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7 Ways to Harness a Wellness Escape in Carson Valley

CARSON VALLEY, Nev. (April 20, 2022) – Wellness travel is a popular buzzword following two years of lockdowns and a piling on of emotional and physical stressors related to a quickly changing world environment. But for the communities that comprise the Carson Valley region, located just about an hour south of Reno, Nevada, wellness has been and continues to be a lifestyle dating back more than 170 years.

Reports from leading economic and tourism sectors note that wellness travel's growth is expected to outpace many other sectors – by leaps and bounds. While wellness travel has been around, nearly 68% of people state, “that they'll likely plan their next vacation around improving mental well-being in particular.” And these travelers are seeking greater wellness and self-care along with fulfilling the desire for in-person connections and wish list experiences. ([American Express Travel 2022 Global Travel Trends Report](#))



Carson Valley Mountain Biking – Photo courtesy of Corey Rich

Enter Carson Valley, comprised of four community-oriented towns including Genoa, the oldest permanent settlement in Nevada, Gardnerville, Minden and Topaz Lake. In describing the communities, words such as wide-open, outdoors, nature, awe-inspiring, connecting to nature, and family easily come to mind. In today's environment, wellness means more than just a spa experience. It's a mindful practice

that gives a chance to disconnect from whatever pressures there may be and to spend time being present in new ways.

“Talking about all the wellness connections that are available in such proximity may sound too good to be true, however, we’re here to tell you that we’re closer than you’d imagine and that’s what makes a getaway to Carson Valley within reach to, well, anyone,” said Jan Vandermade, executive director for Visit Carson Valley. “The epiphany for many of us coming out of the last two years is how much travel and experiences fed us. We’re seeing a rise in people looking for those missed experiences right here in our valley – and these aren’t new experiences per se, they’ve been part of who we are as a community for centuries.”

Here are seven ways to embrace wellness this summer and into fall:

1. **Nature and Outdoors:** The [River Fork Ranch](#) is 800 acres of protected wildlife habitat located near Genoa, Nevada, as the East and West Forks of the Carson River meet. It’s now a nature preserve and working cattle operation remaining true to its sustainable agriculture practices. On any given day, spotting wildlife is not a problem including birds, deer and frogs and turtles. Just a few minutes’ drive further to the town of Genoa, connect with the outdoors through an [impressive trail system](#) for hikers and mountain bikers with treks along the Sierra foothills or to the top with views overlooking the valley and Lake Tahoe. After exploring the Eagle Ridge Loop, Sierra Canyon Trail and the Discovery Trail, stop by the [Genoa Bar](#), the oldest thirst parlor in Nevada, for a cold beer or a specialty cocktail.
2. **Unplug:** Leave your phone at your hotel and take some quiet time to visit the settlement of Genoa and the towns of Minden and Gardnerville. Get lost in the numerous [art and antique shops](#) for hidden treasures or a rare find. Grab a drink at [DST Coffee](#) and then find a spot with a view of Jobs Peak, topping more than 10,600 feet, it’s a surefire way to put things in perspective.
3. **Animal encounters:** Animal therapy is a thing for a reason, it heals us. Carson Valley has a plethora of wild and tame animals that are ready to strike a pose for that perfect shot through [varied tours](#). Local guides and expert photographers take visitors off-road for an up-close look at wild horses. These encounters offer a window into life in the wild west – and the views aren’t bad either. For a tamer approach, youth and adults can go to [Chappell Ranch](#) to learn more about horsemanship and leadership on a working ranch. Through several outfitters and tour guides, activities to connect with animals are one of the area’s best-kept secrets.
4. **Supporting local:** Local business is the heart and soul of the Carson Valley community. Mom and pop businesses strive to deliver experiences in a way that demonstrates a true passion for their trades. View our [interactive map](#) of Genoa, Minden and Gardnerville and search shopping for more than 40 shops, boutiques and antique stores. Connect at a level that goes beyond the normal and dine at [J.T. Basque Bar & Dining Room](#). Rooted in Basque history, the restaurant dates back to more than half a century and is considered a Nevada icon. Seating is family-style and throughout the multi-course meal, friendships are made – true to the establishment. Or make a reservation at [Daniel’s](#) for a French country dining experience in historic Genoa. Locally owned and run, it’s more than just dinner, it’s local at its finest.
5. **Work hard – play harder:** For many, work from home is the new normal and combining work and play is now commonplace. With more than 50 miles of trails located within 15 minutes of most lodging properties, tying hiking shoes or clipping into a bike and hitting the trails is quick and convenient. Not to mention, more than 300 days of sunshine and activities in all four seasons make a work-life balance achievable.

6. **Rise Above:** While Carson Valley is grounded in many ways, a look-up offers a whole new wellness vantage point. Glider enthusiasts travel from around the world to experience a flight from Minden. The ideal airstream conditions mix with spectacular scenery to give riders the thrill of a lifetime. Carson Valley's [Soaring NV](#) takes guests on a flight high above both Carson Valley and Lake Tahoe by tow cable, before cutting the aircraft loose to soar the skies - engineless. Hot air ballooning over Carson Valley is awe-inspiring and [Balloon Nevada](#) offers rides with expert pilots rising high for a peek over the Lake Tahoe Basin and impressive unobstructed valley views.
7. **Just be:** The benefits of just standing still and listening to the silence are only enhanced by the environment that encompasses the valley. The sun rises above the Pine Nut Mountain Range, a high desert landscape that contrasts with sunrises over the range to the west, the Eastern Sierra, a mountain range that extends 400 miles to the south. There's no bad seat to capture the dance that takes place in the sky above. Instagram-worthy pictures are easy to find each morning and evening. For a totally relaxing experience, catch a sunrise or sunset from the natural hot springs at the Holiday Inn Club Vacations [David Walley's Resort](#). The resort features five mineral spas heated by geothermal groundwater produced naturally from the Earth's mantle.

Explore more of Carson Valley's wellness by visiting [online](#).

About Carson Valley: Nestled at the base of the Sierra, Carson Valley begs visitors to not just drive through it, but to it. Located 45 miles south of Reno-Tahoe International Airport and 12 miles east of South Lake Tahoe, the region's natural beauty is legendary: wide-open farms, ranches, bands of wild horses and birds of prey dot the landscape. Outdoor recreation enthusiasts follow all points of the compass with more than 50+ miles of hiking, mountain biking, or walking trails along with world-class road biking. The valley's museums, arts, antiques, Basque dining, historic watering holes and more add to the destination's authentic culture. The region includes the communities of Minden, Gardnerville, Topaz Lake and Genoa, Nevada's first settlement dating back to 1851. Explore the land of everyday legends at [VisitCarsonValley.org](#).

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