

2015 Best Of Our Valley Winners: Escapes

Written by Suzanne Koch

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Escapes

Sometimes, Phoenixians crave the crash of ocean waves, the glitter of Sin City or the chill of snow-capped mountains—and this is where we like to settle in when those hankerings hit.

BY MELISSA LARSEN



BEST LAS VEGAS POOL

>>MARQUEE NIGHTCLUB AND DAYCLUB AT THE COSMOPOLITAN OF LAS VEGAS

Beyond the main nightclub space, Marquee of The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas launches the Dayclub portion of the venue each spring. The adults-only outdoor facility showcases eight cabanas with individual infinity pools and 10 three-story bungalow lofts. Guests can take in the sun poolside as the space features cozy sun beds, a gaming area, two pools and a daytime food menu from Executive Chef Ralph Scamardella and thirst-quenching cocktails. marqueelasvegas.com.



BEST LOS ANGELES RESORT

>>FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LOS ANGELES AT BEVERLY HILLS

A favorite spot among celebrities, especially during awards season, Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills is a glamorous stay near Hollywood. Located near Rodeo Drive, the five-star hotel's 285 guest rooms and luxury suites all feature French doors to a balcony with views of the gardens, the Hollywood Hills, Los Angeles or Beverly Hills. The fourth-floor pool is a guest favorite, as are the posh poolside cabana packages, with which guests can feel like A-listers. fourseasons.com/losangeles.



BEST ARIZONA SKI RESORT

>>ARIZONA SNOWBOWL

Seasoned skiers and boarders, as well as first-timers, take to the 777 acres of Arizona Snowbowl in the winter for fresh powder, blue skies and breathtaking views. With one of the best instructional programs in the Southwest, Snowbowl is the ideal resort for families and those putting their boots in the snow for the first time. Arizona Snowbowl offers professionally trained, bilingual instructors to provide skiers and boarders of all levels a top-notch experience. Or hit Arizona Snowbowl's Scenic Chairlift ride on a summer afternoon for a bird's-eye view of one of the state's most scenic spots. arizonasnowbowl.com.

BEST ORANGE COUNTY RESORT

>>ST. REGIS MONARCH BEACH AND MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH

From its award-winning spa to its oceanfront golf course, St. Regis Monarch Beach has everything a visitor could want in a sunny SoCal retreat. The resort is a Forbes Five-Star, AAA Five-Diamond retreat boasting three pools, six restaurants, 400 rooms and suites and plenty of family-friendly activities. Craftsman-style architecture and views of the blue Pacific welcome guests at Montage Laguna Beach. The 250-room resort

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occupies 30 acres in the arts community of Laguna Beach. stregismb.com; montagehotels.com/lagunabeach.

2014 WINNER

BEST TRAVEL WEB SITE

>>EXPEDIA.COM AND KAYAK.COM

When it comes to travel, convenience and ease don't always come naturally—that is unless you're using Expedia.com and Kayak.com Web sites. From finding a hotel, a car rental or a flight, both sites are respected in seeking the best deals for its users.

BEST LAS VEGAS CASINO

>>CAESARS PALACE

This modern-day Roman Empire in Sin City dazzles gamblers with the likes of blackjack, craps, roulette, baccarat, Spanish 21, mini-baccarat, Pai Gow and Pai Gow poker. To spend those hard-earned chips, Caesars Palace is chock-full of things to see and do, including letting loose at on-site nightclubs, shopping, golfing and plenty of pampering at the spa. caesars.com.

BEST LAS VEGAS RESORT

>>THE VENETIAN LAS VEGAS

This 36-story, all-suite resort offers visitors some of the finest accommodations on The Strip (think Egyptian cotton sheets, Roman bathtubs and walk-in closets). Rounding out The Venetian Las Vegas experience is the resort's impressive list of shows, like this month's "The Essential Diana Ross: Some Memories Never Fade," restaurants led by celebrity chefs, energetic nightlife and more. venetian.com.

BEST SUN VALLEY RESORT

>>SUN VALLEY RESORT

An all-season family resort in Idaho, Sun Valley Resort is a favorite among adrenaline junkies who are looking to take to the slopes, horseback ride and more. However, the resort also offers plenty of opportunity for solitude and enjoying simple pleasures. Sun Valley Resort comprises a variety of options when it comes to lodging, from cottages and modern condominiums to historic lodges. sunvalley.com.

BEST MOUNTAIN ESCAPE

>>RUSTIC INN CREEKSIDE RESORT & SPA AND WALDORF ASTORIA PARK CITY

Rustic Inn Creekside Resort & Spa is located on 12 lush acres adjacent to the National Elk Refuge, just a few blocks from Jackson's town square. The Jackson Hole respite dishes out warm Western hospitality, as well as a full-service spa (with newly opened spa suites), a heated pool, a lounge with a full bar and more. Waldorf Astoria Park City happens to be the first ski resort from Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, as well as the only luxury hotel at the largest ski resort in North America. Located at the base of Canyons Resort, the property has 175 residences and boasts an elegant yet casual feel. rusticinnatjh.com; parkcitywaldorfastoria.com; aubergeresorts.com.

BEST SEDONA HOTEL

>>KIMPTON'S AMARA RESORT & SPA

After a recent renovation, Kimpton's Amara Resort & Spa is now just as beautiful as the red rocks that surround it, thanks to interior color that matches the lush foliage and desert flowers. With fresh and seasonal takes on traditional regional cuisine, Amara's new SaltRock restaurant dishes up must-try eats, like duck confit tacos, braised lamb tostadas and more. The pet-friendly resort also hosts a super spa and a zero-edge saltwater pool. amararesort.com.

AFM FAVE

BEST SEDONA HOTEL

>>L'AUBERGE DE SEDONA

Whether we're dining at the amazing, award-winning L'Auberge Restaurant on Oak Creek or checking into a decked-out cottage suite (complete with an open-roof cedar shower), L'Auberge de Sedona is a real gem among Sedona's red rocks. lauberge.com.



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BEST NAPA WINERY

>>DOMAINE CARNEROS AND SILVERADO VINEYARD

Domaine Carneros (pictured), founded by the family behind Champagne Taittinger, is respected as a small grower-producer of méthode champenoise sparkling wine and pinot noir. Imbibers can enjoy caviar and artisan cheese plates alongside their sips from the property's certified organic estate vineyards or the beautiful château. For three decades, Silverado Vineyards and its famed cabernet has been a Napa Valley favorite. Stop by for a tour and tasting (appointment only), and check out the events calendar to see what's on tap for the month. domainecarneros.com; silveradovineyards.com.

2014 WINNER BEST ASPEN RESORT

>>HOTEL JEROME

In 2012, Aspen's legendary crown jewel, the 93-room Hotel Jerome, an Auberge Resort, unveiled a redesign of the 125-year-old historic landmark. The update features contemporary accommodations and modern amenities that continue to honor the property's iconic mountain spirit. The new experiences include regionally inspired culinary events, monthly wine dinners and cooking classes as part of the Auberge Resorts Food of Place program, as well as lavish seasonal Auberge Adventures. hoteljerome.aubergeresorts.com.

2014 WINNER

BEST LOCALLY-OWNED MOUNTAIN ESCAPE

>>HUBBARD'S YELLOWSTONE LODGE

Whether you are a hiker, a bird-watcher, a fisherman or a whitewater rafter, Hubbard's Yellowstone Lodge in Montana is an outdoor enthusiast's dream come true. In the log-built main lodge, guests can enjoy a cozy setting capped with gourmet dining; in the great outdoors, Hubbard's Yellowstone Lodge offers horseback riding, whitewater rafting trips, tours of Yellowstone National Park and many more energy-packed ventures. hubbardslodge.com.

2014 WINNER BEST SAN DIEGO RESORT

>>PARK HYATT AVIARA RESORT

A seaside resort in Carlsbad, Park Hyatt Aviara Resort drops jaws with its lovely Spanish Colonial architecture and lush landscaping and happens to be located right next to one of San Diego's top golf courses. Ocean, garden and golf course views can be enjoyed from the terraces or balconies from each guest room and suite. Guests are invited to savor time relaxing on the beach—or try their hand at surfing or kayaking—or visit the nearby Batiquitos Lagoon, which attracts more than 130 species of migrating birds. parkaviara.hyatt.com.
