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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



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# On the Trail, Off the Beaten Path

## **Scottsdale, Mesa, Phoenix, 2 Days**

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** There is more to Greater Phoenix than meets the eye. The serenity and beauty from Phoenix through Tortilla Flat and Apache Junction is sheer perfection. There are cosmopolitan delights and lush green golf courses on one side, mountain ranges and desert terrain on the other. Among this are intriguing opportunities to discover, rejuvenate and indulge. Visitors to Phoenix find that they run out time before they run out interesting things to do.

# Itinerary Overview

## Day 1 - Phoenix, Mesa

**DAY NOTE:** The Apache Lake Recreation Area is along the 120-mile Apache Trail, which has the distinction of being the only recognized Historic and Scenic Highway in Arizona. This scenic route ventures past deserts, mountains, cliff dwellings, lake shores, through old mining towns and canyons. Constructed in 1919, the route was intended to link the rural copper industry to the Phoenix market and as a service road for the construction of Roosevelt Dam. Despite the impracticality of the narrow route, it has fascinated visitors for decades. Goldfield Ghost Town, an authentic 1890s mining town, offers many funky shops and historic buildings. The historic Mammoth Gold Mine and Goldfield Museum offer tours, and guests can pan for gold or ride on Arizona's only narrow gauge train. At its height Goldfield boasted three saloons, a boarding house, several shops and a school house. Actors reenact old west gunfights and couples exchange vows in the small chapel on site. Located in the town, The Mammoth Steakhouse and Saloon features a restored antique stagecoach and offers steaks, burgers and cold brews.



### Apache Lake Recreation Area

Services for you and your boat



### Superstition Wilderness Area



### Goldfield Ghost Town and Mine Tours Inc.

Valley's only ghost town

## Day 2 - Phoenix, Scottsdale

**DAY NOTE:** A favorite option for Arizona Desert Tours is their dinner BBQ overlooking the Superstition Mountains.



### Pioneer Arizona Living History Museum

Savor the history of territorial Arizona



### Arizona Desert Mountain Jeep Tours

Pristine wilderness

# Day 1 - Phoenix, Mesa



## QUICK NOTE

**DAY NOTE:** The Apache Lake Recreation Area is along the 120-mile Apache Trail, which has the distinction of being the only recognized Historic and Scenic Highway in Arizona. This scenic route ventures past deserts, mountains, cliff dwellings, lake shores, through old mining towns and canyons. Constructed in 1919, the route was intended to link the rural copper industry to the Phoenix market and as a service road for the construction of Roosevelt Dam. Despite the impracticality of the narrow route, it has fascinated visitors for decades. Goldfield Ghost Town, an authentic 1890s mining town, offers many funky shops and historic buildings. The historic Mammoth Gold Mine and Goldfield Museum offer tours, and guests can pan for gold or ride on Arizona's only narrow gauge train. At its height Goldfield boasted three saloons, a boarding house, several shops and a school house. Actors reenact old west gunfights and couples exchange vows in the small chapel on site. Located in the town, The Mammoth Steakhouse and Saloon features a restored antique stagecoach and offers steaks, burgers and cold brews.

**contact:**  
tel: 602-225-5200

**location:**  
2324 E McDowell Road  
Phoenix AZ 85006

## 1 Apache Lake Recreation Area

**DESCRIPTION:** The Apache Lake Marina and Resort is one mile from the main highway and features a motel, gas station, coffee shop, picnic supplies and a trailer park for 12 units. A boat ramp and dock are at the resort, and a county sheriff's aid station is nearby.



**contact:**  
tel: 480-610-3300

**location:**  
26 N. MacDonald, Room 120  
Mesa AZ 85211-5800

## 2 Superstition Wilderness Area

**DESCRIPTION:** This wilderness was first designated in 1939, and was expanded to its present size in 1984. It now contains approximately 160,200 acres. There is a well developed trail system, and the western end of the wilderness receives heavy use during the cooler parts of the year. Trail conditions vary from fair to very poor, and several trails are unsuitable for horses. The area is starkly beautiful and often rugged, but can be inhospitable to those not equipped to meet nature on her own terms. Searing heat and a shortage of water are typical conditions in the summer. Bitter cold, rains (and even snowstorms) may occur in the winter. Rumors still abound concerning lost gold mines, and "secret maps," etc., are still being sold to the unwary. The Superstitions, once you make it to the top are rugged and very dangerous. Care must be taken at all times to literally keep from falling off a cliff. The area is dotted with many canyons that drop down for hundreds of feet in some places. Keeping on the trails will better ensure your safe return to civilization. Located in the northern area of the sprawling Phoenix metropolis, lies the equally sprawling town of Mesa. Travel north on the main street (there is only one) to the base. and park.



**contact:**  
tel: +1 480 983 0333  
<http://www.goldfieldghosttown.com/merchants.html>

**location:**  
4650 North Mammoth Mine  
Road  
Apache Junction AZ 85220

**hours:**  
10a-5p M-Su

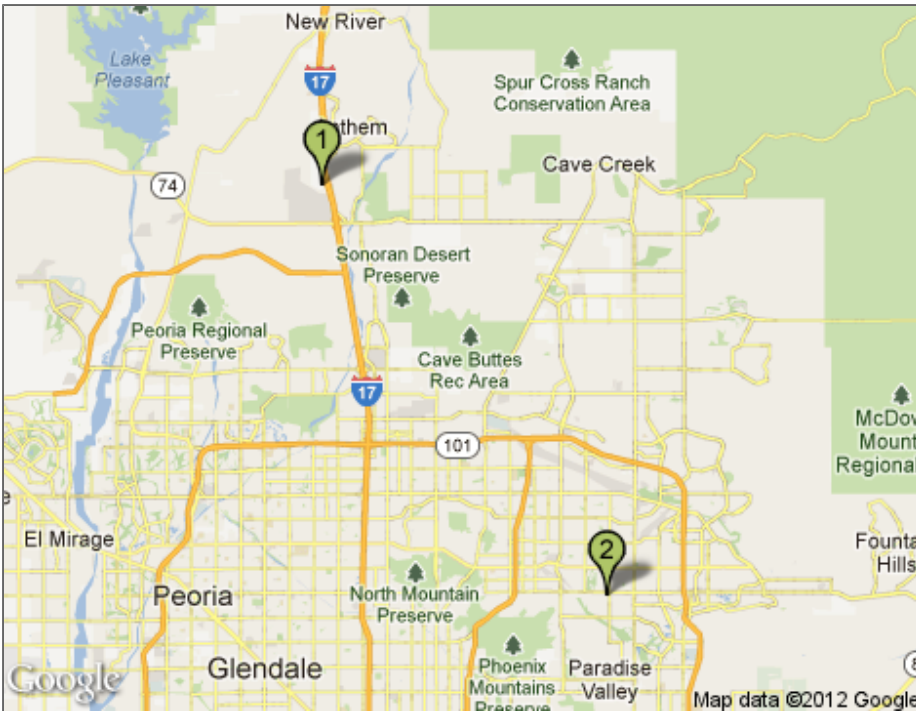
## 3 Goldfield Ghost Town and Mine Tours Inc.

**DESCRIPTION:** Head out to the only authentic ghost town in the valley, at the foot of the Superstition Mountains. Learn about the mystery surrounding the Lost Dutchman Mine and tour an historic 1890s goldmine. Enjoy the scenic view of the Superstition Mountains from a superior angle. Other features include gunfights, narrow-gauge railroad, museums of mining equipment as well as local shopping and food. Local jeep tours are available through Apache Tours. © wcities.com



Copyright © 1892 - 2010 Goldfield Ghost Town

# Day 2 - Phoenix, Scottsdale



## QUICK NOTE

**DAY NOTE:** A favorite option for Arizona Desert Tours is their dinner BBQ overlooking the Superstition Mountains.

**contact:**

tel: +1 623 465 1052  
fax: +1 623 465 0683  
<http://www.pioneer-arizona.com/>

**location:**

85027

## 1 Pioneer Arizona Living History Museum

**DESCRIPTION:** History comes alive in this turn-of-the-century town. Features include a sheriff's office, jail, dress shop and a schoolhouse displayed as it was once used. The charming chapel may be utilized for Victorian weddings by arrangement. Breakfast and lunch are served, graced by an antique cherry wood bar. The kids will enjoy the Critter Corral with miniature Brahma bulls and other animals. Guided tours include a ride on the tractor-pull and detailed historic information. © wcities.com



**contact:**

tel: +1 480 860 1777 / +1 800 567 3619  
fax: +1 480 607 0495  
<http://www.azdesertmountain.com>

**location:**

6303 East Cochise Avenue  
Scottsdale AZ 85253

**hours:**

Open M-Su, call for tour times

## 2 Arizona Desert Mountain Jeep Tours

**DESCRIPTION:** Begin your adventure of a lifetime by participating in any of these tours guided by cowboys or Sonoran naturalists. Many exciting activities are possible with this tour facility. Take an "eco tour" to learn about the delicate balance of the living desert or choose a hearty southwestern cookout. Horseback trail rides are available with some tours. Guides are experts in many areas ranging from herpetology and geology to meteorology that translates into a unique, informative southwestern experience. Tours are twice daily, seven days a week. © wcities.com



Arizona Desert Mountain Jeep Tours



# 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.

© NileGuide

# 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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