



New Mexico MAGAZINE

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Top Weekend Getaways



Photo by Mark Erickson

Whether you're uptown girls or outdoorsy types, Silver City will delight.

Girlfriend Gab-Fest

Destination: Silver City
What to bring: High school yearbook, funny bone, Birkenstocks (really!)

Grab your gal pals and head to Silver City, an artsy spot 112 miles northwest of Las Cruces off U.S. 180, for affordable shopping, foodie fun, and relaxation. Outdoorsy chicks will find plenty of hiking and biking on hand, too—located near the three-million-acre Gila National Forest, Silver City is also known as the Gateway to the Gila.

Saturday, shop 'til you drop! Spend the morning gallery-hopping in the historic art district. In the **Blue Dome Gallery**, gravitate to gorgeous functional clay teapots, and whimsical clocks of clay and wire. Step into **The Common Thread**, a gallery filled with handmade fiber art and fashions produced by talented women of the nonprofit Southwest Women's Fiber Arts

Collective. Here you'll find beautiful silk chiffon kimonos by member Sandy Hopper. (Tip: Check out the collective's website ahead of time for fun-filled workshops taught by members, such as "Painting a Sun Hat," offered Sunday, May 16, 2010.)

Relish a lunch of chicken mole sandwich, key lime tartlets, and jasmine iced tea at **Café at the Kumquat**. While there, mosey inside **The Curious Kumquat**, a top-notch shop selling culinary gadgets and gourmet foods, and where proprietor Rob Connoley hosts monthly cooking classes like "Playing with Chocolate." Still hungry? Indulge in scoops of homemade Italian ice cream at **Alotta Gelato** while poring over those old high school yearbooks. Plan your visit May 28-30, 2010, so you can eat Blues-Berry ice cream during the annual **Silver City Blues Festival**.

Next, bliss out at **Cienega Spa and Salon**. Try the Gila Desert Hydrator facial, or get pampered with massage, pedicures, and manicures. Only two guest suites are available at a time, but the amenities are grand, with full kitchens and private balcony. Top off your afternoon with vino at **Diane's Wine Bar**, and, if you're in the mood for an upscale dinner, reserve a table at **Shevek & Co. Restaurant**, well known for their chilled soups on summer days; try blueberry-merlot, amaretto-fruit, or gazpacho.

For low-key leisure, head to the **Casitas de Gila Guesthouses and Art Gallery**, where, just 45 minutes from town, you'll find cozy Southwestern-style guesthouses that are great settings for those juicy gossip sessions. (Think boondocks—there are no traffic lights here.) Spend your Sunday taking in snapshot views trekking the Gila National Forest. Bicycle rentals (road and mountain) are available at **Gila Hike and Bike** in Silver City. After an active day, relax in a hot tub under shooting stars, reminisce about your trip, and plan your next one. Sangría, anyone?

If You Go: Blue Dome Gallery, 307 N. Texas St., (575) 534-8671, www.bluedomegallery.com; The Common Thread, 107 W. Broadway, (575) 538-5733, www.fiberartscollective.org; Café at the Kumquat and The Curious Kumquat, 111 E. College Ave., (575) 534-0337, (866) 586-7828, www.curiouskumquat.com; Alotta Gelato, 619 N. Bullard St., (575) 534-4995, www.alottagelato.com; Cienega Spa and Salon, 101 N. Cooper St., (575) 534-1600, www.cienegaspasalon.com; Diane's Restaurant & Wine Bar, 510 N. Bullard St., (575) 538-8722, www.dianesrestaurant.com; Shevek & Co. Restaurant, 602 N. Bullard St., (575) 534-9168, www.silver-eats.com; Casitas de Gila Guesthouses and Art Gallery, 50 Casita Flats Rd., (575) 535-4455, (877) 923-4827, www.casitasdegila.com; Gila Hike & Bike, (575) 388-3222.—Wendy Sue Gist

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Travel Nerd: Spas

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