

## CALIFORNIA

**BORREGO SPRINGS**

Surrounded by 600,000-acre Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, the town of Borrego Springs enjoys starkly beautiful canyons, a relaxingly remote location, and a mild winter climate. But its citizens have made sure their prized night skies stay dark—and the stars stay bright—by following a strict lighting ordinance.

**AT NIGHT** Join local astronomer Dennis Mammana at one of his frequent star parties, complete with a 14-inch telescope, just outside town. Or attend events at the Springs at Borrego, Borrego Springs Resort Golf Club & Spa, or Borrego Lutheran Church, which hosts free programs with astronomers Jim and Grace Rickard. “If you’re staying in a hotel, you can just lie out on a lounge chair and look up,” says Betsy Knaak, chair of the Borrego Springs Dark Sky Coalition. “Sometimes it’s so bright you can see the stars reflected in the swimming pool.”

**BY DAY** Immerse yourself in the park on a hike, see desert-inspired art at the Borrego Art Institute, or peruse desert-related tomes at the Nature Center, one of the region’s best natural-history bookstores.

Mammana observes  
Jupiter (right) and Venus.

