

*Neighborhood Connections*  
NOB HILL VENUES BAND TOGETHER  
TO BENEFIT PLANNERS (14)

*Picture Perfect*  
LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHERS SHARE THEIR TIPS  
ON SHOOTING EVENTS (25)

# california

## meetings + events

MEETINGSMAGS.COM // FALL 2016

### GRAPE EXPECTATIONS

*New venues, group offerings  
and tastes raise the bar  
in the state's famed wine regions (30)*

THE TALE &  
EVOLUTION OF  
BOTTLE ROCK  
NAPA VALLEY  
(14)



HOTEL NEWS»

## HOW PALM SPRINGS PLANS TO BEAT THE HEAT

Palm Springs and eight neighboring cities want to be a year-round, international destination, no easy feat in a market with searing summer temperatures, uneven air service and an inconsistent regional identity.

What to do? The Greater Palm Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau commissioned experts to determine how the region could grow annual visitation now and in years to come. The result is the recently released Destination Development Plan, which identified key challenges and hoped-for solutions to increase visitation nearly 30 percent, from 12 million to 16 million people by 2026.

For Greater Palm Springs to be a year-round destination, it requires year-round air service, according to the report. “Most of the airlines decrease service somewhat in the summer and then resume in the fall,” says Rick Blackburn, vice president of convention sales and destination services for the CVB.

To improve transportation, the plan suggested that the cities establish a committee to review and evaluate the options to create a revenue source such as some form of public subsidy to airlines, develop a shuttle or express train to access Ontario International Airport, seek daily Amtrak service, and support shared ride services such as Uber and Lyft.

The CVB also aims to reach out to meeting planners in person and on social media to spread awareness of the region’s affordability and suitability for events. Blackburn said a recent survey of 250 meeting planners found that half weren’t aware that midweek hotel rates are a better value, sometimes \$60 to \$100 less per person per night compared to the weekend.

### OTHER REPORT FINDINGS:

- » Visitors wouldn’t have to sizzle in summer if hotel pools added chillers and cities offered more opportunities for water slides, surf riders and lazy rivers.
- » Outdoor adventures, such as hiking and biking, could be improved by adding signage, restrooms, shade and areas and facilities for groups.
- » Events such as bicycle and running races could capitalize on the region’s identity as a destination for outdoor adventures, eco-tourism and health and wellness. —Valli Herman



### The Garland Blooms in North Hollywood

The Garland has the charm and friendliness of a neighborhood hangout and offers complimentary shuttle rides, upon request, to nearby Universal Studios. That means groups can enjoy easy access to the new Wizarding World of Harry Potter experience without feeling that they’re staying at a generic tourist spot. The 257-room North Hollywood property recently completed a \$20 million redesign. It still pays homage to the actress Beverly Garland, in whose honor the property was built by her husband Fillmore Crank in 1972, but its seven acres have been transformed into a stylish urban retreat. The Front Yard serves shareable dishes on an expansive patio that’s nestled under a canopy of sycamore trees and warmed by fire pits; a private indoor dining room offers 60s décor and seating for 30. There are 13 separate meeting spaces, which can accommodate up to 650 guests, including a posh screening room that seats 130. A jewel of the property is the new Beverly Park, a 4,000-square-foot garden space with heel-friendly turf, fountains and the ability to host both casual “food truck-style” receptions as well as elegant, seated affairs. [thegarland.com](http://thegarland.com)



### Movie Time at Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles

Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills has long been the premier property in LA for movie press junkets. Now, it’s enhancing its offerings with the opening of its Screening Room, a boutique theater with 38 plush leather recliner chairs and state-of-the-art technology. The Screening Room sits next to Culina, the hotel’s signature restaurant, and Chef de Cuisine Denis Dello Stritto will be creating elevated movie snacks, such as truffle popcorn and house made churros. Stritto can also design a customized small plates menu, complemented by pairings from the Vinoteca Wine Bar. Events can also extend to the Culina patio. “We are excited to create a Screening Room to continue our legacy as ‘Hollywood’s Living Room’ and enhance our guest experience for press film junkets and other corporate events,” says Michael Newcombe, the hotel’s general manager.