

SUMMER 2018



via

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California's Redwood
National Park

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Meet the robots

Technology comes to life at a recently expanded museum in Seattle.

Walk in front of the sparkling blue wall inside **Living Computers: Museum and Labs** and, on-screen, flowers sprout from your shadow. Surprises come often and easily at the Seattle museum, a wonderland where visitors can play with sundry gadgets, from a 1963 Teletype machine to a brand-new Dash robot. The center's credo? "Most museums put glass in front of their stuff. We put a chair."

It's a very apt philosophy at a place that was designed for tinkerers by the chief tinkerer himself, Paul Allen. The Microsoft cofounder wanted to allow

the public to interact with vintage computers while honoring the technical achievements of pioneers in the field. Living Computers was born from this notion in 2012, adding labs and a fleet of forward-looking exhibits on robotics, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality four years later.

On a trip through the 31,500-square-foot space, visitors can time travel. Upstairs, they can step into an air-conditioned room to marvel at the world's only operating CDC 6500, an

8.3-ton supercomputer hand-wired in 1967, which can process commands from remote users around the country. Across the room, Mac devotees can play with an original Apple I. Downstairs, the build-your-own-robot exhibit beckons DIY types, while aspiring artists head straight to the Bob Ross station to create digital masterworks in Paint while watching episodes of—what else?—*The Joy of Painting*, with Bob Ross.

—MEGAN MCCREA



Visitors explore virtual oceans at Living Computers.

COURTESY LIVING COMPUTERS MUSEUM AND LABS



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Sweet stops

NORTHERN NEVADA'S OLD WEST CHARM



A Columbian mammoth at the Nevada State Museum

Venture south, beyond the bright lights of Reno, and you'll notice that the cities shrink and the vistas grow. Welcome to the eastern Sierra foothills, where little towns, former mines, and century-old saloons tell tales of times gone by.

In 1859, prospectors struck the Comstock Lode, and **Virginia City** became the West's first silver rush town: The population soared from 4,000 to 15,000 in a year. Learn more on a tour of Chollar Mine. Nearby, at the Mark Twain Museum, you can see the room where Twain worked as a newspaper reporter—complete with printing presses and his old desk.

Once a stopover for travelers, **Carson City** has grown into a destination in its own right. Inside a former brewery, the Brewery Arts Center offers pop con-

certs, film screenings, and other events, while the Nevada State Museum showcases a replica ghost town bathed in perpetual twilight. After exploring, you can feast on pork tamales with house-made salsa at the Lady Tamales or a seven-ounce filet mignon at Cafe at Adele's.

Genoa, Nevada's oldest non-Native settlement, wears its history proudly. Boutiques and antique shops populate weathered buildings downtown. After taking it all in, duck into the Genoa Bar. The watering hole has been slinging cocktails since 1853, serving the likes of Teddy Roosevelt, Lauren Bacall,

and John Denver. Pull up a stool and let the barkeep tell you all about it.

Owing to its proximity to fertile ranch land, **Gardnerville** became a hub for Basque sheepherders in the late 1800s. For a taste of their culture, head to the Carson Valley Country Club or J.T. Basque Bar & Dining Room to tuck into specialties such as paprika-tinged chicken and Picon Punch.

With a population of fewer than 200 souls, **Topaz Lake** is more lake than town. But there's still plenty to see, from soaring bald eagles—which come here to breed—to blooming wild irises, apricot mallows, and milk vetches. Bring a camera to snap sunset photos, or if you're fishing, to prove that trophy trout really was that big

—AARON CARNES



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