



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



neepster

Top 10 Hidden Gems in Phoenix

Mesa, Phoenix, Glendale, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: While exploring the Superstition Mountain Range, be sure to check out Tortilla Flat. Boasting a population of six, Tortilla Flat is a quirky, fun destination. The town originated as a stage stop in 1904 and continues as an interesting break for travelers on the trail. An authentic boardwalk leads to the Superstition Saloon where real saddles serve as bar stools, and dollar bills from previous guests line the walls and ceiling. The Saloon is known for chili and sarsaparilla. Nearby, the ice cream shop serves prickly pear ice cream.

contact:

<http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/usery/>

location:

Phoenix AZ 85207

1 Usery Mountains

DESCRIPTION: Usery Mountain Park encompasses 3,648 acres northeast of Mesa. Hiking, the famous Wind Cave, and mountain biking are popular activities. The elevation ranges from 1,700 to 2,750 feet. The park has 4 trails with 10 miles of easy singletracks: Dam Trail, NoSo Trail, Blevins Trail (3 mi) and Moon Rock Trail. Facilities include a 73-unit campground (no reservations), a group campground (advanced reservations required). Day-use includes a group picnic area (advanced reservations required) and picnic sites with grills, tables, ramadas and water. Per vehicle entry fee for day use.



contact:

tel: 602-225-5200

location:

2324 E McDowell Road
Phoenix AZ 85006

2 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

3 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: +1 623 465 1052
fax: +1 623 465 0683
<http://www.pioneer-arizona.com/>

location:

85027

4 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: +1 800 752 3187
<http://www.cosanti.com>

location:

85253

hours:

9a-5p M-Sa, 11a-5p Su

5 Cosanti Originals

DESCRIPTION: This boutique features handcrafted wind-bells and sculptures by artist Paolo Soleri. All purchases go to fund the ongoing development of Soleri's famous Arcosanti, his version of the merging of architecture and ecology. The ceramic is blended from Arizona clay, stoneware and water. Pieces are cast-molded from a "slip," hand carved with designs, and then kiln fired. Bronze bells have also been produced since 1959, using a sand-casting method. The purchase of any of these unusual and beautiful gift items supports important artistic work. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: +1 480 596 0304
fax: +1 480 596 0311
<http://www.workofartists.com/>

location:

10835 North Tatum Blvd
Phoenix AZ 85028

hours:

10a-9p M-Sa, 10a-6p Su

6 Work of Artists Gallery

DESCRIPTION: Unique offerings from more than 200 artists are gathered together for your shopping pleasure. Choose from cool sculptures, prints, clocks, Native American art and pottery. Famous Cosanti Collection wind chimes make thoughtful gifts or souvenirs of Arizona, and the proceeds from these purchases help support continued Arcosanti construction. Driftwood welcome signs are displayed next to horseshoe art in this eclectic exhibit. New items are added daily, so feel free to visit often to find one-of-a-kind art. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: +1 623 930 4500
http://historiccatlincourt.com/Home_Page.php

location:

5701 West Palmyra Avenue
Glendale AZ 85301

7 Catlin Court

DESCRIPTION: Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this antique niche invites the browser. Whether your choice invokes memories with musty tomes of the past, or delights with unique collectible Christmas trinkets, fascination and charm will surely accompany your visit. Located within Glendale's Historic District, known as Arizona's Antique Capitol. Visit during Gaslight Thursdays, the third Thursday of every month. Local merchants extend shopping hours till 9pm. Free parking, entertainment and trolley rides are available for



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the event. Credit card acceptance and access will vary with merchant. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +1 623 931 2737
fax: +1 623 930 8561
<http://www.thebeadmuseum.com>

location:

5754 W. Glenn Dr
Glendale AZ 85301

hours:

10a-5p M-W, F-Sa, 10a-8p
Th, 11a-4p Su



Bead Museum

DESCRIPTION: Beads have interesting cultural significance, and since 1984 this museum offers a permanent spot to display and preserve these adornments. The featured exhibits include temporary exhibits like the impressive collection donated by Lois Sherr Dubin, called Ojime. These bead types were used by men on their kimono sash accessories. Other exhibits include 19th century beaded flowers from France and a permanent display of rosaries, talismans and prayer beads. There is also a unique gift shop in the museum. Children under 12 are free and there is plenty of parking available. © wcities.com



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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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