

# Out Among the Yuccas, the Anti-Los Angeles

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**HOT SPOTS** The Integratron, left, is open to visitors; the Country Kitchen, above, is open until 3 p.m.

**T**HOUSANDS of sleek white windmills twirl along Interstate 10 at the San Geronio Pass. A turn there onto Route 62 leads to the high desert towns of Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree and Twenty-nine Palms. In Joshua Tree (population 8,200 give or take) the culture of Los Angeles seems far away. In August, when most things are closed because of the heat, you'll be lucky to find an evening meal. But the Country Kitchen is open from 6:30 a.m. until 3 p.m., serving the musicians, artists, writers, actors, filmmakers and furniture designers who have colonized converted Quonset huts, trailers and ramshackle ranch houses. (One part-time resident, Blake Simpson, makes travertine-and-brass tables sold at Troy in Manhattan, at 138 Greene Street.)

Entertainment is offered at Tommy Paul's Beatnik Cafe (760-366-2090) Wednesdays through Sundays. Glenn Patrick, a blues musician who moved to Joshua Tree two years ago from Los Angeles, said Wednesday nights draw a celebrity crowd.

"At any moment, world-class and brand-name people will walk in and blow your mind," he said.

Musicians have always gone to Joshua Tree. Gram Parsons died in Room 8 at the Joshua Tree Inn in 1973, after mixing alcohol and drugs. Keith Richards and Eric Burdon have visited, U2 recorded the album "The Joshua Tree" there and Rita Coolidge lives there part time.

The town comes to life in fall as temperatures dip to 70 degrees during the day. The third annual Joshua Tree Didgeridoo Festival ([www.jtdidgefest.com](http://www.jtdidgefest.com)) is Oct. 18 to 20 with performances and a chance to play the didgeridoo in the Joshua Tree National Park. While in the area, visitors can drive by the "mysterious" Integratron ([www.integratron.com](http://www.integratron.com)), built in the 1950's by George Van Tassel, a local "pioneer of the U.F.O. movement," according to its brochure. Tours are offered (\$5) along with "group sound baths" (\$7). Expect rineine howls. and bring your yoga mat.

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