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PALM DESERT: A SHOPPING & DINING PARADISE

PALM DESERT, CA – Palm Desert’s reputation as the desert’s retail oasis is rivaled only by its remarkable selection of more than 200 restaurants – making it the ideal vacation destination for travelers who love to shop ‘til they drop, then revive themselves with fabulous cuisine.

The City has been the Coachella Valley’s retail center since the early 1980s when the desert’s first enclosed mall, now known as Westfield Palm Desert, was built on Highway 111 by the late Ernest Hahn, southern California’s premier shopping center developer. Today, this mall is anchored by Macy’s, JC Penney, and Sears and is a future home of Nordstrom. It also offers a 10-screen cinema, newly expanded food court and nearly one hundred shops and boutiques.

There are more than a dozen other Palm Desert shopping centers and plazas including Desert Crossing and One Eleven Town Center, which boast nationally known “big-box” retailers of clothing, home furnishings, sporting goods, electronics and toys for every age and inclination.

For the ultimate in upscale shopping, head to elegant El Paseo. Often referred to as the “Rodeo Drive of the Desert,” El Paseo is a mile-long mix of upscale art galleries, jewelry stores, beauty salons, haute couturiers, home décor stores, specialty boutiques, and apparel shops. There also are more than two dozen restaurants, bistros, coffee shops, and bakeries along El Paseo, many with outdoor seating that affords a great vantage point for people-watching. The western end of El Paseo features St. John and newly opened Gucci, Ralph Lauren, Cos Bar, Optical Shop of Aspen, with Burberry opening soon.

While cruising El Paseo, be sure to visit The Gardens, a beautiful complex of shopping, dining and entertainment that’s anchored by Saks Fifth Avenue and includes such notable national retailers as Tiffany & Co., Coach, Cole Haan, Williams Sonoma, Pottery Barn, J Jill, Quicksilver, Banana Republic, Talbots, and Brooks Brothers. It’s soon to be joined by a companion center, El Paseo Village (November 2010), which will be home to more retail and two additional restaurants.

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And then there's the weekend College of the Desert Street Fair. You can find practically anything at this friendly, down-home, open-air market including arts and crafts, jewelry, clothing, silk plants, cosmetics, home furnishings, golf clubs, new and used items, and fresh produce from local farmers. The COD Street Fair is a favorite of locals and visitors alike.

Hungry yet? There's a restaurant in Palm Desert to suit virtually every taste and budget. You can start your day with a down-home diner breakfast at Keedy's Fountain Grill, grab a fast-food lunch at the food court while shopping at the mall, recharge with a late-afternoon cappuccino enjoyed outdoors at a local coffee shop, then savor a gourmet candlelight dinner at one of dozens of fine-dining establishments – and never leave Palm Desert.

Steak-lovers can choose from LG's Prime Steakhouse, Sullivan's, Ruth's Chris the Chop House, or Morton's. Seafood aficionados can catch a great meal at Pacifica in the Desert at The Gardens on El Paseo. And if ethnic cuisine is to your liking, it's all here: Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Thai, Mexican, Indian, French, Irish, and more.

Casual diners can kick back and relax in such fun eateries as California Pizza Kitchen, Elephant Bar, Daily Grill, or Tommy Bahama's Tropical Café.

Information: For a dining guide, complete visitor information on Palm Desert, and a free Vacation Guide, call the Palm Desert Visitor Center at 800-873-2428 or go to www.palm-desert.org.

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