



TravelNevada

Website & Mobile App
Usability Study
Report of Findings

May 2018

Research prepared for TravelNevada by

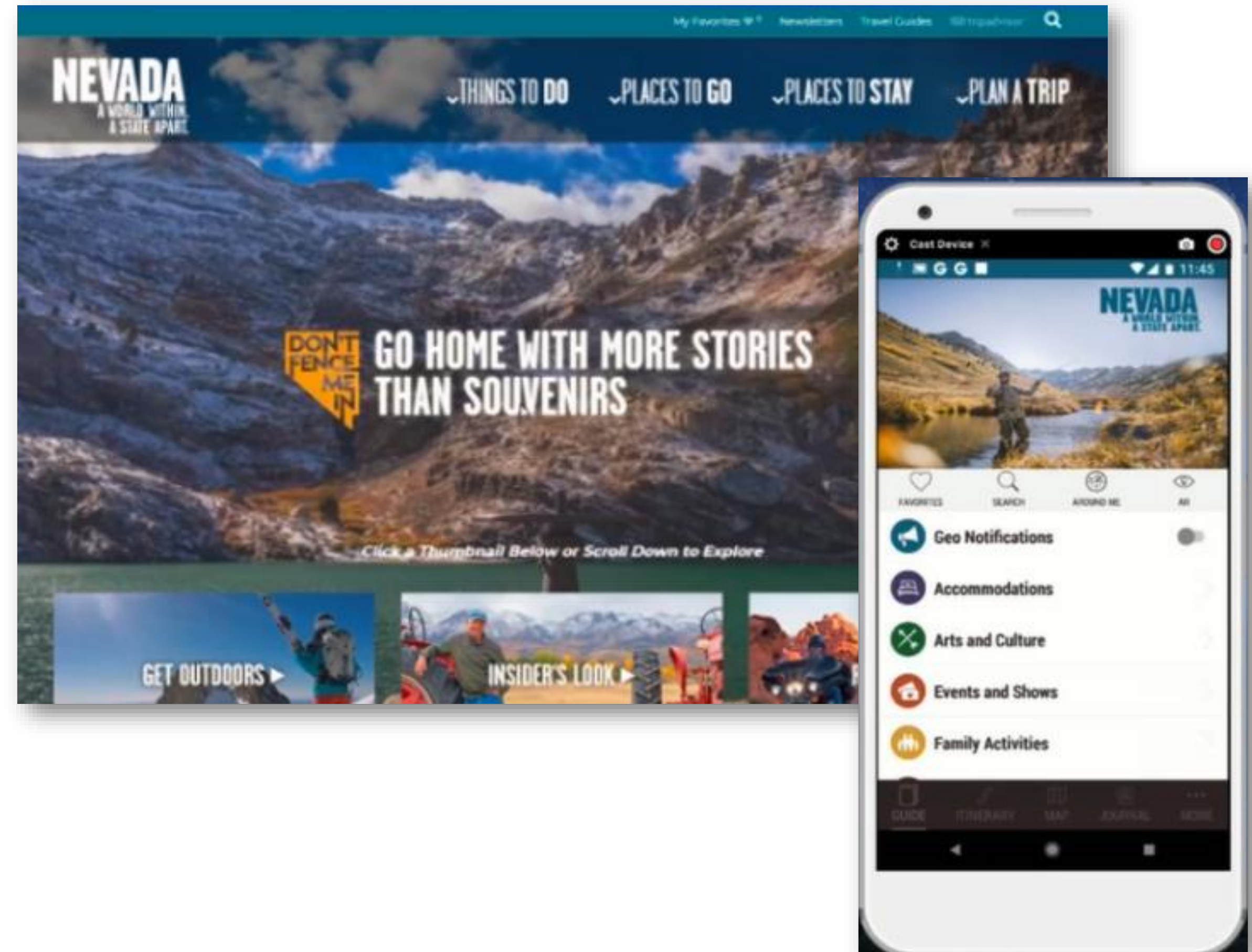


Research Overview & Objectives

This report presents the findings of a study of potential users of TravelNevada's consumer website, TravelNevada.com, as well as potential users of the TravelNevada mobile app.

This study was conducted in March and April 2018 by Destination Analysts, Inc. on behalf of TravelNevada to address the following objectives:

- Assess the overall design, organization and navigation on TravelNevada.com and the TravelNevada mobile app
- Examine specific functionality offered on the website & mobile app to evaluate accuracy, time on task and emotional response
- Gather feedback on content offerings and the process delivering that content
- Generate ideas for potential features, functions and content additions
- Understand the overall effectiveness of the website and mobile app as tourism promotion tools



Above: Screenshots of the TravelNevada.com homepage & TravelNevada App.

Methodology

This study consisted of a series of 60-minute in-depth interviews with fifty (50) leisure travelers who shared their feelings and opinions on how the website and/or mobile app looked and functioned. These leisure travelers were recruited from Destination Analysts' research respondent panel.

The following guidelines were used to recruit leisure traveler participants:

- Forty (40) participants were recruited to evaluate TravelNevada.com
- Five (5) participants were recruited to evaluate both TravelNevada.com and the TravelNevada mobile app
- Five (5) participants were recruited to evaluate the TravelNevada mobile app

Of the interviews conducted, there were sixteen (16) users on desktop/laptop/tablet who reviewed the website and thirty-four (34) users on mobile users (twenty-four (24) who evaluated the website, five (5) who reviewed both website and the mobile app and five (5) who tested the mobile app).

The interviews were conducted via online video conference. Thus, the moderator (and any observers) could evaluate the opinions, behavior and emotional responses of participants in real-time.

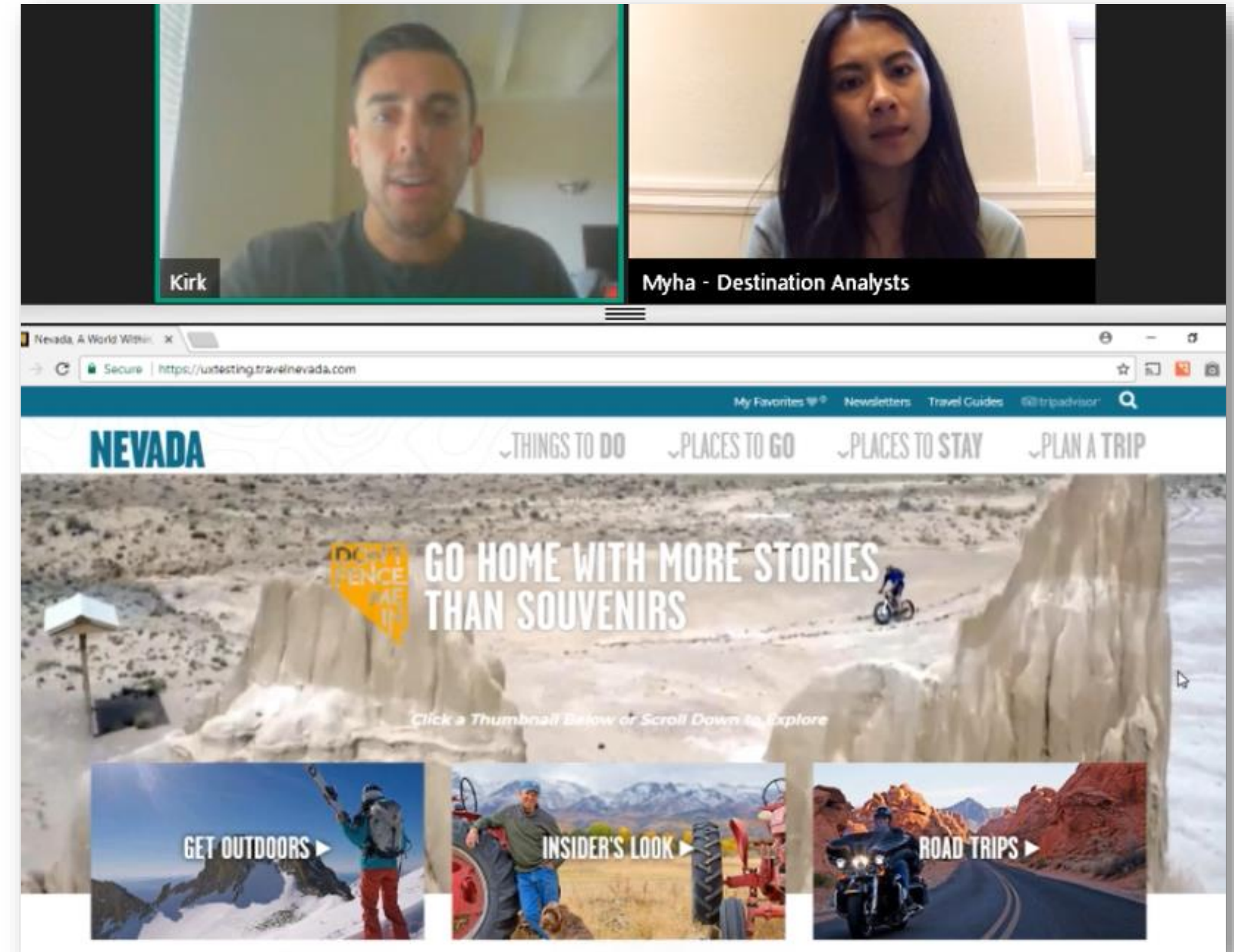


Above: Screenshot of mobile interview environment from the moderator's perspective.

Respondent Profile

The participants in this study:

- Took one or more overnight leisure trips in the past year
- Expressed interest in Nevada as a leisure travel destination
- Regularly used travel app's and other digital resources to research and plan travel
- Were a mix of male and female
- Were a mix of Millennials, Gen Xers and Baby Boomers
- Were a mix of married/partnered, never married and those with children under 18 in their household
- Had a minimum annual household income of \$40,000 if single, or \$50,000 if married or partnered
- Were mostly college graduates
- Lived in TravelNevada's key feeder markets



Above: Screenshot of desktop interview environment from the moderator's perspective.

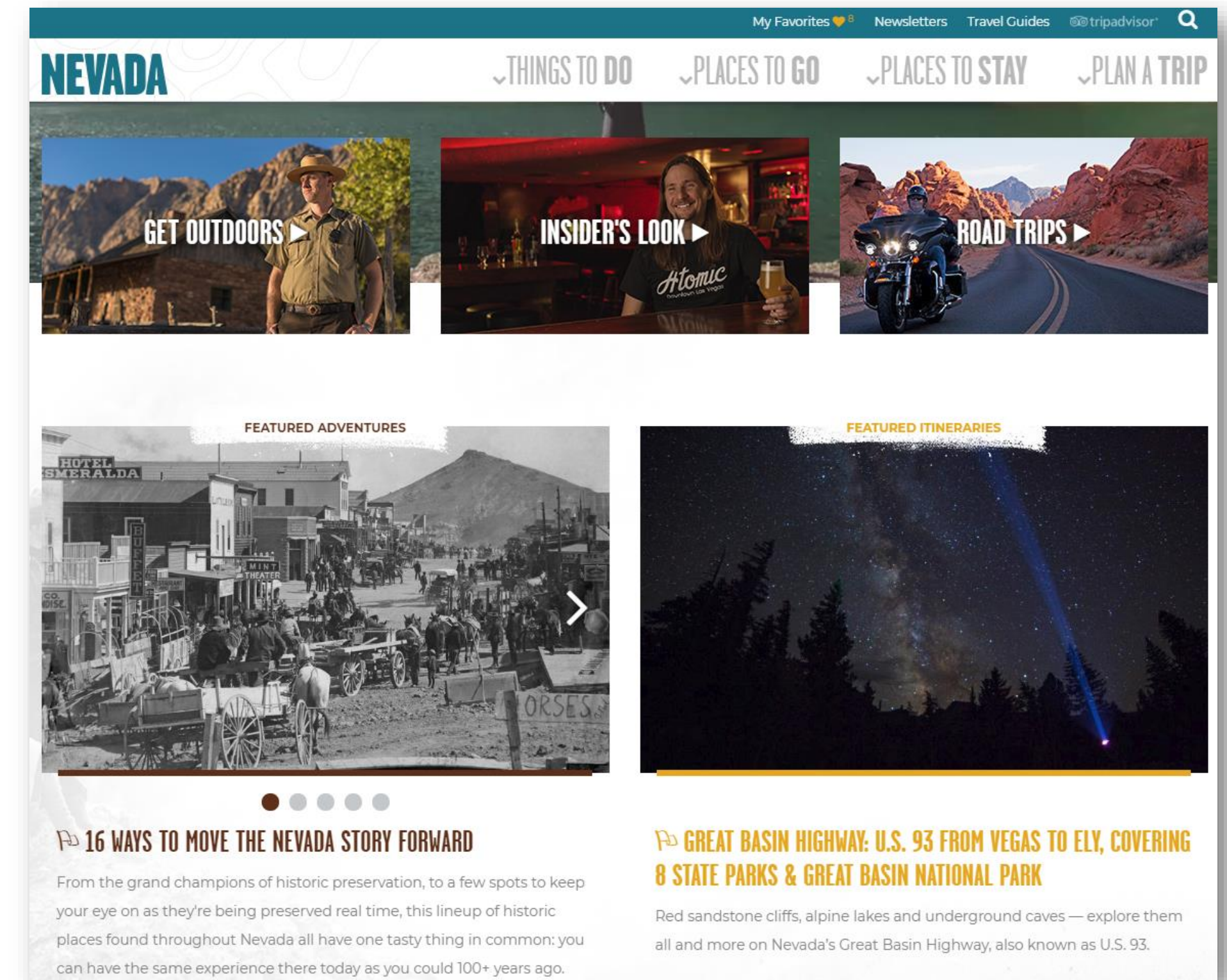
TRAVELNEVADA.COM
WEBSITE USABILITY

TRAVELNEVADA.COM WEBSITE USABILITY STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The following section provides the strengths and opportunities of TravelNevada.com.

Website Strengths

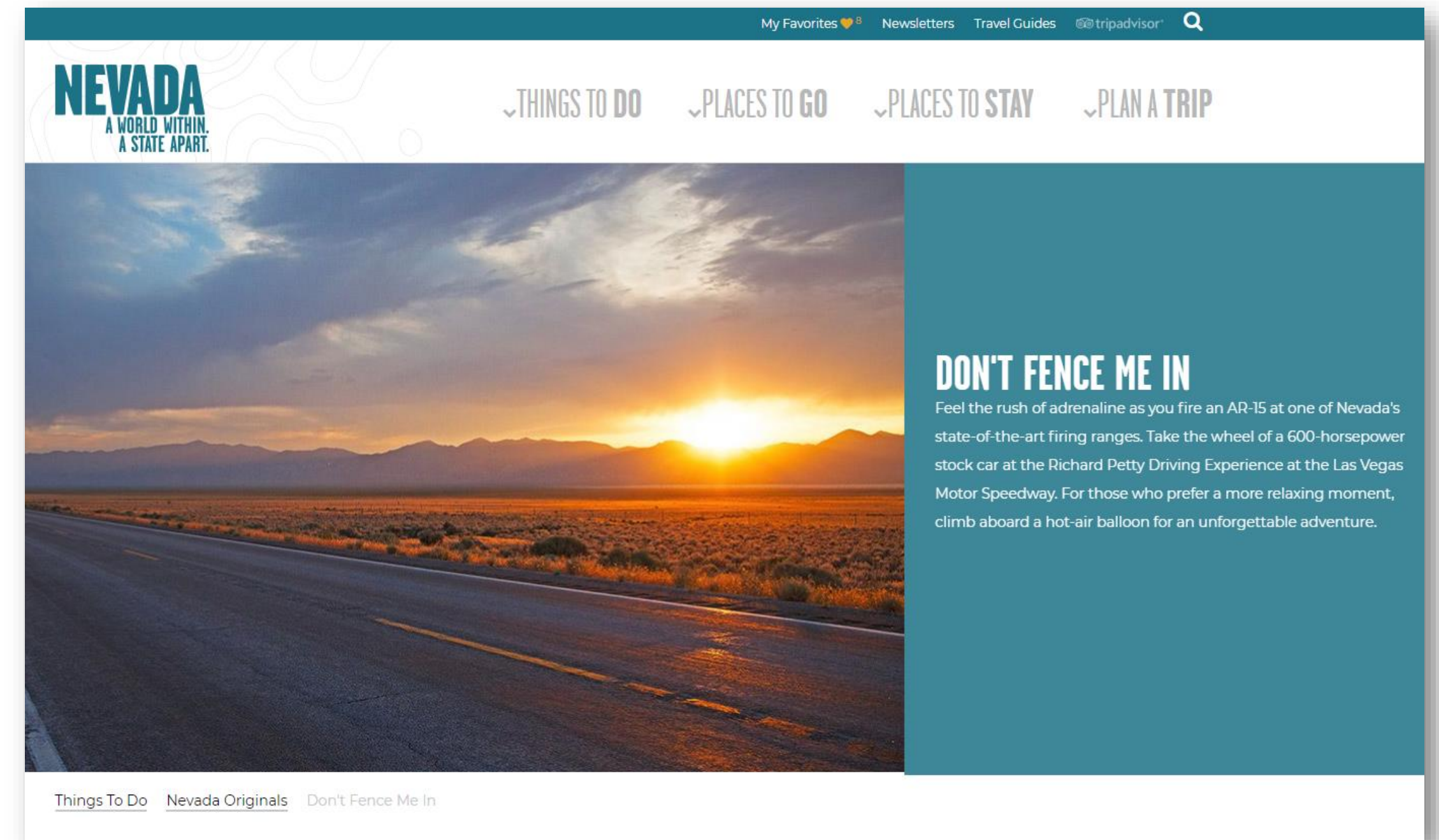
- **TravelNevada.com continues to successfully communicate the diversity of compelling travel experiences the state has to offer.** All study participants felt that the site was showing them a “different side of Nevada” and effectively expanded their perceptions and understanding of the state’s diverse offerings. Across all site users interviewed, top-of-mind associations with Nevada—prior to reviewing the website—centered around Las Vegas, Reno, and barren desert lands. To their surprise, the site highlighted rich natural scenery, snow sports, hot springs and cultural events unique to the state. These unexpected offerings were impactful in overriding the narrow perceptions once held about Nevada.
- **The website effectively shows that Nevada is a place for adventure.** This message was clearly communicated throughout the website and well-received by site users. The vivid imagery featuring a broad spectrum of outdoor recreational activities—from accessible hiking to extreme sports such as heli-skiing—inspired study participants. Although not all site users were receptive to niche sports such as heli-skiing, the wide range of activities highlighted, touched on “something for everyone.” Travelers most often put a strong emphasis on visiting destinations with “lots to see and do” and “unique experiences”—TravelNevada.com delivers on communicating both aspects.



Above: Screenshot of TravelNevada.com homepage showcasing a variety of outdoor experiences.

Website Strengths (continued)

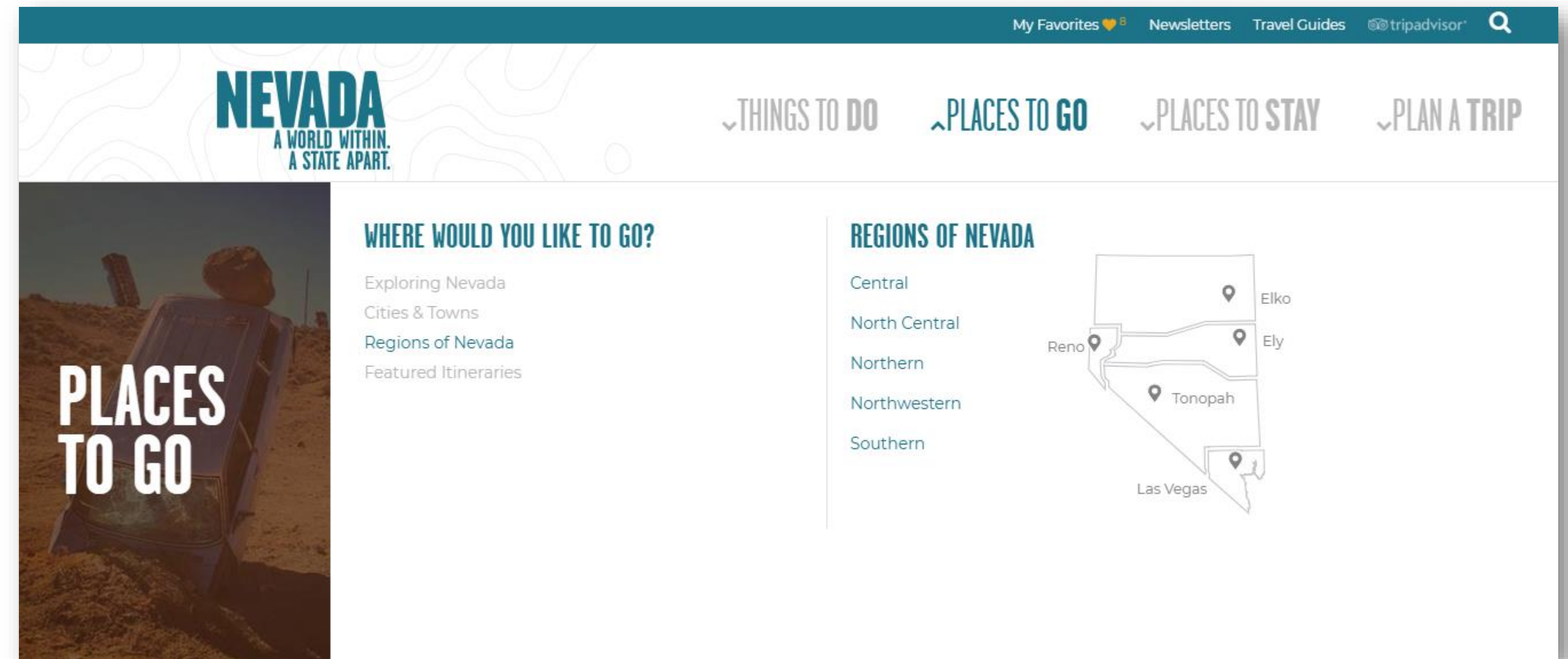
- **“Nevada Originals” content showcases experiences unique to the state.** As mentioned previously, unique experiences are highly sought after by most travelers. They want to know what sets a destination apart from others and “Nevada Originals” summarizes this desired information in one convenient place. Upon first review of the “Things to do” section of the website, most site users interviewed were immediately intrigued by the “Nevada Originals” subpage. In particular, study participants were interested in learning more about the Extraterrestrial Highway, Spencer Hot Springs and Main Street Art Park.
- **The “Don’t Fence Me In” branding is well integrated throughout the site.** Since site users typically had a limited scope of knowledge about Nevada’s tourism product, they immediately understood the significance of the tagline upon reviewing the home page. As one participant commented “That is clever. Don’t fence Nevada in to just gambling.”
- **Overall, TravelNevada.com rendered well on all device types.** All participants (especially mobile users) described their user experience positively. They complimented the site for its ease of use and simplicity.



Above: Screenshot of the “Don’t Fence Me In” content under the Nevada Originals section.

Website Opportunities

- **Further educate site users about the state’s various cities, towns and regions.** Site users were generally unfamiliar with Nevada’s cities, towns and regions and wanted more information about the various geographic locations throughout the website. This was challenging for participants because they expected regional information to be better integrated with the “Things to Do” section and for the cities, towns and regions pages to include more inspirational content like a collage of pictures, “top things to do” and “must see” lists that would build up their desire to go to that city, town or region.

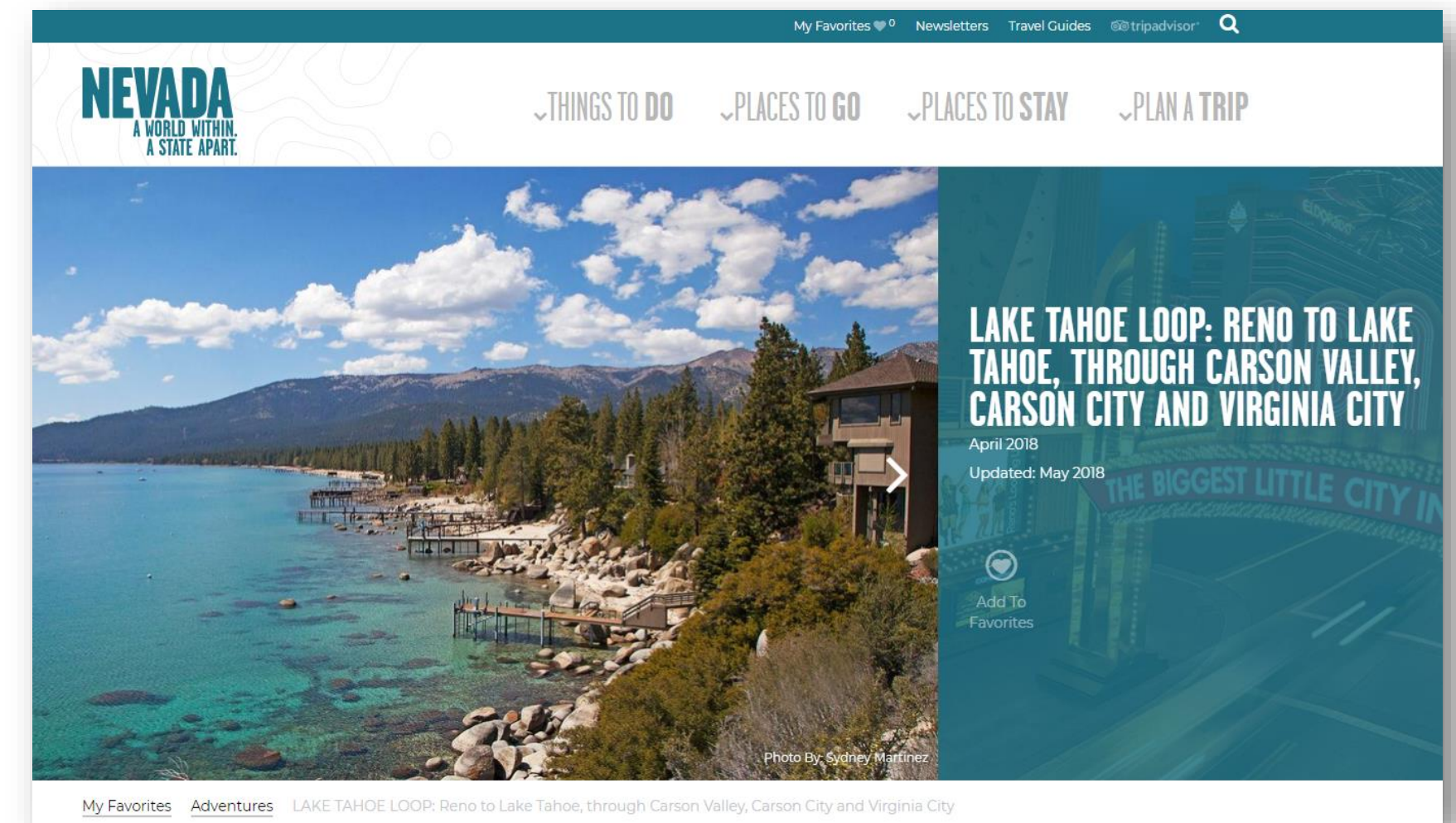


Above: Screenshot of the Regions of Nevada menu.

- **Adding subcategories within the “Plan a Trip” section could more efficiently drive users to the content they are seeking.** The content provided within the “Plan a Trip” section did not align with site users’ expectations. They expected to see “Suggested Itineraries” and a way to book their trip under this section. This section of the site also did not follow the same format of the other navigation menu headers. Rather than breaking up the content into subcategories, it was listed all on one page which was particularly overwhelming to mobile site users due to the amount of scrolling required to review this information. Making organizational adjustments to this section could streamline the user experience.

Website Opportunities (continued)

- **There is an opportunity to develop and feature more inspirational content throughout the website.** Site users that are in the explorational phase of their trip planning process often turn to such content to obtain trip ideas. The sections “Exploring Nevada” and “Featured Itineraries” provide this type of content. However, participants felt there was not much content featured within these sections. In particular, users would like to see more itineraries that explored different facets of Nevada such as region-specific, activity-specific, physical ability/age-specific and/or # of days. Users would also like to see the addition of listicle type content, featuring “best of” and “top” lists for trip ideas.
- **Add more personalization to the “My Favorites” section.** Participants appreciated the functionality of the My Favorites feature but adding the ability to custom sort their favorited items (by day—similar to an itinerary builder or by listing type) would enhance the user-experience/engagement with this function.
- **Bridge the gap between the TravelNevada.com website and the TravelNevada App.** While site users were interested in downloading the app, there was some question about what it would provide. While there was short description, users would like more details. Participants wondered if their favorites would automatically be uploaded when signing up for an account and downloading the app. Others questioned if they would be able to access deals or build an itinerary.



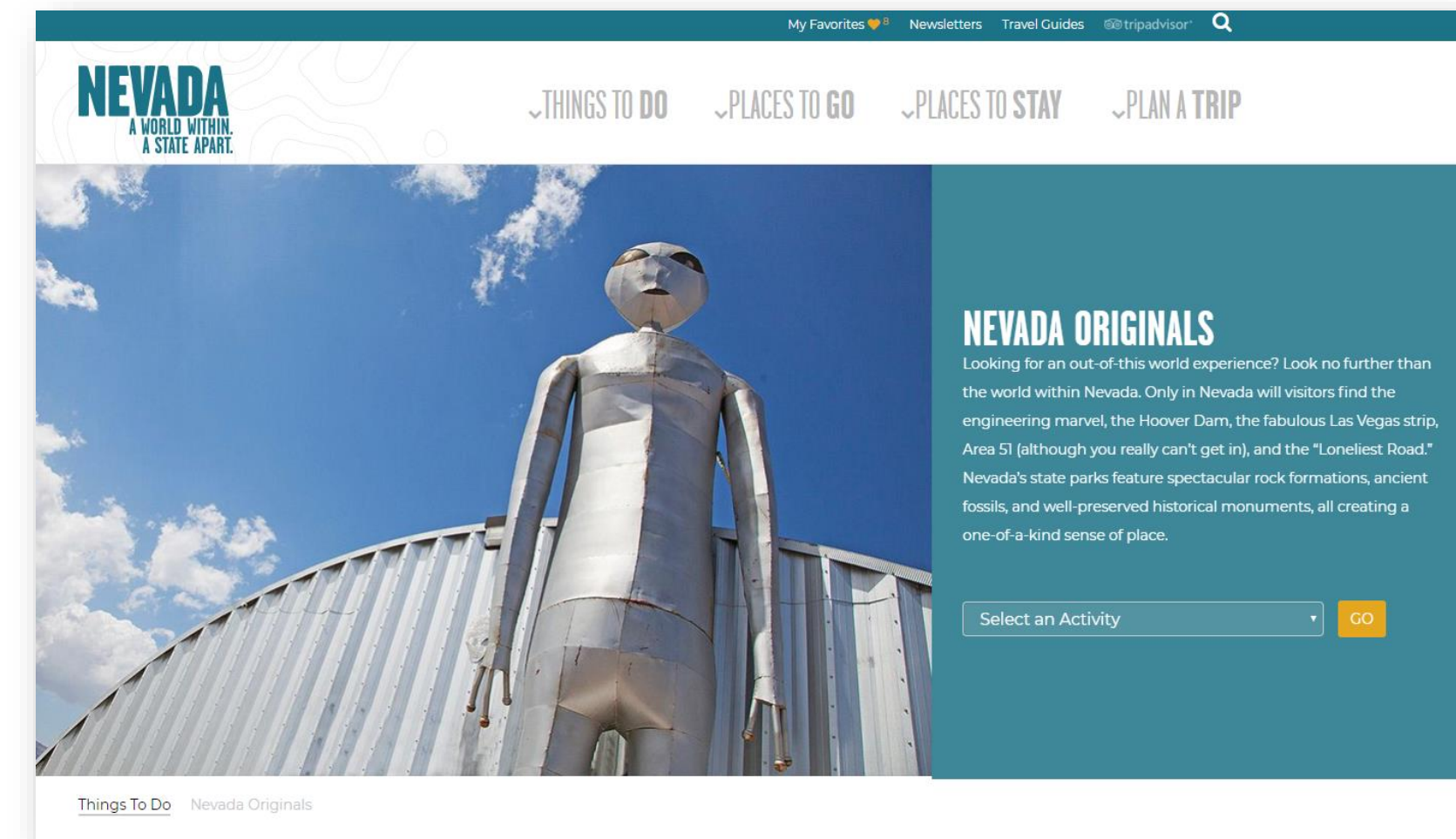
Above: Screenshot of the only Featured Itinerary on TravelNevada.com

TRAVELNEVADA.COM WEBSITE USABILITY TOP 10 QUICK FIX RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section provides the top 10 quick fix recommendations for TravelNevada.com.

Top 10 Quick Fix Recommendations

- **Continue showcasing Nevada’s unique assets.** Expanding “Nevada Originals” to include highlights for highly sought-after destination experiences such as unique culinary experiences and state/national parks would make this section more robust.
- **Add more content related to cities, towns and regions within Nevada throughout the website.** More maps, pictures, descriptions of the cities, towns and regions and an entire section on the destination’s geographic framework would help familiarize users with Nevada’s geography.

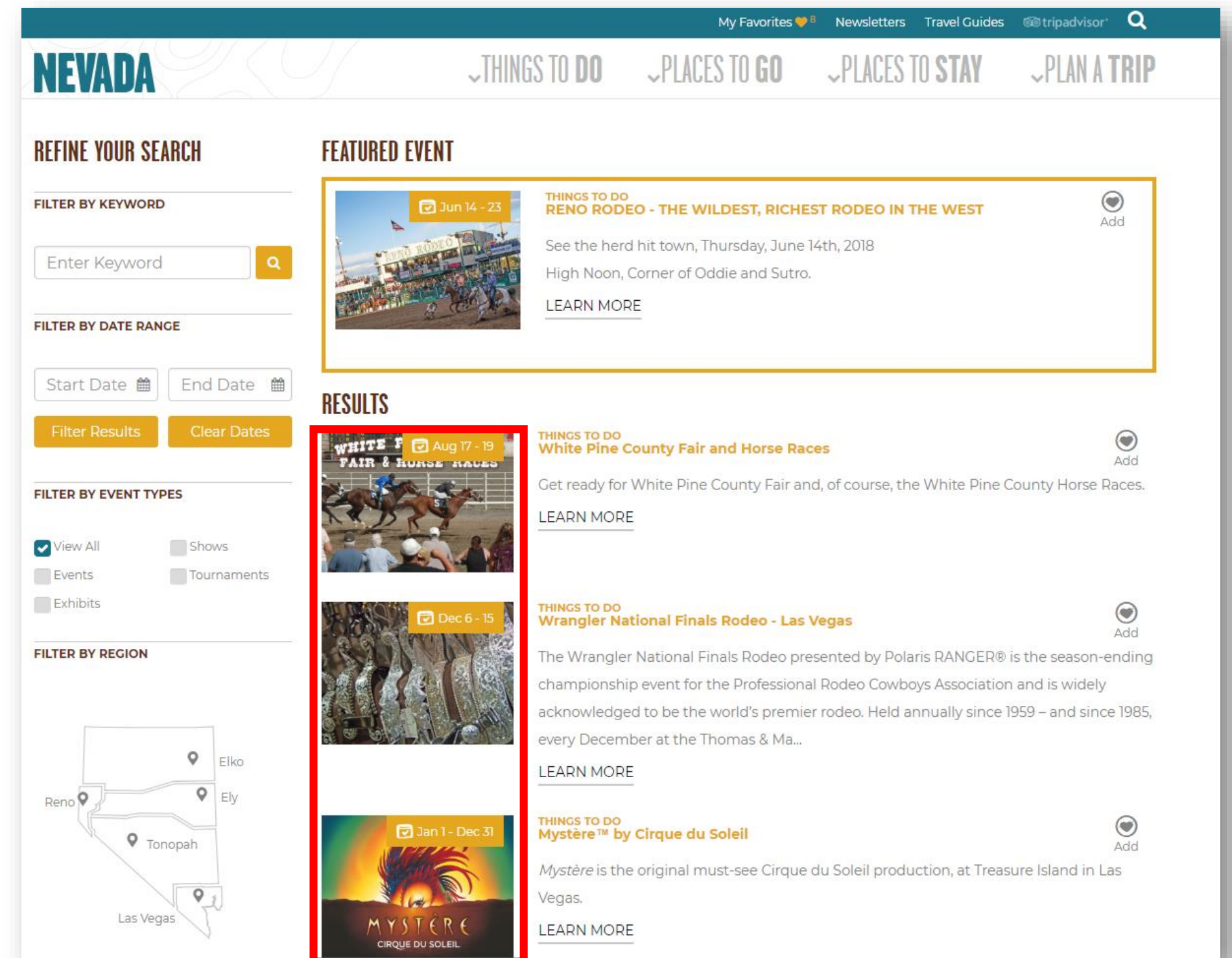


Above: Screenshot of the Nevada Originals menu.

- **Consider renaming the “Exploring Nevada” subsection (under the “Places to Go” menu category) to “Featured Adventures.”** Participants actively sought out the “Featured Adventures” within the menu and were not able to locate because this section was actually labeled “Exploring Nevada.” Adopting the same naming convention should be considered for continuity purposes.
- **Make the “View by” options more prominent on the search listing pages to increase usage of these functions.** The “View by List/Grid/Map” feature was often overlooked because these options were visually muted.
- **The icon on the top right of each business listing should be removed.** The icons were considered a distraction from the photos rather than enhancing the categorical listings.

Top 10 Quick Fix Recommendations (continued)

- **Organize the overall Calendar of Events listings by date.** Displaying this content in an intuitive and logical order makes for easier consumption. Removing the additional step of having to engage with the date filtering option—especially for travelers who have not yet decided to visit (or when to visit) Nevada—makes for a more user-friendly experience.
- **For restaurant listings, consider changing the photos of store fronts to more compelling imagery of the food offered at these establishments.** This provides a quick reference to the type of culinary experience provided by each respective restaurant.
- **Take advantage of the white space in the dropdown menu.** Consider adding an additional image of a featured activity, area or lodging accommodation on this part of the site for visual enhancement—this could be an additional opportunity to engage site users.
- **Fix the continuity of the conveniently embedded third-party booking site.** Users noticed that some third-party booking site links did not automatically redirect to the specific property they were reviewing on TravelNevada.com. Example: On “The Orleans Hotel & Casino” page, when you click on the “Book on Orbitz” link, it takes you to a general booking page for Nevada, not The Orleans Hotel & Casino.
- **Add the ability to filter lodging options by star/diamond/cost rating.** For those who prefer mid-level to high-level luxury accommodations, sorting through the numerous budget lodging options that were provided was considered overwhelming.



Above: Screenshot of the Calendar of Events, highlighting the filtering options

TRAVELNEVADA.COM WEBSITE USABILITY DETAILED RESEARCH FINDINGS

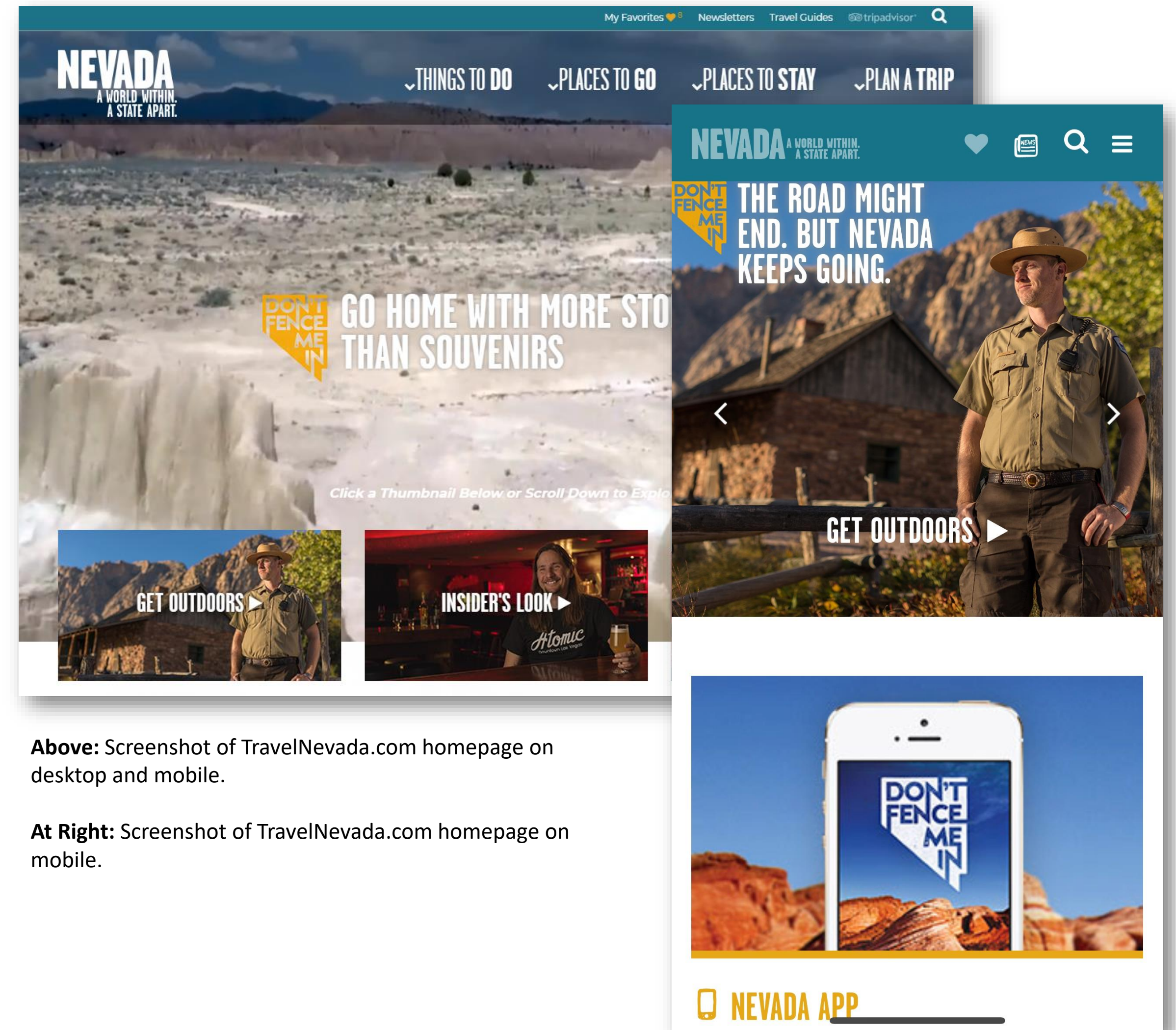
The following section provides the detailed research findings of TravelNevada.com's usability.

Homepage

- **First impressions of TravelNevada.com were overwhelmingly positive.** Site users immediately commented on the vivid, colorful imagery, clean layout and appealing color palette.
- **The homepage successfully challenges the perception that the Nevada travel experience is tied to Las Vegas.** The homepage featured a wide variety of outdoor experiences and scenery that pleasantly surprised site users. This immediately gave the impression that there is a lot see and do within the state outside of Las Vegas and Reno.

“This shows me that there is so much more in Nevada than just Vegas and Reno. I’m learning that there is a whole different side of the state.”

“In Miami you see a lot of airplanes in the sky, but on this site, you see stars, which is nice.”



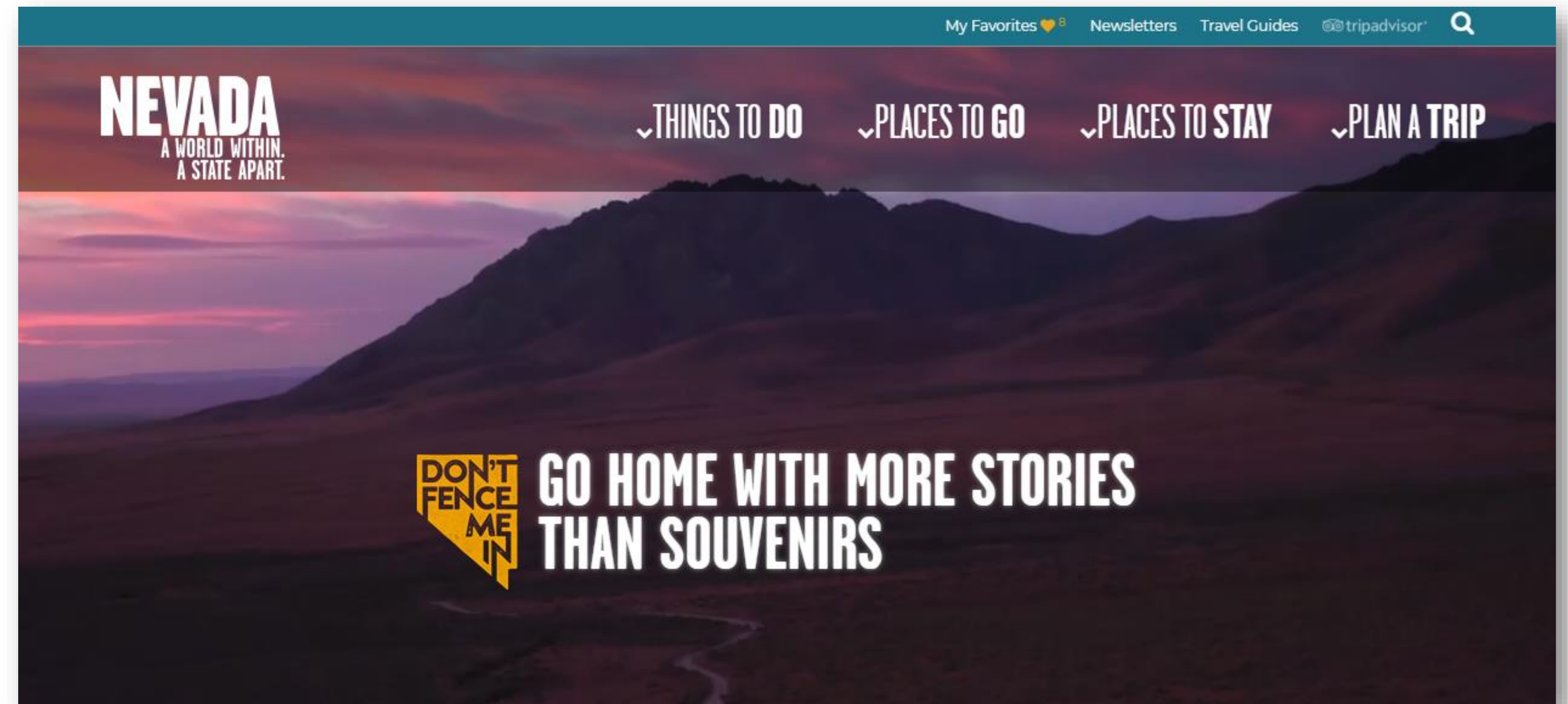
Above: Screenshot of TravelNevada.com homepage on desktop and mobile.

At Right: Screenshot of TravelNevada.com homepage on mobile.

Homepage (continued)

- **TravelNevada’s branding elements worked and were well-received.** Site users noticed the taglines “Don’t Fence Me In” and “A world within, a state apart” without being prompted. They strongly felt that these aligned with the overall message that Nevada’s tourism product is unexpected and diverse.

“Creates an image of Nevada that I really didn’t have before”

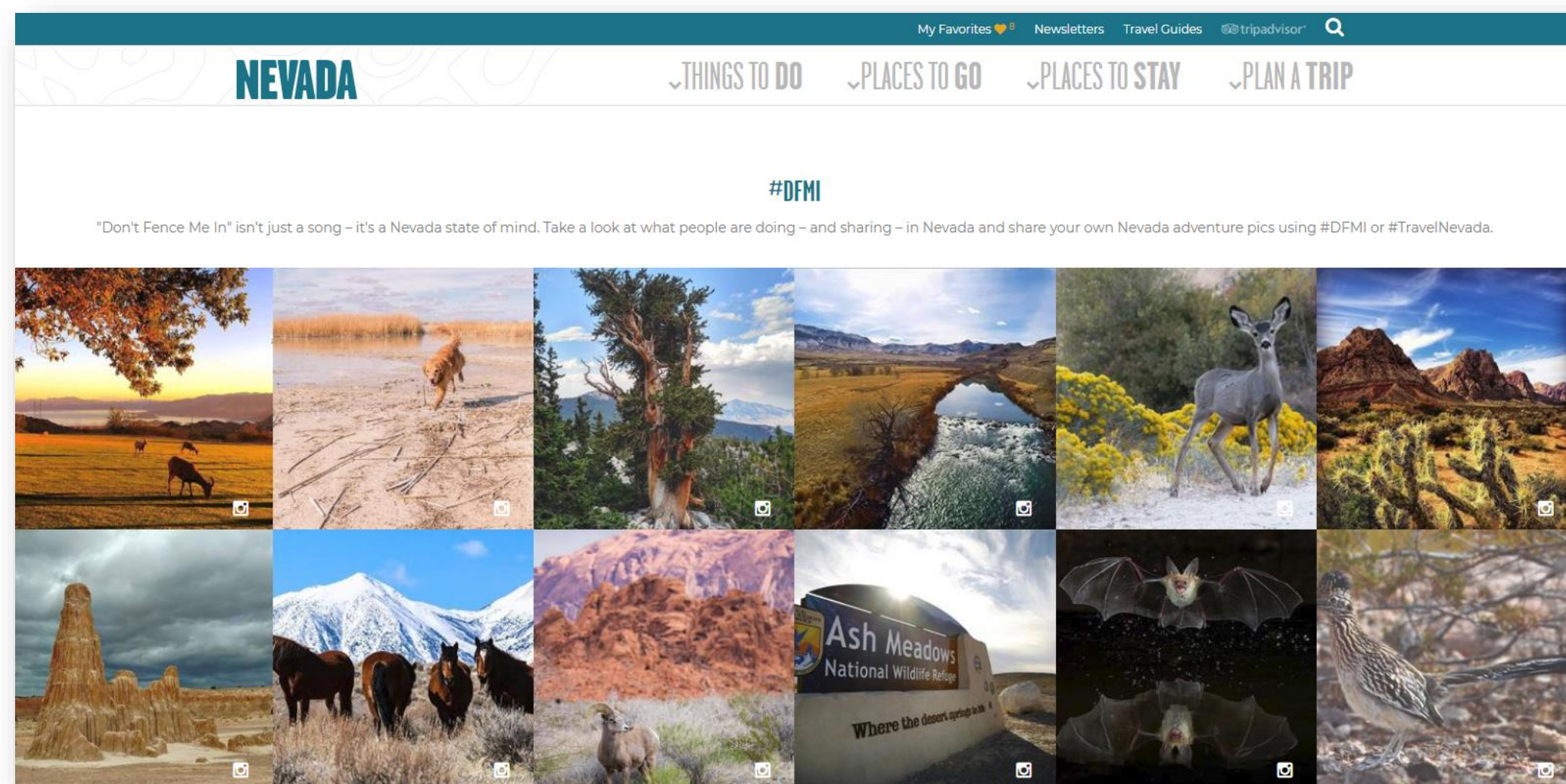


Above: Screenshot of TravelNevada.com homepage, highlighting the destination’s branding elements

Homepage (continued)

- **Images are expected to be portals to content.** In particular, site users were expecting the Instagram feed on the homepage would redirect to targeted sections within website rather than link them back to Instagram.

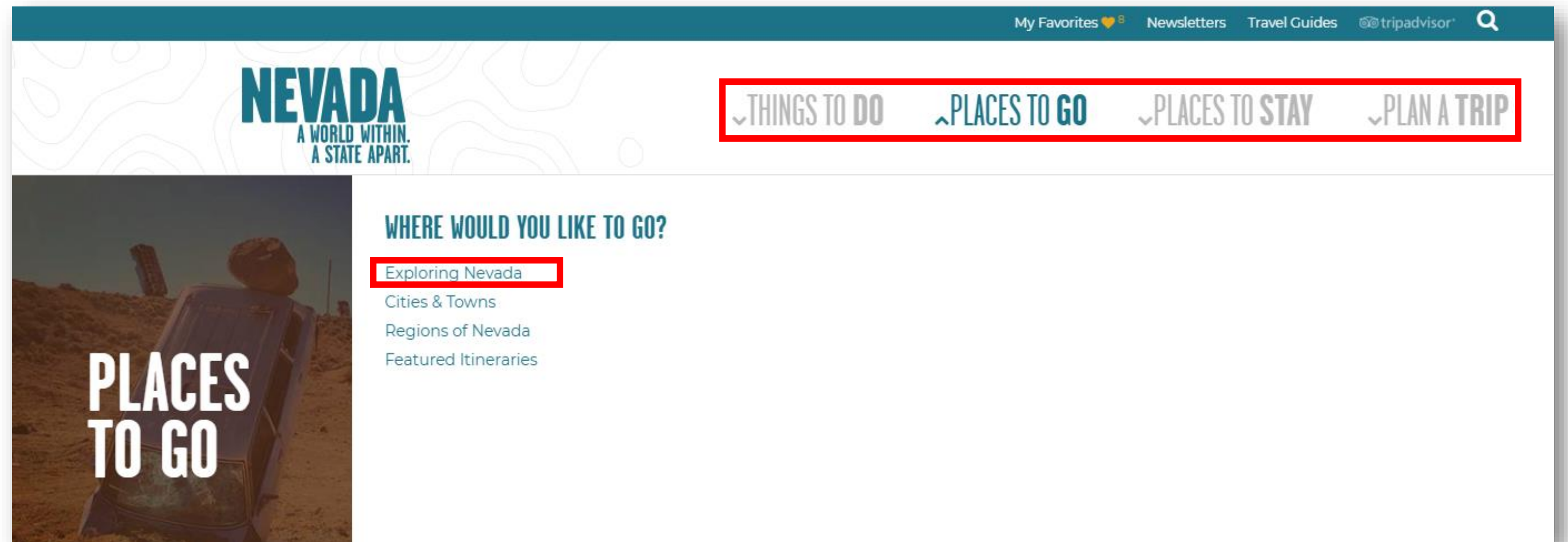
“When I click on one of these photos I want it to take me to a related page on the website. This actually directs me away from the site to Instagram instead.”



Above: Screenshots of Instagram content on TravelNevada.com homepage, highlighting that clicking on these featured images directed respondents to TravelNevada's Instagram account.

Site Navigation

- **The navigation menu options had simple and easy-to-understand categories.** However, there were some perceived inconsistencies. Some study participants questioned the naming convention of “Places to Go.” Most assumed they would find attractions under this section heading. Additionally, the content under “Plan a Trip” was considered a mislabel by study participants. Many expected to see itineraries and booking information under this section heading.
- **“Featured Adventures” on the homepage initially could not be found within the navigation menu.** This section was actually labeled “Exploring Nevada” under “Places to Go” which was considered confusing. Adopting the same naming convention should be considered for continuity purposes.

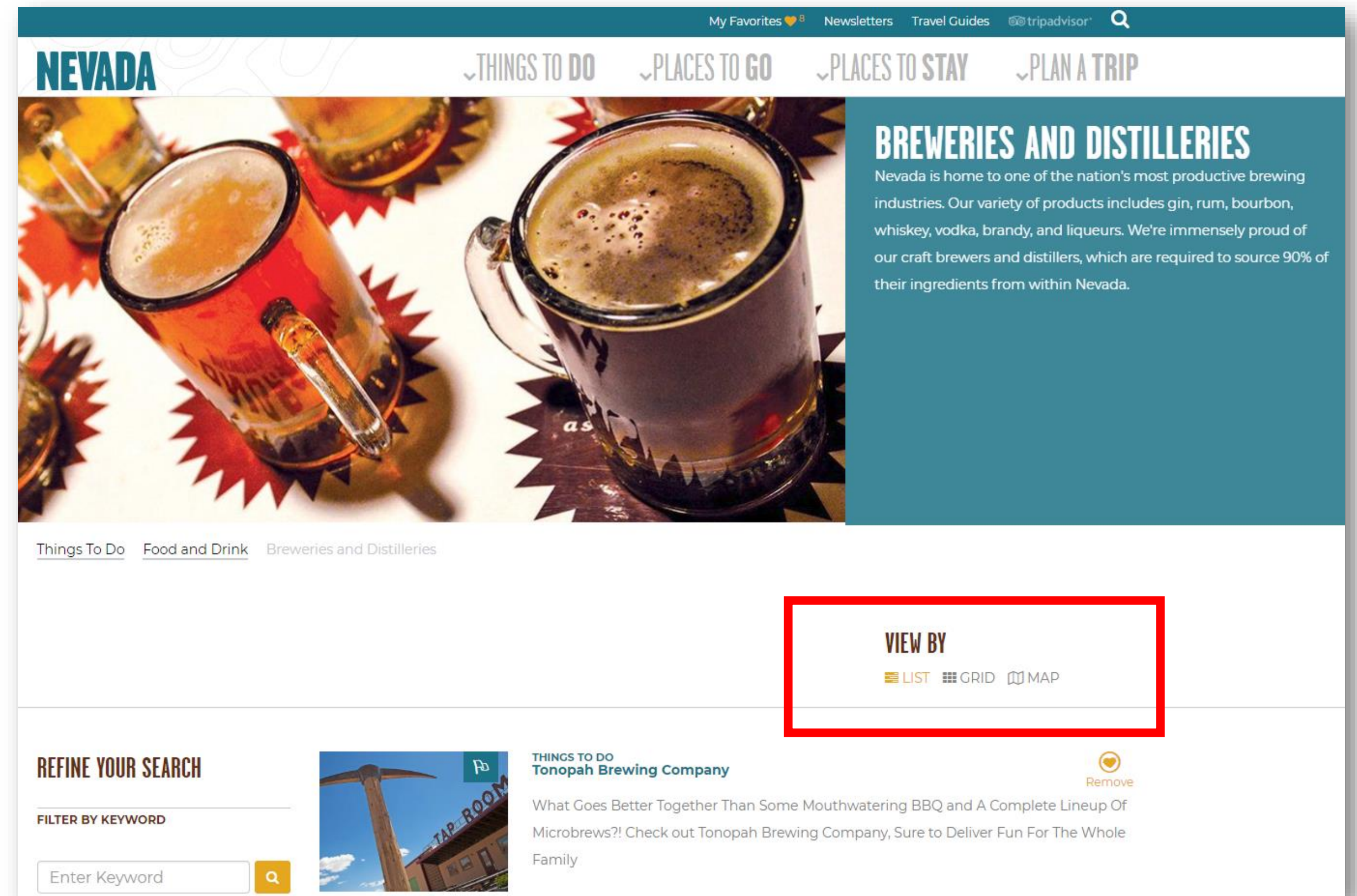


Above: Screenshot of the site navigation menu and the Places to Go submenu highlighting the “Exploring Nevada” section.

Business Listings - Things to Do/Places to Stay

The following findings and observations emerged as participants evaluated the business listing landing pages (Things to Do specific to activities and Places to Stay) on TravelNevada.com. (Findings unique to specific sections are detailed in the subsequent pages of this report.)

- For “Places to Stay” listings site users wanted the additional option to filter by diamond/star/cost rating. Additionally, study participants expressed a desire to see review ratings for the properties as well as room types available (one or two beds, suites, etc.). They felt these additions would make this section of the website a more useful trip planning tool.
- The “View by List/Grid/Map” feature was well received, but often overlooked because these options were visually muted. Site users particularly liked that map view function because it offered them directional orientation.



Above: Screenshot of the “Breweries and Distilleries” business listing page, highlighting the muted visual appearance of the “View by” options

Business Listings - Things to Do/Places to Stay (continued)

- The imagery tied to each business listing was appreciated, but the icons on the top right of the photos (in the list view) were not understood. The icons were generally considered a distraction from the photos rather than enhancing the categorical listings.

The screenshot shows a search interface with the following sections:

- REFINE YOUR SEARCH**
- FILTER BY KEYWORD**: A search box with the text "Enter Keyword" and a magnifying glass icon.
- FILTER BY LODGING TYPE**: A list of checkboxes for "View All", "Bed and Breakfasts", "Guest Ranches", "Hotels", "House/Cabin Rentals", "Motels", "RV Parks", and "Resorts and Casinos".
- FILTER BY REGION**: A section header for regional filtering.

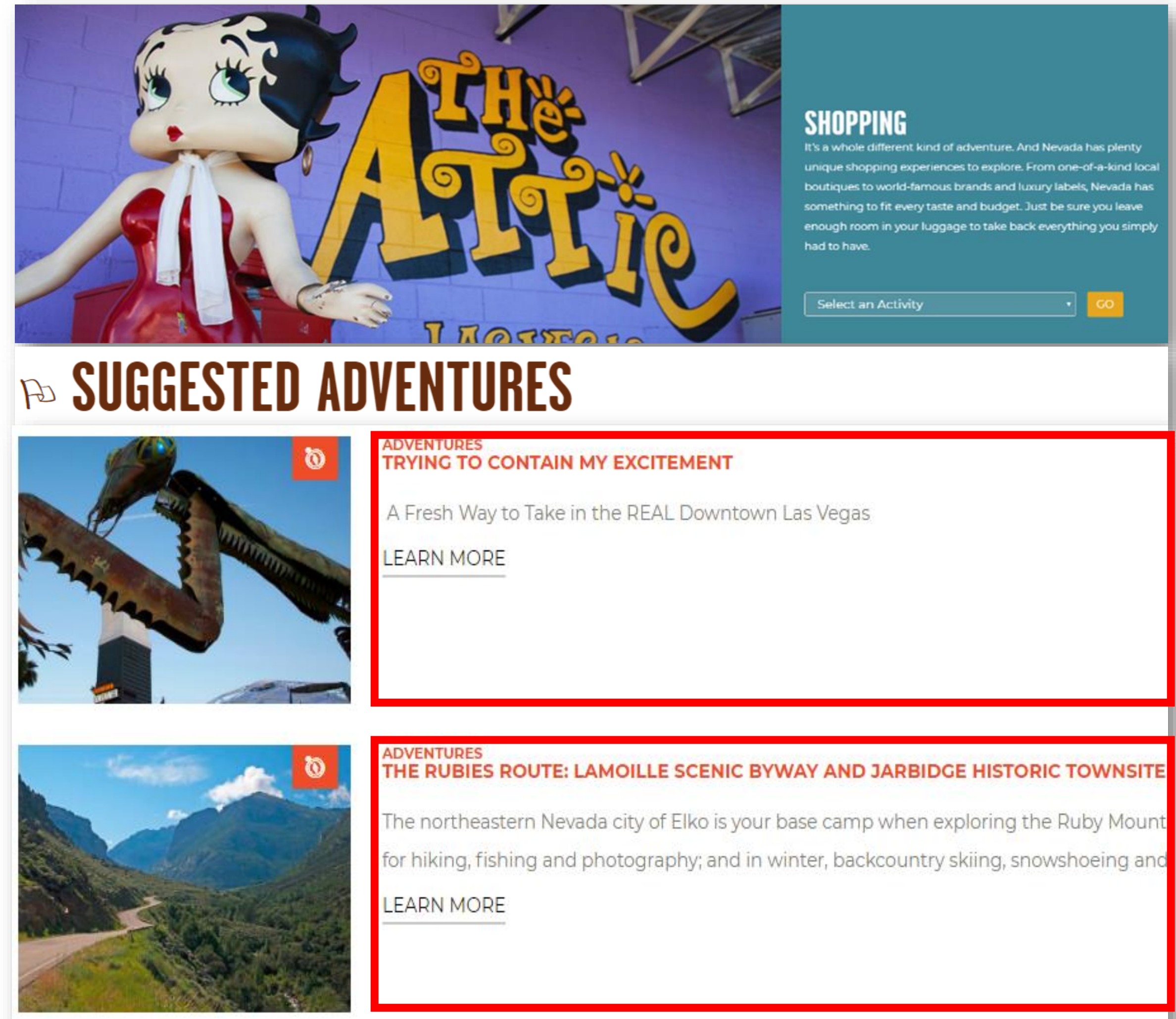
Three business listings are displayed, each with a photo and a small icon in the top right corner circled in red:

- PLACES TO STAY Ruby Hill Motel**: The icon is a white car on a brown background.
- THINGS TO DO Crosby's Lodge**: The icon is a white "Pd" on a teal background.
- THINGS TO DO Miles End Lodge Bed and Breakfast**: The icon is a white "Pd" on a teal background.

Above Screenshot of the Places to Stay business listing page, highlighting the icons associated with the individual listings.

Business Listings – Things to Do/Places to Stay (continued)

- **“Suggested Adventures” content was not always related to topics site users were reviewing.** Study participants assumed the featured Suggested Adventures and the respective activity/attraction they were viewing would be related to the current content they were accessing e.g. similar attraction/activity type or in close proximity by geographic location. There were many instances where the Suggested Adventure had a clear relation to the content being reviewed but this was not consistent throughout the website. Additionally, this content was not universally noticed by site users, particularly on the mobile website, due to the placement far down the page below the slew of business listings.

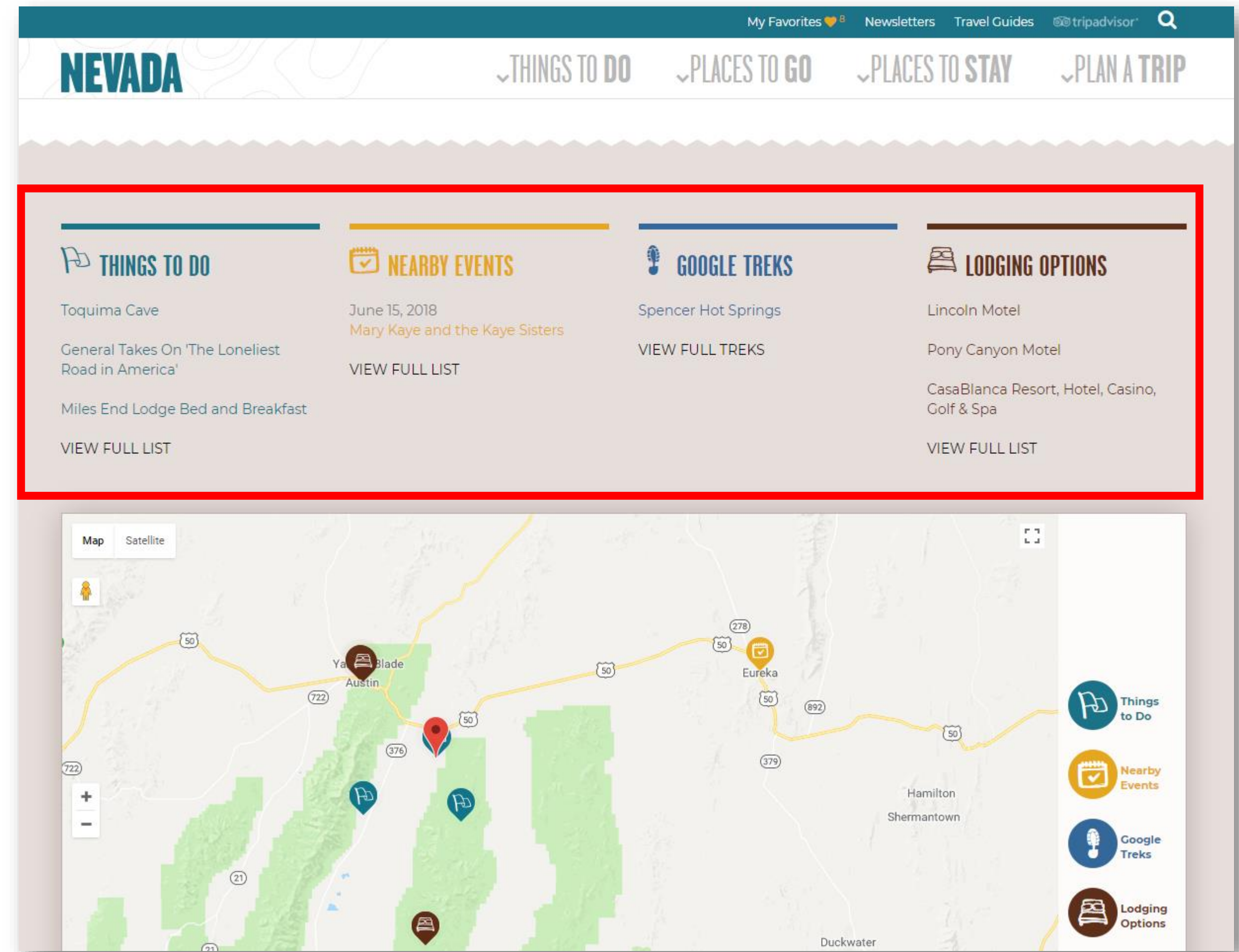


Above: Screenshot of the Shopping page, highlighting the Suggested Adventures featured unrelated to shopping.

Business Listings Detail Pages – Things to Do/Places to Stay

The following findings and observations emerged as participants evaluated the business listing detail pages (Things to Do specific to activities and Places to Stay) on TravelNevada.com. (Findings unique to specific sections are detailed in the subsequent pages of this report.)

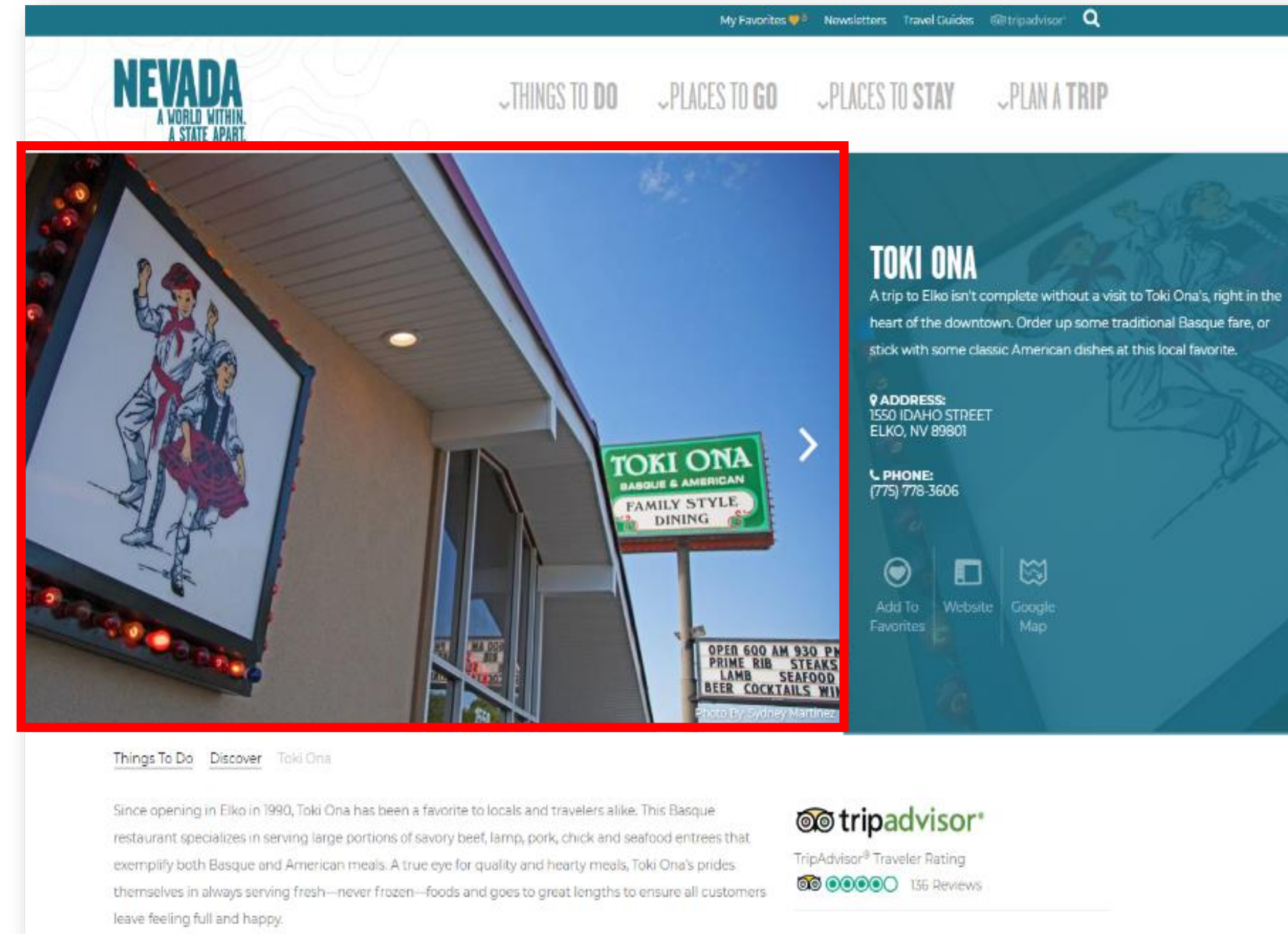
- **The information provided in the individual activity/attraction listings was considered to be comprehensive.** The detailed information— address, phone number, external website link and Google map link— provided everything site users were seeking in their research/planning phase. Study participants also appreciated the carousel of large, vivid images showcased at the top of each listing as well as call-out for which region of the state the respective activity/attraction was located within.
- **Additionally, the overview map included in the listing was considered an extremely useful way for participants to further explore nearby things to do, events and lodging.** The map functionality was simple but not all users knew they could de-select the offerings. Adding a simple instruction could help aid users with this.



Above: Screenshot of the “Spencer Hot Springs” business listing page, highlighting overview map with nearby things to do, events and lodging.

Business Listings Detail Pages - Things to Do/Places to Stay (continued)

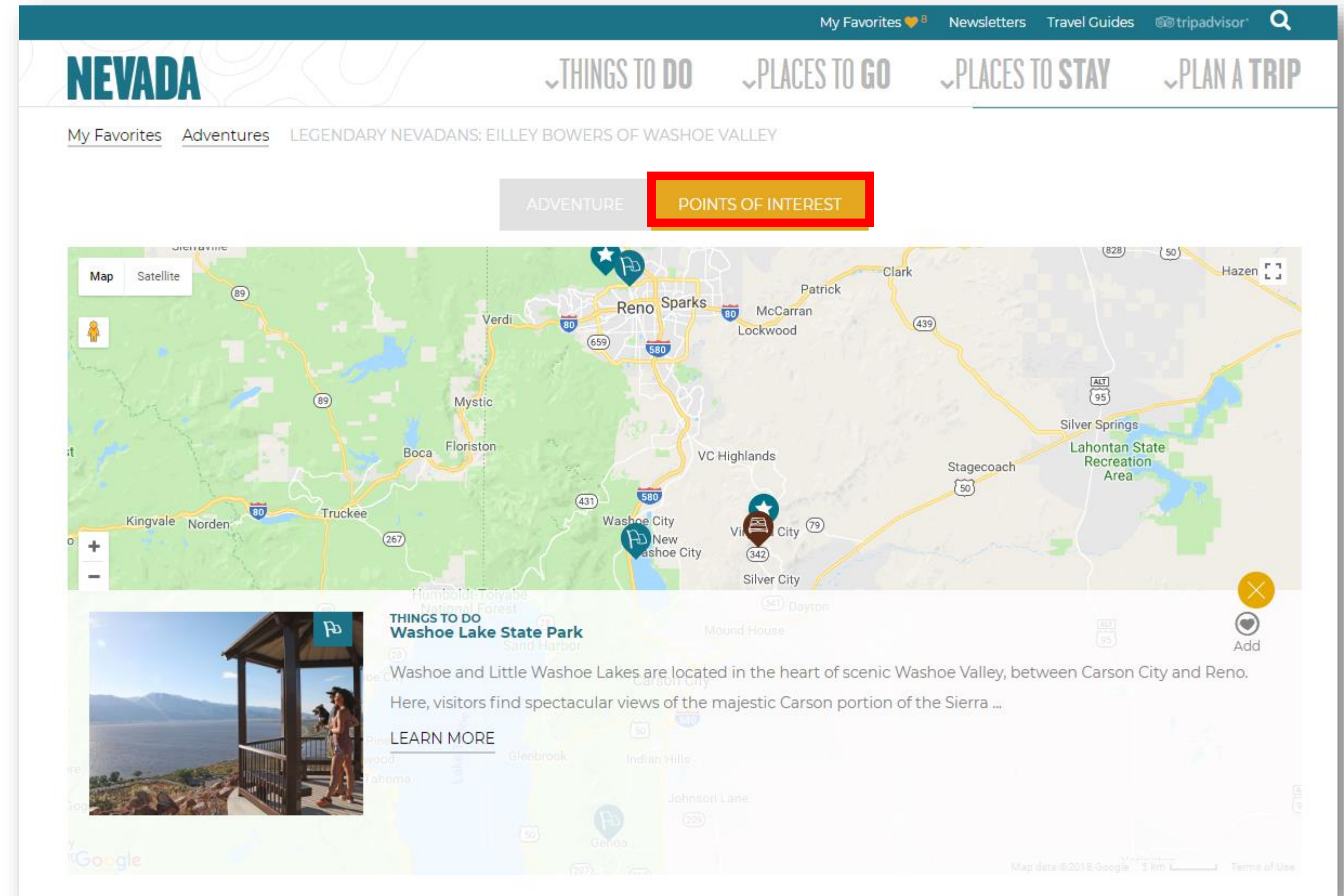
- **Site users intuitively utilized the “Read More” button to expand the detailed description within the individual business listings.** Full site users and mobile site users alike appreciated that this information was condensed as a default. Many commented that they would expand this information and read the copy associated if they were interested in learning more about the respective area/activity/attraction/event.
- **Providing crave-worthy images of the food offerings at the respective restaurants featured would be more inspirational to site users.** To make restaurant specific listings more impactful, the carousel of images should include more food and less snapshots of storefronts.



Above: Screenshot of the “Toki Ona” business listing page, highlighting the image of the storefront.

Business Listings Detail Pages - Things to Do/Places to Stay (continued)

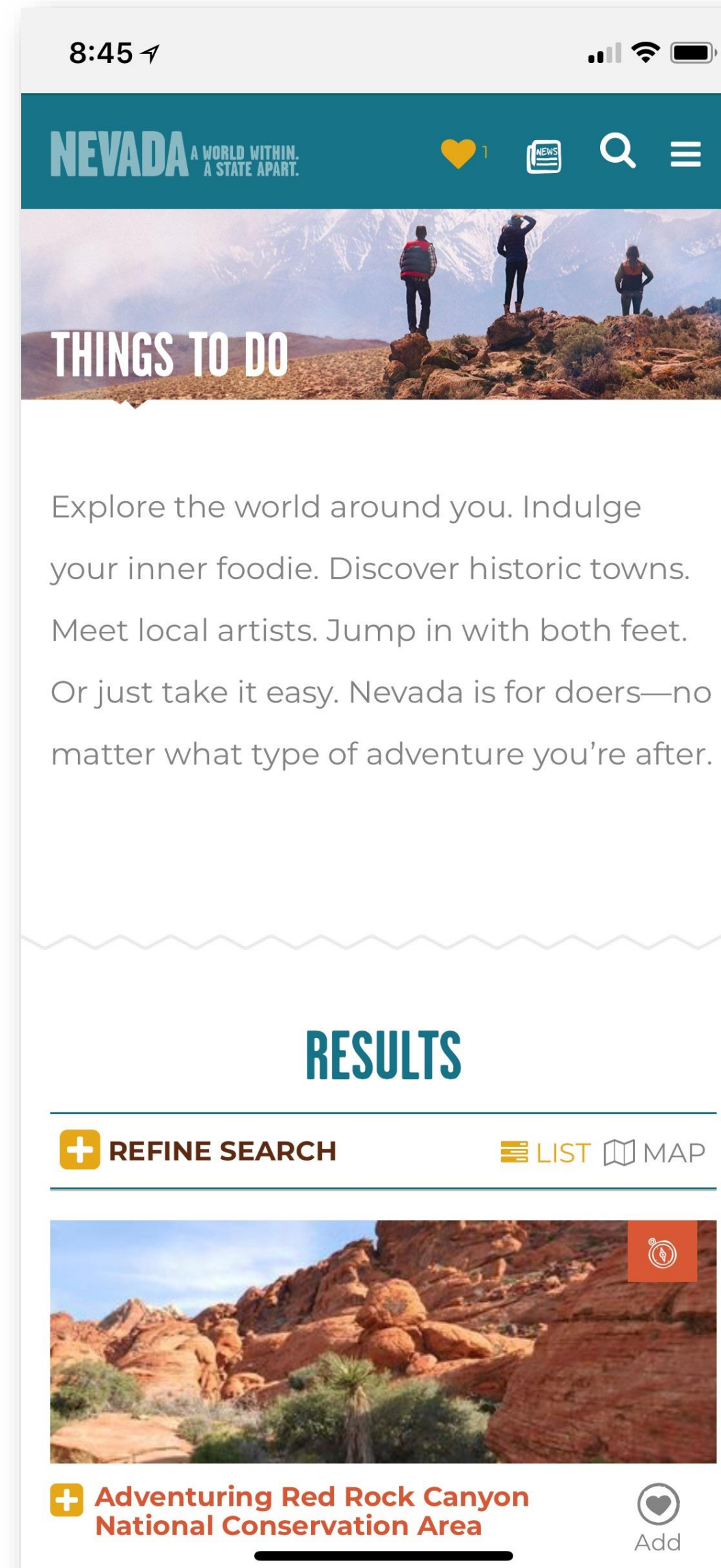
- For individual listings pages that included a two-button toggle feature for “Adventure” and “Points of Interest,” the mapping of related points of interest was considered very useful. Upon selecting one of the points of interest featured, study participants appreciated the pop-up image and detail provided. This functionality provides a call-to-action item that allows for further exploration of the topic of interest.



Above: Screenshot of Adventures, highlighting the convenient Points of Interest menu.

Things to Do

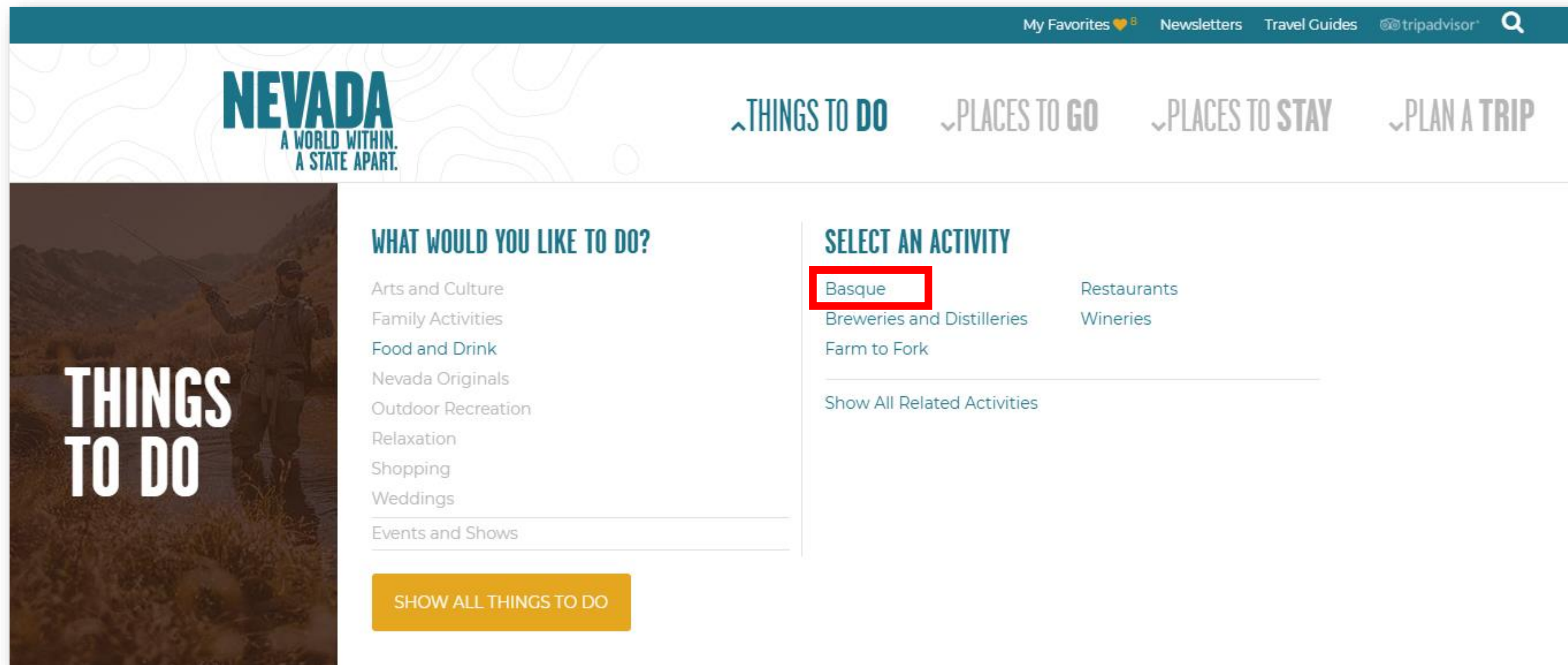
- **The organization of the “Things to Do” section was clear and concise.** “Nevada Originals” particularly stuck-out in the minds of site users and was most often the content they wanted to engage with first.
- **The “Things to Do” overview page left much to be desired.** Currently this part of the website only featured an assortment of listings and Instagram content. Users were looking for more inspirational content such as trip ideas and top activity lists. There is also an opportunity to fold in pertinent content from suggested adventures and featured itineraries.



At Left: Screenshot of the Things to Do landing page on mobile.

Things to Do – Activity/Attractions

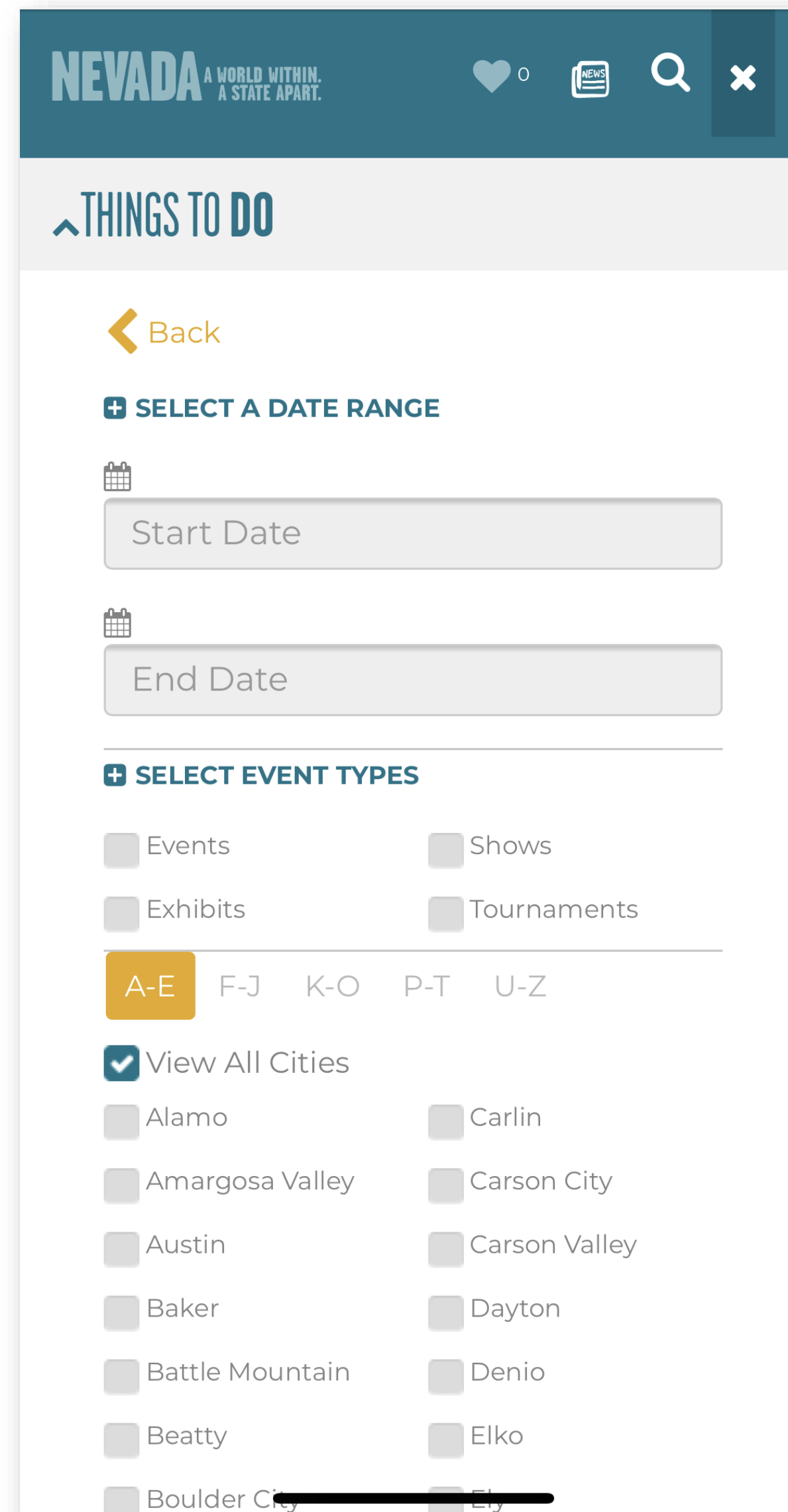
- Under the “Food & Drink” submenu, several participants noted that they were not sure what “Basque” cuisine was and suggested defining it. Travelers are constantly in search of experiences that are unique to a destination and highlighting (and defining) Basque offerings is an additional opportunity to set Nevada apart from its competitors.



Above: Screenshot of the Food and Drink submenu, highlighting the “Basque” category.

Things to Do – Events/Shows

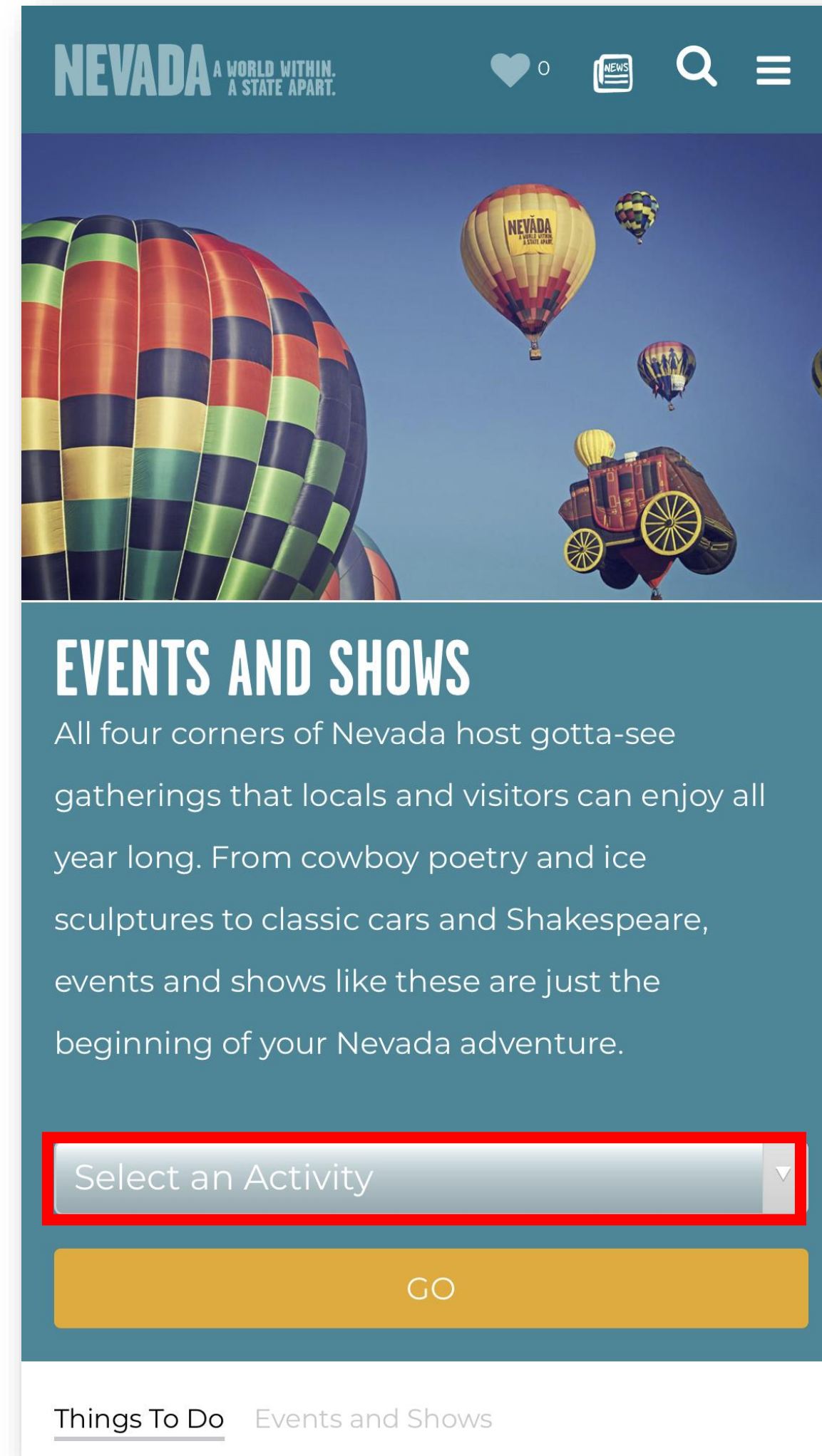
- **Site users don't always have specific dates in mind when they are viewing "Events & Shows".** From the navigation menu, site users were immediately directed to select a date range to search events. Although the site does not force dates to be entered, many users were under the impression that this was a required step. Providing options to narrow down events is a necessary function, however the implication that a date filter is needed to view upcoming events can be unclear. Most site users expected to land on an overview page with featured upcoming events highlighted then subsequent listings ordered by month for easy reference.



At Left: Screenshot of the Events and Shows landing page on mobile.

Things to Do – Events/Shows (continued)

- **The repeated inclusion of “Select an Activity” in the “Events and Shows” main page was confusing to site users.** Upon arrival to the “Events and Shows” main page, users are immediately presented with an option to “select an activity.” This was especially confusing for site users since they had either narrowed down their event type in the previous page or opted to view all event types. Providing this option again in the section header was considered redundant and unnecessary. This was especially true for mobile site users since the limited screen made the presentation of this drop-down menu appear to be necessary step to repeat in order to view the associated content.



At Left: Screenshot of the Events and Shows landing page on mobile, highlighting repeated option for selecting an activity.

Things to Do – Events/Shows (continued)

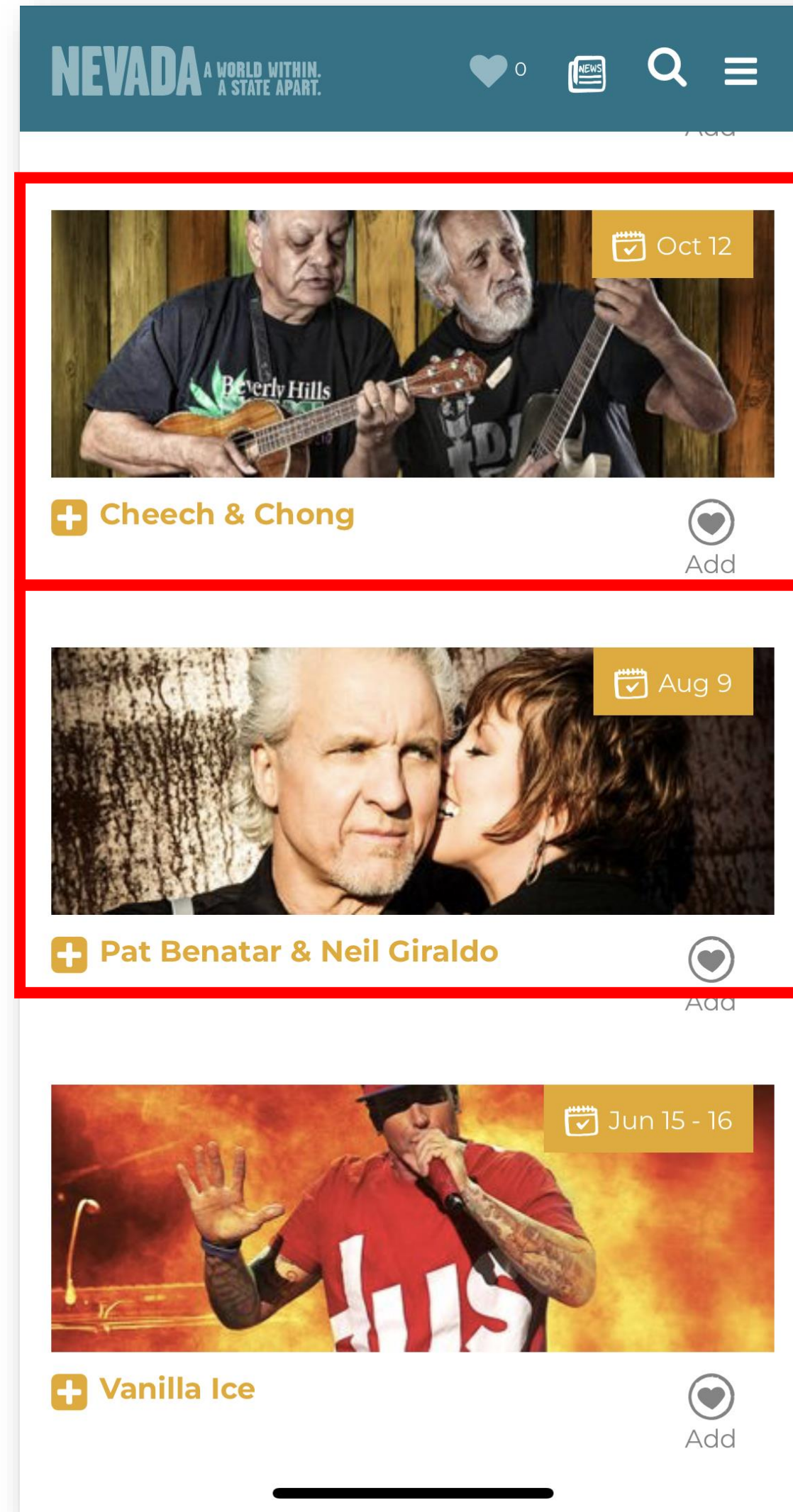
- The options for refining their search within the “Events and Shows” listings page aligned with users’ expectations. However, some suggestions were offered by study participants to make the filtering section more robust which include:
 - Adding additional event types to filter by i.e. live music/concerts, festivals and sporting events.
 - Include a filter for cost.
 - When searching by city, if no results are found, show results for nearby cities.

The screenshot shows the TripAdvisor website for Nevada, specifically the 'Events and Shows' section. The page is titled 'NEVADA' and has navigation links for 'THINGS TO DO', 'PLACES TO GO', 'PLACES TO STAY', and 'PLAN A TRIP'. The main content area is divided into two columns: 'REFINE YOUR SEARCH' and 'FEATURED EVENT'. The 'REFINE YOUR SEARCH' section is highlighted with a red border and contains four filter categories: 'FILTER BY KEYWORD' (with a search input field), 'FILTER BY DATE RANGE' (with 'Start Date' and 'End Date' pickers), 'FILTER BY EVENT TYPES' (with checkboxes for 'View All', 'Shows', 'Events', 'Tournaments', and 'Exhibits'), and 'FILTER BY REGION' (with a map of Nevada showing markers for Reno, Elko, Ely, Tonopah, and Las Vegas). The 'FEATURED EVENT' section displays three event cards: 'RENO RODEO - THE WILDEST, RICHEST RODEO IN THE WEST' (Jun 14 - 23), 'White Pine County Fair and Horse Races' (Aug 17 - 19), and 'Wrangler National Finals Rodeo - Las Vegas' (Dec 6 - 15). Each card includes a title, a brief description, and a 'LEARN MORE' link. The 'RESULTS' section below the featured event displays three more event cards: 'White Pine County Fair and Horse Races' (Aug 17 - 19), 'Wrangler National Finals Rodeo - Las Vegas' (Dec 6 - 15), and 'Mystère™ by Cirque du Soleil' (Jan 1 - Dec 31). Each card includes a title, a brief description, and a 'LEARN MORE' link.

Above: Screenshot of the Events and Shows page, highlighting the filtering options

Things to Do – Events/Shows (continued)

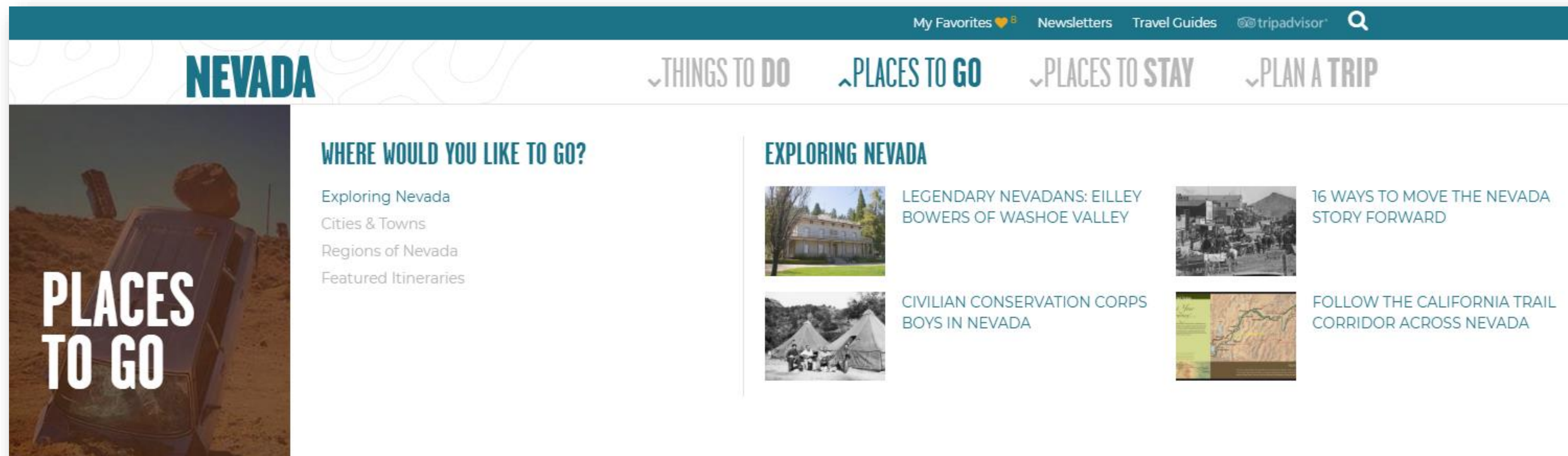
- **Users expected "Event & Shows" search listing results within a realistic date range.** Overall, users felt the listings provided the basic informational items they were expecting to see. However, the queue of search results always returned events that were outside the date range specified. These non-relevant results were interspersed between events that fell within the specified date range which caused confusion. Site users were expecting the results to be organized in ascending order by date. In the example shown at right the dates entered in the search were August 1st-14th. As seen here, an event that takes place on October 12th was shown before the event on August 9th.



At Left: Screenshot of the Events and Shows listings on mobile, highlighting how the listings include events that do not fall within the specified date range searched.

Places to Go – Exploring Nevada/Featured Adventures

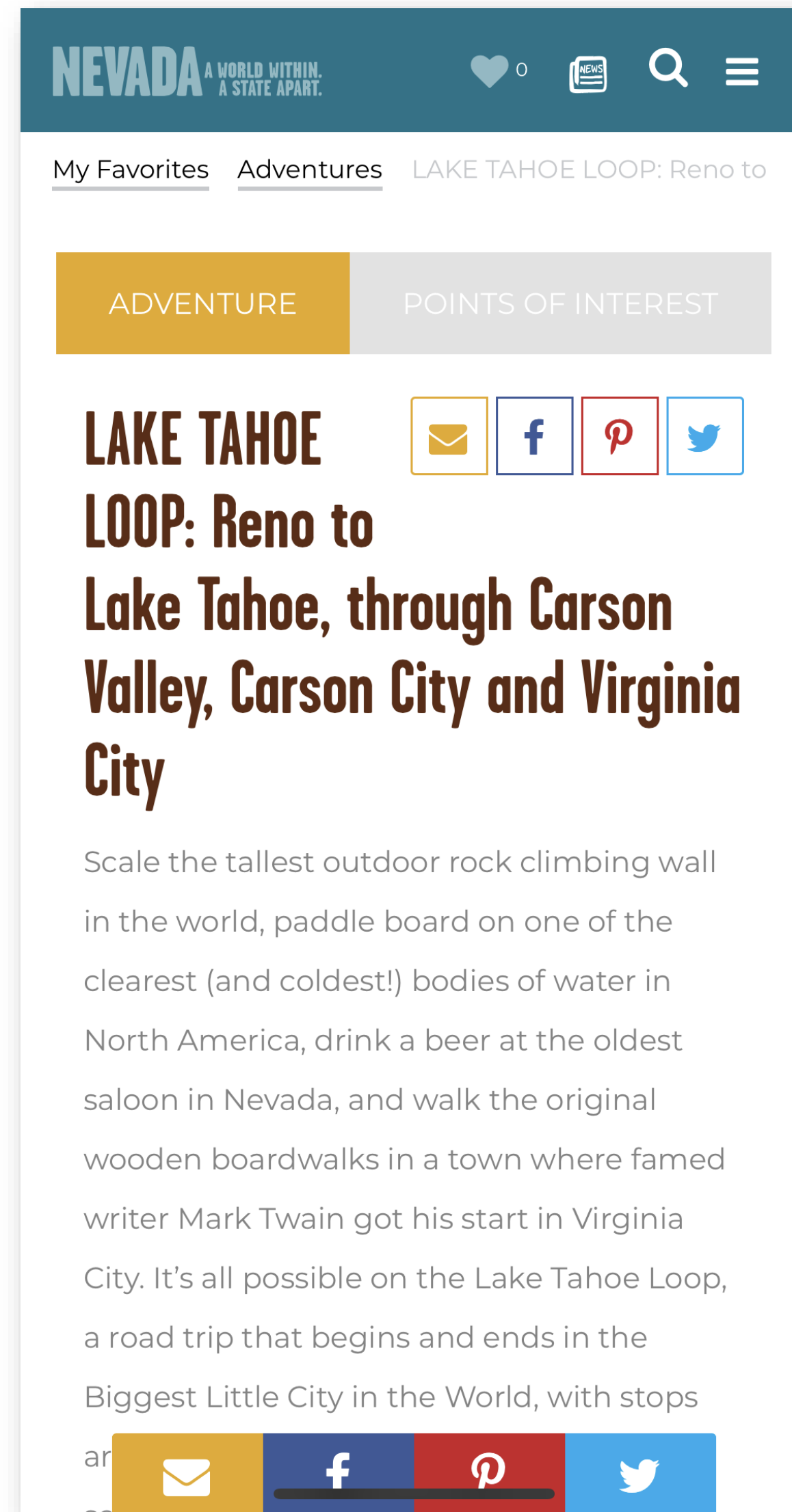
- **The content in the “Exploring Nevada” section was not considered as inspirational as the rest of the site and did not align with users’ expectations.** Most interviewees felt this section was intended to be supporting content for activities, attractions and locations. Study participants remarked that the title “Exploring Nevada” implied that users would be able to search the state by geographical location to identify attractions and points of interest. Additionally, this same content is labeled “Featured Adventures” on the homepage.
- **The overall layout and design of this section was well-received.** Site users liked the information and pictures featured within the adventures but would like to see a summary included at the beginning of each individual listing that provides a quick snapshot about the article that highlights location(s) featured, activities included, best time of year to go on this adventure, etc.



Left: Screenshot of the Exploring Nevada content.

Places to Go – Itineraries

- **Site users were immediately engaged with the “Featured Itineraries” content but wanted to see more than one itinerary featured.** Additional types of itineraries participants expressed an interest in seeing include:
 - By type of activity (like hiking)
 - By Nevada region
 - By physical ability/age, (e.g. kid friendly)
 - By length of travel within the state
- **Participants would like to see all itineraries include a quick overview to the introduction of the itinerary that shows the highlights of the trip in listicle form.**

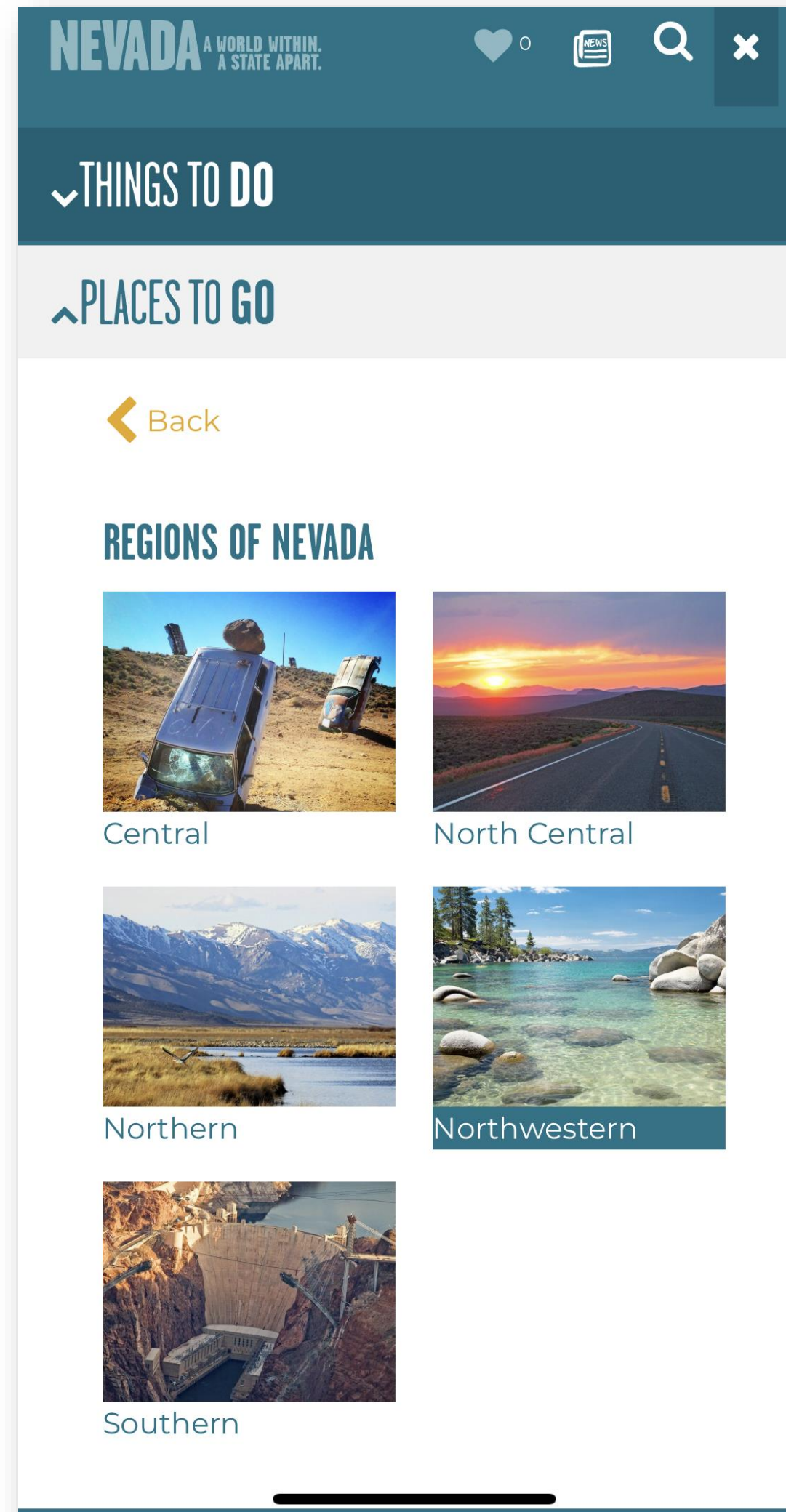


At Left: Screenshot of the “Lake Tahoe Loop” itinerary on mobile.

Places to Go – Cities & Towns/Regions

- **Site users wanted to be further educated about Nevada’s geography and why they should visit the different regions of the state.** While this content was of interest to users, most users did not have a firm grasp of the state’s geography and indicated they wanted an overview page that highlighted the top places to visit in Nevada.
- **Site users wanted easy to reference highlights in the individual regional breakdown pages just before the detailed copy.** Including a snapshot such as this helps travelers understand the unique differences between the regions and could inspire visitation to different areas.

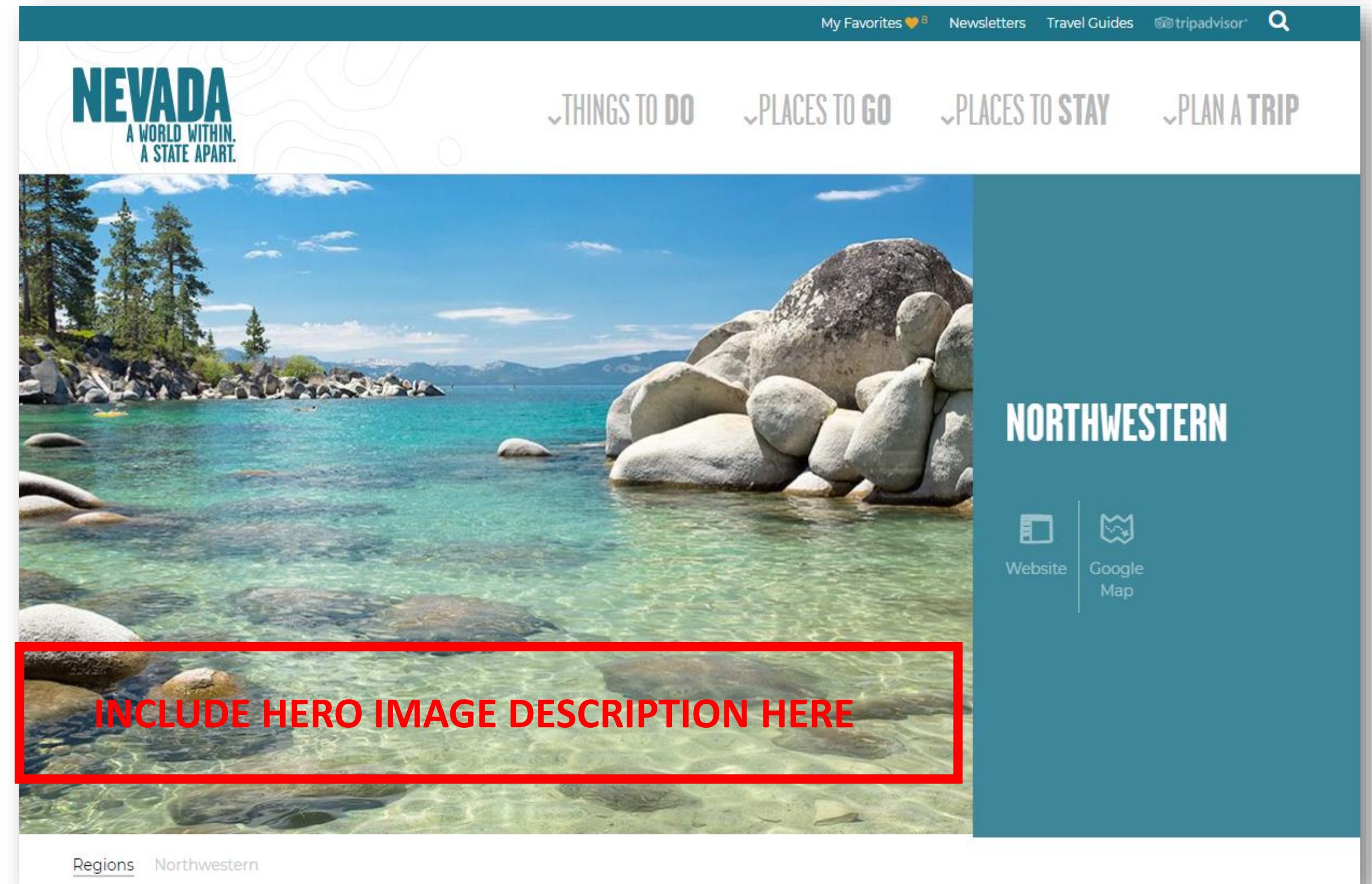
“What’s the difference between cities/towns & regions?”



At Left: Screenshot of the Places to Go Regions of Nevada menu on mobile.

Places to Go – Cities & Towns/Regions (continued)

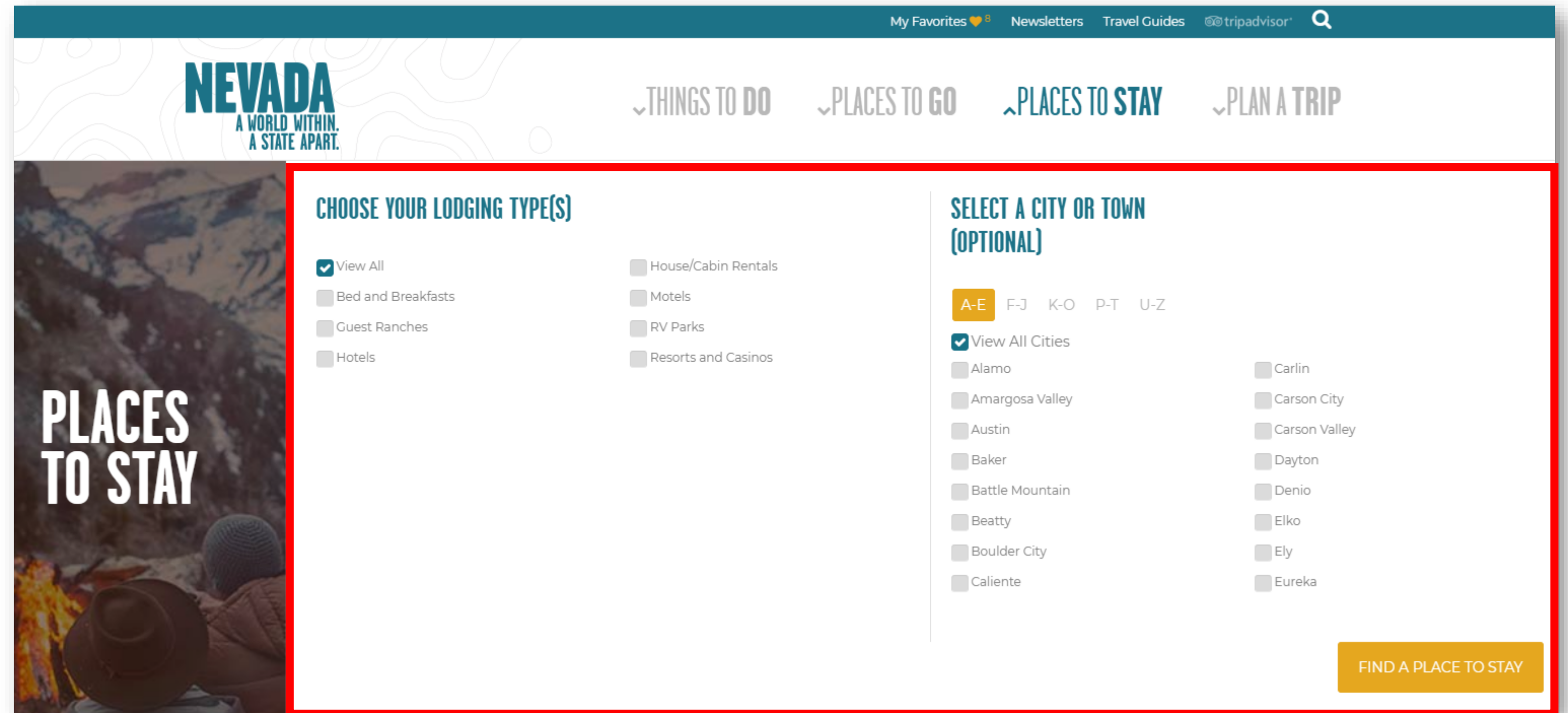
- The map featuring Things to Do, Nearby Events and Lodging Options is extremely helpful and users recommended to move this higher up on the city/town/regional individual pages.
- Additional recommendations to enhance the user-experience within the “Places to Go – Cities & Towns/Regions” section include:
 - Adding the ability to share Cities & Towns/Regions content through email, Facebook, Pinterest and Twitter—this function is included on activity/attraction/events pages
 - Include the ability to add cities or towns to “My Favorites”
 - Add a quick description and location information about the hero image(s) featured on the main page of the specific Region or City/Town.



Above: Screenshot of the Northwestern region page, highlighting the opportunity to cite the location/point of image referenced in the hero image.

Places to Stay

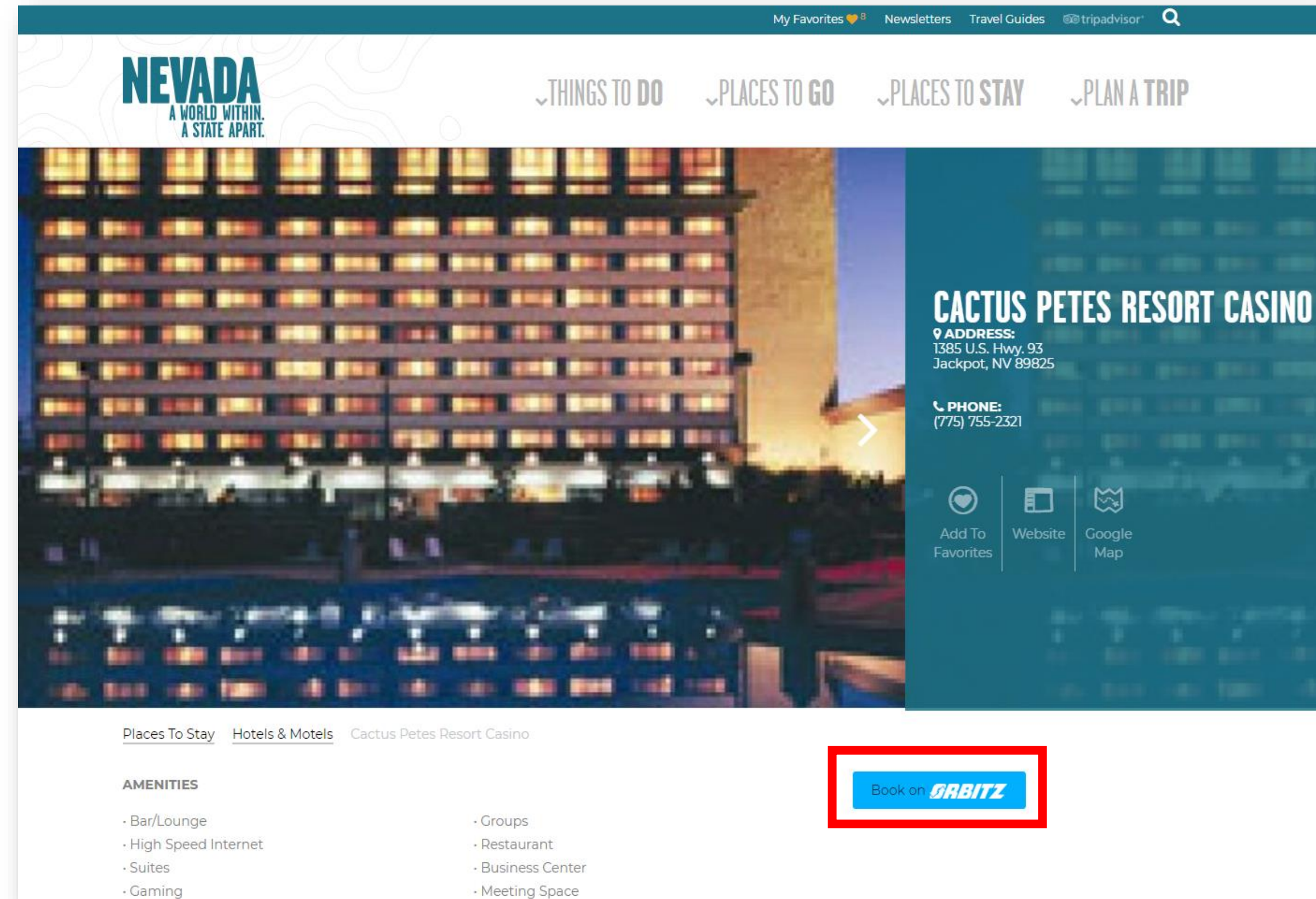
- **Users were typically surprised to be launched into a search function upon first engagement with “Places to Stay.”** Many assumed they would be directed to a lodging overview page with a list of suggested properties/lodging options. However, this was not perceived to be negative since accessing the full page of lodging listings took one additional simple click.
- **The available filtering options were appreciated and made the overall process of narrowing down a search for lodging simple.** The only desired addition was the ability to filter lodging options by diamond/star/cost rating. Travelers who prefer staying in mid-level to luxury properties were especially adamant about the inclusion of these filters.



Above: Screenshots of the Places to Stay menu, highlighting the search/filter options.

Places to Stay (continued)

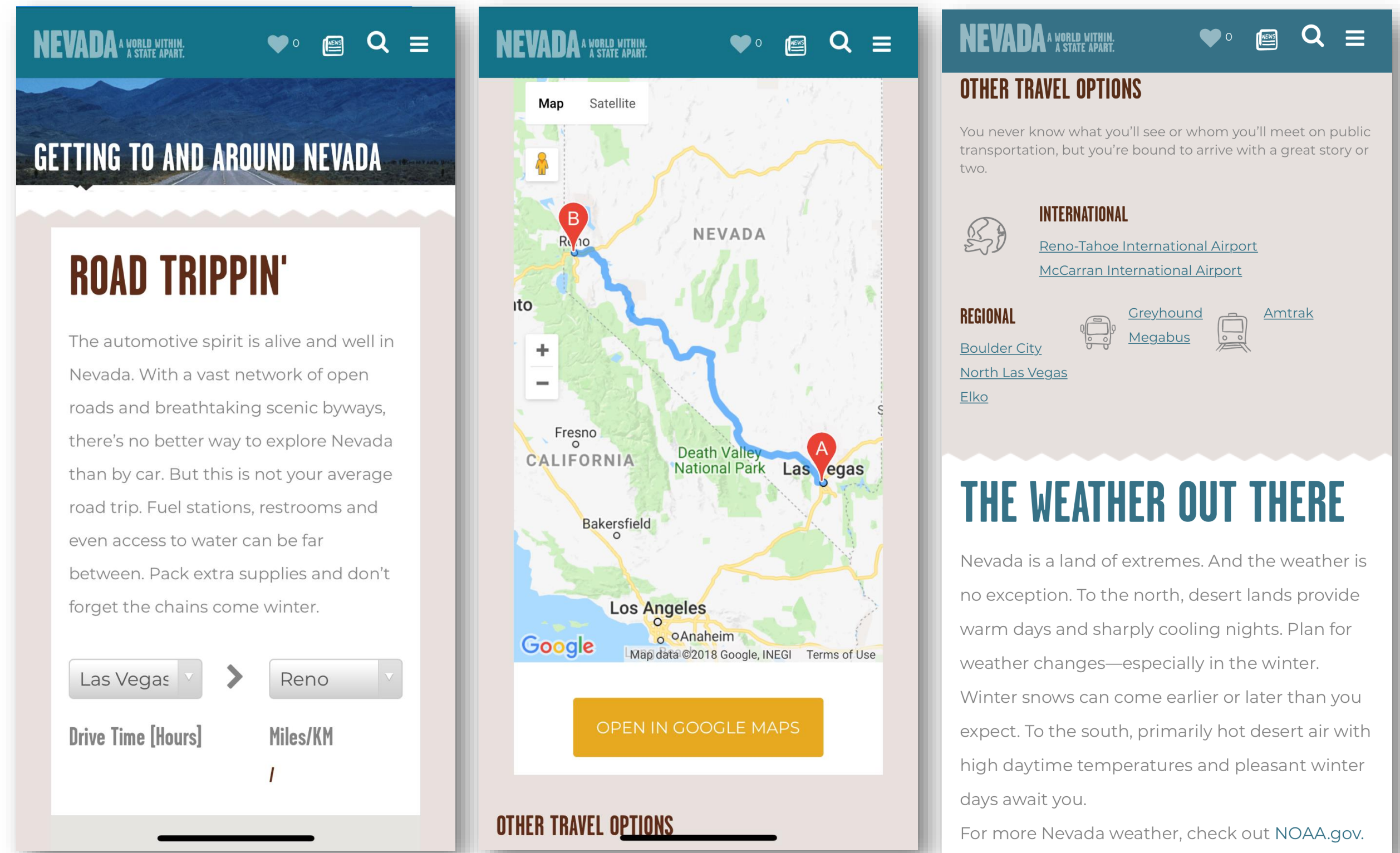
- **The available third-party booking tool was considered a convenient addition to the site.** The placement of the booking link on the individual lodging page was easily seen but the overall size was smaller than expected.
- **Some study participants commented that the embedded OTA booking link had the appearance of an advertisement.** Adding stylistic elements utilized in other parts of the site to highlight the booking link could be the solution to better integrate this resource into the website.



Above: Screenshot of the “Cactus Petes Resort” listing, highlighting the size and placement of the third-party booking link.

Plan a Trip

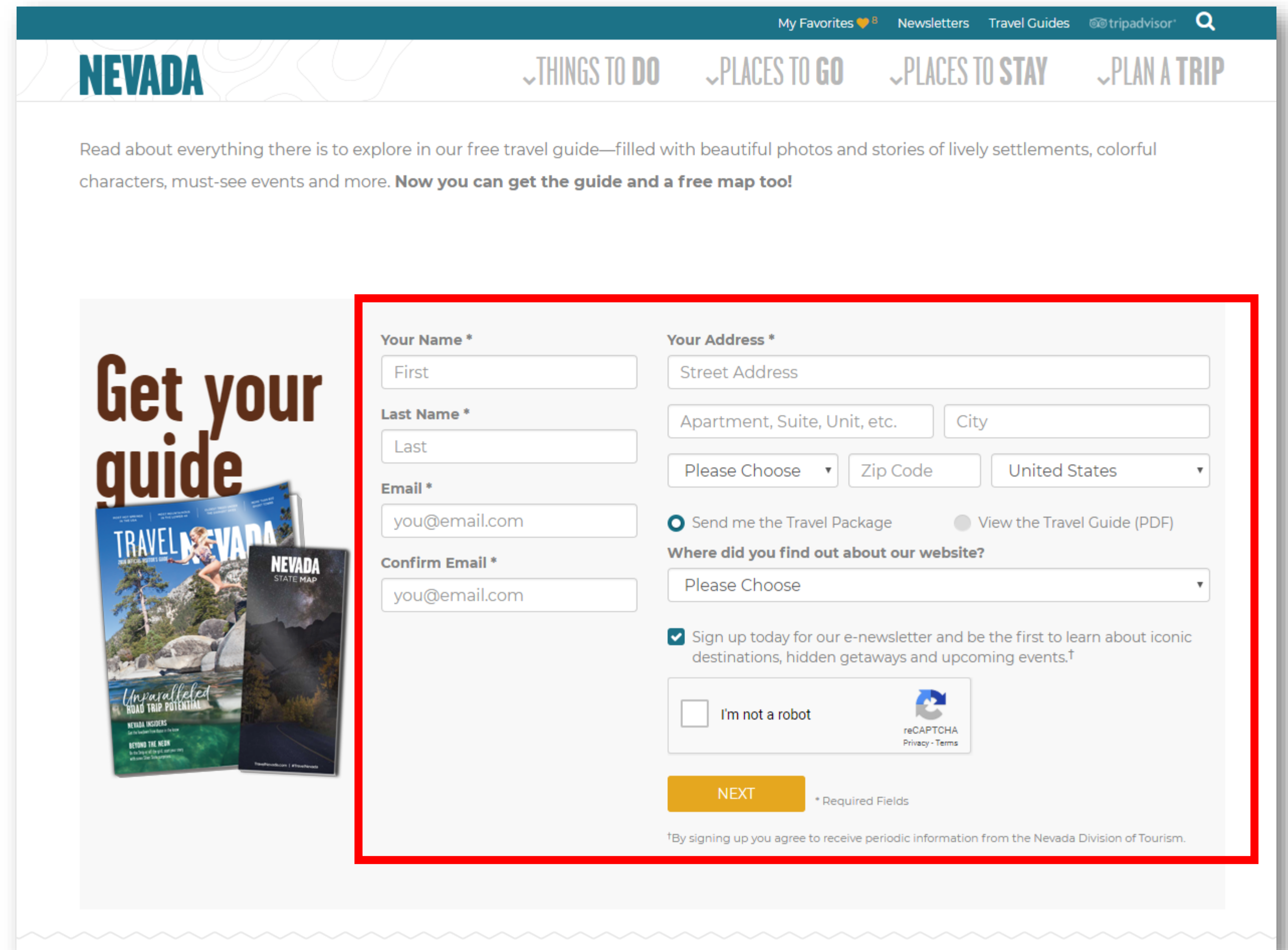
- This section of the website was extremely informative but did not follow the same organizational format as the rest of the website. For mobile users in particular, the “Plan a Trip” section required a significant amount of scrolling to read through all detailed content. Users suggested breaking up this information into the following subpages: Road Trippin’, Weather, Travel Guides, Know Before You Go and Travel Tools.
- Site users especially liked the “Road Trippin’” map. This was considered to be a helpful tool for trip planning. The only suggestion to enhance this feature was adding notable highlights such as attractions/points of interest along the mapped route.
- In reviewing the content pieces included under “Plan a Trip,” users felt this section was mistitled. Site users most often assumed that itineraries would be found under this section heading.



Above: Screenshots of the Plan a Trip section page on mobile, highlighting the detailed content outlined all on one single page.

Vacation Guide

- **Site users felt the overall process for ordering a vacation guide was straight forward but many preferred to instantly download a digital guide.** Some study participants nearly missed the presentation of the digital guides due to the page’s section break. They assumed there was no additional content below the ordering form. Once site users noticed or were directed to review the comprehensive assortment of digital guides they were positively received. They appreciated the themed guides which showcased different facets of the state. Site users also expressed a preference to see the digital guides before the sign-up form to order a physical guide.
- **Increasing usage of this content could be achieved by featuring related guides in different sections of the site.** Rather than allowing only two portals to this content, from the homepage and under “Plan a Trip,” showcasing guides that relate to other content featured on the website within “Things to Do,” “Places to Go” and “Places to Stay” could provide opportunities to site users to further explore topics they are currently researching.



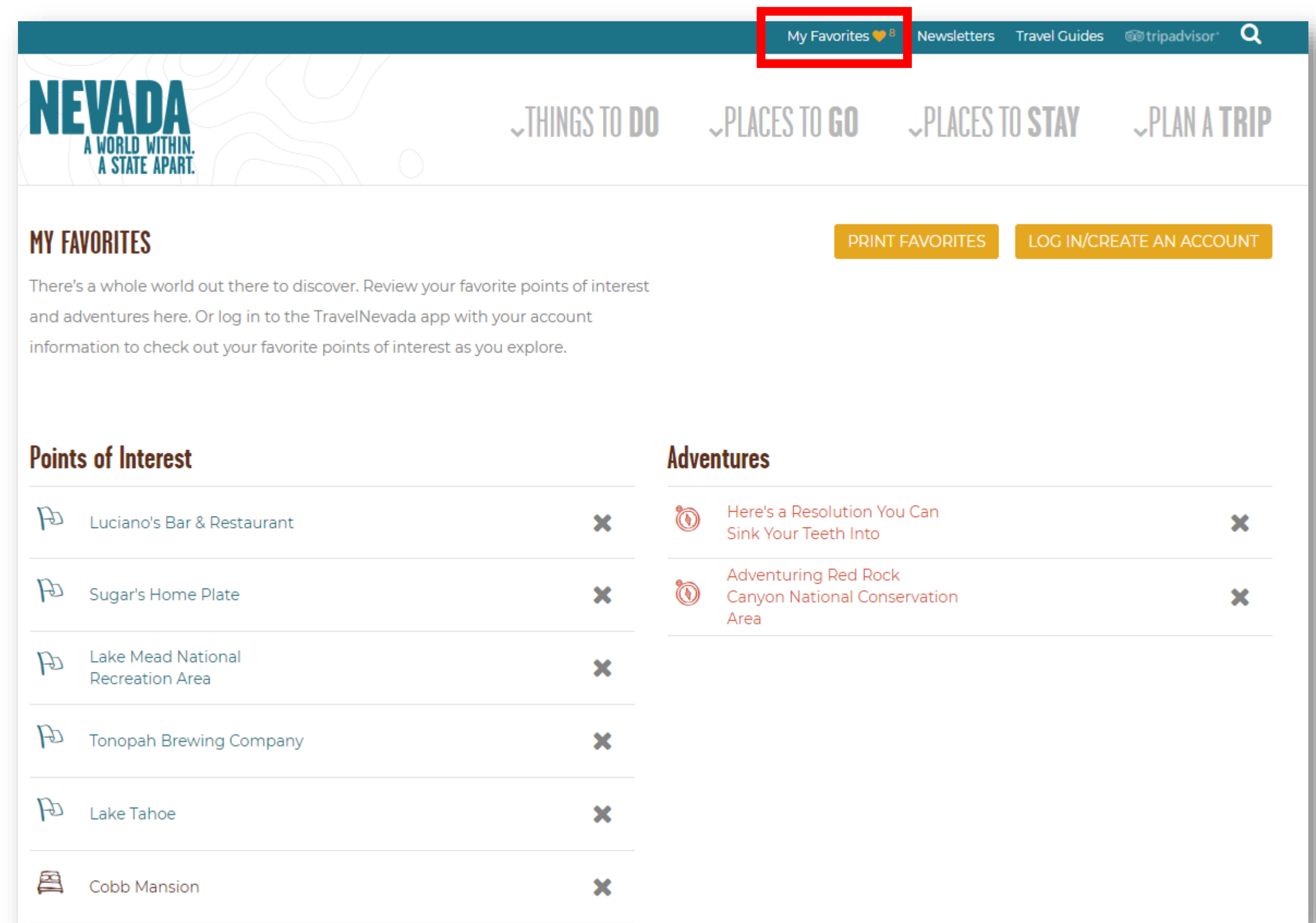
The screenshot shows the Nevada Travel Guides website. The header includes navigation links for 'THINGS TO DO', 'PLACES TO GO', 'PLACES TO STAY', and 'PLAN A TRIP'. Below the header, there is a promotional text: 'Read about everything there is to explore in our free travel guide—filled with beautiful photos and stories of lively settlements, colorful characters, must-see events and more. Now you can get the guide and a free map too!'. The main content area features a large image of a travel guide titled 'Get your guide' and a sign-up form. The form is highlighted with a red border and contains the following fields and options:

- Your Name ***: First, Last
- Your Address ***: Street Address, Apartment, Suite, Unit, etc., City, Please Choose (dropdown), Zip Code, United States (dropdown)
- Email ***: you@email.com
- Confirm Email ***: you@email.com
- Send me the Travel Package
- View the Travel Guide (PDF)
- Where did you find out about our website?**: Please Choose (dropdown)
- Sign up today for our e-newsletter and be the first to learn about iconic destinations, hidden getaways and upcoming events.[†]
- I'm not a robot (reCAPTCHA)
- NEXT** * Required Fields
- [†]By signing up you agree to receive periodic information from the Nevada Division of Tourism.

Above: Screenshot of the Travel Guides section of the website, highlighting the ordering form.

My Favorites

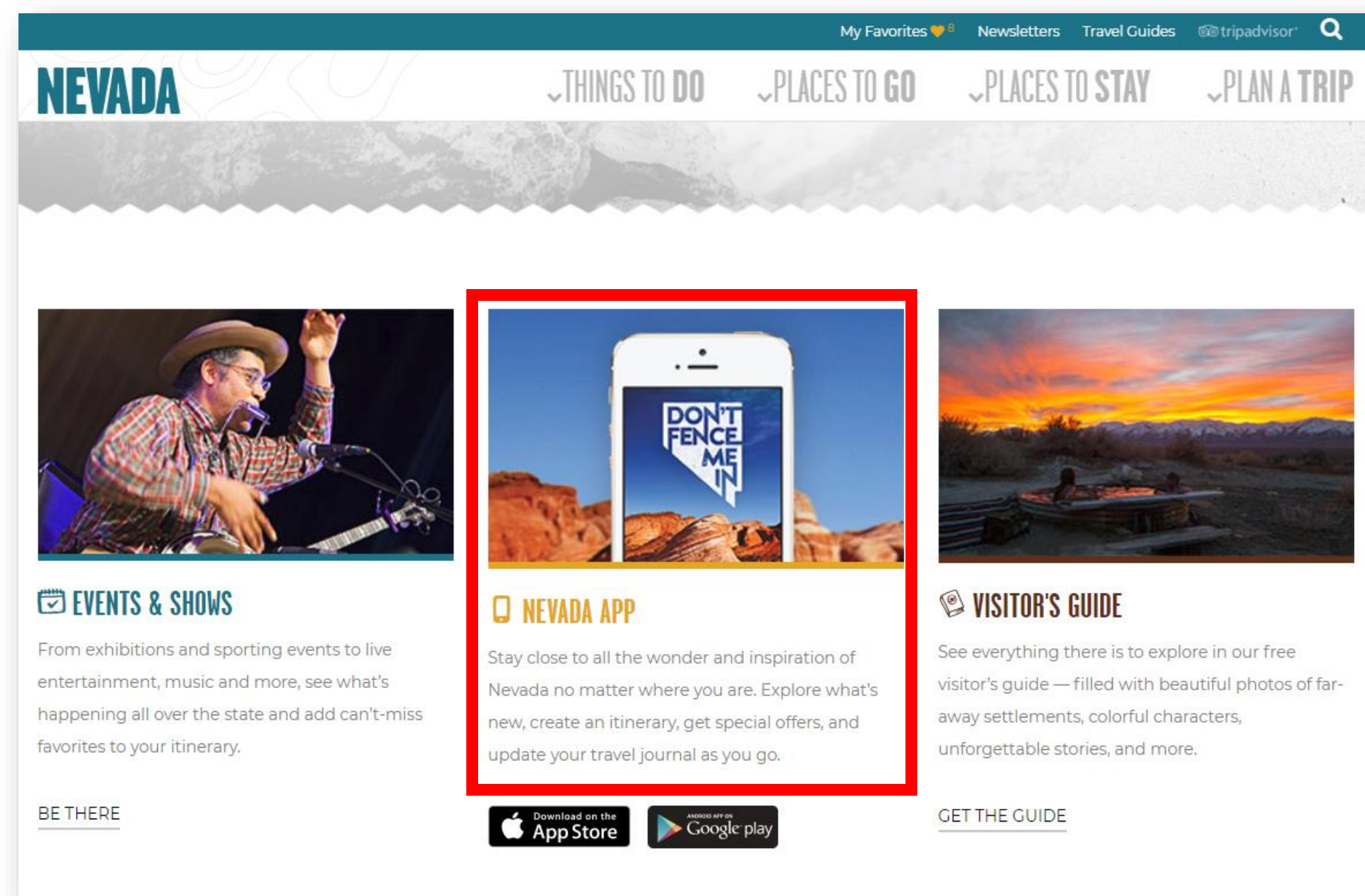
- **Users generally liked the “My Favorites” interactive feature throughout the site.** The affiliated heart icon made this feature intuitive because of its similarity in form and function to usage on social media platforms. Site users said it was natural to select the icon to save an activity/event/hotel of interest and immediately knew they would be able to access their favorited item(s) on the site when ready. They also typically appreciated that immediately after favoriting an item the heart icon at the top of the page turned yellow to signal users and inform them of where to access this information.
- **Participants suggestions to increase usage of “My Favorites” included:**
 - Adding the ability to view the favorited items on an interactive map.
 - Adding the ability to sort favorited items into an itinerary e.g. adding and sorting items by trip dates/times.



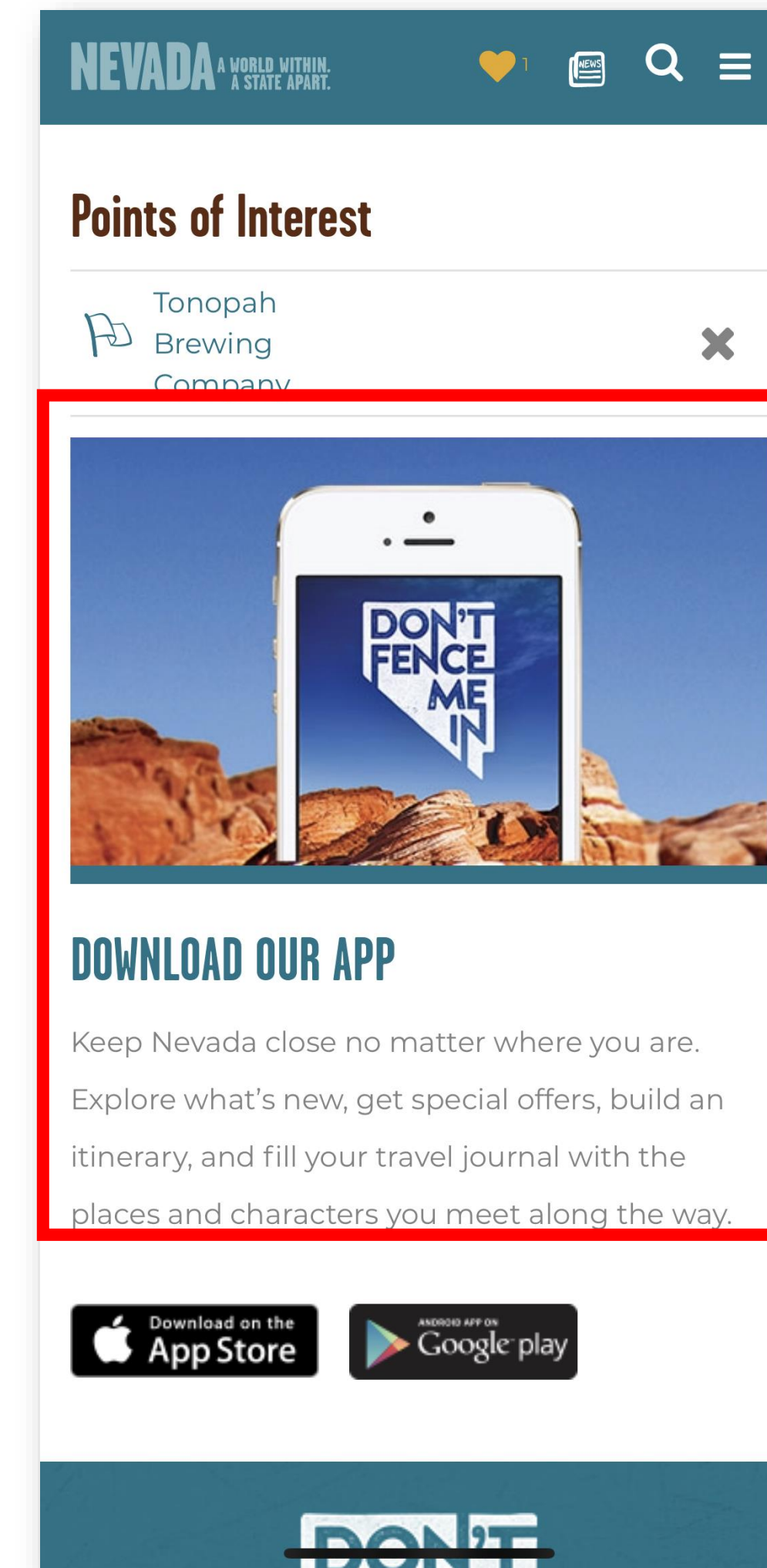
Above: Screenshot of the My Favorites page, highlighting the yellow heart, which signals site users on where to find their favorited items.

Travel App

- Users also liked the option of furthering their destination research through the use of a travel app but were unsure of the full benefits it would provide. Although there was a blurb about some of the app's functionality, site users often missed the description. Adding visual snapshots of the travel app's unique offerings could potentially boost site users' engagement with it. Additionally, most users had the expectation that once they signed up for an account and download the app that their favorites will be imported directly to the app.



Above: Screenshot of the Travel App advertised in the homepage.



At Left: Screenshot of the Travel App advertised in the My Favorites section on mobile.

TRAVELNEVADA APP USABILITY

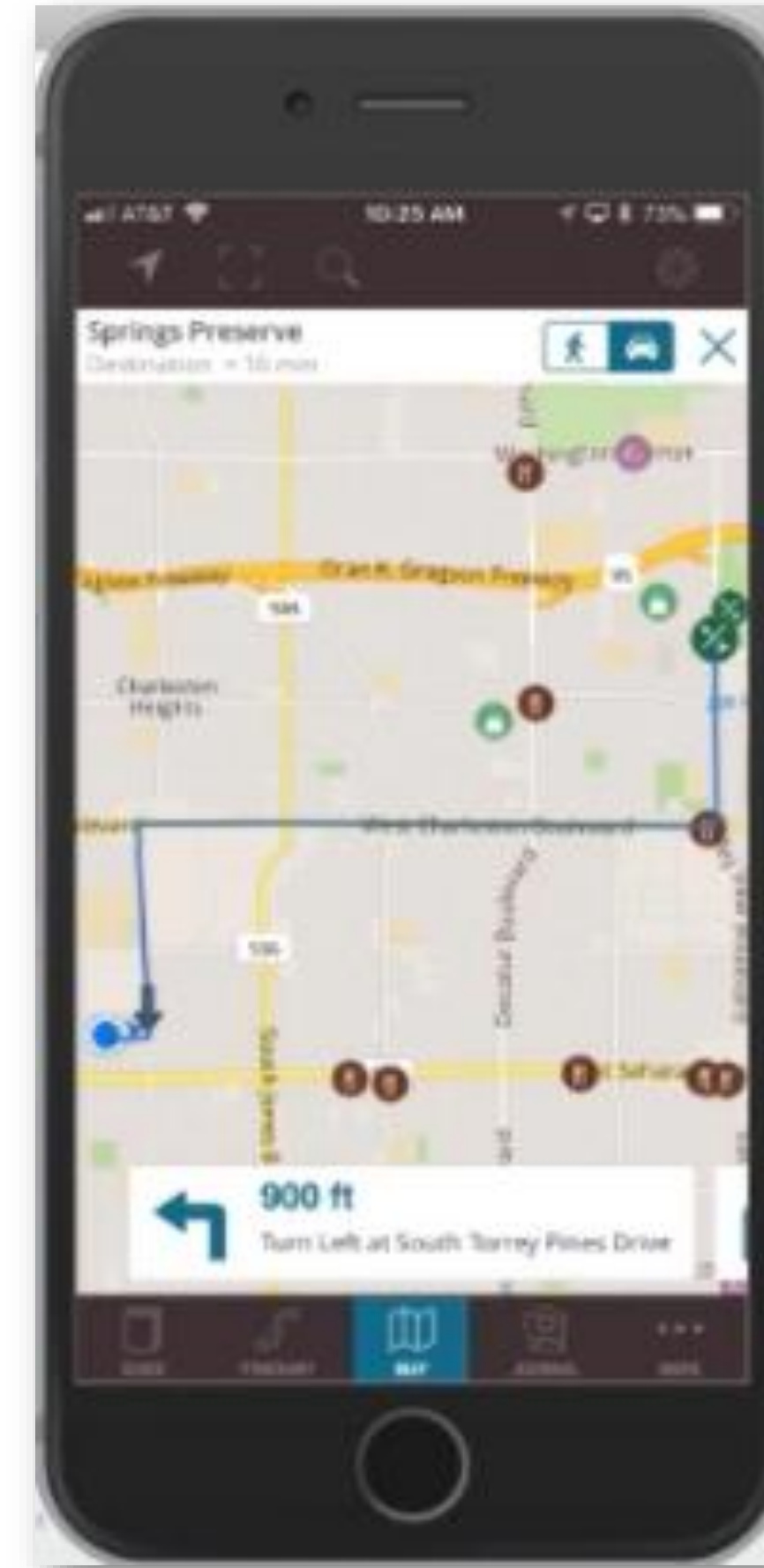
Note: Since this is a 3rd party app, certain suggestions within this section may not be achievable.

TRAVELNEVADA APP USABILITY STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

The following section provides the strengths and opportunities of the TravelNevada App.

Travel App Strengths

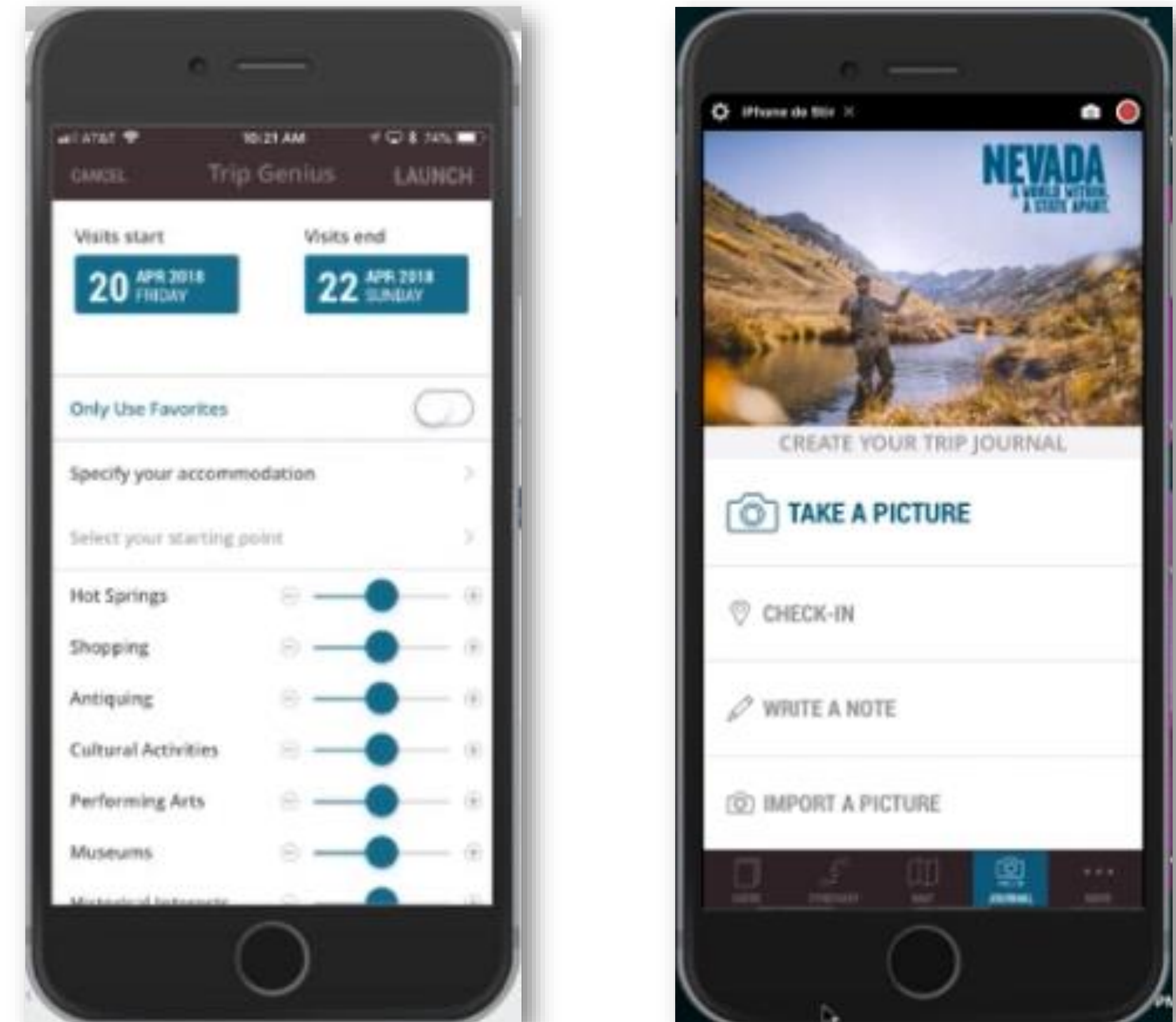
- **The TravelNevada App was viewed as a comprehensive resource to enhance their trip experience while traveling within Nevada.** In addition to the TravelNevada.com website, the TravelNevada App was viewed as an important resource for travel-related information. App users were impressed by the level of detail provided within the app, including ways to find nearby businesses, the itinerary builder and sharing their trip experience within the travel journal.
- **The “Itinerary” section was praised for the dynamic features made available to users to build their trip.** Users appreciated the options available to build their trip itinerary including the incorporation of their “favorites” into a custom itinerary and the option to use the “Trip Genius” tool. Additionally, users valued seeing their itinerary mapped out by day and location.
- **Overall, the TravelNevada app effectively delivered a positive users experience. The layout and design of the travel app were described as simple-to-use, visual and contemporary.**



Above: An example of a useful feature within the TravelNevada app itinerary section.

Travel App Opportunities

- **The TravelNevada App seemed self-contained and users wanted better integration with other resources.** Users who interacted with both the site and the app felt the app lacked continuity from the website. These users noticed differences with the layout and questioned whether they would be able to view favorites saved on website. Also, app users discovered that reviews were not affiliated with a trusted source (like Yelp or TripAdvisor) and the travel journal didn't offer a clear way to share their experience on social media.
- **Provide users with additional resources and options to more effectively to build a trip itinerary.** App users highly valued this feature but wanted some flexibility in building their itinerary. These users wanted to more quickly understand how to build an itinerary and expressed their desire for a tutorial or step by step instructions. Users also suggested to not prompt them to specify their accommodation. Additionally, users would like to filter suggested itineraries by type of activity, location and distance.



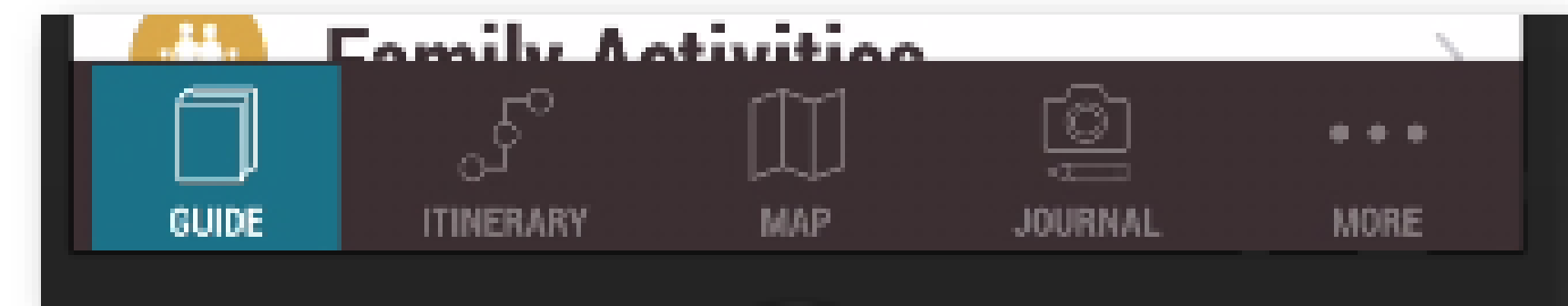
Above: Screenshots of the trip itinerary and the travel journal sections within the travel app.

TRAVELNEVADA APP USABILITY TOP 5 QUICK FIX RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section provides the top 5 quick fix recommendations for the TravelNevada App.

Top 5 Quick Fix Recommendations

- **Improve the visibility of the horizontal toolbar that intermittently appears on the bottom and top of the screen.** The dark background and muted icons of the horizontal toolbar along the bottom and top of the app made it difficult to see. Making adjustments to the toolbar will draw greater attention to these important app features that were sometimes missed.
- **The “Add a Place” category within the “Guide” section should include simple instructions to help users understand the functionality and purpose of this feature.** Upon clicking “Add a Place,” users were confused to see a repeat of the previous menu options.



Above: Screenshot of the horizontal toolbar shown at the bottom of the screen.

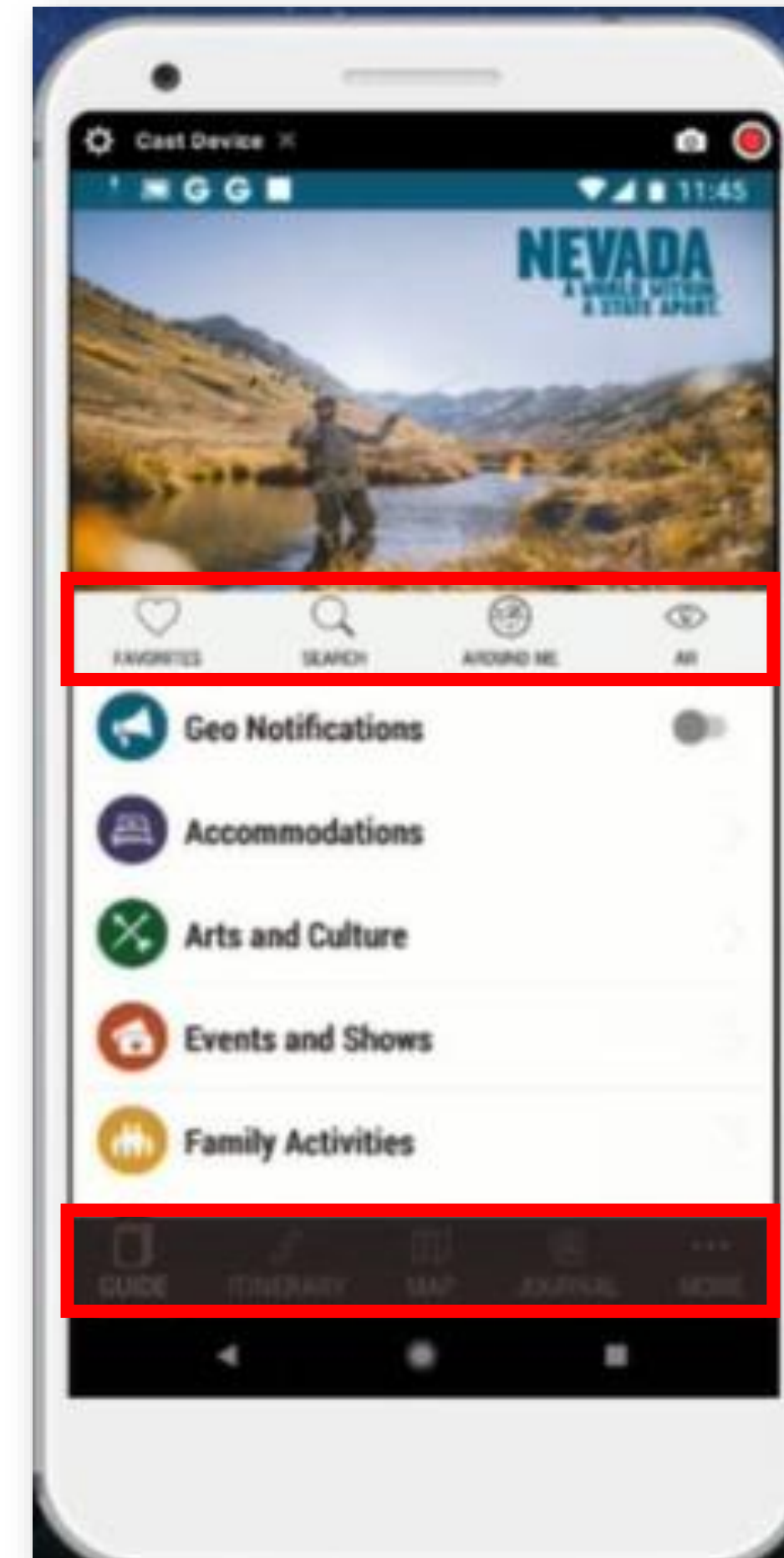
- **Re-label filters within the “Guide” section category pages to better align with users’ expectations.** When users selected “filter”, they expected to see options to filter A to Z, city, distance and ratings rather than just the sub-categories within selected heading (e.g. the Accommodations sub-category only included options to filter by other Bed & Breakfast, Guest Ranches, etc.).
- **Within the “Itinerary” section, make the section dividers more distinctive.** The “Your Itinerary” and “Suggested Itineraries” sections appeared to run together. Providing a clear separation between the two different sections should be considered.
- **To prevent the app from crashing, make adjustments to the Suggested Itineraries content within the “Itinerary” section.** The TravelNevada app crashed each time users tried to open any of the suggested itineraries. This was problematic, as this type of content is considered a significant source of inspiration to travel. Addressing this issue should be a priority.

TRAVELNEVADA APP USABILITY DETAILED RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following section provides detailed research findings of the TravelNevada App's usability.

TravelNevada App First Impression

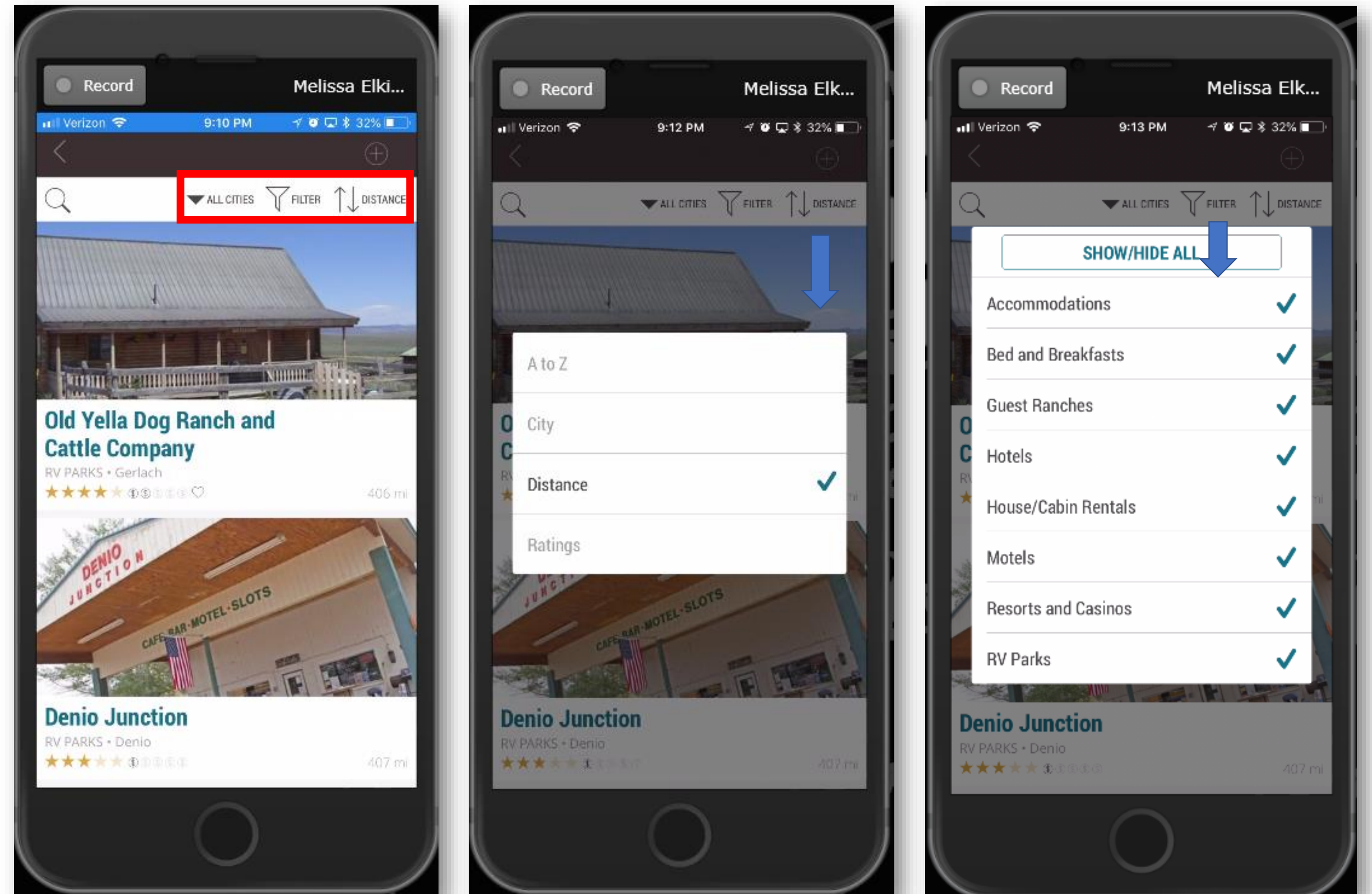
- **Overall, users had a positive first impression of the Nevada Travel App.** The layout and design of the travel app were described as simple-to-use, visual and contemporary. Based on their first impressions, study participants felt the app was successful in communicating that there is a broad spectrum of things to do in Nevada for travelers of all ages.
- **The horizontal toolbar was immediately noticed upon opening the travel app.** Participants were drawn to the horizontal toolbar under the hero image due to its central placement on the screen. The icons were clean and easy to interpret except for the “AR” feature. This was the only icon that participants did not intuitively know the purpose/function of. Upon learning that “AR” was short for “Augmented Reality” study participants were immediately intrigued by this feature.
- **The horizontal toolbar along the bottom of the screen was sometimes missed.** Users didn’t always see the horizontal toolbar along the bottom. Participants said this was due to the dark background and the muted color of the icons.



Above: Screenshot of TravelNevada’s mobile app, highlighting the horizontal toolbars along the top and bottom.

Category Pages

- **The filtering options provided did not align with users' expectations.** When users selected “filter”, they expected to see options to filter A to Z, city, distance and ratings rather than just the sub-categories within selected heading (e.g. the Accommodations sub-category only included options to filter by other Bed & Breakfast, Guest Ranches, etc.).
- **All app users should have the option to filter their searches by region and city.** For out-of-state users, the “All Cities” filter appeared at the top toolbar. While useful, users would like to see this additionally broken down by region. Additionally, for in-state users, the “All Cities” filter was removed from the top. Not all users are looking for business listings in their immediate area and they should be given the option to search for other locations in Nevada.



Above: Screenshots of the category results page, highlighting the filtering options.

Individual Business Listings

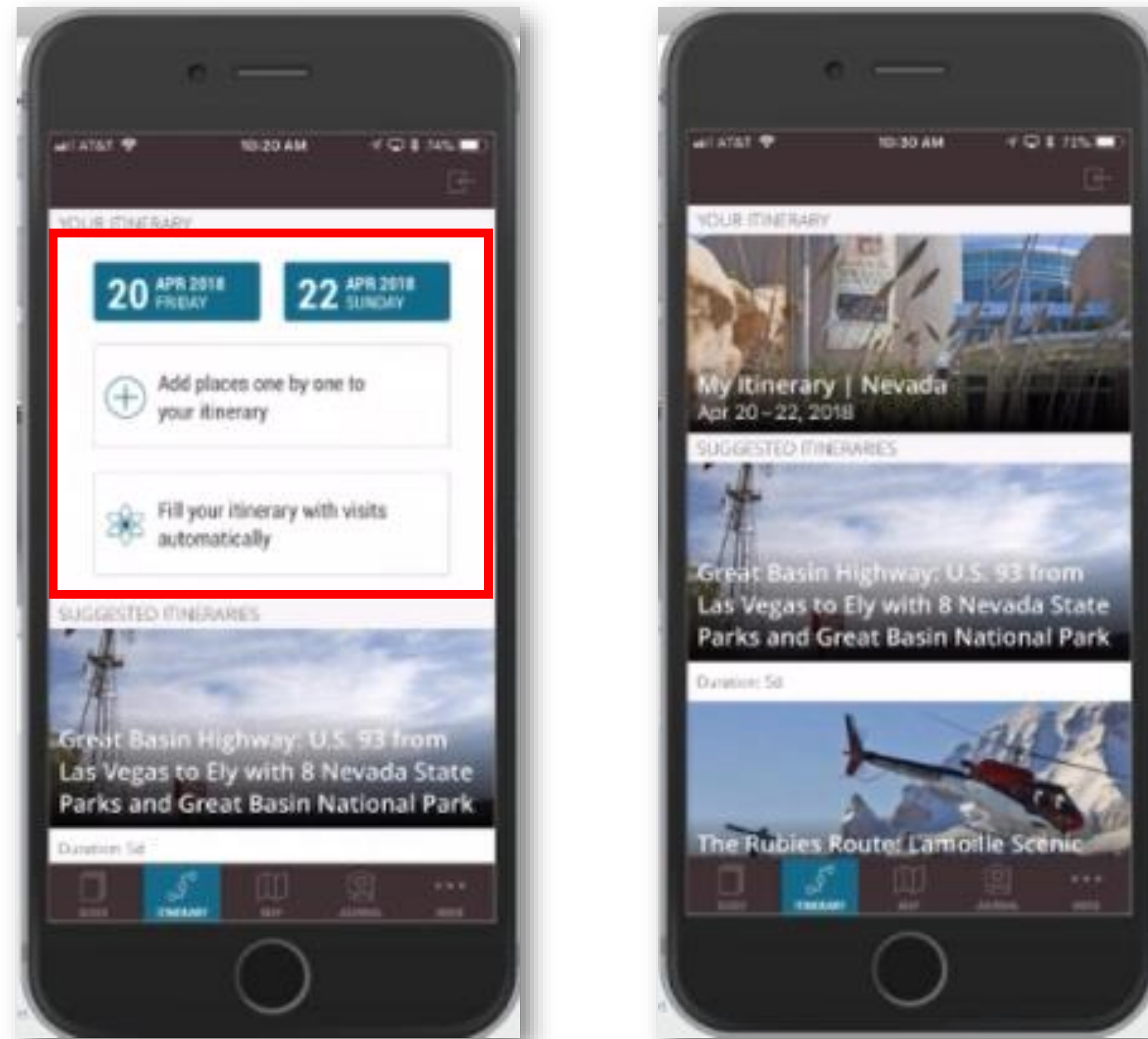
- **Individual business listing pages were viewed as a useful resource.** The information outlined in the individual listings aligned with users' expectations. They also appreciated the engagement the app provides through the convenient options of adding items to their favorites list, viewing the business on a map and accessing driving directions directly within the app.
- **Study participants wanted see ratings from a trusted source such as Yelp or TripAdvisor as opposed to seeing ratings from other travel app users.** Participants viewed ratings as an important resource that would influence their likelihood to visit a business/attraction, but they prefer to see ratings from familiar user-generated content sites that they consider trustworthy. There was an uncertainty around the validity of ratings generated from other app users.



Above: Screenshot of the “Wildflower Village” business listing.

Itinerary

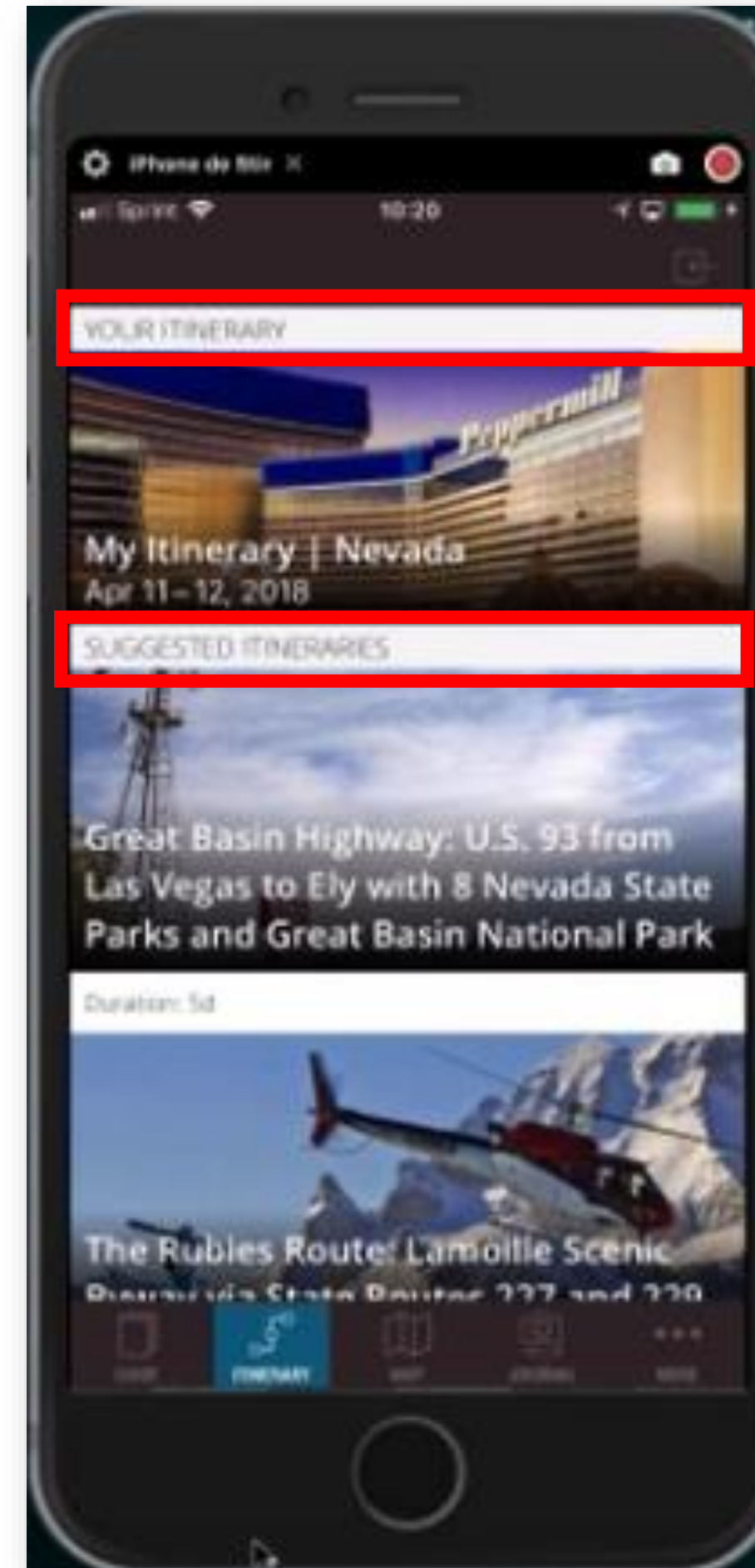
- **The process of building an itinerary within the app was not immediately intuitive.** Although users noticed the helpful introduction page upon first accessing the itinerary builder, the page was no longer available as soon as users navigated to other sections of the site when they returned to the itinerary section.



Above: Screenshots of the itinerary section, highlighting the introductory page on left and the normal screen view on the right.

Itinerary (continued)

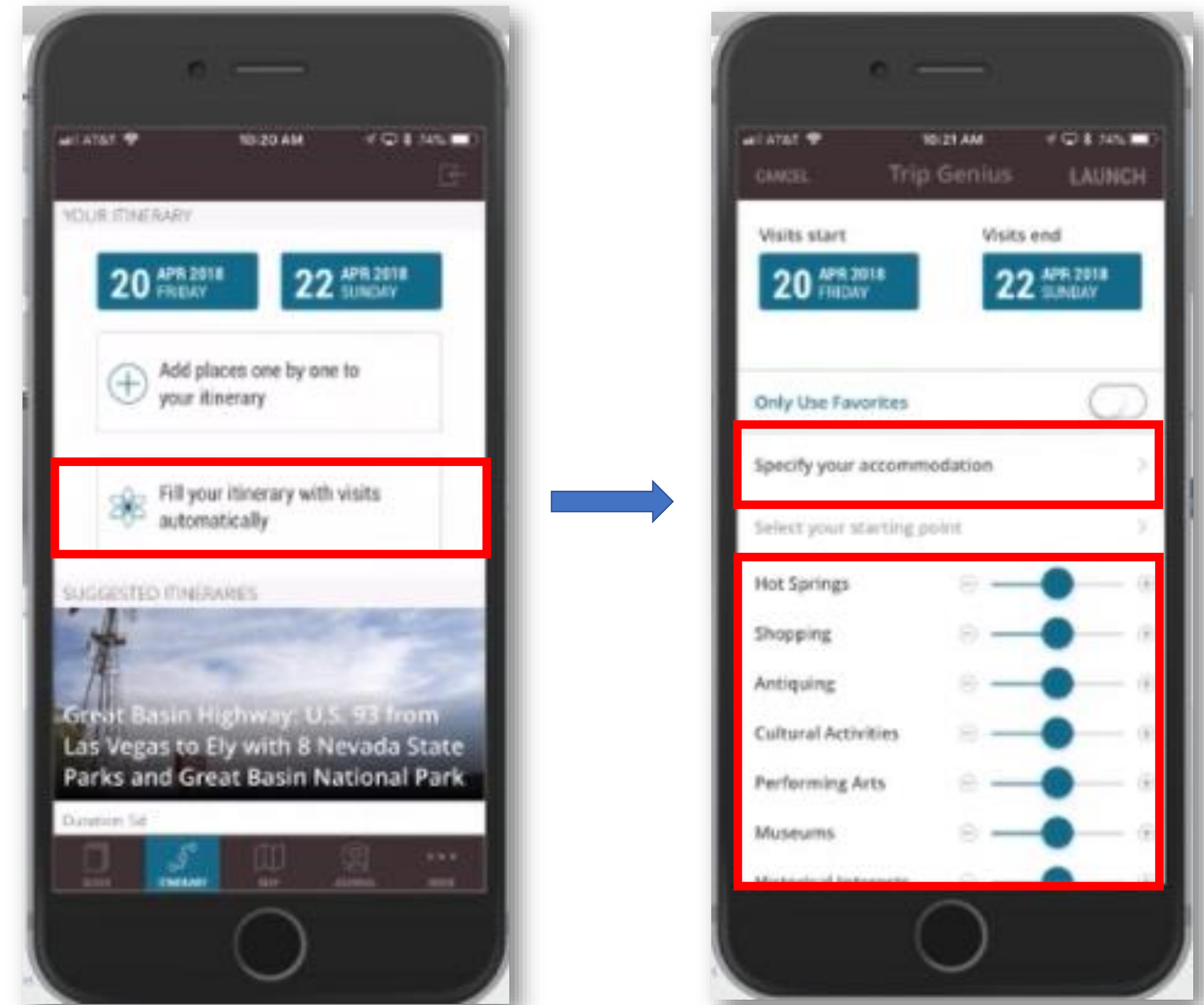
- **The section dividers were not distinctive enough.** The “Your Itinerary” and “Suggested Itineraries” sections appeared to run together. Providing a clear separation between the two different sections should be considered.
- **To enhance the “Suggested Itineraries” section, users suggested adding the ability to filter.** Participants would like to include filters by type of activity, location and distance (for those using the App during their trip).
- **Although study participants were intrigued by the suggested itineraries, they were unable to review this content.** The TravelNevada app crashed each time users tried to open any of the suggested itineraries. This was problematic, as this type of content is considered a significant source of inspiration to travel. Addressing this issue should be a priority.



Above: Screenshot of the itinerary section, highlighting the section dividers.

Itinerary (continued)

- **Participants loved the concept of the “Trip Genius” feature.** Upon discovery of the “Trip Genius” feature, users were enthusiastic about customizing their travel experience. However, because app users were immediately prompted to specify their accommodation, they assumed this was a necessary first step to building their itinerary. Additionally, users seemed to be somewhat disappointed in the output when they did not see a robust variety of activities/attractions returned. They also expressed a desire to define a certain geographical area (or current location for in-state users) to ensure their customizable trip included points of interest that fell within the city/town/region they were planning to visit.



Above: Screenshots of the of the Trip Genius feature, highlighting the “Specify your accommodations” and customization controls.

Around Me - Residents ONLY

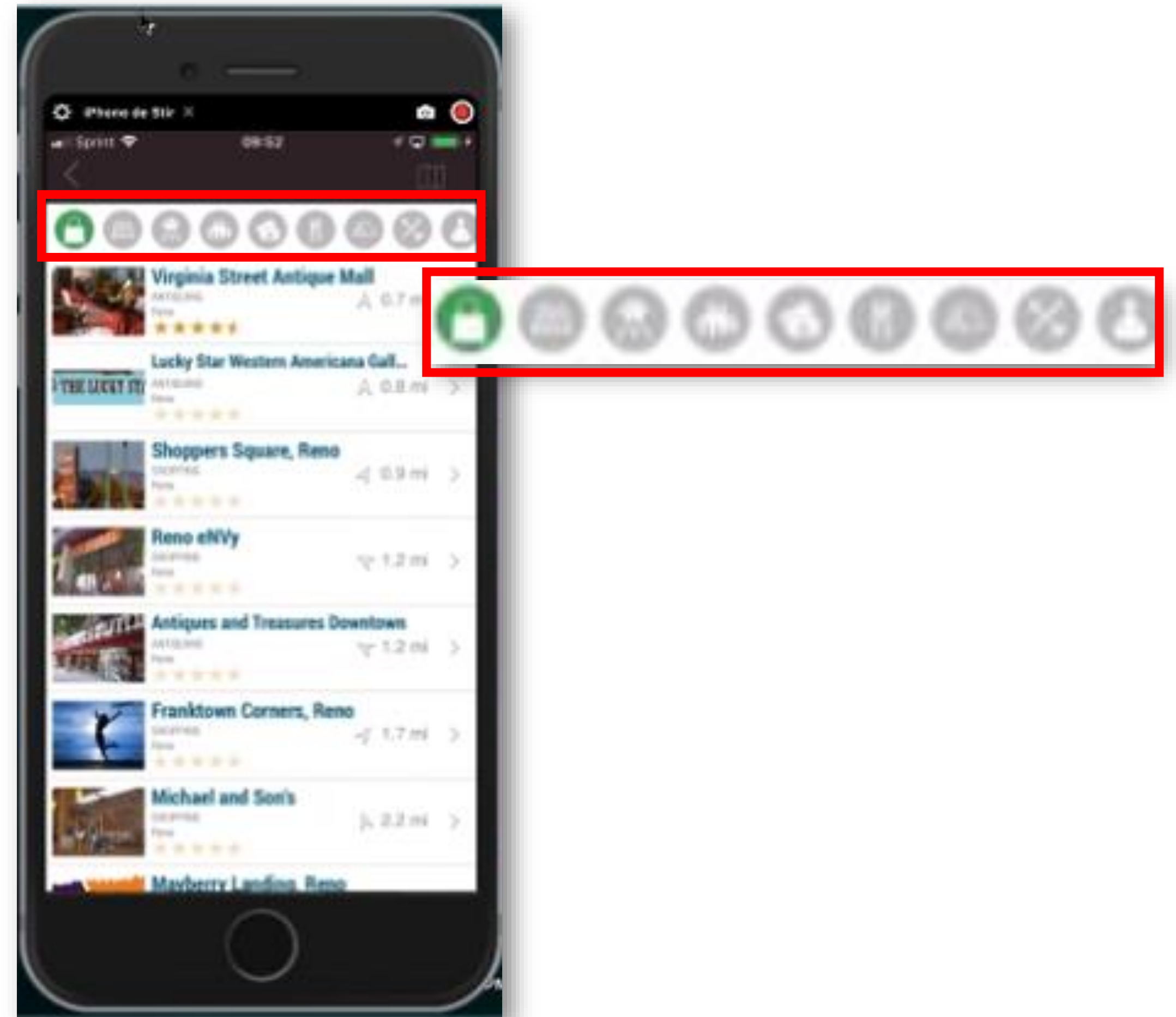
- **Initially, users needed some direction on how to effectively navigate this section.**
Users were not aware they could utilize the categories across to the top of the screen to filter down to options that were of interest to them. Since the user is in the process of becoming accustomed to this page, they would like some guidance/instruction. Users would like the option to see a general category or a way to select the category/categories of their choice before they are automatically shown listings.



Above: Screenshot of the Around Me section's perspective from an in-state resident.

Around Me - Residents *ONLY* (continued)

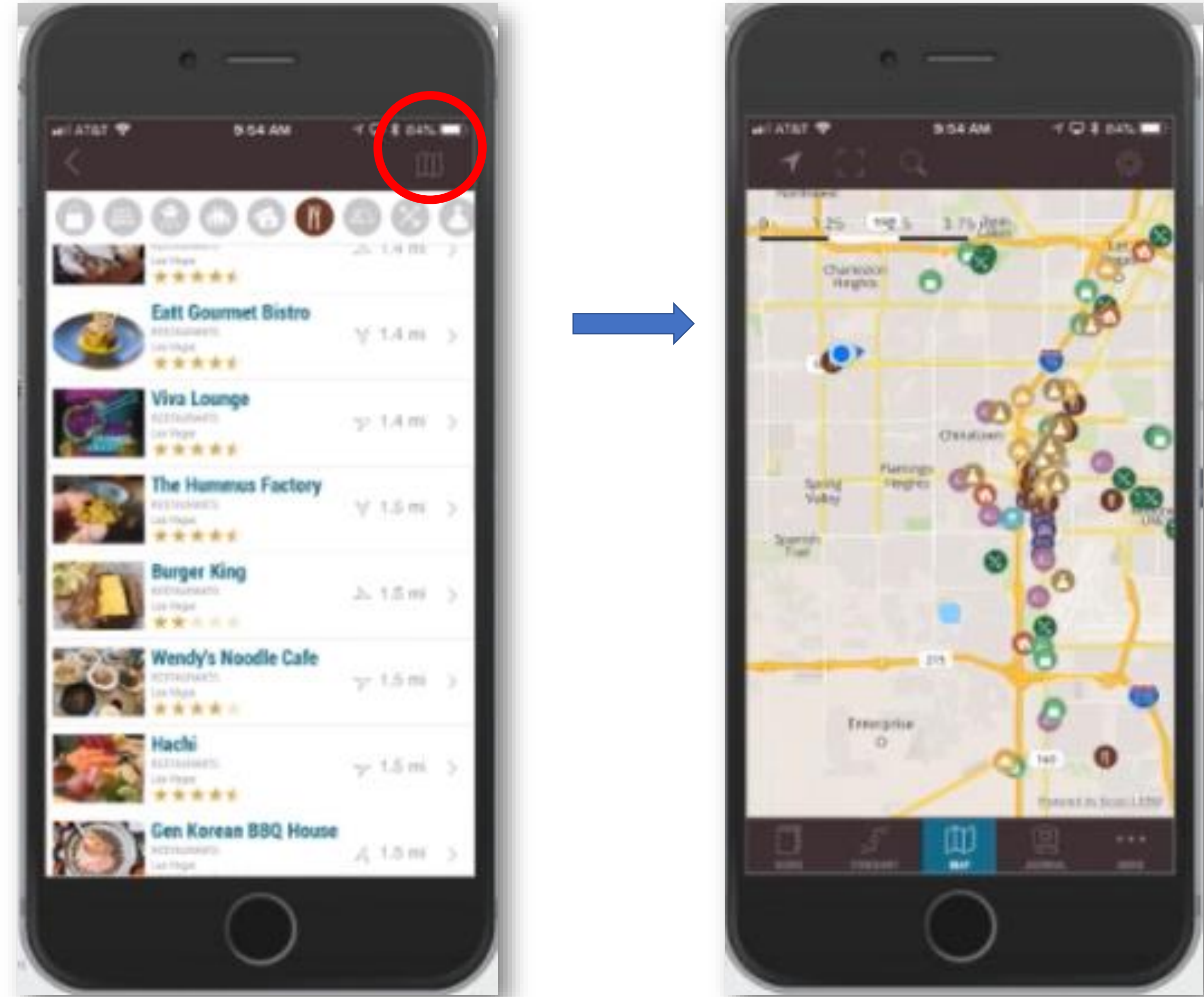
- **Not all icons were intuitive within the Around Me toolbar across the top and the map view.** This caused some confusion among the study participants. They either went back to the Guide page or guessed what categories they were reviewing. Providing an icon legend within these sections could be helpful to users.



Above: Screenshots of the Around Me section, highlighting the category icons.

Around Me - Residents *ONLY* (continued)

- Participants liked having the option to view nearby business listings on a **map**. However, it was not always immediately seen due to the dark background. Participants suggested lightening up the background to improve the visibility of the map icon.



Above: Screenshots of the Around Me section, highlighting the map icon and the map display.

Map

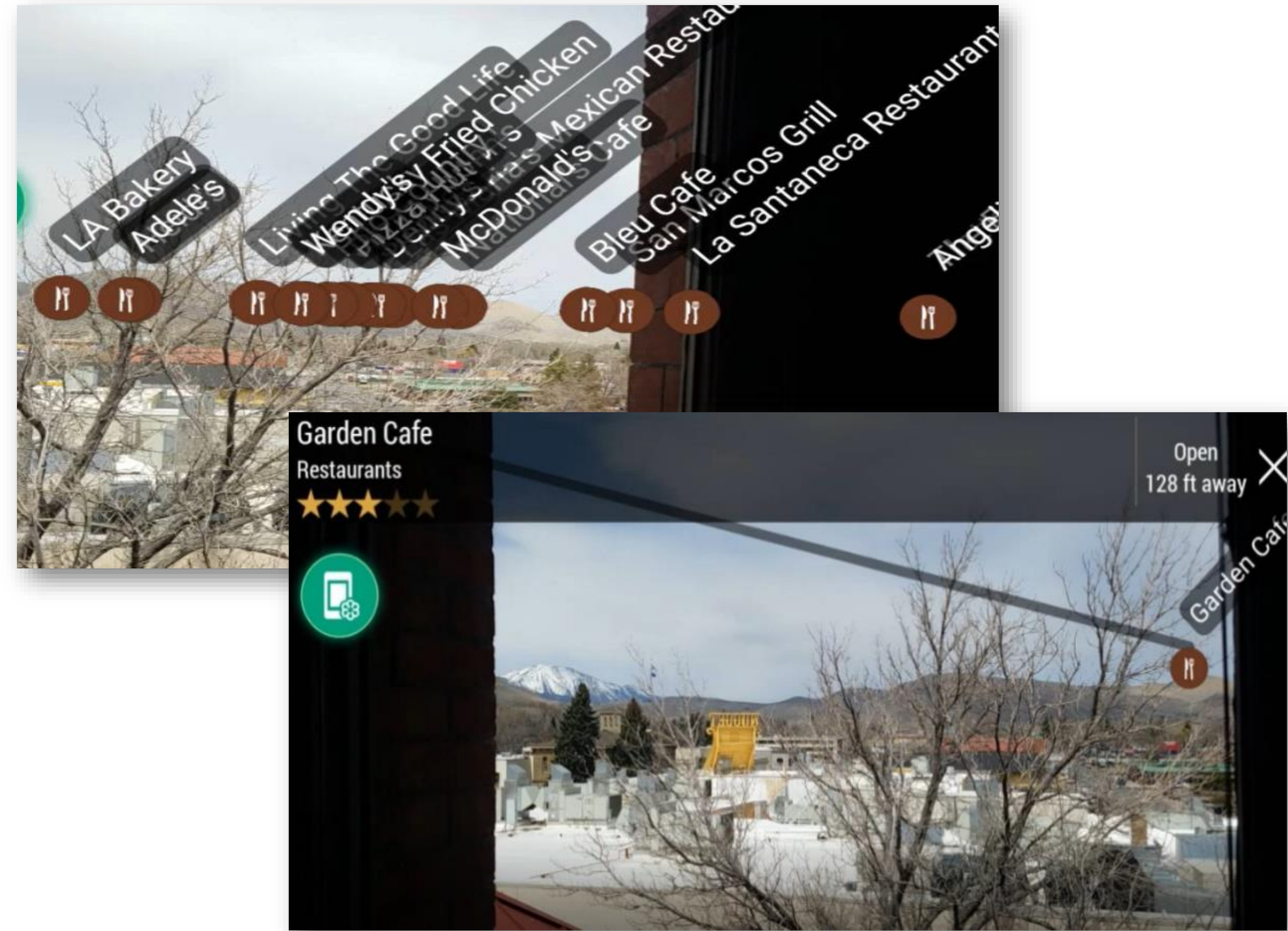
- **Nearby businesses were slow to populate on screen (For Residents Only).**
Users understood this was likely due to the geolocation feature but would like to see a message saying that the map is populating. Otherwise, they were initially under the impression that there was an unusually low number of offerings.



Above: Screenshot of the Map section.

AR- Residents ONLY

- **There were mixed feelings about the AR feature.**
 - Some participants felt this was too advanced for them and they didn't think it was a useful feature.
 - Others liked that you could see nearby businesses but wouldn't consider using this as a means to navigate them to these respective locations. They would prefer to turn to other mapping apps. Rather, they would like the AR feature be a resource for landmarks and important facts about an area.



Above: Screenshots of the AR section's perspective from an in-state resident.

Journal

- **The trip journal was well received but users expected there would be an option to connect with other social media platforms.** Participants considered this to be a clever way to share their trip with friends and family but upon review users noticed that it didn't connect with any social media channels.



Above: Screenshot of the Journal section.