

SPRING BREAK!
Easy Escapes. Killer Deals.

Outside

LIVE THE ACTIVE LIFE

51 PERFECT THINGS

Our Favorite ...

Adventures, Gear, Beer, Events,
Books, Big Ideas & More

#39 Going All In
(Like a Life-List Trip
to Bora-Bora)

ADVENTURE REAL ESTATE

The New Low
Price of Paradise

MARATHONS MADE EASY

A Simple Plan
for Beginners
and Veterans

KILLED BY COYOTES

Why America's
Most Widespread
Predator Is on
the Attack



1 Unforgettable
Tale of Survival

MARCH 2010

\$5.99

03>



39038

0 756636 3
OUTSIDEONLINE.COM

This Pack
Can Save
Your Life
page 87



walls (entrance fee, \$5; climbing permits free; 702-515-5350). The northeast face of Mount Wilson offers tough, fun multipitch climbs, and spring is the time to tackle it (not too hot, not too cold). Book a day trip with Jackson Hole Mountain Guides (\$235; jhmg.com), the same outfit that leads clients up the Grand Teton. They'll belay you on a four-pitch climb designed for your skill level. When you're done, it's only 20 minutes back to the Strip, where you can try to win back the cost of your trip.

—RYAN KROGH

> Scenario: Sun Spell in the Northwest

Rx: FLOAT THE ILLINOIS

Whitewater rafting in March? Yup, if it's on southwestern Oregon's Wild and Scenic Illinois River, a Class IV-V beauty that happens to be my favorite stretch of water in the Northwest. The key is catching the perfect flow. In March, that means a Pacific storm bringing three days of rain to raise the water level, followed by a splash of sun. Ashland-based Momentum River Expeditions knows when the Illinois is best. Call a month in advance and tell them you're flexible with your schedule so they have time to adjust for weather. Ask for their four-day wine-and-cheese float (\$850; momentumriverexpeditions.com), which puts in two hours northwest of Ashland at Miami Bar and takes out 34 miles later at the confluence of the Illinois and the Rogue. Momentum will pack local syrah to complement Rogue Creamery cheeses. That's the pampering you'll want between picking your way through more than 80 rapids and one wild eight-foot waterfall.

—KYLE DICKMAN

> Scenario: Early Spring

Rx: RIDE NAPA

Winter means rain in the Bay Area. But even in El Niño years, spring arrives early. And what an arrival it is—especially in Napa, the place to go for a spring break featuring green hillsides, rolling roads, fine libations, and no cheap tequila. Start in Yountville and stay at Bardessono (doubles from \$300; bardessono.com), a new, stylish hotel with easy access to the area's vineyards. Then set out for a gentle 14-mile ride (daylong rentals, \$35 at Napa Valley Bike Tours; napavalleybiketours.com) through the Stags Leap district, home of Malk and Pine Ridge, makers of wine country's best cabernet sauvignon. Next up is Mount Veeder, a 36-mile loop that climbs 1,500 feet to valleywide vistas. Recovery: After soaking in Bardessono's spa,



Oregon's Illinois River

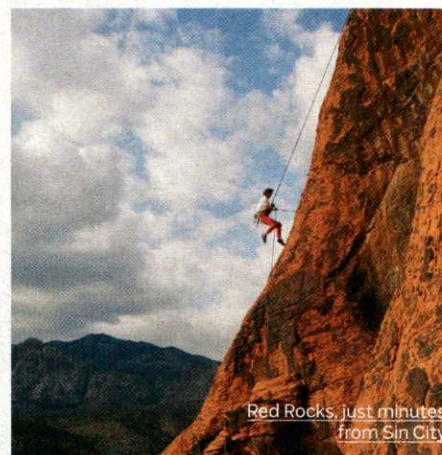
walk to any of the multiple celeb-chef-run restaurants nearby. Try Thomas Keller's Ad Hoc for succulent fried chicken (adhoc-restaurant.com).

—AMY MARR

> Scenario: PBS Keeps Airing Ken Burns's *The National Parks*

Rx: HIKE ARCHES

Due to its proximity to Moab, Arches National Park has seen a steady increase in visitation since the eighties. This year, expect a deluge thanks to Burns's documentary. But the park is most heavily trafficked in May, meaning an early spring trip gets you uncrowded access to the 2,500-odd archways. At this time of year, Arches sees everything from temps in the seventies to light snow. But south-facing walls soak up enough sun to keep climbers comfortable in all conditions. Outfitters don't guide in the park, so rent gear in town at Pagan Mountaineering (435-259-1117) and shimmy up Owl Rock, an easy 5.8 trad route (stay on the park's main road past the visitor



Red Rocks, just minutes from Sin City

center and turn right by Balance Rock). Hikers: You'll find the most arches on the 7.2-mile Devil's Garden loop. Camp at one of Sand Flats Recreation Area's 120 sites, located on a high-desert plateau with views of the 11,500-foot La Sal Mountains (\$10 per night; 435-259-2444).

—ALISON KELMAN

What Says El Niño?

The phenomenon known as El Niño is, to oversimplify a bit, the Pacific Ocean regulating her body temperature. This happens in intervals of between two and five years, and the effect is a warming of surface waters in the eastern Pacific. This shifts the jet stream—and its corresponding storm track—south, leading to an upheaval in typical U.S. weather patterns, especially in the Southeast, Northwest, and California. Many meteorologists are predicting a moderate-to-strong effect through May. What's that mean for you? Probably a warm, wet spring in Southern California and drier conditions in the Northwest. (The record-breaking November snowfall in Whistler, British Columbia, was an El Niño anomaly and a strict reminder that predicting the weather is pure folly.) Odds are the late-season powder gods will smile upon the Sierra and, if temps stay cold, the southern Rockies. But the biggest upside? Potentially awesome surf in Southern California and Hawaii, which already saw huge swells in December.

—JENNIFER L. SCHWARTZ