

with children, for people who have alternative lifestyles."

Located in the Cascade Mountains, the ranch contains forests, rivers and creeks to explore. Nearby attractions include Seven Feathers Casino, the Oregon Caves and swimming and a natural slide rock at South Umpqua Falls. The property abuts the Umpqua National Forest, which offers biking, hiking, fishing and kayaking.

The ranch is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and midweek visitors likely will have the place to themselves. Up to 40 people occupy the campground on weekends. **J**

**BURNT RANCH
(LESBIAN-OWNED)**

Distance from Portland: 4 hours.
Cost: \$15/night, RV with hookup \$20/night, rooms \$50/night, day use \$10.
Things to do: John Day Painted Hills, fishing, hunting.
Contact: www.theburntranch.com.
Special notes: No cell phone service past Prineville. Bring all food and drinking water. Burning restrictions in summer.

**KALLES FAMILY RANCH
(LESBIAN-OWNED)**

Distance from Portland: 4 1/2 hours.
Cost: \$8/person plus \$2 for hookups.
Things to do: Crater Lake, Oregon Caves, Wild Animal Safari.
Contact: www.kallesfamily.com.
Special notes: Creek water is available; bring your own if you're afraid of the taste.

**RIVENDELL RANCH
(GAY-OWNED)**

Distance from Portland: 3 hours.
Cost: \$10/night or \$100/year.
Things to do: Lake Quinalt, Olympic Rain Forest.
Contact: www.rivendell-ranch.com.
Special notes: Owner Guy Koehler is looking for someone to live on the property with him to help tend the ranch and campground.

**TRIANGLE RECREATION CAMP
(NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION)**

Distance from Portland: 4 1/2 hours.
Cost: \$15/night or \$150/year.
Things to do: Ice Caves, Granite Falls.
Contact: www.camptrc.org.
Special notes: Bring food, water and photo identification. Over 21 only. No cell phone service.

Where the boys are

A gay guy's guide to Palm Springs

BY FLOYD SKLAVER

The first time I went to Palm Springs, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven. Sun, fun and beautiful men lounging poolside, naked and sipping cocktails with little paper umbrellas. Is it any wonder so many gay Portlanders go?

By now, everyone has heard that the "Desert Playground of the Stars" has been rejuvenated by gay men and lesbians who embraced its kitschy, midcentury aesthetic and turned the town into an oasis of fabulousness.

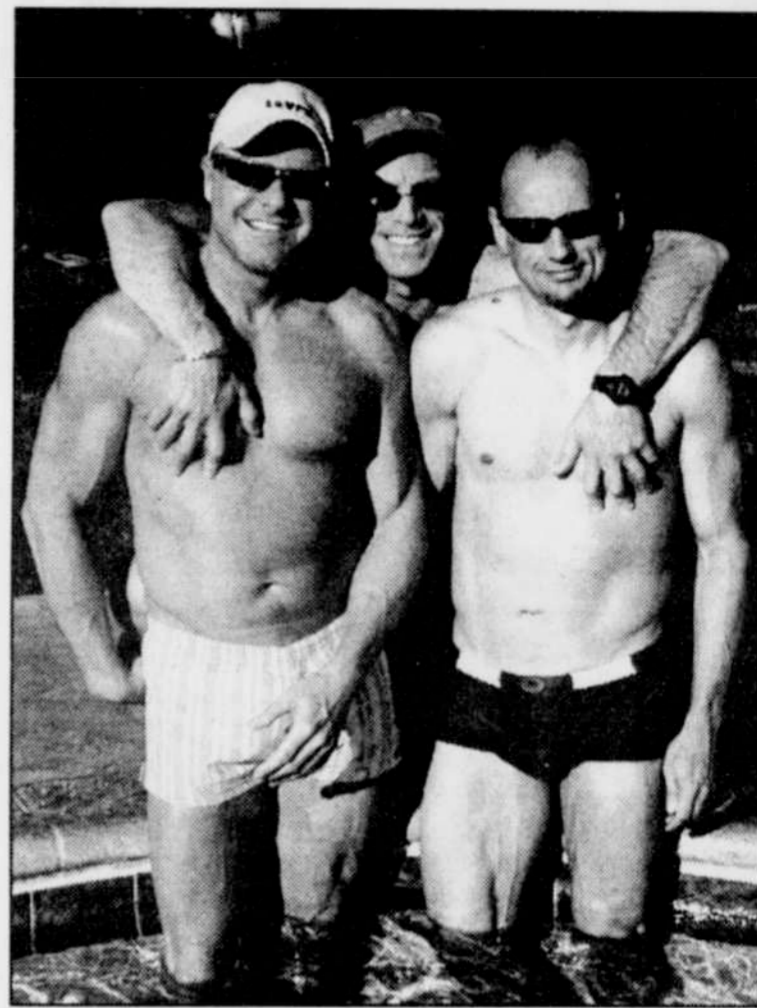
Places to stay in Palm Springs are plentiful and run the gamut of prices from cheap to outrageous. If this is your first time to the desert, head to the sun-baked streets of Warm Sands, where you will find a dozen clothing-optional gay resorts, each with its own personality. The Vista Grande is a resort that doubles as a bathhouse with a very active steam room, while the Hacienda at Warm Springs is like having your own private villa.

My personal favorite is INNdulse, where the rooms are clean, the complimentary continental breakfast satisfying and the crowd sexy and flirtatious. Chasing the sun is the main daytime activity in Palm Springs, and INNdulse's layout and tall trees mean con-

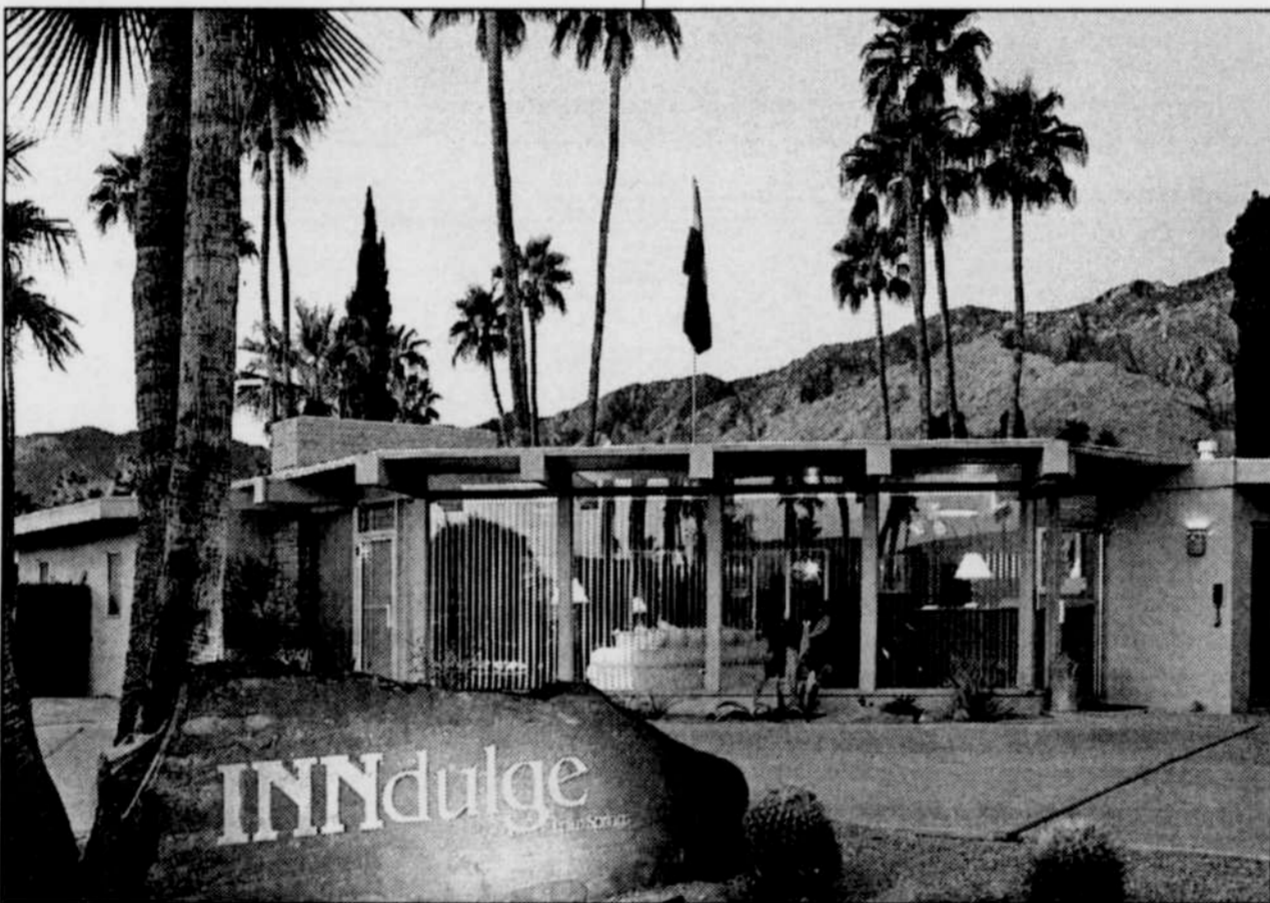
tinual chairhopping, which ensures that you end up next to the hottest men. (By week's end, I needed a flow chart to keep track of who everyone was, what room they were in and who they had done!) Then, at 5 p.m., complimentary wine and hors d'oeuvres are set out for friendly socializing while plans are set for the night's dinner and dancing.

Restaurant choices in Palm Springs are as varied as they are for lodging and, once again, run the gamut from cheap to outrageous. Among my favorites is Blame It on Midnight, where the food is fair but the appeal is the glittering ambience and the delightfully second-rate cabaret singers. For lunch, I always choose the very reasonably priced Capra's, where I've consistently had the best homestyle Italian cooking since leaving New York. Run by Frank Capra's son Tom and his family, the restaurant features movie memorabilia, including the legendary director's Oscar statuette.

After dinner, it's time for barhopping, a task



The author (center) and his groupies catch some rays poolside in Palm Springs



Palm Springs accommodations run the gamut, but INNdulse is a favorite of many

made easy as many of the bars are on one street, Arenas. Hunters has the youngest and best-looking crowd, but like many dance bars, the men tend to be a little snotty (at least until you've bought them a drink). For a more relaxed and friendlier atmosphere, try Rainbow Cactus Café, a piano bar that tends to attract the over-50 crowd. Best of all, every bar and restaurant is smoke-free, so you don't need to fumigate your clothes when you finally stumble home.

While the main reason to visit Palm Springs is to worship the sun, plenty of activities occupy those of us who can't sit still, including golf, tennis, horseback riding, hiking in the Indian canyons (where Frank Capra's 1935 classic *Lost Horizon* was filmed) or nearby Joshua Tree National Park and, of course, shopping. Every trip to Palm Springs requires a pilgrimage to the Gay Mart on Arenas, where you find the trendy (OK, trashy) bar clothes and bathing suits you won't find in Portland stores.

For me, Palm Springs is the perfect vacation spot for a quick weekend or an extended stay. Book now for holiday travel, and remember to bring warm clothing for chilly winter desert nights. And don't fret if you travel alone. Just walk for a few blocks in any direction and you're bound to run into a fellow Portlander. **J**



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