

The *COURIER'S* DESERT

May 2, 2008



Splashtopia at Rancho Las Palmas, Rancho Mirage

The Value Season

In our backyard Desert, summer months mean rising temperatures and falling hotel and golf rates. With the right pool and a plan of action, you can still enjoy the full Desert experience. Use our guide to pools, golf and attractions to get the most from The Value Season.

The Value Season

Jump Into These Desert Resort Pools For Cool Comfort

By Abbey Hood

aying out with her piña colada in hand, Ray Bans slightly above her nose, a woman reached for her Hawaiian Tropic Tanning Oil.

She was joined by another girlfriend who laughed with her as they watched the parade of bathing suits circle the pool at the Desert Springs JW Marriott.

One of the largest pools in the valley was crowded with good-looking people who danced and laughed to the music blasting on the speakers overhead.

The pool looked like the inside of the hotel's nearby nightclub, Costas.

Guests enjoying bachelor parties and girls' weekends, and even families enjoyed the waters as temperatures rose.

Yes, the Desert might reach 100 degrees, a little too hot for golf or gardening, but it is never too hot for a day by the pool.

The *Courier's Desert* recommends four of our favorite spots where you can enjoy The Value Season poolside.



THE FAMILY STYLE POOL Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa

Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa likes to say that the Griswold family, famous from the Chevy Chase *Vacation* movies, wouldn't have had to drive to Walley World if they knew about Splashtopia at the hotel in Rancho Mirage.

A water complex located in the center of the hotel's property, Splashtopia features a 425-foot lazy river, including two 100-foot water slides; a cliffside Jacuzzi, expansive swimming pool, and a sandy beach and water-play zone. Two lifeguards are on duty at all times.

Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa is offering the "Spalshtopia Package," an added benefit for families looking for something fun to do at the hotel. This getaway package includes overnight accommodations in the newly renovated "Riverside" guest rooms and two personalized lazy river inner tubes to keep. Prices start at \$199 in May, \$169 in June, and \$149 July through September.

For more information, call 866-423-1195; 41-000 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage; rancholaspalmas.com.



The Desert Springs JW Marriott resort's pool.

IT KIND OF REMINDS YOU OF VEGAS

Desert Springs JW Marriott

If you're looking for the pool to see and be seen at, head to the Desert Springs JW Marriott.

It is the pool that has become the destination spot for bachelor and bachelorette parties, girls getaway weekends. It's the perfect spot for those 21 and older as poolside cocktail servers keep those piña coladas flowing.

The pool is a favorite for Angelinos to flock to during spring break and the Coachella Festival weekend. And you're guaranteed to spot a Beverly High student or alumni during Memorial Day weekend.

Couples and singles, always looking flawless, lounge listening to music played either by a disc jockey or calypso band.

The pool is adjacent to a full-service bar and restaurant.

For more information, call 760-341-2211; 74855 Country Club Drive Palm Desert; desertspringsresort.com.

PRIVATE POOLS FOR TWO

Sundance Villas

Looking for the experience of owning a home in the desert with a private pool, without having to actually purchase one?

Sundance Villas in Palm Springs offers 19 personal spa villas.

The two- to three-bedroom homes have their own kitchen, living room with fireplace, enclosed garage, private sunning patio, color TV with DVD and VCR, plus stereo with CD, and gas barbecue.

Each has its own pool in the back patio, located in a private location near the old site of the historic Palm Springs Racquet Club.

The 19 private villas in the resort are located around the resort's tennis court.

Summer rates for a private villa with its own pool start at only \$325 a night.

For more information; call 760-325-3888; 303 Cabrillo Road; sundancevillas.com.



HOLLYWOOD'S HOTSPOT

Viceroy Palm Springs

Standing by the boutique resort's statues of whippets, villas in glossy white, black and lemon-yellow surfaces, Hollywood's elite sipped on cocktails at the GQ Celebrity Party hosted at the Viceroy Palm Springs pool for the Coachella Music Festival.

The three pools are a part of the "in" spot for Angelinos in the desert looking to find the chicness of Palm Springs' original era of glamour.

"To further enhance Viceroy Palm Springs' theatrical inside-out style, unique draped outdoor cabanas provide al fresco dining, entertaining or relaxing amidst a traditionally indoor setting," the promotional material says about the hotel.

"Like their interior counterparts, the pavilions provide a glamorous drama custom-tailored to Palm Springs leisure under the sun and stars."

This summer, the resort is offering 25 percent off everything Viceroy with its "Breathe Easy" package, including accommodations that accentuate the desert's peaceful setting. Summer prices at the hotel start at \$127 (after discount) per room, per night for Premium Studio (not including resort fee). Available through Sept. 11.

For more information, call 800-670-6184; 415 South Belardo Road, Palm Springs; Viceroypalm Springs.com. **CD**