



# nevāda

## SCENIC BYWAYS

### GREAT BASIN

Passing through 10 ghost towns and five state parks, this was the first route to be named a Nevada Scenic Byway. Starting at Crystal Springs and making its way to the city limits of Ely, US 93 makes you feel as though you've journeyed back in time. At 135 miles, this is the longest of Nevada's 10 scenic byways.

Eastward, you'll pass through the town of Caliente, with its historic mission-style train depot, then make your way north toward Panaca, the second-oldest town in Nevada. You'll visit the old mining town of Pioche, home of the "Million Dollar Courthouse," and experience a wealth of town history. You'll pass ghost towns such as Bristol, Stateline and Fay — complete with tumbleweeds and eerie stories.

The five state parks along the way — Kershaw-Ryan, Cathedral Gorge, Echo, Eagle Valley and Beaver Dam — provide natural beauty and opportunities to picnic and relax along your drive. Spring Valley and Echo Canyon are known for fishing and camping, and Cathedral Gorge features impressive rock and clay outcroppings that stab into the desert sky like spires on a church. Cathedral Gorge State Park hosts the Nevada Parks Visitors Center for information about surrounding areas.

The northern section of US 93 passes by Great Basin National Park, which gives us the name of this wonderful byway. The park contains 77,100 acres and is home to an incredible range of plant and animal life. Great Basin National Park offers many recreational opportunities as well. There are several marked trails that take you through various climate zones. Backpacking and camping are also permitted within specific areas in the park. Five campgrounds are scattered around the park, and winter is an amazing time for backcountry skiing.

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# SCENIC BYWAYS

Whatever you're looking for in a scenic drive, there's a good chance Nevada has it. The most mountainous state and the sixth-largest state in the lower 48, the Silver State's majestic peaks and valleys are spread over a seemingly endless chunk of land. Nevada's three national and seven state byways travel along the shore of Lake Tahoe, visit a gem of a lake on Indian territory, introduce the glitz and glamour of Las Vegas, and navigate through one-of-a-kind state parks. Nevada's scenic byways wind their way through some of the most spectacular scenery in the country.

Chosen based on input from state and federal land management agencies for their beauty, history, culture and recreation, each byway offers insight into Nevada's unique place in America. Highlighted below are the locations of the state's 10 scenic byways.



## VALLEY OF FIRE

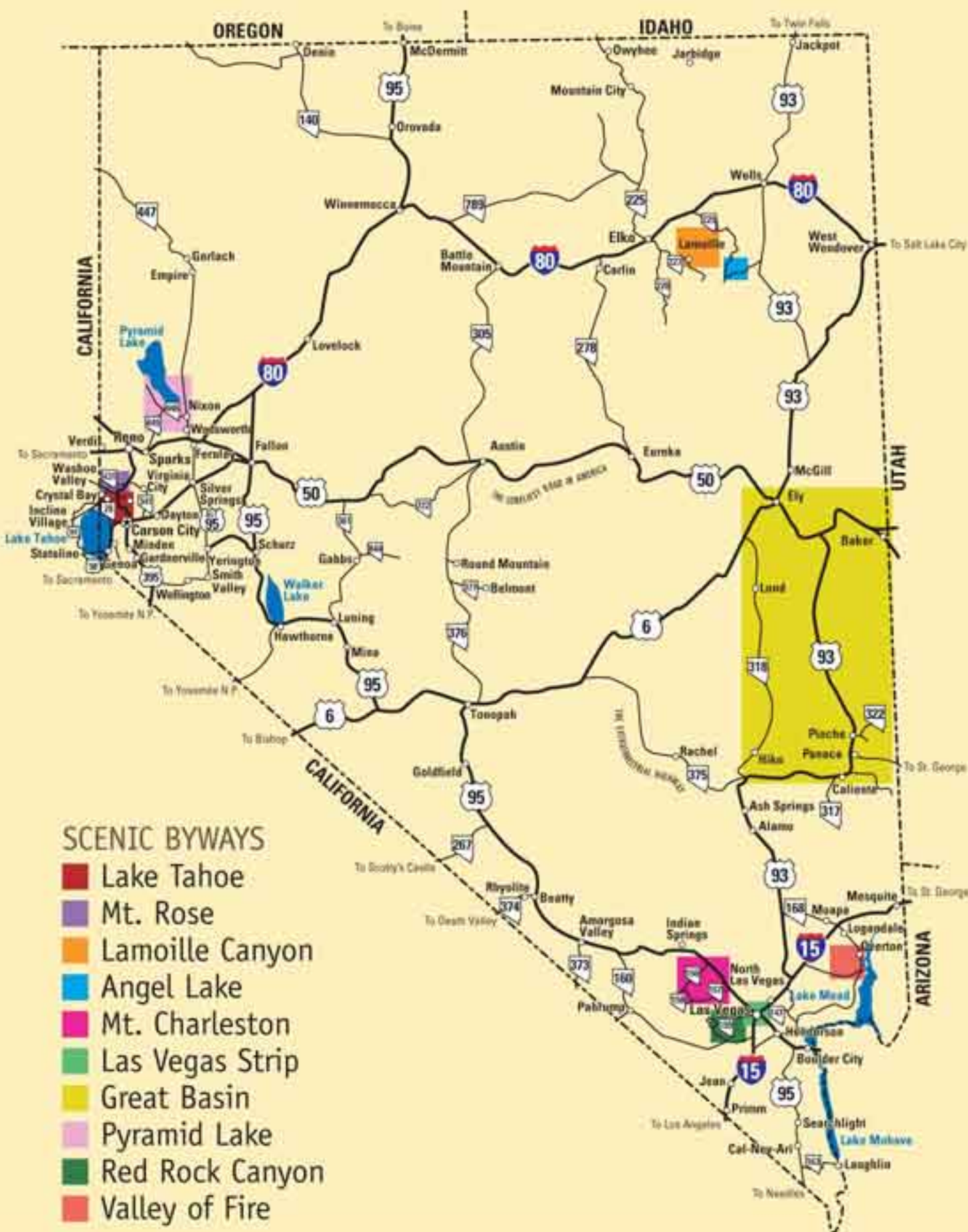
In between Las Vegas and Lake Mead lies Valley of Fire, an impressive canvas of wind-sculpted red sandstone that transforms with each slight movement of the sun.

Travel northeast from Las Vegas on I-15 about 30 minutes to the Valley of Fire interchange (exit 75), then south and east to the park boundary. Although the state byway totals eight miles (the distance from the park entrance to SR 169) the surrounding Valley of Fire State Park is Nevada's largest and oldest state park. Suggested driving times are fall through spring; be cautious of the severe desert heat in the summer.

Mimicking the dance of a flame, the rocks change from benign oranges and browns to deeper, more dramatic shades, while the sun and its shadows seem to mold the rocks into new shapes. Just after sunset and just after sunrise, when the rocks are particularly luminous, are the best times to see how the park got its name. The rock formations rise from the desert floor, fluctuating from ground level to 499 feet high. The roadway will take travelers past geologic marvels such as Arch Rock, Piano Rock and Rainbow Vista. Rainbow Vista is a favorite with photographers for the panoramic view of multicolored sandstone.

Valley of Fire Road runs east to west, intersecting with White Domes Road which runs north to south. White Domes Road earns its name from the impressive white, rounded rocks that create a striking contrast to the surrounding reds. Just off White Domes Road is Silica Domes Road, with an overlook to yet another impressive rock formation.

Valley of Fire has campgrounds, picnic sites and numerous hiking trails. The largest visitors center in all of Nevada's state parks, the Valley of Fire Visitors Center offers interpretive information of the area's natural history, geology, plants, and wildlife, as well as information about how Indian tribes survived in such a harsh environment.



### SCENIC BYWAYS

- Lake Tahoe
- Mt. Rose
- Lamoille Canyon
- Angel Lake
- Mt. Charleston
- Las Vegas Strip
- Great Basin
- Pyramid Lake
- Red Rock Canyon
- Valley of Fire

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[vof@mvdsl.com](mailto:vof@mvdsl.com)





## RED ROCK CANYON

Just 15 miles from the bright lights and casinos of Las Vegas lies the magnificent Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area (NCA). With its expansive sandstone rock formations, hiking trails, rock climbing and picnic areas, Red Rock provides a dramatic contrast to nearby Las Vegas. Beginning in Las Vegas, follow SR 159 west. Follow the loop off SR 159 to view the 39-mile state byway, which returns to SR 159.

The highway winds through the 197,000-acre NCA under the rocky eye of the Spring Mountain Range. The road provides easy access to area sites and attractions. In addition to multicolored rock formations and unique desert flora and fauna, you might spot desert bighorn sheep, bobcats, gray foxes and wild burros. There are numerous scenic and trailhead parking areas along the drive. The visitors center, operated by the Bureau of Land Management, has information on NCA trails and recreation opportunities as well as displays on geology, history, and plant and animal life. Stop by the bookstore to see the excellent selection of books and interpretive materials on southern Nevada.

There are numerous hiking trails along SR 159. The most popular are First Creek, Oak Creek, Lost Creek and Pine Creek.

When SR 159 is heading almost straight south, you are on Red Rock Canyon Road. If you remain on this road and don't take the loop, you eventually get to Spring Mountain Ranch and Bonnie Springs/Old Nevada. Spring Mountain Ranch, once owned by Howard Hughes, is now a state park and offers historic ranch tours and excellent picnicking facilities. The park also has a large outdoor theater and features concerts, plays and various productions. Bonnie Springs/Old Nevada offers a taste of the Old West including cowboys and cowgirls, a petting zoo and weekend activities in which kids can help find the bad guy.

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## PYRAMID LAKE

Pyramid Lake's sparkling waters and tufa formations stand out like a gem in Nevada's desert landscape. Allow the state's third National Scenic Byway to introduce you to it. SR 445 (Pyramid Way), which runs north from the city of Sparks, takes you along the ancient lake's west shore. The first nationally designated scenic byway entirely within a tribal reservation, the road trip offers views of Pyramid Lake's natural tufa rock formations — a pyramid-shaped rock juts out of the water and is the lake's namesake. For centuries, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Indian Tribe has celebrated its unique features.

As you drive along the west shore, take note of the water's shade shifting from green to turquoise to deep blue — contrasted with the earthy hues of the surrounding desert, the water's boldness is striking. The lake is 356 feet deep and is supported with fresh water from the Truckee River running out of Lake Tahoe. Stop in Sutcliffe for general information or to fish. Anaho Island, sitting off-shore on the southeastern side of the lake, is a National Wildlife Refuge and the breeding ground for the largest-known colony of American White Pelicans.

If you want to pay a visit to the Paiute Tribe Museum and Visitors Center, from SR 445 go south and east on SR 446, which leads you to the lake's southern tip and eventually to the town of Nixon (a left on SR 447). Here, visitors can purchase camping, boating and fishing permits or learn about the history and culture of the Paiute Tribe. Call 775-574-1088 for hours of operation.

Also on SR 447 are the Numana Fish Hatchery and the Marble Bluff Fish Hatchery. The Numana Hatchery is committed to securing the survival of the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, while the Marble Bluff Hatchery is focused on the survival of the cui-ui, which is not found anywhere else in the world.

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775-574-1088  
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## LAKE TAHOE

Prepare to see Lake Tahoe's stunning version of "East Side Story," starring Nevada's serene wonder in all her glory, on one of three National Scenic Byways in Nevada. A suggested starting place for this 28-mile stretch that skirts Lake Tahoe's east shore is Stateline — a town internationally acclaimed for its entertainers, skiing and gambling — on the Nevada/California border.

From Stateline, US 50 east takes you through a tunnel beneath Cave Rock, a prominent natural feature of the area, where the roadway travels through 25 yards of solid rock. The second leg of this journey begins when you take a left on SR 28. Sand Harbor, three miles south of Incline Village, offers more views of Tahoe blue and the Sierra Nevada from an open beach area with group-use facilities. For more secluded peeks at the lake, stop at the Memorial Point or Hidden Beach lookout areas.

You might want to plan in advance for a visit of the historic site, Thunderbird Lodge, located south of Incline Village. The former estate of tycoon George Whittell features a 600-foot walk-through tunnel, but to see it you must schedule a tour of the property. May through October are the preferred months, but special arrangements can be made. Water tours and wine dinners also are available through the lodge. Call 775-832-8750 or visit [thunderbirdlodge.org](http://thunderbirdlodge.org).

After your Whittell history lesson, you'll want to check out the lakefront mansions in Incline Village, one of the United States' richest zip codes. Many celebrities own homes in the area. Continuing west on SR 28, you'll pass through Crystal Bay, home of Tahoe's first casino, Cal Neva Resort, built in 1928.

If you feel like you haven't gotten enough of the lake, the road gets up close and personal to the water at the byway's end.



800-AT-TAHOE (SOUTH)  
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## MT. ROSE

At the northern end of the Lake Tahoe National Scenic Byway, you can pick up one of the state byways, which takes you from the pine forest of Mt. Rose to the desert sagebrush of Reno all in a half-hour's time — 45 minutes if you take it slowly. It's a lesson in Nevada's elevation changes, but well worth the 4,000-foot plunge.

From SR 28 in Incline Village, go north on SR 431 to wind along 25 miles of ponderosa pines and through Tahoe Meadows, but catch a glimpse and snap a few photos of beautiful Lake Tahoe before you leave her behind.

At Tahoe Meadows, at the top of the pass, you have access to the hiker-popular Tahoe Rim Trail, the mountain-bike friendly Flume Trail, and cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and snow-tubing. A few local favorites are Ophir Creek and Lower Price Creek. On the southeast corner of the meadows, you'll find a 1.3-mile handicap-accessible trail with 11 bridges.

Along SR 431, you'll pass Mt. Rose-Ski Tahoe, at Tahoe's highest base, elevation 8,260 feet. Skiers and snowboarders flock to the resort, which has panoramic views of Lake Tahoe and the Nevada terrain during the winter months.

Shortly before you arrive in Reno, you can check out the hiking, sledding or cross-country skiing spots along Jones and White creeks in Galena Creek Park. Toward the end of the byway, where SR 431 intersects US 395 in south Reno, have a look to your right at the mountain-style homes surrounding Montrêux Golf & Country Club, site of the PGA's annual Reno-Tahoe Open.



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## LAMOILLE CANYON

In a region famous for wagon trains and cattle drives, you'll have a much easier time than trailblazing settlers did on this 13-mile route. Follow SR 227 southeast from Elko toward Lamoille. Before Lamoille, turn right on Lamoille Canyon Road. This is the state byway, which proceeds southeast into the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and ends at aptly named Road's End Picnic Area near the Ruby Mountain Scenic Area.

The route makes its way through Lamoille Canyon, formed by glaciers, and heads toward the base of the 11,249-foot Ruby Dome. The Ruby Mountains are Nevada's wettest, providing a verdant and lush landscape, a refreshing contrast to the surrounding area's desert ecosystem. The Ruby Crest Trail, a 40-mile route across the Ruby Mountain Ridge, is known worldwide, and Lamoille Canyon hosts the northern trailhead. The trail ends at Harrison Pass.

Lookout spots along the Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway offer spectacular views of the canyon's seasonal foliage and waterfalls. Interpretive signs explain how the valley was formed.

For camping, the Thomas Canyon Campground on the south end of the byway offers 40 sites in a wide-open area with Lamoille Creek running through and aspen and cottonwood trees surrounding it. Natural terraces abound at the campground, offering perfect picnicking spots.

Along the byway, you'll find a developed, self-guided car tour with interpretive signs describing the geology of the canyon. At the culmination of the paved road, the parking lot sits at 8,800 feet, and trailheads begin for short and long hikes. This area offers more than 100 miles of hiking trails. Island Lake is an easy two-mile hike, and numerous alpine lakes can be found in the area.

Although Lamoille Canyon Scenic Byway closes for driving in the winter, the canyon is alive with snowmobiles and cross-country skiers who access the area from the parking lot at the entrance.

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## ANGEL LAKE

The Angel Lake Scenic Byway is a spectacular 12-mile route through beautiful landscape, offering plenty of options for hiking, picnicking and camping. You can catch this state byway at the intersection of I-80 and US 93 in the town of Wells. From Wells, take SR 231 or Angel Lake Road, south and west.

Angel Lake Road winds its way into the East Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The drive takes you past sagebrush, piñon pine, mountain mahogany and aspen trees. En route to Angel Lake, the byway's end, the surrounding mountains feature scarps and spires shooting into the sky. This mountain range provides an impressive backdrop as you make your way toward the lake.

Eight miles toward the lake is Angel Creek, a popular campground. The remaining four miles to the lake are steep and windy, and you'll notice how the terrain changes with increasing altitude.

At the top of the road sits Angel Lake Recreation Area, a 26-site campground and popular site for day use and picnicking. Potable water, picnic tables and restroom facilities are available at the campground. If you feel like hiking, try the Greys Lake Trailhead, a well-maintained trail that leads six miles to Greys Lake, or a quick one-mile trip to Smith Lake.

Angel Lake is a natural body of water. The dam you'll see was built in the 1900s, and the water is still used today to irrigate surrounding farm valleys, eventually flowing into the Humboldt River. From the lake, at an elevation of 8,400 feet, you'll be able to see Chimney Rock, known as "the oldest rock in Nevada" and a celebrated landmark of Wells.

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## MT. CHARLESTON

An hour's drive north on US 95 from energetic Las Vegas, this byway's elevation takes you from low to high. Thirty-six miles on three state routes — Lee Canyon Road (SR 156), a portion of Kyle Canyon Road (SR 157), and Deer Creek Road (SR 158) — link US 95 with the majestic, 11,918-foot Mt. Charleston in the Spring Mountain Range. On this state byway, sage turns into a mix of Joshua, piñon, ponderosa pine, juniper and white fir trees. You may even spot an ancient bristlecone pine, the oldest living tree on the planet.

Lee Canyon Road is the northern access to the tallest point in southern Nevada. Believe it or not, there's skiing near Las Vegas. Las Vegas Ski and Snowboard Resort is reachable from SR 156. Kyle Canyon Road is the southern access to the larger-than-life mountain, with Deer Creek Road connecting them to the north and south.

Golden eagles, owls, hawks, foxes, deer and wild horses occasionally can be spotted in the spectacular scenery. Mt. Charleston also hosts at least 25 species of animals and plants that cannot be found anywhere else in the world. Perhaps you'll be lucky enough to see a Mt. Charleston Blue Butterfly.

The roads making up this scenic byway provide easy access to many recreational areas of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. While nearby Las Vegas sizzles in the summer, temperatures in this area run 20 degrees cooler, making it pleasant for hiking, camping, picnicking and driving. Mt. Charleston Lodge, a great place to stay and eat, can be reached from the SR 157/SR 158 junction. Call 800-955-1314 for more information.

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## LAS VEGAS STRIP

It's not possible to see the world in an hour, but the Las Vegas Strip National Scenic Byway is the closest you're going to get. In five miles on America's only night-time byway, you can be transported to another world through themed resorts that include an Egyptian pyramid, a medieval castle, the New York City skyline, a Roman temple, the Eiffel Tower, dancing water and an erupting volcano.

The Strip shines like no place on earth, begging you to check out its world-class entertainment, hot nightclubs and fine dining. More than 38.9 million people visit Las Vegas each year, and when you drive along this designated All-American Road, you'll understand why.

To start at the northern end of the byway, take US 95/93 east from I-15 and exit south on Las Vegas Boulevard. If you're coming from McCarran International Airport, you'll want to start at the byway's southern end. From the airport, head north on Las Vegas Boulevard to view the famous "Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas" sign — then take in the glorious sights of the Las Vegas Strip.

Just north of the byway is the Fremont Street Experience, located in the heart of downtown Las Vegas. If you need a break from the glitz, the Las Vegas Arts District, best visited on the first Friday evening of each month, has 18 blocks of art galleries, antique stores, chic boutiques, and cafés.



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