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Visit Carson Valley Feature Story Topics

Creative. Inspiring. Photo Tourism.

Picture the Great American West. Images of soaring bald eagles, majestic wild horses, stunning mountain peaks and lush valleys probably come to mind. Maybe there's a rushing stream, a working cowboy or a historic building in view. These scenes are what visitors find in Nevada's Carson Valley. Easily. Every day. Within reach. The area's scenic natural beauty inspires photographers of all abilities and ages. A photo tourism visit to Carson Valley begins on arrival. A few minutes in any direction and visitors are transported to the wild west of their imaginations, unburdened by the noise, congestion and pressures of their regular life. The mountains, skies, historic buildings, wildlife and water features are easy to access and practically scream to be captured and shared as fine art, Facebook and Instagram posts. Carson Valley is a destination that inspires visitors to become storytellers and create their own new histories of the west, through the lens of their camera.

Carson Valley Dining. Serving up Legends.

Dinner in a Basque restaurant is less like a meal and more like an experience. Nobody knows that better than JB and Marie, the hosts at the legendary JT's Basque Bar & Dining Room in Gardnerville. Their family has owned and operated the legendary eatery for more than 50 years. A meal at JT's begins with the inexplicably delicious and devilish Picon Punch. (First timers to quickly learn the correct pronunciation is PEE con Punch.) Then, guests tuck into family style tables heaped with plates of the day's delicious specials and traditional side dishes, all served with a bottomless jug of red wine. Drunk from juice glasses. There's nothin' fancy here. The JT's experience is rich in conversation, raucous with stories and laughter, the kind of place full of friends you didn't know the night before but will not soon forget. This is Basque cooking. This is the Basque experience. This is an authentic dining experience only found in Carson Valley.

Get Out There. Really Out There.

Buckle up, adventurers, and get ready to feed your need to do something a little wild. Carson Valley is a recreation wonderland, a place that's ready to be conquered, in a region that's ripe for discovery. Pick a season. If it's winter, plan a day of backcountry skiing or snowshoeing, or check into one of the area's world-class ski resorts for the legendary vistas and terrain Heavenly Valley and Kirkwood Resort are known for. Between seasons, how about a little Ice Tee: that's what locals call skiing in the morning, golfing in the afternoon. Same day. When it's spring, get out into the valley's rugged terrain on miles of single track trails, or cycle for hours along quiet country roads. Motor sports enthusiasts can discover an untamed Carson Valley by ATV, OHV or motorcycle. Fall is perfect for exploring the Sierra Nevada that surround the valley by foot, for day hiking, backpacking or climbing. Whatever their passion, visitors to Carson Valley will find their wild here.

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Living the Ranch Life: Agritourism Carson Valley Style

Farms and ranches aren't what they used to be. Today's ag business is getting back to basics, offering visitors the experience of living, working, eating and playing in an environment their ancestors knew, a life that is far from the asphalt, glass and steel of modern life. Here are five discoveries not easily matched and full of rich heritage.

1. Get married in a 200-year-old barn, and celebrate in a meadow under the towering Sierra Nevada. Get hitched western-style at Gardnerville's East Fork Ranch
2. Stroll back to another era to celebrate your own heritage with a family reunion on a working berry farm. Nobody will forget that experience, under the 100-year-old apple trees at the Jacobs Family Berry Farm in Gardnerville
3. Do all Westerners know how to ride a horse? Find out and learn yourself at the Chappell Ranch in Gardnerville. Their ranch, turned equestrian center, offers horsemanship programs for kids and adults that will bring out any visitor's inner cowboy.
4. Fall means "pumpkin spice everything." At the Corley Ranch in Gardnerville, every October is pumpkin spicy when this working cattle ranch and farm celebrates fall with a pumpkin patch, corn maze, hay rides, food and crafters.
5. Antiques, anyone? Carson Valley's working ranches and historic buildings are antiques in their own right. On your way there or back, amble and shop along the Carson Valley Arts & Antiques Trail, and bring home your own artifacts from the Great American West.

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