



3 Days in... Elko, Nevada

Elko is rich in ranching, mining, and Basque heritage.



Plan It
 ▶ The **Stockmen's Hotel and Casino** in historic downtown Elko, has reasonable rates and convenient gaming. Get a trim in the hotel barber shop and see great live music, too. 775-738-5141, northernstarcasinos.com/stockmens-hotel-casino

▶ **Day 1:** In its 29th year, the **Western Folklife Center's** week-long **National Cowboy Poetry Gathering** in late January is the country's signature cowboy culture event. See performances by cowboy poets, authors, storytellers, and music artists, and marvel at the craftsmanship of handmade Western tack, boots, hats, and apparel. The dances, film screenings, workshops, and socializing at the **Pioneer Saloon** aren't bad either. Make time for lunch or dinner at **The Star Hotel & Restaurant**, which has been serving family-style meals of baked lamb, beef dishes, and their notoriously huge filet mignon (and wickedly strong Picon Punch) since 1910. Two blocks away, **J. M. Capriola** has been specializing in custom saddles, bridles, and chaps, and all things cowboy for more than a century. And the **Northeastern Nevada Museum** displays a permanent collection of original **Will James** paintings and pencil sketches, along with an original **Pony Express** cabin.

▶ **Day 2:** An hour's drive northwest of Elko, **Tuscarora** is an old mining and ghost town, where some 5,000 fortune seekers came in 1870. Today, a half dozen professional artists live there and offer workshops in Western landscape and lifestyle painting, sculpture, and pottery. Midway between Elko and Tuscarora on Hwy 225, among the sagebrush, stop at the **Taylor Canyon Club** for burgers, steaks, and ranch-style breakfasts. Eight miles west of Elko on I-80, the **California Trail Interpretive Center** is a state-of-the-art facility that demonstrates the life, times, and travails of the 500,000 pioneers who made their way by wagon to California between 1840 and 1869, before the transcontinental railroad was completed.

▶ **Day 3:** Fifty miles east of Elko, the **Trail of the 49ers Interpretive Center** in **Wells, Nev.**, tells the history of the Great Basin and showcases its pioneer, ranching, mining, and railroad past. Follow Angle Lake Road (State Route 231) southwest from Wells for 12 miles to **Angle Lake**, a body of crystal-clear water nestled in a high-alpine meadow. South of Wells on US 93 grab a beer at the **Ruby Mountain Brewing Company**. Located on a working cattle ranch, the brewery produces exceptional amber and pale ales and a delicious Bristle Cone Brown Porter.

TEXT BY LAZELLE JONES (3 DAYS IN); PHOTOS COURTESY THE STOCKMEN'S HOTEL AND CASINO (3 DAYS IN), AND FRONTIER (THE LIST)

