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LIFESTYLE

28 LAS VEGAS DATES YOU'D ACTUALLY WANT TO GO ON

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Summer is a brutal, scorching affair in Las Vegas, but the hot desert sun can warm your heart as quickly as it sizzles your feet on the pool deck. Despite the triple-digit temperatures, the season is full of endless opportunities for romance. So whether you're looking for a quick fling or a long-term commitment, check out the best activities to keep couples busy throughout the next few months. These come free, cheap, and Vegas-levels pricey.

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SUNRISE COFFI

Take a lovely walk in the park with a cup of locally roasted java in hand

Southeast

Coffee is the [perfect first date drink](#). We shouldn't need to explain this, but just in case: if you are actually looking to DATE someone, and not just hook up, it might be better to get to know them over non-intoxicants. For some of the best in town, hit up local coffeehouse [Sunrise Coffee](#) for an excellent pour-over made from their own [Mothership Coffee](#) beans sourced from single-origin organic Fair Trade micro co-ops (that's coffee-talk for real, real good), then cross the street to [Sunset Park](#) for a stroll along the pond filled with geese and ducks and swans (romantic if you suppress thoughts of all the bird droppings), or through the ancient dunes that once covered all of Las Vegas (the dune field is all that remains of them).

Have super-casual happy hour drinks by the fire pits

Town Square

[Double Helix Wine & Whiskey Lounge](#) is kind of the ideal date spot: centrally located from most corners of the Las Vegas Valley, right off the I-15/215 interchange, on the Strip without being on the Strip, in a neutral location with tons of free parking, good food, and drinks all around, a stellar happy hour to keep it cheap, and a great patio with comfy couches and warm fire pits. It might be a little clichéd for anyone who has lived and dated in Vegas for a while but it's a solid go-to.

Let your inner child loose at Gold Spike

Downtown

[Gold Spike](#) is basically a hipster romper room complete with adult playsets (think giant versions of Jenga, chess, and foosball). First dates can be especially tricky, so this is a good spot to go where you can chat at the bar, then go play some games to distract from awkward lulls in conversation that occur once you cover all the basics.

Try locally made chocolate paired with wine 40 stories above the Strip

The Strip

The High Roller is a bit underwhelming, unless you really enjoy the views of the backs of parking garages. That said, it's still a Vegas thing, and one of the best ways to experience it is with an added twist: the [Chocolate Tasting Experience](#) featuring local chocolatier, Ethel M Chocolates. Over the course of a 30-minute ride, sample chocolates paired with wine while getting to know your date and deciding whether to suggest another stop along the [LINQ Promenade](#) afterward -- maybe some fried chicken and bowling or a show at [Brooklyn Bowl](#) -- or not!

Enjoy craft beer and fancy eats at the new restaurant at one of the city's oldest bars

East Fremont

[Atomic Liquors](#) is the oldest freestanding bar in Las Vegas and a [beloved local dive](#), as well as a [beloved local beer bar](#) (still one of the best in the city). Just last year they expanded their offerings with the [Kitchen at Atomic](#), a separate full-service restaurant that shares the same property and outdoor patio as its namesake. The restaurant is sunny, airy, open, reclaimed-chic space rehabbed from an old auto shop that serves excellent, seasonally changing

elevated gastropub fare. Belly up to the bar to chat with the knowledgeable bartenders about what's good on the menu and off the beer list, and enjoy a casual night out that's still a best face forward in local food and drink.



COURTESY OF WYNN NIGHTLII

Go swimming at a nightclub

Wynn Encore

[Nightswim](#) is back on for summer -- all weekend long. The nighttime pool party hits Encore Beach Club Thursday-Saturday and XS every Sunday. It's the perfect excuse to check out your date in a bathing suit without worrying about the hot sun beating overhead. Toss in big-name DJs like the Chainsmokers and Kygo and you have a high-energy only-in-Vegas event that will keep the party going well until the early morning.

Dine outdoors at Carson Kitchen

Downtown

One of the best [reasons to visit Downtown](#), [Carson Kitchen](#) might be getting even better than ever under the leadership of new executive chef Scott Simon. The old favorites are still there -- like the crispy chicken skins and bacon jam -- along with new additions like smoked trout rilette in a jar and rhubarb panna cotta, both fresh and vibrant for a casual summer dinner. The restaurant has seen some renovations in recent months, doubling in size while adding a new bar area. But if it's not too hot outside, you still can't beat a table-for-two on the upstairs rooftop deck.

Share an açai bowl at the Bellagio

The Bellagio

Is the juice bar the new steakhouse in Las Vegas? It seems every hotel on the Strip is required to have one now, but the Bellagio really gets it right with the introduction of [Juice Press](#). Next door to the Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, it has its own dedicated kitchen for pressing juice on the spot (as opposed to shipping in bottles from an outside source) and mixes in guilt-free snacks like açai bowls and chocolate chip cookies made from cashews. Juice Press is also open late -- and there's something oddly satisfying about checking out the hotel's latest floral displays before having a nightcap that won't make you feel hungover the next morning.



PUBLIC HOU:

Build your own dessert at Public House

The Venetian

A good date usually scores points for creativity, and you'll get extra creative when ordering dessert at [Public House inside the Venetian](#). The restaurant recently expanded its "build your own dessert" menu at the budget-friendly price of \$10. First, choose your base -- like chocolate layer cake, blackberry cobbler, or butterscotch pudding. Then pick a sauce, either something simple like dark chocolate fudge or adventurous like bourbon peach compote. Toppings are next -- ranging from raspberry lambic marshmallows to chocolate chip sea salt cookies. And finally, a choice of ice cream, which can mean house-made flavors like cold brew coffee or rhubarb gin.

Get proper tea service at the Mandarin Oriental

The Strip

The Mandarin Oriental is such a breath of civility in the midst of the chaos of the Strip, and by god, is there anything

more civilized than a full tea service? Head to the [Tea Lounge](#) on the 23rd floor, with one of the best views of the Las Vegas Strip, for their Classic English Afternoon Tea served daily with seatings around 12pm, 2pm, and 4pm, an experience like no other around for \$45. But if you keep more evening hours, there's nothing wrong and everything right with cocktails in the [Mandarin Bar](#), offering that same [stellar view](#).

Hang with local beer and wine enthusiasts at one of Khoury's weekly tasting events

Henderson

Don't let the name fool you: [Khoury's Fine Wine & Spirits](#) is actually probably best known as one of Las Vegas's best craft beer stores (and bars), though they most certainly sell wine and spirits, we've heard. But to each his own! Every Wednesday is a new beer tapping event, often celebrating a new special release or entry to the Vegas market, followed by wine tasting events every Thursday. The folks who work here and those who hang out almost daily are super friendly, so taste some new beers (or wines) and plan on making new friends together in a low-pressure, casual fun evening here.

Eat dinner atop the second-most romantic Eifel Tower in the world

The Strip

Things are maybe going somewhere now? If so, start pulling out the big romance guns, and start with a trip to the [top of the Eifel Tower](#) inside Paris Las Vegas, a half-scale replica of the real deal, then have dinner at the [Eifel Tower Restaurant](#), with a wall of floor-to-ceiling windows offering an unparalleled view of the Bellagio fountains.



THE BARRYMOI

Skip the dinner date and take a food tour instead

Everywhere

The standard dinner date is a classic, but sitting across the table staring at each other for an unknown stretch of time can be nerve-wracking for anyone. Try something a little different with [Lip Smacking Foodie Tours](#), walking tours that hit some of [the best restaurants in Vegas](#) -- all in one night. They start at \$125 a ticket and go all the way up to an ultra-premium [steakhouse tour](#) at \$799 per person. Regardless of which option you choose, the tours take a little bit of the one-on-one pressure off the date while still providing an unforgettable cuisine-hopping experience.

Get your culture on with *Hamilton*

Downtown

The Smith Center is sleek, elegant, sophisticated, and one of the best places to impress a date -- especially when the hottest show on Broadway is coming to town. After a big tease of a wait, [tickets for Hamilton](#) have finally gone on sale -- and going at a record pace for shows in May and June. But that doesn't mean you can't find a good (perhaps last-minute) deal on the resale market. Be prepared to shell out a few bucks -- this night out is worth the splurge. The Smith Center also just revamped its food menu with Cut and Taste catering, so at least you'll go in knowing the snacks are good.

Drive out to one of our hundreds of natural hot springs

Lake Mead

Nevada is home to more than [300 natural hot springs](#), and there are plenty around Vegas, all located around the

Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Gold Strike is probably the most well-known, but it is also the most technical (there are several ropes to climb up and down over large, slick boulders) and the most crowded (lots and lots of people in inappropriate footwear sharing their personal music selections with everyone within earshot). It's also the least impressive. Hit the [Arizona Hot Spring](#) instead, a three-tiered pool of increasingly hot water located in a very cool slot canyon, with a much more impressive view of the Colorado River at the end. It's just over an hour away by car.

Head to the top of the world for a few thrills

The Strip

The top of the world = the [Top of the World](#) restaurant located at the top of the Stratosphere, more than 800 feet above the madness of the Strip. The revolving restaurant is a bit of a Vegas bucket list item and a great place for a special night out with someone you rather fancy. You can also up the ante a bit with one of the [thrill rides](#) that drop dangle, and spin you over the side of the Strat some 900 feet off the ground. For the real adrenaline-junkies, though there's also the Guinness Book record-holding [SkyJump](#), an open-air 829-foot jump.

Make some magic at a magic show

The Strip

Maybe it's something you don't quite realize because it's probably not something you often think about while living here, but Las Vegas is the world capital of magic shows, hands-down. There are a TON here, all the time, and we've recently seen a surge in [new magic shows](#) opening, too. While you can never go wrong with a classic like [Penn & Teller](#), [Piff the Magic Dragon](#) is just the right mix of self-deprecating humor, an adorable dog, an intimate space, and a grown-ass man in a dragon costume. For a price, these will keep you both laughing, which is a good headspace to be in on any date.

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COURTESY OF ANTHONY MA

Make Champagne showers from a vending machine

Paris Las Vegas

Is there anything more romantic than sipping on Champagne? How about sipping Champagne while soaking in the Strip views from a rooftop nightclub? [Chateau](#) just introduced its own Moët and Chandon vending machine, making it quick and easy to get some bubbly on the fly. Just buy a special coin from the bartender and place an order for you and your honey. The machine dispenses a chilled mini bottle of Champagne -- while taking care not to shake it up -- along with flutes to drink it from.

Get a couples massage... in a salt cave

Summerlin

You know you've found the right person once you can do couple-y things without fear or shame -- like get couples' massages just because deep down you know you want to. There are plenty of spas in Las Vegas, but maybe try something a little different in luxury pampering: a couples massage inside a salt cave. Halotherapy (salt therapy) is poised to be the Next Big Thing in health and wellness, and the [Salt Room LV](#) offers a variety of salt cave experiences, from monthly halotherapy memberships to body treatments, facials, and side-by-side couple's aroma massages.

Check out any of these other events this season

Various locations

Every season Thrillist rounds up the best things you can do in Vegas in [one comprehensive calendar](#). All the events

are fun on your own, but even better with a fun date. (If that fails, try any of these [new restaurants](#) in town.)

Go adventuring in Lake Mead

Lake Mead

Lake Mead has a whole lot more to offer than party boating and (boozy) cliff jumping. Kayak through the Black Canyon to Emerald Cave, where the afternoon light makes the waters inside the cave a brilliant emerald color. You can rent a kayak, bring your own, or take a guided tour with a local company like [Kayak Lake Mead](#). If you'd rather see Lake Mead from high above, hit the [Flightlinez](#) zip-line tour of Bootleg Canyon, with 1.5 miles of zip lines over four runs through the Red Mountains in Boulder City.



COURTESY OF BRIAN STEFI

Check out Gwen Stefani's new Las Vegas residency

Planet Hollywood

Back in the '90s, most girls wanted to be like Gwen Stefani while most guys had a crush on her. Now that we're all grown up, it only makes sense that everyone's excited to see the [No Doubt singer's new Vegas residency](#). The extended run of shows at the Zappos Theater at Planet Hollywood begin on June 27, following in the footsteps of Jennifer Lopez, Britney Spears, Pitbull, and the Backstreet Boys -- who've all come to represent a new era of Sin City headliner at the same venue. For the perfect date night, grab dinner beforehand at Strip House, a saucy steakhouse (with vintage erotic photos on the wall) that's [one of our favorite steakhouses](#) in town.

Visit a butcher shop for one of the best brunches and dinners in Vegas

Tivoli Village

[Echo & Rig](#) is a local butcher shop and full-service restaurant widely and regularly recognized as having one of the best brunches in town and being one of the best steakhouses in the city, on or off the Strip. This place is outstanding with food that puts it heads above most of its competition regardless, made all the more exceptional by consistently impeccable service from every member of the staff and prices that make you think you're in some mid-sized Midwestern city, and certainly not Las Vegas. If you're there for not-brunch, definitely gawk at the family-style stea presentation, but if you're there early enough you *have* to get the rib-eye cap. This one sells out nightly -- if that give you further motivation.

Tour Las Vegas' wine country

Various locations

This is a real thing! This a thing that defies the basic principles of agriculture, but regardless, it exists, in Pahrump, which is a bit better known for a whole different kind of industry. (And by that we mean, er, brothels.) But here you will also find the [Pahrump Valley Winery](#) and the [Sanders Family Winery](#). Sanders is a much smaller family-run operation, where Pahrump is the real tourism draw with a beautiful estate that is much more modern and Instagram ready. This winery also has an upscale steakhouse on property with lovely views of the surrounding mountains that hearken back to the steakhouse-and-seafood fine dining dominance of the '90s.

See Vegas' best performers in an off-Strip show that changes with each performance

Downtown

After four years, [Mondays Dark](#) has gained a serious following among Las Vegas locals. Twice a month, performers, musicians, athletes, celebrity chefs, and other Las Vegas and Hollywood personalities gather in an ever-changing variety show with tickets starting at just \$20 and proceeds to benefit a different local Las Vegas charity each time.



FLAMINGO WILDLIFE HABITAT

Talk to the animals at the Flamingo Wildlife Habitat

The Flamingo

For more than 23 years, the Wildlife Habitat at the Flamingo has been one of the best cheap dates on the Strip. (An by "cheap" we mean totally free.) Covering about 4 acres, the outdoor attraction has more than 60 exotic birds, 20 turtles, and 300 large fish. But the main attraction is the collection of 10 Chilean flamingos, including one more than 35 years old. A great detour and a perfect instant-escape from the chaos of the Strip.

Get a quick seat at the best new brunch on the Strip

The Palazzo

One of the best new restaurants in town is continuing to innovate. Once just introduced a new brunch that gives new life to a familiar concept -- easily competing with the top brunch choices in town. The Peruvian-Japanese offerings include white meat chunks of fried chicken with pumpkin-sweet potato beignets and yuzu avocado toast with spicy tuna. Even the mimosas are interesting -- sweetened with a syrup made in-house from purple corn. Tucked away in a not-so-busy corner of the Grand Canal Shoppes, Once is large enough that it's usually easy to score a brunch table without a reservation -- Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. (By the way, impress your date by getting the name of the place right on the first try. It's pronounced "on-seh.")

Party poolside at a strip club

Off the Strip

It's Vegas, so hear us out. Sapphire gets a lot of attention for being the only strip club in Vegas with its own

[swimming pool](#) -- which is slowly reinventing itself as a welcome alternative to the crowds, crazy prices, and TSA-level security at the day clubs found at big resorts. Just park your car and walk right in. Despite its image, the girls can't get completely topless, but that's what pasties are for. While this may seem like the perfect guys day out, it's also great for the kind of couple that wants to enjoy a little quality time -- and sexy scenery -- in one of 11 cabanas surrounding the pool.

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