

Carson City

Contributed by Administrator
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US-395 heads south from Reno along the jagged spires of the High Sierra , past Mono Lake, Mount Whitney and Death Valley . Just thirty miles south of Reno, CARSON CITY , state capital of Nevada, is small by comparison but has a number of elegant buildings, some excellent historical museums and a handful of world-weary casinos.

Carson City was named after frontier explorer Kit Carson in 1858, and is still redolent with Wild West history. A good introduction is the Nevada State Museum at 600 N Carson St (daily 8.30am-4.30pm; \$3). Housed in the former Carson Mint, it covers the geology and natural history of the Great Basin desert, from prehistoric times up through the heyday of the 1860s, when the silver mines of the nearby Comstock Lode were at their peak. Amid the many guns and artifacts is the reconstructed Ghost Town , from which a tunnel allows entry down into a full-scale model of an underground mine .

Greyhound buses between Reno and Los Angeles stop once a day in each direction, at 111 E Telegraph Ave. Among budget motels are the Super 8 at 2829 S Carson St (tel 775/883-7800; \$35-50), and the Hardman House Motor Inn at 917 N Carson St (tel 775/882-7744 or 1-800/626-0793; \$75-100). The visitor center , on the south side of town at 1900 S Carson St (Mon-Fri 8am-5pm, Sat & Sun 10am-3pm; tel 775/687-7410), can help with practical details and provide maps for self-guided architectural walking and driving tours of the town, taking in the State Capitol, the museums, and many of the fine 1870s Victorian wooden houses and churches on the west side.