



Nevada has some of the most beautiful hiking trails in America. One very colorful autumn destination is Red Rock Canyon, on and around Mount Charleston, just a half-hour drive from the glitz and glamor of the Las Vegas Strip.

There are steep mountainous trails among the brilliant rocks and trees for experienced senior hikers, as well as less challenging walkways along the paths. In winter, the weather at high altitudes can be snowy. If you're hiking near the desert floor, especially in summer, you'll find it very hot and dry. Throughout the year, hikers can see wildlife that roam Red Rock Canyon, including rabbits, gophers, bighorn sheep and coyotes. There are occasional sightings of wild horses and mules, descendants of pack animals abandoned more than a century ago by pioneer families and gold miners.

When you ascend toward the mile-high peak, the views from the Red Rocks and Mount Charleston trails become more spectacular. You'll see the ski areas capped with snow, along with pine forests and natural volcanic rock formations. At nightfall, there's also the spectacular sight of the bright lights of Las Vegas.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area and Hoover Dam provide many day hiking areas. Located 33 miles from Las Vegas, many senior visitors hike along the top of the Dam. As they make their way across, the views down the massive sides into Lake Mead are breathtaking.

The dam-top road leads a half-mile across Lake Mead from Nevada into Arizona, and now is exclusively for hikers and other pedestrians. With the recent opening of a new bridge nearby,

there's no auto traffic, and hikers can easily descend on the Nevada side into the Lake Mead area. There they can stroll sandy trails lined with varieties of cactus and other desert plants.

In Northern Nevada, the Truckee River flows through downtown Reno. It originates 60 miles away as snow melt from the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Lake Tahoe. On both sides, there are scenic hiking trails and park-like grounds.

Throughout the year, alongside the river, there are many special events, flower gardens, art and sculpture exhibits and a whitewater park. In the 1950s, Reno was famous for quick divorces, and newly-divorced women made a ritual of tossing their wedding rings into the Truckee to celebrate their freedom.

Day hiking in Nevada near the two major cities is always a pleasure. The state offers spectacular trails, mountains, forests, deserts, lakes and everything else to create a joyful experience.