

# EUROPEANS FLOCK TO THE WILD WEST



cowboy world.

Most people imagine a trip to the United States to involve either a visit to the Grand Canyon, a shopping trip to New York or a beach bonanza in California. Many leave thoughts of the Wild West in John Wayne films and the thought of basing a holiday on this theme is rarely considered. The situation, surprisingly to some, is changing and destinations such as Baker Country and Tombstone are becoming more and more popular as Western Europeans attempt to escape their densely populated countries for the vast and wide open spaces of America's

Let's face the fact that there is nowhere in Great Britain, Germany or the Netherlands that offers as much space as the Wild West. The Germans and the Dutch especially find it the ideal opportunity to combine the ideas of escaping from the masses and absorbing the atmosphere of the Wild West, that they know from films, at the same time. The culture is now known as 'the dude ranch' culture. A dude ranch is basically a hotel with the Wild West theme attached to it. Trips down the gold mines and on horseback around the desert serve to enhance the experience.

There are economic reasons for the dude ranches' growing popularity, and much of them are related to the strength of the Euro. For starters, at \$4 a gallon, petrol can easily afford the 'cheap' label in the US by European standards. Indeed, travelling across the small Netherlands may cost the same as hiring a vehicle and travelling across most of the cowboy area. The strength of the Euro and the dollars subsequent weakness mean that America is now much cheaper for Europeans.

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