

HERE'S THE REAL SILVER LINING

Carson City-Virginia City, Nevada

In the latter half of the 19th century, people of every walk of life packed their belongings and headed to the Comstock Lode, the newest silver mining boom unfolding in Nevada. For some, it meant instant riches; for many others, it was little more than an interesting chapter in their lives. Their legacy, a string of silver mining boom towns just east of the Sierra Mountains, offers a great flying adventure. Rent a car and follow your fancy. When we visited the Silver State, here are some of the highlights we discovered:

In Carson City, make time to visit the Nevada State Railroad Museum at 2180 South Carson St. This museum preserves the railroad heritage of Nevada, including locomotives and cars of the famous Virginia & Truckee Railroad and other railroads of the Silver State. Many were bought from Hollywood studios, where they were made famous in movies and television shows. Activities include the operation of historic railroad equipment, including train rides and handcar rides, lectures, an annual railroad history symposium and a variety of special events. On May 10, the museum plans a public viewing of two rare self-propelled passenger cars, 100 years to the day when the cars first arrived in Carson City.

Carson City is also the home of the Carson City Mint, where U.S. coins were made from 1870 to 1893. It's now collocated with the Nevada State Museum, a great place to get a feel for Nevada in its Old West heyday.

You can download an iPod "tour" of Carson City's Victorian-style homes and other historical points of interest. The Talking Houses tales are 90-second narratives of frontier life, with anecdotes and secrets of each home, plus sound effects, including train whistles, horse-drawn carriages and John



Wayne's voice at the Krebs-Petersen House where he filmed his last movie, *The Shootist*. Celebrated locals of yesteryear tell the tales, including Mark Twain, Carson City founder Abe Curry and Hannah Clapp, the town's original feminist. For all the information on visiting Carson City, go to VisitCarsonCity.com or call 800.NEVADA.1. Arrivals: Carson City (CXP).

Up the road in nearby Virginia City, the history of the silver mining days continues. Don't forget to find a moment to move forward a hundred years to visit the Red Dog

Saloon, an important icon in the history of rock and roll. In the mid-'60s, seminal, but previously unheard of bands like the Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service, The Charlatans, Big Brother and the Holding Company (with Janis Joplin) and the Jefferson Airplane played together for the first time at the Red Dog. Their time on stage at this tiny Nevada bar led them back to San Francisco to develop what was to become the soundtrack for the psychedelic '60s. For more on Virginia City, log on to VirginiaCity-nv.org, or call 800.718.SLVR.