

THE ESCAPE ARTIST

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MODERN OASIS

A Chicago design pro reveals his favorite hot spots in Palm Springs, the desert getaway for Hollywood renegades and architecture buffs



OUR GUIDE  
**JERRY SANFILIPPO**  
 INTERIOR DESIGNER AND  
 CO-OWNER OF ASI INTERIORS

Jerry Sanfilippo first visited Palm Springs 15 years ago and now stays at his vacation home there almost every month. On his must-do list for February: [Palm Springs Modernism Week](#). Starting February 16, the 11-day festival draws an international crowd of midcentury modern design fanatics.

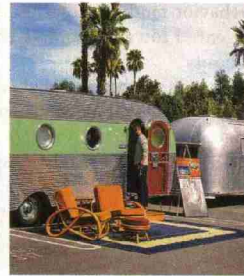
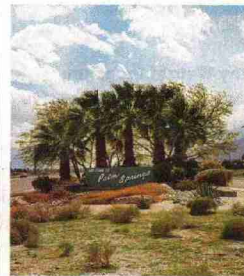
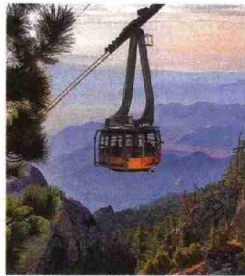


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THREE YEARS AGO, MY PARTNER AND I purchased a cubist-inspired vacation home, which we have since filled with art from galleries in and around Palm Springs: a mid-century modern metal piece in the dining room, a giant acrylic box filled with fabric-and-leather confetti above the sofa, an original painting from a local artist over the fireplace. The artwork, our organically shaped pool, the perfect views of the San Jacinto Mountains, the seclusion and quiet—this is quintessential Palm Springs living. There's nothing to distract you from relaxing.

The mornings are so peaceful that I can't resist rising early to see the changing red glow of the mountains. Cooler temperatures also make it the best time of day to experience outstanding natural surroundings. You can hike stunning desert trails or ascend 8,500 feet up the Chino Canyon on the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway for breathtaking views beyond the clouds and more hiking at the top. When I want to keep it simple, one of my favorite things to do is ride a bike through Las Palmas and other neighborhoods with famous architecture.

We always tell friends to rent a home if they want a more authentic Palm Springs experience. You can stay in a vintage midcentury modern house built by the pioneering father-son team of George and Robert Alexander, a celebrity retreat previously owned by Betty Grable, or a suite once



(Clockwise from top) The Kaufmann House, Richard Neutra's 1946 masterpiece, is a private residence that epitomizes the best of the area's modernist architecture; the classic Palm Springs sign welcomes you; getting a look inside a vintage trailer during Modernism Week; Hedge, one of Sanfilippo's favorite design galleries in Cathedral City; the aerial tram offers stunning 360-degree views of Coachella Valley.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) COURTESY OF JERRY SANFILIPPO; KENNETH JOHANSSON/CORBIS; BRUCE DUFFY/GETTY; GREGG FELSEN; COURTESY OF JERRY SANFILIPPO; COURTESY OF PALM SPRINGS DESERT RESORT COMMUNITIES CONVENTION AND VISITORS AUTHORITY



occupied by Lucille Ball at Gene Autry's Ocotillo Lodge—for much less than you might think.

Of course, those who prefer pampering have many choices among the scores of impeccable hotels, where you can find accommodations ranging from trendy and modern to opulent vintage luxury. You can experience the original 1930s Hollywood Regency style—now making a big comeback—at the Viceroy Palm Springs, which has a beautifully white restaurant, Citron. For a diversion from modern décor, I like the quiet, Moroccan-inspired Colony Palms Hotel, with its very chill poolside scene. Swanky cocktailing is still revered in Palm Springs, especially the daily happy hour from 4 to 7 p.m. I meet friends at Trio, which is always packed, or Lulu, where top-shelf cocktails are priced ridiculously low, from \$4 to \$6 a drink.

The hottest new place to shop in Palm Springs is a booming retail corridor for the design-obsessed. Just north of downtown and consolidated over five blocks along Palm Canyon Drive, the Uptown Design District has smaller-scale design-minded stores like Christopher Anthony, Boulevard, and Wil Stiles. Christopher Anthony is my go-to source for unusual art and furniture that will work well with other styles; Boulevard offers a constantly refreshed collection of furniture and décor from the 1950s; and Wil Stiles carries European street fashion, including Fred Perry designer clothing and colorful handcrafted resin jewelry from Brazil.

In Cathedral City, five minutes from Palm Springs down Highway 111, Colin Fisher Studios and Hedge are my favorite design galleries. Originally from Chicago, Colin Fisher is the first person I call for out-of-the-ordinary sculpture and art. Hedge specializes in midcentury modern and contemporary furnishings, from vintage George Nelson gentleman's dressers to organic teak pieces from Bali.

On Wednesday mornings, hit The Estate Sale Company, a giant resale store, as soon as it opens at 9 a.m. to get first dibs on the most recently acquired goods. You can find indoor and outdoor furniture, accessories, and artwork. Friends of mine have grabbed up a contemporary sofa from Elizabeth Taylor's estate, a dressing table owned by Barbra Streisand, and four stone Buddhas before they even made it off the delivery truck.

—As told to Nina Kokotas Hahn



## PALM SPRINGS ADDRESS BOOK

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### STAY

**Ace Hotel & Swim Club** The hipster design set stays here. 701 E. Palm Canyon Dr.; 760-325-9900, [acehotel.com](http://acehotel.com). From \$155. **Colony Palms Hotel** Poolside dining and cocktails at the Purple Palm. 572 N. Indian Canyon Dr.; 800-557-2187, [colonypalmsshotel.com](http://colonypalmsshotel.com). From \$179. **Riviera Palm Springs** The legendary Rat Pack resort. 1600 N. Indian Canyon Dr.; 866-588-8311, [psriviera.com](http://psriviera.com). From \$259. **Sun and Fun Vacation Rentals** Vintage and celebrity rental homes with concierge service. 1051 S. Palm Canyon Dr.; 877-322-7961, [sunandfunvacationrentals.com](http://sunandfunvacationrentals.com). Condos from \$120; homes from \$250. **Viceroy Palm Springs** Hollywood Regency glam meets modern luxury. 415 S. Belardo Rd.; 800-670-6184, [viceroypalmsprings.com](http://viceroypalmsprings.com). From \$130.

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### EAT AND DRINK

**Jake's Palm Springs** Casual indoor and outdoor restaurant in the Uptown Design District. 664 N. Palm Canyon Dr.; 760-327-4400, [jakespalm springs.com](http://jakespalm springs.com). **Lulu California Bistro** Affordable downtown dining. 200 S. Palm Canyon Dr.; 760-327-5858, [lulupalmsprings.com](http://lulupalmsprings.com). **Trio A** social hub with great food. 707 N. Palm Canyon Dr.; 760-864-8746, [triopalmsprings.com](http://triopalmsprings.com).

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### SHOP

**Boulevard** 800 N. Palm Canyon Dr., Ste. A; 760-832-9011, [boulevardps.com](http://boulevardps.com). **Christopher Anthony Ltd.** 800 N. Palm Canyon Dr.; 760-322-0600, [christopheranthonyltd.com](http://christopheranthonyltd.com). **Colin Fisher Studios** 68929 Perez Rd., Ste. M, Cathedral City; 760-324-7300, [colinfisherstudios .lstdibs.com](http://colinfisherstudios .lstdibs.com). **The Estate Sale Company** 4135 E. Palm Canyon Dr.; 760-321-7628, [theestatesaleco .com](http://theestatesaleco .com). **Hedge** 68929 Perez Rd., Ste. F, Cathedral City; 760-770-0090, [hedgepalmsprings.com](http://hedgepalmsprings.com). **Wil Stiles** 875 N. Palm Canyon Dr.; 760-327-9764, [wilstiles.com](http://wilstiles.com).

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### DO

**Palm Springs Aerial Tramway** Spectacular Coachella Valley views from its vantage point in Chino Canyon. 1 Tram Way; 888-515-8726, [pstramway.com](http://pstramway.com). **Palm Springs Art Museum** 101 N. Museum Dr.; 760-322-4800, [psmuseum .org](http://psmuseum .org). **Palm Springs Modernism Week** Midcentury modern design festival, February 16 to 26. 760-333-9169, [modernismweek.com](http://modernismweek.com). ●