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**Laze poolside at A-lister's oasis**



THE place to sunbathe ... Palm Springs, and (inset) Marilyn Monroe

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LAZING poolside, drinking cocktails and putting the world to rights well past midnight, even the most BlackBerry-addicted workaholic can't fail to chill out in Palm Springs.

The Californian resort is just *so* relaxing.



Relaxing ... chic bungalow at The Horizon Hotel

Don't get me wrong, if you want to spend your holiday playing golf or hiking then you can on one of the 100-plus courses and trails.

But I get the feeling once you arrive in Palm Springs – which is a two-hour drive or one-hour flight from Los Angeles – physical exertion will be the last thing on your mind.



Pool party ... Sinatra

Don't feel guilty, though, it's what nature intended. After all, why would the sun shine so bright and for so long if not for us to lie under it?

It's no wonder Palm Springs has long been the A-list's favourite holiday hideaway, hosting everyone from Elvis and Priscilla to Brad and Angelina.

In fact the resort is best known for its celebrity clientele, with many tours showing you where the rich and famous have lived and partied.

If you squint hard enough you may even glimpse the pool, once owned by Frank Sinatra, where Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo frolicked together. . . naked!

And with the right tour guide you'll hear plenty more stories like that.



Frolic ... Dietrich

For those who like more substance to their history, the modern mid-century architecture all around town is among the best in America – as you'd expect for a town where home-buyers are mega-loaded.

### **Refined**

But as interesting as these trips are, your mind always wanders back to one thing. The fabulous weather.

I did most of my sun-bathing at my hotel, The Horizon, and I'm not sure if it was the exquisite drinks mixed by the manager, David, or the fact that most of the other people by the pool were gorgeous and female, but I found it very hard to leave.

If you have the budget, I would definitely recommend this hotel.

It's an exclusive set of 22 bungalow-style apartments around a central bar and pool, now restored to the Fifties and Sixties glory that saw John F. Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe stay there – possibly at the same time.



Out and about ... tram station

But there are also plenty of other gorgeous and historic places to stay at, to suit all purses. And even though you can't sleep in them all, be sure to pop into a few for a meal or spa.

The distinctive Viceroy is a must-visit, whether it be for their sea bass or sea salts.

But while Palm Springs is the perfect getaway, I wouldn't suggest it for anyone with young children.

The kids would probably rather be at Disneyworld than watching you get a massage.

It's also not one for teenagers or students looking for a debauched Ibiza-style trip.

For single adults or child-free couples it is great, though, with refined nightlife ranging from wine-tasting to upmarket clubbing.

There is also a thriving gay and lesbian community, as a rather overfriendly chap named Mani was more than happy to point out to me. And for retired folk, Palm Springs is equally welcoming.

The food is fabulous and shops are well stocked with things you'd never find in the UK and prices you definitely wouldn't.

The shows are just wonderful, too – especially The Fabulous Follies, a troupe of showgirls aged from 55 to over 80 who can kick as high as any 20-year-old.

There are also some interesting museums and art galleries if all that lovely sun gets too much for you.

*Somehow I don't think it will.*