

CALIFORNIA'S BEST PIZZA
HOTTEST SPOTS, TOP RECIPES

Sunset

LIVING IN THE WEST

20 Dreamy weekend trips

Winter getaways under \$200,
from Mendocino to Palm Springs



Small but sinful
Mini chocolate desserts

Instant paradise:
Decorate your deck with plants p. 50

ORGANIC & EASY
Grow no-fuss flowers

FEBRUARY 2010

\$4.99 US \$6.50 CAN

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Sunset.com



The beach is a barefoot stroll from your room at the Inn at Mama's Fish House on Maui.

Dream trips to match your mood

What are you in the mood for?

OCEAN VIEWS

The Inn at Mama's Fish House
Maui, HI
Venice Breeze Suites L.A.
Playa Viva
Near Zihuatanejo, Mexico
Hotel Maya Long Beach, CA

PAMPERING

Sedona Rouge Hotel AZ
The Horizon Hotel Palm Springs
The Cottages of Napa Valley
Near Yountville, CA
Hotel Lāna'i Lanai, HI
Solitude Near Salt Lake City
Rancho Pescadero

Near Todos Santos, Mexico

A LAID-BACK ESCAPE

Grand Targhee Resort WY
Glendeven Inn
Near Mendocino, CA
Greer Lodge Greer, AZ
Tamarack Lodge
Mammoth Lakes, CA
Hawaii Island Retreat
Big Island, HI

AN OFFBEAT ADVENTURE

The Inn at Manzanillo Bay
Troncoso, Mexico
Yellowstone National Park
Summit Meadow Mt. Hood, OR
Lake Quinault Lodge
Olympic National Park
Chena Hot Springs Resort
Near Fairbanks

Whether you're itching for a kick-back weekend on the beach or big thrills in the snow, one of these **20 places under \$200** will feel just right



IN THE MOOD FOR AN
Offbeat
adventure



TRONCONES, MEXICO

Try surfing

Even beginners can tackle the swell at the Inn at Manzanillo Bay, a secluded spot a half-hour from the Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo airport. You can also find water calm enough to test your balance on one of the inn's stand-up paddleboards. The laid-back hideout has eight ocean-view thatched-roof bungalows and two suites. And, because the owner is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy, the trip's worth it simply for the food, like the roasted poblano-chile soup and tequila-glazed yellow-fin tuna. Also, a hand-crafted reposado tequila is made just for guests. From \$138 U.S.; manzanillobay.com or +52-755-553-2884.

-DAVID LAHUTA

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Track wolves

Deal!

Winter is wolf time in **Yellowstone**. Packs of a dozen or more of the animals often stalk elk within full view of the plowed road between Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyoming, and the park's northeast entrance. Their howls sound especially chilling in the snowy, uncrowded landscape. You can go on a three-day wolf-watching tour with experts from the Yellowstone Association or drive the road

unguided. Keep your binoculars handy. You'll feel a burst of adrenaline when a pack lopes into view: long legs, full coats, intense stares, all business. Elk Horn Lodge, in Cooke City, Montana, is comfortably close. Rooms from \$89; elkhornlodge.mt.com or 406/838-2332. Tours from \$635; through Feb 28; yellowstoneassociation.org or 866/439-7375. \$25 park entrance fee.

-CHRIS WOOLSTON

MT. HOOD, OR

Leave the road behind

The only way to reach the five secluded **Summit Meadow Cabins** near the frozen shore of Trillium Lake is to snowshoe or ski. The coziest is the Falls Creek A-Frame, where a fire blazes in the potbelly stove and the snow's usually so deep that you have to go up to the loft to see the namesake cascade. From \$165; two-night minimum; summitmeadow.com or 503/272-3494. -TED KATAUSKAS



OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK

Sleep in a rain forest

Washington's **Lake Quinault Lodge** gets 12 feet of rain per year. And that's a good thing, believe it or not. Learn the secrets of the rain forest along the startlingly green Rainforest Nature Trail, then plop down in front of the lobby's massive fireplace, where you'll have dripping views of lawn, lake, and forest. From \$89; visitlakequinault.com or 866/297-7367. -JIM McCUSAUD



MORE GETAWAYS TO TAKE NOW: sunset.com/winter-trips

NEAR FAIRBANKS

Soak under the northern lights

You could trek to the Arctic Circle to see the aurora borealis. But Chena Hot Springs Resort—on 440 wooded acres about 60 miles northeast of Fairbanks—is so much closer. Plus, the heated, glass-walled viewing room lets you watch the world's greatest light show without freezing your rump. Warm up in the resort's 105° natural hot springs, then grab

a cocktail amid the frozen life-size sculptures at the ice bar, built with 1,000 tons of snow and ice and kept at 20° year-round. In a place like this, even an appletini, served in a hand-carved ice martini glass, becomes an adventure. From \$189; chenahotsprings.com or 907/451-8104. —D.L.

