

PALM SPRINGS WINTER ESCAPE

Relax for 8 days and 9 nights at Palm Mountain Resort.

February 4, 2024 – 10 Days

50th
ANNIVERSARY

WELLS GRAY TOURS
a world to experience



Palm Mountain Resort



Joshua Tree National Park

Relax in the comfort of the warm sun on this great winter get-away to California's most desirable sunny destination — **Palm Springs**. We stay for nine nights at Palm Mountain Resort, a favourite for Wells Gray travellers that always receives great reviews. Rooms surround a palm tree lined pool terrace that is the focal point of the resort. The hotel is just off Palm Canyon Drive, noted for classy shopping, numerous restaurants, theatres, and art galleries. A great variety of attractions is included — the Aerial Tram, Joshua Tree National Park, Village Fest, the Air Museum or Art Gallery, Living Desert, Sunnylands Garden, a jeep tour in the desert, and a harbour cruise at Newport Beach. Two full days and two mornings are yours at leisure to do as you wish. Come to Palm Springs and get away from winter for 10 days!



INTERNATIONAL
TOUR



ACTIVITY LEVEL

► **15 Meals Included:**

9 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 2 dinners

► **Fares per person:**

\$4,495 double/twin; \$5,610 single - NO GST

► **Early Booking Bonus:**

\$200 discount on first 15 seats; \$100 on next 10

► **Experience Points:** Earn 101 Experience Points

► **Departure from:** Victoria



Palm Springs Tram

ITINERARY

Day 1: Sunday, February 4

Transportation is provided to Victoria Airport and we fly on WestJet to **Palm Springs**. Our coach meets us at the airport. We stay nine nights at Palm Mountain Resort which has an excellent location, a block off Palm Canyon Drive where many shops and restaurants are found. Each room has a microwave, fridge, coffeemaker, Wi-Fi, and 40" flat-screen TV.

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 2: Monday, February 5

Breakfast is included each day at nearby Sam's Place. This morning, we thrill to one of the city's highlights – the spectacular **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway** which ascends nearly 2,000 metres into the San Jacinto Mountains. Each car rotates slowly during the climb, affording an incredible 360-degree view of the desert and craggy cliffs. At the top, you can visit the interpretive centre. During the afternoon, a local expert conducts an entertaining **drive around Palm Springs** and the Palm Desert Valley past some celebrity homes and historic attractions. A welcome dinner is planned at Lulu's Bistro.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 3: Tuesday, February 6

The morning is free time. We board jeeps at Matate Ranch for a three-hour exploration of the twisted and tortured landscape of the famous **San Andreas Fault**. The guide describes the fascinating geology of the area while we walk between the steep walls of deep canyons created



by the powerful forces of plate tectonics, water, wind, and time. We admire panoramic views of the Coachella Valley and visit a natural palm oasis where crystal clear water bubbles up from the underground aquifer.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 4: Wednesday, February 7

A local guide is with us all day as we explore **Joshua Tree National Park**, created in 1994. It protects 800,000 acres of Mojave Desert wilderness and features curious rock formations and a great array of desert plants such as the imposing Joshua Tree, ocotillo, and cactus.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 5: Thursday, February 8

We enjoy a stroll through the **Sunnylands Garden** which was the winter retreat for philanthropists Walter and Leonore Annenberg. Their fortune came from a media empire of newspapers and magazines, and they donated about \$2 billion to American charities during their lifetimes. Eight US presidents, Queen Elizabeth and other royalty, and many other dignitaries were guests of the Annenbergs during the 35 winters they spent here. During the afternoon, we explore **Living Desert**, a 1200-acre preserve featuring exotic birds and animals, botanical gardens, nature trails and the Wildlife Wonders show. Tonight, Palm Canyon Drive is closed to vehicles and the street is converted to a pedestrian area for **Village Fest** where you can enjoy music, entertainment, food, or people watching.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort



Day 6: Friday, February 9

The morning is free time. In the afternoon, you can choose one of two attractions (please notify Wells Gray Tours no later than at final payment).

1. **Palm Springs Air Museum** features a large collection of flying World War II airplanes and is dedicated to the restoration and operation of legendary fighter aircraft.

2. **Palm Springs Art Museum** features a sophisticated collection of art, loaned or donated by the area's affluent residents. The collection rivals urban galleries and includes works from Marc Chagall, Pablo Picasso, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Louise Bourgeois, Henry Moore, Robert Rauschenberg, and Ansel Adams.

Tonight, we go to Palm Canyon Theatre for a performance of ***Something Rotten***. In this mash-up of 16th century Shakespeare and 21st century Broadway, brothers Nick and Nigel are desperate to write a hit play but are stuck in the shadow of the master playwright known as "The Bard." When a soothsayer foretells that the future of theatre involves singing, dancing, and acting, the brothers set out to write the world's first musical.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 7: Saturday, February 10

This is a free day to do as you wish.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 8: Sunday, February 11

A local guide accompanies us for a day tour to **Newport Beach**. A short cruise around the harbour is included. This afternoon, we visit **Mission San Juan Capistrano**, founded in 1776, and known for the legend of the swallows that have returned to nest from Argentina each summer for two centuries.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 9: Monday, February 12

This is another free day to enjoy activities of your own choosing. Take a walk over to Ruddy's General Store, full of old-time curiosities. A "Farewell to Palm Springs" reception and dinner at Kaiser Grill is arranged tonight.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Palm Mountain Resort

Day 10: Tuesday, February 13

Transportation is provided to Palm Springs Airport, then we fly on WestJet to Vancouver, connecting to Victoria. A transfer is provided to your pickup point.

Meals included: Breakfast

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Transportation to/from Victoria airport
- WestJet flight to Palm Springs and return
- Current air taxes and security fees
- Airline fees for one checked suitcase
- Transfers between Palm Springs airport & hotel
- 6 days of coach transportation in Palm Springs
- 9 nights of hotel accommodation & taxes
- Palm Springs Aerial Tramway
- Locally-guided tour of Palm Springs and Valley
- Jeep tour exploring San Andreas Fault
- Locally-guided tour of Joshua Tree Park
- Joshua Tree National Park fee
- Sunnylands Garden
- Living Desert
- Choice of Palm Springs Air Museum OR Palm Springs Art Gallery
- *Something Rotten* at Palm Canyon Theatre
- Locally-guided tour to Newport Beach
- Newport Harbor cruise
- Mission San Juan Capistrano
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Gratuities for Palm Springs guides and drivers
- Luggage handling at hotel
- **15 meals:** 9 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 2 dinners



Activity Level 1: Light activity including short distances to walk and some steps. There is some walking in Joshua Tree Park and while visiting Living Desert, Sunnylands, and Capistrano. It is 1 block from the hotel to Sam's Place for breakfast. The walk from the hotel to Palm Canyon Theatre is 4 blocks.

There can be longer walks in the airports while travelling to/from Palm Springs; request a cart or wheelchair at check-in if this could be an issue for you. The coach cannot carry a scooter or motorized wheelchair. **Everybody** participating in this tour is expected to be capable of handling Activity Level 1. The tour director, local guides and drivers have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be required to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$400 per person is requested at time of booking and balance is due November 15, 2023. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined. Payments can be made by online banking or cheque (1.5% discount on tour fare), or by Visa or Mastercard (\$5,000 limit per person on credit cards).

Early Booking Bonus: Receive \$200 discount on first 15 seats and \$100 on next 10 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after November 15, 2023.

Cancellation Policy: Up to October 15, 2023, the cancellation charge is \$100 per person. From October 16 to November 15, the cancellation charge is \$200 per person. From November 16 to December 4, the cancellation charge is 40% of tour fare. From December 5, 2023 to January 3, 2024, the cancellation charge is 80% of tour fare. After January 3, there is no refund.

Itinerary and Fare Changes: Due to continuing after effects of the pandemic, sometimes we are notified about changes to the itinerary prior to departure and sometimes during the tour. We do our best to substitute a similar service if something cancels, but occasionally the only alternative is to provide a refund for the missed activity. Please note that if we are forced to cancel a component of this tour due to an issue beyond our control, the current penalties still apply if you choose to cancel the entire tour. Fuel surcharges and changes to taxes or other tour costs can occur at any time, therefore Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes up to departure.

Flight seating: We are unable to take requests for window or aisle seating on the planes. The airline will not accept them, as group seating is assigned as a block. If this is important to you, we suggest you take the "No Flight" option with a fare reduction of \$460 and book your own flight which allows seat selection.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy. Please do not tell us about your food preferences, as restaurants ignore these requests. An allergy causes medical distress, a preference does not.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Home pickups may be offered in Greater Victoria, depending on the number of people booked and coach size. Decision is made about 2 weeks before departure and you will be contacted about your pickup point and time.

Photo Credits: Palm Mountain Resort, Wikimedia (Joshua Tree, Palm Springs Tram), Palm Springs Tourism (jeep tour), Greater Palm Springs CVB (Sunnylands),

Experience Points or E-points: This tour earns 101 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn e-points that are added to your account after the tour returns. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your earned points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until November 15, 2023.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

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