



**nileGUIDE**

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



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# Phoenix is Phun for Kids

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

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** The popular, sunny destination of Phoenix offers an extensive array of fun-filled activities and amenities for families with children. From hands-on museums and mountain biking to Native craft lessons and Western shows, Phoenix invites parents to enjoy themselves as their children enjoy their own activities in this unique family vacation spot. Parents staying at selected properties, including the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort at Gainey Ranch can relax and unwind while children enjoy the activities offered at the kids' clubs without stepping foot off the resort.

# Itinerary Overview

## Day 1 - Phoenix, Chandler

**DAY NOTE:** A highlight of the day will be Rawhide, located on the historic lands of the Gila River Indian Community and conveniently close to downtown and the airport. Rawhide is the state's largest western-themed attraction, offering burro rides, stunt shows and a mechanical bull. Families with children enjoy Rawhide Steakhouse's generously-sized specialties, including mesquite-grilled steaks, BBQ pork ribs and chicken. A kids' menu and vegetarian selections are also available. Live country music plays nightly.



### Arizona Doll and Toy Museum

Antique toys and dolls



### Enchanted Island

An island paradise



### Rawhide 1880s Western Town

A true old west experience

## Day 2 - Mesa, Scottsdale, Glendale

**DAY NOTE:** The day starts off on an educational note at Arizona Museum for Youth. The facility has hands-on and interactive exhibits that engage the minds, energy and imaginations of youth. Adults may learn a thing or two, as well! The museum is a great location themed birthday parties for children, with access to performers, games and caterers.



### Arizona Museum for Youth

Hands-on activities for young people



### Pischke's Paradise

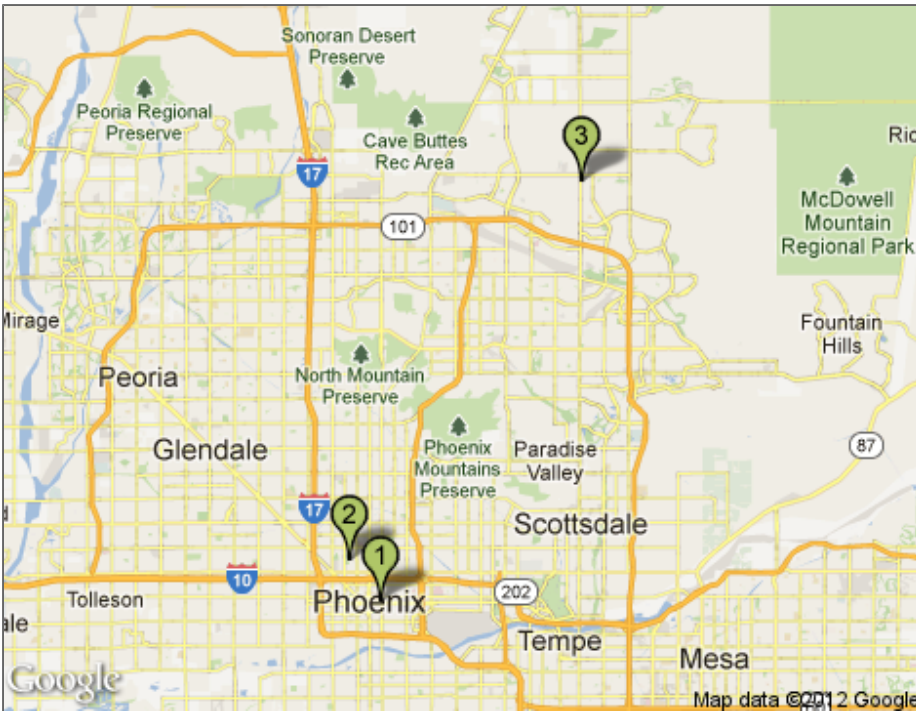
Island-themed family eatery



### Water World Safari

Wave boredom goodbye

# Day 1 - Phoenix, Chandler



## QUICK NOTE

**DAY NOTE:** A highlight of the day will be Rawhide, located on the historic lands of the Gila River Indian Community and conveniently close to downtown and the airport. Rawhide is the state's largest western-themed attraction, offering burro rides, stunt shows and a mechanical bull. Families with children enjoy Rawhide Steakhouse's generously-sized specialties, including mesquite-grilled steaks, BBQ pork ribs and chicken. A kids' menu and vegetarian selections are also available. Live country music plays nightly.

**contact:**

tel: +1 602 253 9337  
[http://www.rossonhousemuseum.org/the\\_park.html](http://www.rossonhousemuseum.org/the_park.html)

**location:**

602 East Adams Street  
Phoenix AZ 85004

**hours:**

10a-4p Tu-Sa, noon-4p Su,  
closed M, closed Aug

## 1 Arizona Doll and Toy Museum

**DESCRIPTION:** This fully restored 1900s home, known as the Steven's Bungalow, now provides a glimpse into the toys of the past. On display in the Historic Heritage Square, this red brick structure is located at the northwest corner of Washington and Seventh Streets. Dolls are exhibited in a recreated one-room schoolhouse. Other items include antique dollhouses and toys. Admission fee. Credit cards not accepted. Nearby, you will find other historic homes including the Rosson House and the Silva House. © wcities.com



Arizona Doll and Toy Museum

**contact:**

tel: +1 602 254 1200  
fax: +1 602 254 1264  
<http://www.enchantedisland.com>

**location:**

1202 West Encanto  
Boulevard

## 2 Enchanted Island

**DESCRIPTION:** Located at Encanto Park, this oasis is rightfully named. Catering to the 2-10 year-old set, the island is surrounded by ducks, swans and fish. Listen to the oohs and aahs and you'll hear how happy the kids are. Rides include a train, carousel, parachutes and others guaranteed to create a



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Phoenix AZ 85007

fun-filled adventure. Prices are reasonable and all-day passes are available. © wcities.com

**hours:**

Hours vary by season, W-Su, please call to confirm

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**contact:**

tel: +1 480 502 1880 / +1 800 527 1880

fax: +1 480 502 1301

<http://www.rawhide.com>

**location:**

5700 West Loop Road  
Chandler AZ 85255

**hours:**

M-Th 6p-10p; F-Su 5:30p-10p

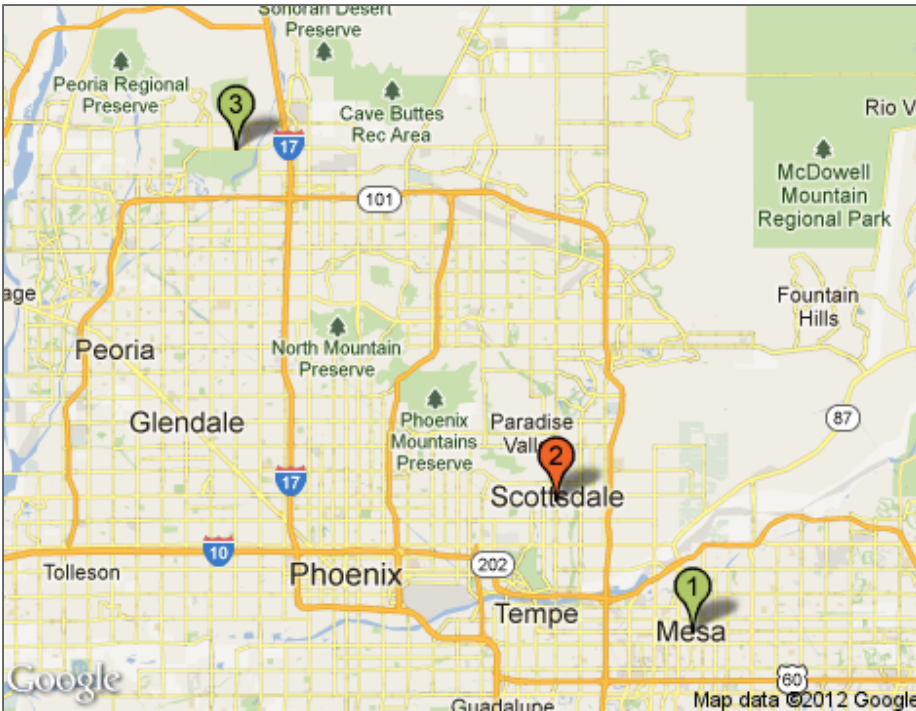
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**3 Rawhide 1880s Western Town**

**DESCRIPTION:** Step back in time to the Wild Wild West in Arizona's largest western theme park. Be careful when you walk through the streets, you never know when a cattle rustler might get involved in a shoot-out. Rides and attractions are throughout the town. If shopping is your idea of fun, you won't be disappointed with more than 15 shops. You can even buy a rattler head for that special someone. Seasonal cookouts, a famous steak house and a saloon are open too; be careful, the sheriff does not like rowdies. Admission is free except for special events. Please call for current information. © wcities.com



# Day 2 - Mesa, Scottsdale, Glendale



## QUICK NOTE

**DAY NOTE:** The day starts off on an educational note at Arizona Museum for Youth. The facility has hands-on and interactive exhibits that engage the minds, energy and imaginations of youth. Adults may learn a thing or two, as well! The museum is a great location themed birthday parties for children, with access to performers, games and caterers.

### contact:

tel: +1 480 644 2467  
fax: +1 480 644 3675  
<http://www.ci.mesa.az.us/amfy>

### location:

51 East Main St  
Mesa AZ 85201

### hours:

9a-5p Tue-Sat; 1p-5p Sun;  
closed Mon

## 1 Arizona Museum for Youth

**DESCRIPTION:** Interactive activities have been the hallmark of this unique museum dedicated to kids. Experiencing different media through experimentation has been the fun way kids have been learning at this creative outlet. Experience interactive displays for kids in the What on Earth? exhibit. Please call for current exhibit information. Minimal admission for ages 2 and up. © wcities.com



Arizona Museum for Youth

### contact:

tel: 1 480 481 0067  
[www.pischkes.com](http://www.pischkes.com)

### location:

7217 East 1st Street  
Scottsdale AZ 85251

### hours:

## 2 Pischke's Paradise

**DESCRIPTION:** This family-owned-and-operated restaurant has been a local favorite for decades. Serving three meals daily, the menu has more than 300 selections. It is often busy, so plan on at least a short wait before being seated. Hearty breakfasts (including pancakes made with orange juice) are followed by burgers, salads and sandwiches at lunch (try the Island Melt Sandwich) and seafood, steaks and pastas at dinner. Interesting desserts include the Hoosier Pie. Full bar service is available. © wcities.com

7a-9:30p M-Sa, 8a-9:30p Su

**contact:**

tel: +1 623 581 8446  
fax: +1 623 780 0869  
<http://phoenix.golfland.com/>

**location:**

4243 West Pinnacle Peak  
Road  
Glendale AZ 85310

**hours:**

Memorial Day through Labor  
Day: 10a-8p M-Th, 10a-9p F-  
Sa, 11a-7p Su

**3 Water World Safari**

**DESCRIPTION:** Thrill to the Zambezi River or the screaming six-story Kilimanjaro Speed Slides. For those not quite ready for heart-stopping emergency-room type rides, there are safe thrills enough on the ocean waves ride at the Serengeti Surf Wave Pool, or cruise over to the little kid play area in Jungle Jim's. Open seasonally from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Prices are subject to change, call or refer to the Web page. © wcities.com



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# 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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