

Paul Thomas Anderson visits Palm Springs, talks 'Hard Eight,' martinis

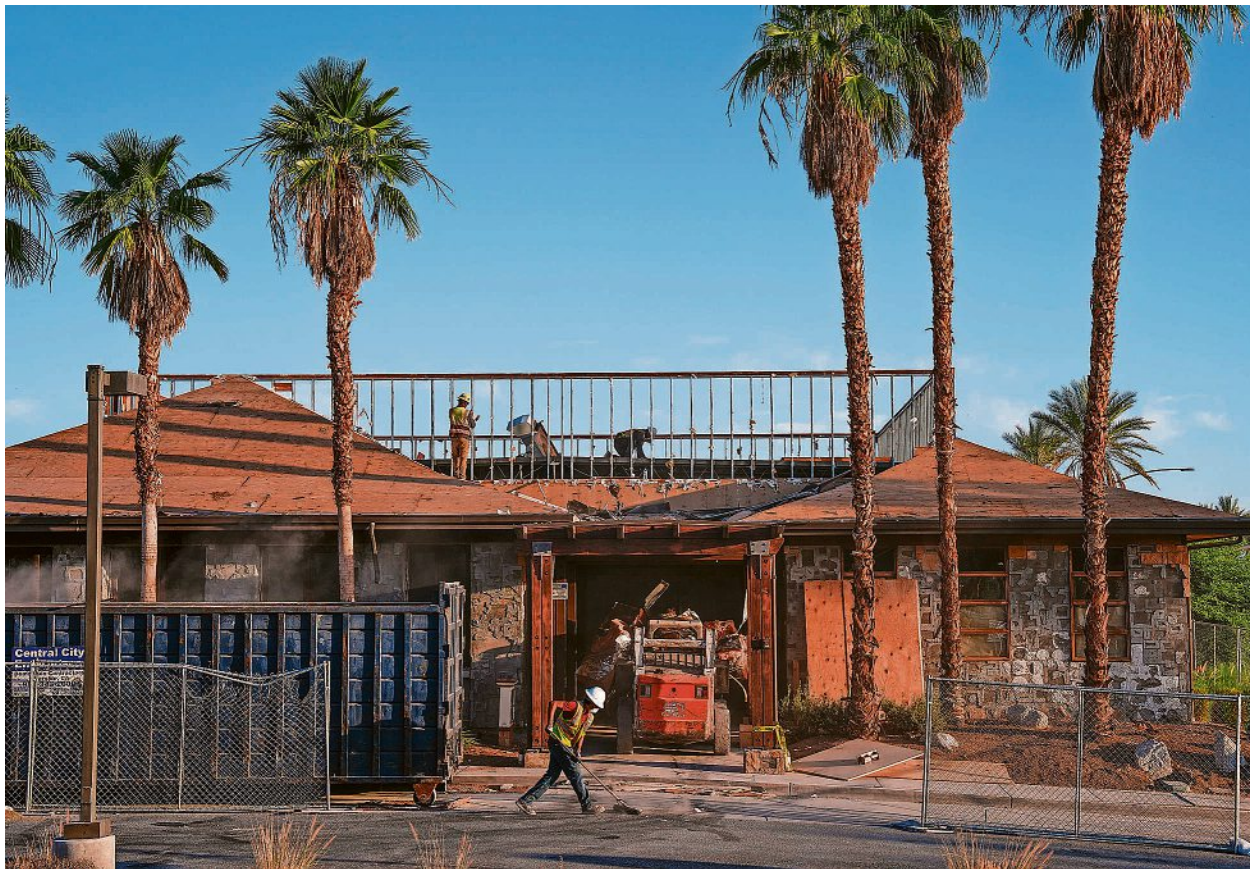
COACHELLA VALLEY, 3A

The Desert Sun

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RANCHO MIRAGE



A demolition crew works on May 13, gutting the building that was formerly Roy's Hawaiian Fusion restaurant on Highway 111 just east of Bob Hope Drive in Rancho Mirage. PHOTOS BY JAY CALDERON/THE DESERT SUN

Capital Grille steakhouse may come to former Roy's

Tom Coulter Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

An upscale steakhouse with a nationwide footprint could soon be coming to the space that used to be Roy's restaurant in Rancho Mirage. • The Capital Grille, which offers a wide range of dry-aged steaks and other specialties, has started to work on paperwork to renovate the former home of Roy's Hawaiian Fusion, which closed after the COVID-19 pandemic. Construction workers were on scene this week at the restaurant space along Highway 111.

"The City can confirm that The Capital Grille has been working with our Planning and Building staff on obtaining all necessary approvals for renovations on the former Roy's building," Gabe Coddling, the city's marketing director, told The Desert Sun.

With the restaurant's remodel up for review by city staff, a timeline wasn't immediately for the restaurant to open near Bob Hope Drive. A spokesperson with Darden Restaurants, the company that owns The Capital Grille, declined to comment on the specific project.

"As The Capital Grille continues to grow, our real estate teams are constantly looking for sites across the country," Leah Santiago, communications manager for the chain, said in an email. "However, we do not comment on any specific plans until a project has received the necessary approvals."

The Capital Grille, which has other California locations in Burbank and Costa Mesa, is owned by the same company that runs Eddie V's Prime Seafood, which has a desert location on El Paseo in Palm Desert.

The former Roy's space had also previously been eyed as an expanded location for



The owners of the Capital Grille chain have proposed opening a location at the building that was formerly Roy's Hawaiian Fusion restaurant in Rancho Mirage.

The Beer Hunter, a popular local sports bar. But those plans fizzled, and The Beer Hunter's main location in La Quinta lost its liquor license due to underage drinking and closed in 2024.

Tom Coulter covers local government for The Desert Sun. Reach him at tcoulter@usa-todayco.com.

El Niño could reach 'very strong levels'

Brandi D. Addison and Doyle Rice USA TODAY NETWORK

El Niño is coming "soon" and it could reach "very strong" levels later this year, according to a May 14 forecast released by climate scientists from NOAA's Climate Prediction Center. California may feel the impacts as Pacific storm activity is expected to ramp up under El Niño conditions.

This and other forecasts are raising alarms globally because of the pattern's powerful influence over the world's weather. This includes its often dramatic impact on hurricanes, where it can suppress the number

of storms that form in the Atlantic basin but boost those in the Pacific.

NOAA's forecast said that El Niño is likely to emerge soon (with an 82% chance the next 2-3 months) and continue through the Northern Hemisphere winter of 2026-27 (a 96% chance by December 2026 - February 2027).

Also, even if the strongest part of the El Niño doesn't arrive until the end of the year, it could still be strong enough during the hurricane season (June-November) to impact the number of storms that form

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Trump leaves China with stalemate

Summit yields modest economic deals, little else

Michael Martina, David Brunstrom, David Lawder and Mei Mei Chu REUTERS

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump's visit to Beijing may have produced modest results by the standards of U.S.-China summits but it highlighted a clear benefit for China: After the extremes of last year's trade war, the countries have reverted to their familiar economic and strategic standoff.

Two days of talks between Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping underscored that even after Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs and the ensuing trade detente the two sides reached late last year, Washington and Beijing are still locked in the contest that Trump inherited when he started his second term.

For the United States, that means that the most troubling aspects of the relationship - from what it considers Beijing's mercantilist trade policies to its efforts to increase its military clout in the Indo-Pacific - remain largely unaddressed.

But for Xi it offers some breathing room and a return to a more predictable set of challenges. He appeared to describe the change with a new framework for the countries' relations he called "constructive strategic stability."

China came out ahead, given the retreat from the Trump administration's brash approach on trade from early 2025, said Scott Kennedy, a China expert at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"Compared to where we were a year ago, with 145% tariffs and the U.S. really trying to push China and the rest of the world to fundamentally change, we've had a counterrevolution and we're back at stability," Kennedy said.

Trump brought to the May 14-15 summit some of America's most powerful executives, from Tesla's Elon Musk to Nvidia's Jensen Huang, but most had little to show for their time, aside from a lavish banquet.

The meeting also did not secure any public commitment from China to help the United States end the war in Iran that has roiled global markets and dented Trump's approval ratings.

"The summit projected stability but it left the stalemate intact," said Craig Singleton, a China expert at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. It "produced modest, marketable and managed outcomes, which is about all the U.S.-China relationship can bear right now."

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