

Travel

THE ITINERARY

Trips and tips for the week ahead



PHOTO COURTESY OF SYLVAN DALE GUEST RANCH

Cooking with gas (rebates)

Many vacation destinations feel your pain at the pump and are offering incentives to make a trip worthwhile. For example, if you want to connect with your inner cowboy and visit a dude ranch this summer, one of the best, according to *True West* magazine is Sylvan Dale Guest Ranch in the Colorado foothills near Rocky Mountain State Park. Located just about an hour from Denver, the 3,200-acre resort has a summer package offering six-night dude ranch vacation packages. Guests go on cattle drives and cattle roundups, trail rides, overnight pack trips, and take horseback riding lessons, as well as enjoy Western cookouts. There is also fishing, hiking, swimming, hayrides and other activities. And now for that incentive: During the 10-week summer season ending Aug. 24, Sylvan will give guests who use a different kind of horsepower up to \$200 to pay for gasoline for the drive home. For more info, call 877-667-3999 or visit www.sylvandale.com.

Online: www.sylvandale.com; CNN.com

Staying fit on the road

Traveling for business or pleasure can play havoc with your workout regimen. Whether you have a home gym or a membership to a health club, spending time on the road presents a challenge for people who want to follow a regular routine. So,



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before you leave on your next trip go to GymTicket.com, a Web site that will put you in touch with workout facilities for more than 2,000 gyms and health clubs. In addition to the name and city (with a Google map showing the location), the site will give you the distance from where you are staying and price

range. A number of gyms also advertise free guest passes. Also listed are gyms that offer yoga, Pilates or kickboxing. You'll also learn about the gym's amenities, hours, ambiance and food and drink. This Web site relies on gym chains, however, and some entries are a little skimpy on the essentials. If you're a jogger, visit www.walkjogrun.net, where you can map a route for aerobic exercise anywhere in the country.

— *Los Angeles Times*

Security bottleneck

Even with difficult economic times, there are still a fair number of vacationers in airports this summer, and many may be wondering whether security provisions have been changed. One source of confusion centers on the size of bottles you can take aboard a flight. The magic number is still 3 ounces. The Transportation Security Administration says that you may take 3-ounce bottles (or less) in a 1 quart-size plastic bag, with a limit of one plastic bag per passenger. The rules apply to liquids, aerosols and gels. Exceptions are made for larger quantities of medication, breast milk, baby formula and juice for infants and toddlers. You cannot have a partially filled 4-ounce bottle (or larger). The TSA also says that larger containers that are half-full or toothpaste tubes rolled up are not allowed. For more info, go to www.tsa.gov.

— *San Jose Mercury News*

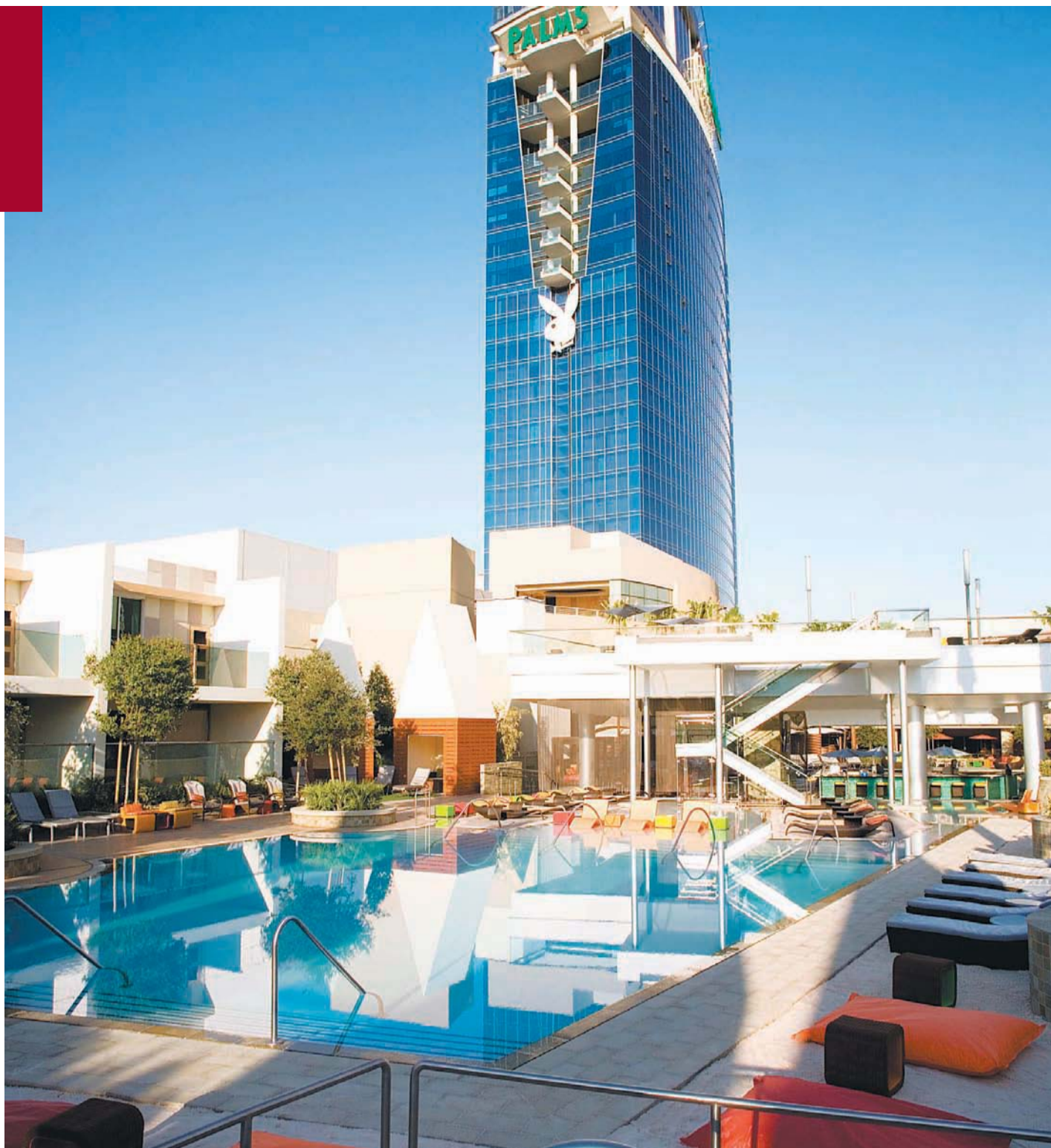
FUN FACT

Americans welcome?

If you are planning to visit another country this summer, you might want to consider those that have a favorable view of Americans. For instance, you might avoid Turkey, where only 3 percent of those surveyed by the Pew Research Center said they like Americans. In contrast, 77 percent of South Koreans said they like us. The Pew Center recently released the results of its 2007 Global Attitudes Survey, with results in order of countries most frequented by Americans. Here are the countries, and the percentage of those interviewed who said they have a favorable view of Americans:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Mexico, 44 percent | 6. Germany, 55 percent |
| 2. Canada, 76 percent | 7. Japan, 65 percent |
| 3. U.K., 70 percent | 8. Jamaica, NA |
| 4. Italy, 62 percent | 9. China, 38 percent |
| 5. France, 64 percent | 10. Spain, 41 percent |

Online: www.pewresearch.org



The pools at the Palms Casino Resort are see-and-be-seen places that attract Hollywood celebrities.

PALMS CASINO RESORT



One of the Flamingo's pools features the birds.

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER/H. LORREN AU JR. VIA MCT



The Mandalay's grand pool has wave action.

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER/H. LORREN AU JR. VIA MCT

THE WEST

Plunge into Vegas

Sin City sizzles in summertime, and a wonderland of splashy fun awaits, with a pool to suit every taste

BY GARY A. WARNER The Orange County Register

I spent many a summer as a boy visiting my aunt in Las Vegas, so it's not just devout gamblers who venture to Sin City during its blazing-hottest midsummer madness. Just make sure you have a good dip on the Strip (or beyond).

You'll need less cash and more splash to visit during the hot (as in temperature, not timing) season in Las Vegas. Hotel rates plummet when the mercury goes up, except on the always-busy weekends.

Nearly every big hotel has a nice pool. Most of the pools are kept at 80 degrees, but when the mercury hits 110 degrees, that feels awfully nice. My favorites, on and off Las Vegas Boulevard, in descending order:

Flamingo

Four pools, including a big, meandering one with a cove to get out of the sun. This is the party-central pool of all of Las Vegas and sometimes it can seem like there's no room to swim, with all the people standing around drinking beer. But it's still a blast. The smaller Go Pool is ringed by huge pink flamingo statues and features pricey private cabanas. Unfortunately, this area has become an adults-only "European-style" pool (translation: Some women don't wear their bikini tops), so you won't be able to take the kids here.

Mandalay Bay

The closest to a water-park-style hotel in Las Vegas, the Mandalay Bay has a wave machine in a pool with more than 1.5 million gallons of water. There's also the Lazy River, a meandering pool where guests float in bright plastic inflatable rings. There's a stage for poolside concerts. Like many hotels, Mandalay has a walled-off "European-style" pool with an entry fee; this one is called the Moorea Beach Club.

More on POOLS on 18F

There's something elemental about the FireSky Resort

BY ERIC NOLAND

Los Angeles Daily News

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — So you think it's hot in North Texas? Triple-digit summer temperatures are the norm in Arizona's Valley of the Sun and if you like it hot, try a getaway that embraces its desert setting.

The FireSky Resort, which opened in April, coexists with the desert world around it. The basic elements of earth, fire and water are part of the theme at this retreat at 4925 N. Scottsdale Road.

Fountains gurggle in the massive lobby, and waterfalls tumble from stone pillars into the pool, reminding you of how vital this resource is here. At night, fire leaps from cauldrons atop those pillars, as if to stave off the desert chill when the sun goes down. Candles flicker in lanterns, gently holding back the darkness. And just outside the

bar, living room furniture has been set up in an area of bare, packed dirt.

The 204-room FireSky is part of the "anti-chain" of Kimpton Hotels, all of which are distinctive and compatible with their setting. The FireSky's greatest asset is its lobby, a sprawling space whose big-beamed ceiling soars to 30 feet. There are seating areas of mismatched furniture, with traditional pieces such as wing-back chairs mixed in with bright-colored day beds, settees and pillows. And in the middle of it all is a startling zebra-striped ottoman.

Guests congregate here for morning coffee, a complimentary afternoon wine social and evening cocktails; the bar anchors the lobby wall that opens onto the pool. Outside are several conversation nooks, the chairs arranged around mes-



The lobby at the FireSky Resort

MAURICE SARTIRANA

quite-burning fire pits and under mature pepper trees. The FireSky's restaurant, Taggia, serves coastal Italian cuisine made with fresh ingredients and featuring house-made pastas. The rooms, which start at \$239, are comfortably appointed, including leopard-print robes.

One TV channel offers a continuous yoga session. The hotel's Jurlique spa features products from that company's organic and biodynamic farms in Mount Barker, Australia.

For more info, visit www.fire-skyresort.com, or call 480-945-7666.