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Gay Palm Springs – the best gay hotels,
resorts, bars, clubs & more

Overview

Palm Springs has been an LGBT getaway for decades ever since the glamorous days of Hollywood starting in the early the 1930's. Actors working in Hollywood would escape to Palm Springs, just a 2 hour drive away, to let loose and mingle with other closeted gays from the entertainment industry. These days, Palm Springs may have a reputation as a destination for just middle aged or retired visitors but don't be fooled.

The city has plenty to offer for all ages and you'll find travelers of all generations visiting the city, especially during major events like gay pride, The White Party and especially the Coachella Music Festival, which draws an especially young demographic. If you haven't thought about visiting Palm Springs, you might want to think again. With year around warm weather and lots of events and cool activities, there's no better time than now to plan a trip.

General Tips

One of the best things to do in Palm Springs is to not do anything at all. After all, Palm Springs is a resort town so take advantage and head out to your hotel's pool and spend your afternoon lounging and sipping cocktails. Palm Springs is famous as the second home of some of the biggest Hollywood stars, past and present. Barbra Streisand calls Palm Springs home as well as many other famous actors, actresses and gay icons alike. The months of July and August are beyond hot and are best to avoid. Ideal times to visit are spring and fall. While not pool weather, winter can still make a nice getaway, particularly if you come from a cold destination and want to escape the snow.

Transportation & Airport Transfer

Most people visiting Palm Springs arrive by car from LA or nearby urban centers. The drive from LA is just two hours and makes for an easy add-on to any visit to [Los Angeles](#). However, Palm Springs does have a small regional airport if you decide to fly in directly.

Palm Springs is a small city with a population of just 46,000. If you stay in the central and downtown part of the city, you can explore the town without the need to drive. The city even offers a free local trolley called 'The Buzz' to make it convenient to enjoy the city without a car – especially great when you happen to have a buzz, which is bad news if you get behind the wheel of a car. The Buzz runs from 11am to 1am Thursdays through Sundays so take advantage and play it safe. For travel longer distances, Uber and Lyft are your best option.

Gay Hotels & Resorts in Palm Springs

Palm Springs has more all gay resorts than any city in the world. Before the days when you could be public with your orientation, these were a major draw as gays could vacation together and mingle with others in privacy. Most are small to medium sized hotels catering to gay men. The properties in town range in quality and many are clothing optional.

Gay Friendly Hotels in Palm Springs

[Riviera Palm Springs](#) – relax and enjoy a full-service spa, world-class golf course, shopping and sightseeing opportunities. Hotel guests have access to a pool, well-equipped gym plus a full-service salon.

[Ace Hotel and Swim Club](#) – this hotel has a bohemian design including rooms with either a garden patio or in-room fireplace. The Ace Hotel and Swim Club features two pools and an outdoor fireplace area to relax and sip cocktails. After a workout in the well-equipped gym, guests can relax with a massage in the hotel's full-service spa.

Clothing-Optional Gay Resorts in Palm Springs

[InnDulge](#) – a clean and welcoming place to stay with a great pool and friendly staff. They offer a 12-person jacuzzi and heated/chilled saltwater pool, both open 24 hours a day. Enjoy the morning breakfast and evening social hours, Thursday pizza and weekend pool parties.

[Santiago Resort](#) – this men-only, 4-star property offers a year-round outdoor pool. Santiago Resort is set in the uptown district in Palm Springs and is one of the nicest clothing options resorts in Palm Springs.

[All Worlds Resorts](#) – only a few blocks walk to the ‘Arenas Road Entertainment District’ for enjoying great bars, parties, karaoke and dining. Guests can enjoy a daily complimentary breakfast and restful amenities including a heated pool and a soothing hot tub. Day and night passes are also available.

[Canyon Club Hotel](#) – this property is near popular attractions and also features a swimming pool and a sauna. The hotel provides access to a golf course, bicycle rental and a business center. A fitness center can also be accessed by guests who want to stay active while travelling.

[La Dolce Vida Resort & Spa](#) – another clothing optional resort with Jacuzzi an outdoor pool. The resort is near both the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. The Moorten Botanical Garden and Cactarium is also just a 10-minute walk away.

For women

[Casitas Laquita](#) – one of the few hotels designed for lesbian travelers. It is located near the Moorten Botanical Garden and Cactarium. The property has 15 rooms, each offering all the necessities to ensure a comfortable stay.

Apartments

There are many sites for apartment rentals in Palm Springs, with [AirBnB](#) probably being one of the most popular. Prices are generally comparable to budget hotels, especially if you’re willing to get a room in a shared apartment. [Book AirBnB →](#)



There are even a few LGBT-oriented booking sites like [misterb&b](#) with listings from gay hosts for gay guests where you can either rent a whole apartment or a private room in a shared apartment. Understanding Palm Springs' gay scene is much more easily done with the help of a local and apartment sharing is one of the best ways to meet someone living in the city who knows how things work, where and when are the best nights to go out, and what places to eat at and which to avoid.

Sightseeing & Activities in Palm Springs

[Palm Springs Ariel Tramway](#) – one of the best experiences in Palm Springs is taking the cable car up to the top of San Jacinto Peak. At the top you'll get great views of the city and the entire Coachella valley, not to mention a temperature drop of about 30F (18C). The peak is part of the steepest mountain range in the US starting from the desert floor and reaching heights of 8,500ft (2600m). A ride to the top costs \$25 and takes about 10 minutes. As you make your way up, you'll even discover that the tram car actually rotates under your feet giving the entire car a 360-degree view on both the way up and down. [Book tour →](#)



Weekly Palm Springs VillageFest – If you're in town on a Thursday then you should head over to Palm Canyon Drive in the evening from 6pm to 10pm for the [weekly market called Palm Springs VillageFest](#). The city closes the street and you can stroll around and find a variety of products for sale including crafts and artwork plus plenty of entertainment and various types of food and drink options. Enjoy the evening in the warmth that Palm Springs offers and people watch as you shop, enjoying the relaxed vibe.



[Icons Tour](#) – a two-hour exploration of Palm Springs in a red open-air Jeep. You'll ride around town learning the history of Palm Springs gaining insights into how it has become such an important destination. Gay and lesbian stars themselves, plus icons from a variety of decades have always come to Palm Springs and this tour will show you the best including homes from people like Lily Tomlin, Liberace, Judy Garland, Cher and Barry Manilow. [Book tour →](#)

Restaurants and Cafes (LGBT owned)

The Sandwich Spot – pop in for freshly made, specialty sandwiches using only the finest quality ingredients and freshly baked breads.

[Birba](#) – a popular restaurant for dinner located in downtown Palm Springs. They offer delicious, classic Italian pizza (gluten free crust available) and handcrafted cocktails. The menu also features innovative weekly dinner specials, delicate salads and homemade desserts.

[Townie Bagels](#) – This bakery is located in the Antique Shopping District. All bagels, breads, muffins, bialys and scones are made from scratch in the bakery each day.

[Azucar](#) – go for dinner to enjoy modern contemporary cuisine with an emphasis and focus on flavor utilizing high quality and local ingredients. Enjoy a great roof top deck and sip on amazing cocktails and appetizers. It's best to call ahead and make a reservation.

[Copley's](#) – award-winning restaurant serving upscale American cuisine infused with traces of tropical and European flavors. Andrew Copley is an executive chef with more than 20 years of culinary background. A must-visit dinner spot in Palm Springs.

Palm Springs Gay Bars

Visiting Palm Springs without catching a local drag show should be a crime. More than just your average drag performance, Palm Springs is full of unique acts like [The Judy Show](#) located at The Purple Room or Trivia Night at the Ace Hotel hosted by local drag ambassador – [Bella da Ball](#). The Purple Room at Club Trinidad originally opened in the 1960's and was one of Palm Springs' original Rat Pack hangouts often frequented by Frank Sinatra and friends. It recently re-opened featuring swanky updated décor with a large performance stage where the talented impersonator Michael Homes performs amazing renditions of Judy Garland, Carol Channing, Mae West and Katherine Hepburn.



[Tool Shed](#) – Palm Springs’ friendliest leather and Levi cruise bar located in the Warm Sands District. Head over for morning specials on screwdrivers and bloody marys. Come to play bingo, pool or just to meet and socialize with the local crowd.

[RetroRoom Lounge](#) – a intimate atmosphere reminiscent of the rat pack days. Handcrafted cocktails prepared the way Dean Martin would have preferred. Live, lounge-style entertainment on the weekends and karaoke 3 nights per week.

[Chill Bar](#) – A warm and fabulous twenty-first century, modern venue located on Arenas. Relax on the outdoor patio enjoying music and refreshing beverages with friends after a game of pool.

[Street Bar](#) – If you are new in town or a frequent patron, Streetbar is where people connect. At Streetbar everyone is part of the nightly entertainment.

There is not a traditional gay sauna or bathhouse in Palm Springs, however, All World Resorts has cruising and [hookup](#) areas and sells day and night passes.



Gay Events in Palm Springs

Each spring, Palm Springs becomes the LGBT party capital of the entire country.

[Dinah Shore Weekend](#) – this is the place for be for women. It's the largest lesbian event and music festival attracting more than 10,000 ladies from around the world.

[Palm Springs Gay Pride](#) – the gay pride in Palm Springs takes place each November and draws a crowd of 60,000. It's a great excuse to visit and take advantage of the warm weather in November when many places around the country are in full force fall weather, with winter shortly behind. The pride parade takes place on Sunday morning with a colorful array of local organizations, activists and themed floats running along Palm Canyon Drive. The parade ends around 12:30pm and the city offers a free pride festival with performances, food and plenty of fun to finish off your pride weekend. You can also attend other official events throughout the weekend including pool parties, the Ladies' Party Saturday night at Georgie's Alibi Azul Patio and the Oscar's Sunday Tea Dance.

[Cochella Music Festival](#) – the Cochella Music Festival takes place in April each year in the city of Indio, 45 minutes from Palm Springs. This show spans for two weekends and hosts more than 200 performers with music sets ranging from rock, indie, pop and electronic. The festival was started in 1999 and is now popular as a road trip destination given its remote location. Though it's not located in the city, Palm Springs is a great place to stay for the weekend since hotel space is limited in Indio. Truthfully, Indio is not a really a tourist destination but with plenty of public shuttle buses available, you can attend the music festival by day and escape back to Palm Springs by night to enjoy the vibe, restaurants and nightlife.

[White Party](#) – the White Party is the largest and longest running event of its kind in the US. Originally started in Palm Springs more than 20 years ago, this party now has expanded to Miami and Bangkok.