

# *Las Vegas* One City, Five Ways

Words: Alexandra Owens

Venture beyond the Strip and explore the secret sides of Las Vegas – from colorful art festivals to some of the Southwest's most beautiful canyons

From restaurants decked out with <u>authentic Picasso artworks</u> to malls modeled after <u>Venetian canals</u>, Las Vegas does nothing in halves. Yet, there's so much more to this flamboyant city than bright lights, glittering casinos and glamorous nightclubs. Look beyond the buzzing Strip and you'll discover a whole other world of quietly sophisticated dining, under-the-radar nightlife, bluechip art, immersive shopping and natural beauty spots.



Tuck into immaculately plated French fusion dishes at Partage Photo by Sabin Orr

### Food

Some of the best food in Las Vegas can be found off the beaten path. In Chinatown, <u>Yui Edomae Sushi</u> serves fresh sushi using fish flown straight from Japan, and at a fraction of the price it would cost in an establishment just a few blocks east. Next door, <u>Partage</u> creates mouth-watering French fusion dishes like pork glazed with soy sauce and honey, scallops with seaweed chutney and oxtail croque monsieur. For some of the best Thai food in the country – never mind the city – head to <u>Lotus of</u>. <u>Siam</u>. The restaurant's *khao soi* (curry noodles), spicy mushroom dip and other Northern Thai delicacies have won numerous awards and received rave reviews from the likes of the James Beard Foundation and *Gourmet* magazine.

Looking for a snack? Tacos el Gordo has you covered. Its three locations dish up handmade corn tortillas loaded with guacamole and traditional meats such as *suadero* (beef brisket), *carne asada* (grilled beef) and chorizo.



The Laundry Room is a speakeasy-style bar with an entrance concealed behind a bookcase

## Nightlife

Speakeasy-style bars like <u>The Laundry Room</u> – a cozy former laundromat with an entrance hidden behind a bookcase – and <u>Here Kitty Kitty Vice Den</u> provide exclusivity without the stress or cost of bottle service. If you want to put on your dancing shoes, <u>On the Record</u> provides a more laid-back experience than the typical mega-clubs, with indoor and outdoor spaces offering plenty of room to bust a few moves.

For a taste of old Vegas, try a specialty sour beer at <u>Atomic Liquors</u>, the city's first freestanding bar. This is where customers once watched explosions taking place in the Nevada desert several miles away, and where the Rat Pack drank after their nightly gigs.



Admire hundreds of eye-catching neon signs at the Neon Museum

## Arts and Culture

In recent years, Las Vegas has made a name for itself as an art destination. From contemporary master Ugo Rondinone's brightly painted <u>"Seven Magic Mountains"</u> planted in the middle of the desert to <u>"Akhob,"</u> James Turrell's immersive light installation, the city is full of exciting art. Stop by the 18-block <u>Arts District</u> on First Friday, a free community festival with street performances and food trucks. During this monthly event, thousands of visitors flock to venues like the <u>Arts Factory</u>, which houses the studios of more than two dozen regional artists.

Nearby, the <u>Neon Museum</u> showcases over 250 of the Strip's iconic neon signs – many dating from the 1950s to the 1980s – that once adorned the city's casinos and hotels. Take a guided tour of the Neon Boneyard to learn about trends in design and technology, or visit at night to catch "Brilliant," an immersive musical show that illuminates the history of Las Vegas.



The Forum Shops at Caesars Palace pays homage to classic Roman architecture

## Shopping

Shopping is practically a sport in Vegas. Check out <u>The Shops at Crystals</u> for luxury brands like Louis Vuitton and Prada, or head to <u>The Forum Shops at Caesars Palace</u>, which ranks among the world's <u>highest-grossing malls</u>. Among the latter's 160 boutiques and Roman-themed streetscapes, you'll find <u>Urban Necessities</u>, a wildly popular sneaker shop hawking vintage and rare shoes. And if you're staying at <u>Elara by Hilton Grand Vacations</u>, you'll be glad to know that the resort offers direct access to the <u>Miracle Mile Shops</u>.

For a twist on the modern mall, check out the <u>Downtown Container Park</u>, an outdoor shopping and entertainment complex built from stacked metal shipping containers. Pick up some candy at <u>Sugar Shop</u>, order a personalized airbrushed print at <u>Ziggy's Art Studio</u> or browse designs from local brands and artisans at <u>Third & Arrow</u>.



Explore the Colorado River on an inflatable kayak

### Nature

If you need a break from the bustle of the Strip, venture beyond the city limits – some of the most beautiful mountains and canyons of the American Southwest lie within easy reach. With its dramatic sandstone cliffs, seasonal desert waterfalls and Native American petroglyphs, the <u>Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area</u> remains a favorite with local hikers, climbers and cyclists. Explore the area on foot or hitch a ride with <u>Pink® Jeep Tours</u>.

Further afield, you'll discover the Colorado River, one of the largest rivers in the country. Book a <u>kayaking tour</u> that takes you below the gigantic Hoover Dam, and keep your eyes peeled for wildlife like bighorn sheep – and even bald eagles during the colder months. It's also possible to see the Grand Canyon from here. While the beloved natural wonder is found in Arizona, it's close to the state border and can be accessed on a half- or full-day trip from Las Vegas via <u>helicopter</u>.