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neepster

Adventures in Phoenix

Scottsdale, Phoenix, 2 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Phoenix is many things to many people: a dramatic desert ripe for exploration, a hot spot for culture, a golfer's paradise or an award-winning resort destination. From the moment visitors approach the Sonoran Desert by air, they are witness to the diversity of the landscape. Hikers, bikers and climbers in Greater Phoenix have come to the same conclusion as coyotes, roadrunners and jackrabbits: The Sonoran Desert is a great place to play. Three major mountains offer opportunities for many outdoor pursuits. Hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding on the area's numerous mountain trails provide views of the variety of flora and fauna at varying elevations.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Phoenix

DAY NOTE: A Jeep excursion is an exciting way to see the Apache Trail and the foothills of the majestic Superstition Mountains. Astounding views flaunt majestic canyons, jagged mountain peaks and sparkling desert lakes.



Silver Dragon

Hong Kong-style fare for serious fans



Royal Palms Resort & Spa

Elegant, historic resort destination at the base of Camelback Mountain

Day 2 - Phoenix, Scottsdale

DAY NOTE: Visitors are intrigued with the 120-mile Apache Trail, a route that has the distinction of being the only recognized Historic and Scenic Highway in Arizona. Adding a steamboat cruise is a fascinating way to enjoy this region.



Apache Trail / Canyon Lake Steamboat Cruise

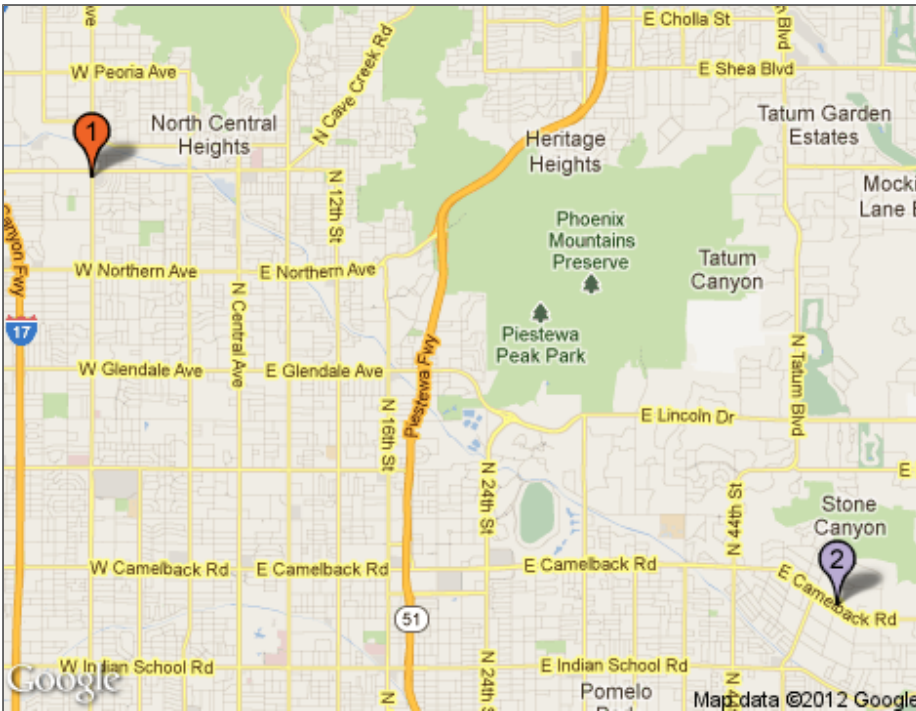
Nature & Wildlife



Marquesa

Picturesque place for paella

Day 1 - Phoenix



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: A Jeep excursion is an exciting way to see the Apache Trail and the foothills of the majestic Superstition Mountains. Astounding views flaunt majestic canyons, jagged mountain peaks and sparkling desert lakes.

contact:

tel: 1 602 674 0151
fax: +1 602 674 0152

location:

8946 North 19th Avenue
Phoenix AZ 85021

hours:

11a-9:30p M-Th, 11a-10p F,
Su, 4:30p-10p Sa

1 Silver Dragon

DESCRIPTION: Serious Chinese cuisine fans will need to ask for the Chinese menu to receive the the more fabulous Hong Kong style dishes. The basic menu offers standard fare lunch specials like Mongolian Beef or Moo Goo Gai Pan. Delectable dinner entrees from the Chinese menu include Beef with Baby Ginger and Pineapple or, for the brave at heart, choose the White Fungus Seafood Soup. This local favorite was the recipient of the Arizona Republic's Best of Chinese award. A private dining room is available. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +1 602 840 3610 / +1 800
672 6011
fax: +1 602 840 6927
<http://www.royalpalmsotel.com>

location:

5200 East Camelback Road
Phoenix AZ 85016

2 Royal Palms Resort & Spa

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

This is a favorite hotel destination for couples looking to splurge on the ultimate romantic getaway in Phoenix.

DESCRIPTION: This Mediterranean and Spanish Colonial-inspired resort was originally a mansion commissioned by New York financier Delos Cooke in the late 1920s. In its 1950s-era

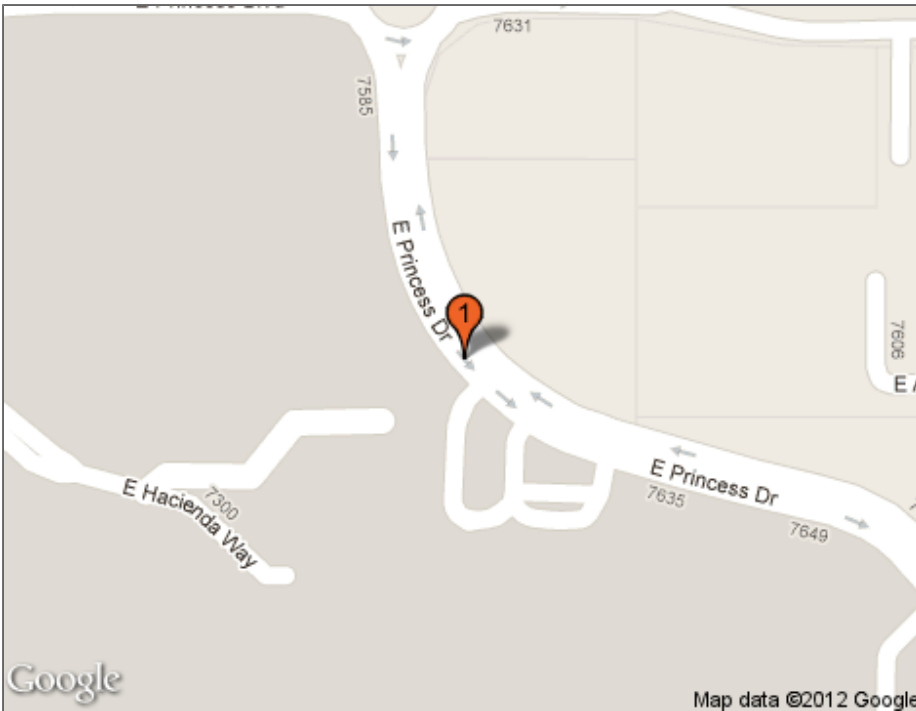


Royal Palms Resort and Spa

heyday, the mansion and surrounding casitas were known as the Royal Palms Inn, attracting thousands of sun worshipers from around the country looking to relax at the base of scenic Camelback Mountain. After falling somewhat into disrepair, the casitas and villas were eventually restored to their original stately splendor, and local landscape designers gave a face-lift to the property's lush, inviting palm groves, orange groves, flower gardens, and fountains. This is a stunning older property, with one of the most acclaimed restaurants in Phoenix, T. Cook's, located on site. Not surprisingly, rates are high at this exclusive resort.

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Day 2 - Phoenix, Scottsdale



QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: Visitors are intrigued with the 120-mile Apache Trail, a route that has the distinction of being the only recognized Historic and Scenic Highway in Arizona. Adding a steamboat cruise is a fascinating way to enjoy this region.

contact:

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Phoenix/Apache-Trail-Canyon-Lake-Steamboat-Cruise/d639-3630ATCLS>

location:

Phoenix Arizona

Apache Trail / Canyon Lake Steamboat Cruise

DESCRIPTION: Arizona is renowned for its spectacular scenery, and you will certainly see a lot of it on this tour. Journey along the magnificent Apache Trail following the base of the Superstition Mountains. Visit historic Goldfield Ghost Town, and complete your day with a relaxing steamboat cruise on Canyon Lake. Travel the scenic Apache Trail at the base of the legendary Superstition Mountains. Visit Goldfield Ghost Town where tales of gold abound! Gold was first struck here in 1892. Next, it's time for a relaxing steamboat cruise on one of Arizona's most beautiful desert lakes - Canyon Lake. Your cruise aboard the Dolly Steamboat will give you a chance to catch a glimpse of big horn sheep and bald eagles as well as learn about the Apaches from your boat captain. After your cruise, enjoy a stop at the "bustling" town of Tortilla Flat (population 6). This small Arizona town is the last surviving stagecoach stop along the Apache Trail. A lunch stop will be made at either Canyon Lake Marina or Tortilla Flat. © Viator



viator

contact:

tel: 1 480 585 4848

location:

7575 East Princess Drive
Scottsdale AZ 85255

hours:

6p-10p M-Th, 6p-11p F-Sa,
10a-10p Su

1 Marquesa

DESCRIPTION: Honored by Zagat's Survey as a top restaurant, you will not be disappointed with the fare. A terrific selection of tapas (appetizers) is available, plus authentic entrees like Cuinat de Peix amb Salsa Romesco, Tarragona-style Seafood in a Romesco sauce with black risotto; and Xai Rostit i Salsitxes and roasted lamb loin wrapped in cabbage with chorizo, artichokes, potato gratin and a stone-ground mustard-rosemary sauce. Located at the beautiful Fairmont Scottsdale Princess. . © wcities.com

Scottsdale Snapshot

Local Info

Scottsdale once made a name for itself as "the West's most Western town," but today the city is better known for its manicured streets, fashionable restaurants, shops, and nightlife, as well as its scenic location in the northern reaches of the Sonoran Desert. Scottsdale draws thousands of visitors every year who come to soak up the sunshine, relax at local resorts, or simply enjoy the natural beauty of the desert. But Scottsdale is more than a resort town. The city has a strong arts and culture scene, architectural wonders by Frank Lloyd Wright and Paolo Soleri, and frequently ranks high on lists as one of the country's "most livable" cities.

Scottsdale, one of the most affluent areas in Arizona and the country, is bordered to the west by Phoenix and Paradise Valley, to the north by the small town of Carefree, to the south by Tempe, and to the east by Fountain Hills and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. The McDowell Mountains loom over central Scottsdale, separating the city from the neighboring town of Fountain Hills. The city of roughly half a million people can be divided into four distinct areas.

Old Town Scottsdale

The city touts its Western heritage in the pedestrian-friendly downtown area,

featuring Southwestern-themed statuary, tourist shops, art galleries, nightclubs and restaurants. A free neighborhood trolley traverses downtown, stopping at designated points of interests every fifteen minutes. The high-end Scottsdale Fashion Square, one of the country's most profitable malls, is also located in Old Town. Also in downtown is the Scottsdale Waterfront, a 1.1 million square foot project that includes high-rise retail and office buildings and two 13-story residential buildings facing the Arizona Canal. Still in development, it's projected that about five miles of the area will become open public space that will include recreation paths, an outdoor amphitheater, and public art.

South Scottsdale

Just south of the downtown area, South Scottsdale is considered the most working class part of the city and represents the least expensive place to live within city limits. South Scottsdale abuts the city of Tempe, and much of this part of the city resembles its college town neighbor to the south. Here you'll find an ample supply of small bars and restaurants that cater to the large student population that drifts into Scottsdale on a regular basis.

North Scottsdale

Home to multimillion dollar homes set against the scenic backdrop of the Sonoran

Desert, North Scottsdale represents one of the most expensive zip codes in the United States. Once the least developed, more rural part of Scottsdale, the area has seen significant development in recent years, with the residential boom attributed partly to the growth of the Scottsdale Airpark, one of the largest employers in the Phoenix Metroarea. The Airpark is home to the company headquarters of major companies such as Fidelity Investments, GE Capital, Discount Tire Company, The Vanguard Group, and others.

The Shea Corridor

The east-west corridor along Shea Boulevard encompasses most of central Scottsdale. Many of the housing developments in this area were built in the 1970s and have increased in value over the years, including highly desirable communities such as McCormick Ranch and Gainey Ranch. The area is also home to the so-called Resort Corridor, for the abundance of resort hotels located along Scottsdale Road, including the Hilton Scottsdale Resort and Villas, FireSky Resort and Spa, and the projected Ritz Carlton to be located in the area.

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Phoenix Snapshot

Local Info

Love it or hate it, this sprawling desert metropolis has become one of the biggest, most modern cities in the American West. Rising from the ashes of the Hohokam civilization, Phoenix transitioned from dusty agricultural farm town to gleaming city of nearly two million residents (the population doubles if you include the suburbs) in the blink of an eye. Although the city keeps a low profile and is more famous for its suburban sprawl than tourist attractions, the city will reward your persistence if you take the time to seek out its hidden treasures.

Downtown Phoenix

Downtown Phoenix is still not what one would hope for in a city of this size, but development has been growing steadily over the years and there's plenty to see and do. The recent inauguration of the Arizona State University Downtown Campus has brought some much-needed new blood to downtown, with new student-centered businesses and living facilities adding a whole new energy to the area. Perhaps the biggest boon to downtown Phoenix in years is the new light rail system that connects downtown to points north and east, and makes it easier than ever to get around downtown.

Downtown becomes a frenzy of big-city pedestrian activity and traffic jams during major events. The Phoenix Suns play at the U.S. Airways Center, and the Arizona Diamondbacks are just a stone's throw away at Chase Field--expect big traffic delays during a game day. The Phoenix Civic Center drives traffic into the area with an ongoing schedule of national conferences and events, and visitors have plenty of choices in terms of museums and attractions. The Arizona Science Center is a favorite with kids and adults alike, while the Phoenix Art Museum regularly brings world-class exhibits to the Valley of the Sun. Other top museum destinations include the world-famous Heard Museum, home to one of the largest collections of Native American artwork, pottery, textiles, and jewelry, and the popular Phoenix Children's Museum, featuring hands-on exhibitions and activities for children of all ages.

The Downtown Phoenix Business Improvement District (formerly known as Copper Square) is the sleek 90-square

block nucleus of shops, eateries, and businesses. Here you can observe office workers criss-crossing the busy streets at lunchtime, with a slew of sandwich shops and cafes feeding the downtown masses with impressive speed. After business hours, however, the business district can start to look like a ghost town.

West Phoenix

The Westside, which makes up a large part of the Valley of the Sun, is a gathering of suburban neighborhoods largely developed throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Generally speaking, the homes and communities get newer the further west you drive, although there are pockets of historic points of interest. For vintage charm, check out Historic Downtown Glendale, touted as "Arizona's Antique Capital." Indeed, there's much antique hunting to be done at the shops of Caitlin Court.

Concertgoers should familiarize themselves with Cricket Pavilion, home to annual music festivals and major touring acts. Desert Sky Mall caters to West Valley's Latino population, while Arrowhead Towne Center in Peoria is a mecca for suburban shoppers. The Westside got a big shot in the arm with the development of the recent Westgate City Center, billed as "Times Square in the Desert," featuring chic boutiques, eateries, and multiplex movie theater. Westgate is home to the Phoenix Coyotes, who play at Jobbing.com arena, and just a stone's throw away is the huge University of Phoenix Stadium--lovingly nicknamed the Spaceship or Toaster by the locals--where NFL action looms large every Sunday in the fall with the Arizona Cardinals.

South Phoenix

This is one of the oldest parts of Phoenix and home to South Mountain Park, one of the largest municipal parks in the United States. Dobbins Lookout is located at 2330, the highest point in the park, and is easily accessible by car. Make sure to stop by for amazing panoramic views of the city. Horse rentals and trail hiking make this a perfect spot to spend the day.

South Phoenix is a culturally diverse area with thriving Latino and African-American communities. For comfort food ecstasy, South Phoenix is home to perennial favorites like Carolina's Mexican Food and

traditional soul food at Lo-Lo's Chicken and Waffles and Mrs. White's Golden Rule Cafe.

Northwest

A mix of old and new, the Northwest Valley is comprised of communities like Peoria, Glendale, Sun City, Sun City West, Youngtown, and Surprise. Sun City and Sun City West are large active living retirement communities. Some of the best hiking in the Valley of the Sun can be found at White Tank Mountain Regional Park, and animal lovers can get an eyeful at the Wildlife World Zoo and Aquarium.

East Side

Some of the oldest and most exclusive communities in the Phoenix area are located on the Eastside. The Valley's rich and famous find their sanctuary among the red rocks and hills of Paradise Valley, while Scottsdale remains a major draw for its high-end boutiques, art galleries, and fabulous resorts. For exclusive shopping, dining, and weekly outdoor markets, the Borgata of Scottsdale brings a unique Mediterranean-in-the-Desert flavor to North Scottsdale.

Tempe, located south of Scottsdale, brings college town amenities and energy to the Valley of the Sun. Arizona State University, one of the biggest universities in the country, is the beating heart of Tempe. Mill Avenue, with its assortment of hamburger joints, cafes, boutiques, and bars, is the major artery and gathering point, home to the Tempe Festival of the Arts and major Fourth of July Festivities. Tempe Beach Park, built around the wide, artificial Tempe Towne Lake, offers temporary respite from the desert with boat rides, walking trails, and snack kiosks selling premium gelato.

Further east are the cities of Mesa, Chandler, and Gilbert. Mesa, once a busy agricultural community, is now a major city boasting the Mesa Arts Center complex and a busy downtown area. Chandler too has experienced a renaissance, with downtown receiving a major face-lift, and a full performing arts schedule showing at the Chandler Center for the Arts.

Continuing east we find Mesa, Chandler and Gilbert. Chandler remained largely an agricultural community until a growth spurt, which began in the 1970s. Much of this area houses young families and

Phoenix Snapshot continued

middle-class professionals in stucco and tile developments. Local shopping is enjoyable at the Superstition Springs Center Mall at

the northwest corner of Highway 60 and Power Road.

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