

MAKING IT HOME

SPREADING OUT IN **SOUTHWEST** LAS VEGAS



SPACIOUS SUBURBIA

LIVING ON THE EDGE

Comprising bedroom communities and old-school rural estates, Southwest Las Vegas is a place for those who like to spread out and live large (literally) BY ELISABETH DANIELS

Editor's note: In this issue, we kick off "Making It Home," a six-part, bimonthly series that spotlights the diverse home styles, lifestyles and communities of Las Vegas. Whether you're looking to relocate or just hoping to discover something new about your own neighborhood, "Making It Home" should prove a valuable resource. In this installment, we highlight the best of South Las Vegas. In future issues, we'll cover central and downtown Las Vegas, Summerlin and Centennial Hills, North and East Las Vegas, and Henderson and Boulder City.

With a building boom expanding the Strip in the early '90s — the Mirage opened in '89, the Excalibur in '90 — the undeveloped southern part of the valley appealed to those looking to get away from the hustle and bustle. Land was cheap, houses were big, and the views were amazing.

"There were no amenities out there forever, and people liked it that way," explains Geoff Schumacher, author of *Sun, Sin & Suburbia: The History of Modern Las Vegas*. Amenities now abound, but families are still drawn to the ranch-style estates with big lots, quiet cul-de-sacs, garages to tinker in, and room to ride ATVs. They like having their neighbors a quarter-mile away.

But as development has increased along the I-15 beltway, old now mixes with new. Instead of spreading out, communities like Rhodes Ranch and Mountain's Edge have built Mediterranean-style homes with more stories on smaller lots. Imported trees and vegetation create vibrant outdoor spaces for kids to play in. Many communities feature golf courses and other recreational facilities. The part of town that was once a remote getaway is now one of the valley's most bustling bedroom communities. Southwest Las Vegas has become the place to go for people seeking, in some ways, the anti-Vegas: a safe, comfortable, family-friendly way of life in the valley — a spacious slice of suburbia for active families who want lots of room.

It's also popular with newcomers. "If you're moving to Las Vegas from Iowa," says Schumacher, "you don't want your family back home to think you're living in a hotel on the Strip — so you move to Southwest Las Vegas."

Young professionals will find something here, too, in mid-rise and high-rise condos like Loft 5, Manhattan Condos, Park Avenue, One Vegas and Boca Raton. That means less maintenance and great views, plus easy access to upscale shopping and nightlife are a big draw to busy urbanites.



VARIETY PACK

RANCH, MED AND CONDO

Bucolic rural spreads, classic 'burbs and all-in-one condo communities

SADDLE UP

Considering our proximity to California, where the **Ranch Style** home originated in the 1930s, it's no surprise that homes here were typically Ranch Style from 1930 to 1980. Ranch or "Rambler" house plans are based on large lots with open floor plans and few interior walls. The majority of these homes are single-family and single-story with a one-car detached garage.

Most move-up or larger

homes offer a two- and three-car garage. Low-pitched gable roofs with deep-set eaves complement simple exteriors made of wood, brick and vinyl.

The large picture windows take full advantage of the area's sweeping mountain vistas, and sliding glass doors leading to back patios are common. A 5,044-square-foot equestrian ranch estate with five bedrooms and six baths on 3.85 acres was recently listed on Zillow for \$1,950,000.



SUBURBAN LUXE

The newer, master-planned communities tend to have two-story **Mediterranean Style** homes. Placed on smaller lots, with the garage at

HELLO, NEIGHBOR! He may be the quiet one at work, but Teller's hilltop home east of Mountain's Edge has a lot to say. Teller, of course, is the famously silent half of the magic duo Penn & Teller that's been headlining at The Rio for the past 14 years. His 4,500-square-foot, cubist mansion sits on a 10-acre rocky outcropping with views of the Strip and the mountains. Outside, it's all blocky windows and corrugated steel. Inside, the fun begins. It's not open to the public, but it adds a certain undeniable, let's say, magic to the area. In 2007, Teller told USA Today, "Like much of my life, this house is a reflection of everything I wanted back when I was 12." You know: mirrors, hidden doors, a talking bear sculpture and, of course, a bookcase that opens onto a secret passage to his office. (The office features a "Houdini corner" with hand restraints and a black cross owned by the legendary magician, along with a brick from the hospital where Houdini died.) A portrait of Teller done by artist Georgia Maher, his own "Dorian Gray," makes him look old and run-down. He has the artist come out every year to update it and make him look worse. Inside and out, his house adds offbeat charm to the area's suburban vibe.



the front of the house, these homes are particularly known for their low-pitched tile roofs, which are often red. The inside is characterized by dramatic open spaces with high ceilings, columns,

arched windows, curved wall corners and filigreed light fixtures. Mosaic tile designs accent floors and interior walls. Outside, walls are detailed with stucco, and there may be wrought-iron balconies



off of the bedrooms in the upper stories. A 3,004-square foot single-family home with four bedrooms and three and a half bathrooms was recently listed on Zillow for \$363,000.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

The **condominium** offerings south of the Strip offer upscale living

without the hassle. Both mid-rise and high-rise options are available, and all of them deliver a low-maintenance lifestyle with an array of attractions like restaurants, outlet malls, parks, casinos, and nightlife in close proximity. Condo prices range from \$124,500 to \$1,100,00 to own and \$895 to \$2,900 a month to lease.

In the Neighborhood

You may think you live in Las Vegas, but if you live in Enterprise Township, you really don't — but that's not a bad thing.

Enterprise is part of a trend that emerged in the late '90s: densely populated urban areas that aren't cities. Enterprise is one of six townships in the Vegas Valley. Following Paradise (fun fact: that's where the Strip is located, not, actually, the city of Las Vegas), Spring Valley, Sunrise Manor, Whitney and Winchester, Enterprise became a township in December 1996, as a means for residents to prevent losing their semirural lifestyle to Henderson. The residents are committed to staying independent from city zoning and retaining the area's rural flavor — and the spread-out, exurban setting, where you're as



likely to see a horse on the road as you are an SUV, has proven to be a major lifestyle attraction for people moving to the area.

And a lot of people have moved to the area in the last 15 years, notwithstanding the recession that turned many subdivisions into stucco-spangled ghost towns seemingly overnight. Consider this: The 2000 census counted about 15,000 living in Enterprise; by the time the 2010 census took another tally, the township was home to more than 108,000 people. And, make no mistake, that's made for some town-vs.-country

tensions fueled by the immense growth of Southern Nevada. In that sense, the story of Enterprise is the story of the Las Vegas Valley itself — balancing the building of a modern metropolis with preserving the Western virtues — space, privacy, individualism — that made it appealing in the first place. At any rate, it's fitting that Enterprise is located in Southwest Las Vegas, because like the rest of the area, townships are a mix of old and new. They're a legacy of the Wild West days and yet serve a purpose in a modern urban environment.



Tiffany Jones of Peridot Sweets

Street smarts: Rainbow

Cuisine, culture and commerce mingle on south Rainbow Boulevard

Deceptively housed in an office/retail center at Windmill and Rainbow, **The Sparklings** (8310 S. Rainbow Blvd.) is an upscale casual restaurant with an open, airy floorplan that's quickly garnered citywide buzz for its upscale gastro-pubby fare — think grilled octopus, crispy gnocchi, spaghetti with mushroom and bacon cream sauce, and jambalaya. Specializing in vintage and used toys, **Rogue Toys** (2115 S. Rainbow Boulevard, roguetoy.com) also aims to build a sense of community with frequent special events, such as its recent Christmas promotion, a 12-day valley-wide scavenger hunt in partnership with other stores around

town. A toy-swapping event takes place at Rogue Toys the third Saturday of each month at 5 p.m.

Patty's Closet (7920 S. Rainbow Blvd. #115, ilovepattyscloset.com) carries boutique-but-affordable dresses, tops, pants, shoes and accessories. Each style is limited to only a few offerings in small, medium and large to keep the selection fresh. With lots of feminine touches in the décor, the location is welcoming and there's a strong emphasis on customer service to help them find exactly the right outfit for any occasion.

Custom cakes, French macarons, fair-trade, organic coffee, and homemade vanilla extract. Hungry yet? Everything is made from scratch at

Peridot Sweets

(6475 S. Rainbow Blvd. #100). Owner Tiffany Jones is a former baker for multiple Four Seasons Hotels and the former assistant pastry chef of The Mirage, and her background shows in everything she creates. The shop is almost as sweet as the goodies it sells: pale green chairs, white wood display cases and a small crystal chandelier hanging above the register. And hungry customers can beat the rush by ordering online at peridotsweets.com.



CROWN JEWELS

SMELL THE ROSES!

- A hidden gem near Southern Highlands is the **Doctor Harry B. Johnson Rose Garden** (5330 Somerset Hills Ave.). This small park has only six parking spaces, but it's worth nabbing a spot if you can. Fragrant rose bushes are interspersed with beautifully tended hedges and a charming gazebo. With an enclosed playground and a splash pad, let the kids romp while you relax in one of the picnic areas.

- **Town Square Las Vegas** embodies the maxim, "If you build it, they will come." One of southwest Las Vegas' top destinations for shopping, dining, movie-watching, toddler-playdating and after-hours cocktailing, the pedestrian-friendly retail complex pretty much as it all. Not far, either, are the **Southern Highlands Golf Club** and the **Rhodes Ranch Golf Club**.

- **Opening this summer**, **Ikea** (I-215 at Durango Drive near Sunset Road) will have two floors packed with the chain's signature blend of stylish yet affordable items with names that sound like an elf talking dirty, 50 inspirational room settings, and even three model home interiors for generating ideas. (Just don't have a *Fight Club*-style mental meltdown.) A 450-seat dining room will offer the chain's famous meatballs with lingonberries as well as convenience goods — think frozen meat and seafood along with Nordic desserts, candy and condiments — to take to your new flatpacked home.

BEHIND THE BIZ *Peridot Sweets' Tiffany Jones isn't just passionate about sweets. As a mother herself, she's a strong supporter of other entrepreneurial moms. She's an active member of a Facebook group for small-business owners who are also moms, and she hires ambitious, business-minded moms whenever she can. One designed her website, and another assisted with shop décor.*



MAKING THE GRADE

Area schools of special note

DORAL ACADEMY Cactus Campus (9025 W. Cactus Ave., doralacademynv.org) is a charter school, serving kindergartners through eighth-graders. Opened in August 2014, the school was developed through a partnership with the Turner-Agassi Charter School Facilities Fund. The school emphasizes math and literacy, highlights community involvement, and was named a Five Star Elementary School.

Average Class Size: 28

Student/Teacher Ratio: 26:1

Highly qualified teachers in all subjects: 100%

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

PREPARATORY SCHOOL (11500 Southern Highlands Parkway, southernhighlandsprep.com), a private school located between Valley View Boulevard and Dean Martin Drive, serves kindergarten through 8th grade. They've been educating the children of Southern Highlands since 2003. Part of the Nobel Learning Communities, they strive to deliver an outstanding education in a technology-rich environment. Every student in 4th through 8th grade receives an iPad.

Average Class Size: 16

Student/Teacher Ratio: 12:1

Unique After School Programs Offered: 11

SOUTHWEST CAREER AND TECHNICAL

ACADEMY (7050 W. Shelbourne Ave., swcta.net) is a public magnet school for grades 9-12. Along with the requisite English and math classes, students here acquire in-depth skills in sought-after fields like web design, fashion design, culinary arts, nursing and mechanical engineering. Because a quality workforce is a draw for high-value companies, SWCTA has grown in popularity and receives thousands of applications for the 400 openings it has each year.

Average Class Size: 30

Average Graduation Rate: 99%

GET OUT (AND ACTIVE)

A peak park experience (for real!) and more

Exploration Peak Park (9700 S. Buffalo Drive, just south of the entrance to Mountain's Edge) is an 80-acre oasis in the desert. It's best known for the 2,846-foot-high Exploration Peak. Walk or bike the trails that lead to the top for stunning views of the Las Vegas Valley. The park's Old West theme includes a mock Western town with replicas of frontier buildings, a covered wagon play structure, an Indian village, and an archaeological dig site. Other park amenities include a playground, a water area, a horseshoe pit, an outdoor amphitheater and more walking trails. Dogs are more than welcome as long as they're leashed.

For those seeking a high-intensity workout indoors, CrossFit is popular in the south valley, too. There are several "box" training gyms to choose from, including **CrossFit Double Down** (8755 Lindell Road), **Decibel Crossfit** (7060 W. Warm Springs Road) and **Straight Flush CrossFit** (8544 Blue Diamond Road).

Amenities & Attractions

Mermaid Lounge is an under-the-sea themed eatery in the Silverton Casino, 3333 Blue Diamond Road. The restaurant offers classic

American fare and a 17,000-gallon saltwater aquarium, which is home to 4,000 tropical fish

The **Windmill Library**, 7060 W. Windmill Lane, is the headquarters of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District

and one of four Library District branches designated as a Family Place Library™. With Wi-Fi, separate computer labs for adults and kids, and a special collection for teens, it's truly a family destination.

Steak 'n Shake is a popular Midwest fast food chain, and the only one in the valley is at the South Point Hotel Casino and Spa, 9777 Las Vegas Blvd. South. It's at the base of the escalators leading to the Cinemark

Century 16 theater complex.

South Point Arena and Equestrian Center is an indoor horse facility hosts a equestrian events such as horse jumping competitions and the World Series of Cutting.

With picnic

pavilions, a disc golf course, a large splash pad, two swing sets, a lighted outdoor basketball court and a one-mile walking path, **Red Ridge Park** (7027 S. El Capitan Way) is a great place for play dates and family gatherings.

MARCH: CENTRAL AND DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS