

Maricopa parks fire ban begins Monday

Apr 28, 2023



Photo courtesy of the Town of Fountain Hills

The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department

(MCPRD) will initiate its annual fire ban on Monday, May 1. The City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department's annual fire ban goes into effect the same day.

The department's annual fire ban dates align with the county's Air Quality Department burn activity regulations. Under these regulations, outdoor recreational fires are prohibited within Area A's boundaries between May 1 and Sept. 30. This area encompasses all of Maricopa County's regional parks.

"This winter, Maricopa County received an abundance of rain, which provided us with a beautiful superbloom of wildflowers in the parks," said R.J. Cardin, MCPRD department director. "As the temperatures begin to rise, this vegetation is drying out and quickly becoming an ideal source for wildfire ignition. Implementing a fire ban limits the possibility of starting a brush fire, which could cause severe damage to park resources, threaten park visitor

safety and pose a danger to homes near many of our parks."

MCPRD said it is also important to note that during this time of year, the National Weather Service often issues red flag warnings across central Arizona to alert land management agencies that conditions are ideal for wildfire ignition. Should this occur before the fire ban, park supervisors are authorized to issue temporary fire bans to ensure public safety and protect the park's resources.

When temporary fire bans are issued, the information is posted on the website and visitors are notified upon entry to the park. The parks also stop selling firewood during this time.

The fire ban does not allow campfires, fire pits and charcoal grills; however, using gas/propane grills in designated areas such as semi-developed and developed camping sites is still acceptable. Campfires along the shoreline at Lake Pleasant Regional Park are prohibited. Those who violate the fire ban may be fined under Rule 314, Section 312.

Smoking in the parks is also discouraged due to the extremely dry conditions. MCPRD asks everyone to be responsible and ensure that all cigarettes are properly extinguished and placed in trash receptacles. While Sept. 30 is the traditional fire ban lift date, an extension is possible. Park staff will monitor precipitation levels and vegetation conditions in the parks throughout the summer to

determine if an extension is necessary.

Contact the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department at 602-506-2930, or visit maricopa.gov/parks for additional information.

Things to Do in Cave Creek Regional Park- 5 Amazing Facts

by sayo_thapa – usatales.com
April 25, 2023

Cave Creek Regional Park

located just outside of Phoenix is one of the best highlights of Arizona. Situated in N Lava Lane Cave Creek, far away from all the noise and the hustle and bustle of the city, comes with numerous activities such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, picnic spots, live animal display, campgrounds, and various other beautiful area and sites.

If you are looking forward to spending your weekend or your holidays getting away from the monotonous city life and trying something adventurous, irrespective of whether you are a professional hiker or a traveling enthusiast, or just a common office man, Cave Creek Regional Park has you all covered.

In this article, you will be reading about various such activities and informational details of several areas and hiking trails that you can visit whilst in Arizona.

1. Cave Creek Regional Park
Since its official public inauguration in 1985, the Cave Creek Regional Park in Lava Lane Cave

Creek has grown to be a well-liked hangout for outdoor enthusiasts.

The current management of Cave Creek Regional Park by Maricopa County Parks & Recreation is committed to safeguarding the region's natural beauty and cultural legacy. The amenities and facilities in the park have been created to offer tourists a variety of recreational possibilities while simultaneously safeguarding the precious Sonoran Desert ecosystem.

The history of Cave Creek Regional Park is extensive and dates back thousands of years. According to archeological data, numerous indigenous cultures, including the Hohokam, Yavapai, and Apache tribes, had resided in the park for over 5,000 years.

Cave Creek Regional Park is a magnificent utopia that offers an incredible variety of outdoor adventures and gorgeous landscapes. Located right in the middle of the Sonoran Desert, this 2,922-acre park is a haven for hikers, mountain bikers, horseback riders, and nature lovers of all kinds with its craggy canyons, towering saguaros, and panoramic views.

Therefore, join me in this venture to unravel the magnificence of this hidden treasure and learn why it is one of Arizona's most popular spots for vacations.

2. Things to Do in Cave Creek Regional Park

There are a lot of activities that you can indulge yourself in

whilst in Cave Creek Regional Park. Listed below are some of the best-handpicked activities that you can try for yourself when in Cave Creek Regional Park.

2.1. Go for a Picnic with Your Loved Ones

Cave Creek Regional Park comes with various other sites which make it one of the most ideal sites for picnicking with family, friends, and loved ones. And if you are planning a short weekend getaway to this wonderful location, then make sure to carry your picnic baskets.

Apart from coming with alluring picnic spots, Cave Creek Regional Park also offers four Ramadas that are mainly built for the purpose of housing large gatherings. Therefore if you are planning an event and looking for an ideal place, you might as well utilize Cave Creek's four large Ramadas. But be sure to contact the authorities to reserve a Ramada in advance because the authority system here runs on the basis of "first come-first serve".

Another additional factor that makes Cave Creek Regional Park a bonus spot for a picnic is that the picnic areas in this location are complete with picnic tables, barbecue grills, drinking water, fire pits, a dump station, and also a playground nearby.

Therefore, if you are planning on a little outdoor activity with your loved ones, then going for a picnic in this lovely location might just be what you are looking for.

2.2. Nature Center

Cave Creek Regional Park also offers its visitors a nature center and if you are fascinated as well as intrigued by the wonders of nature, then, these centers are definitely a "must-see" spot for you.

These Nature Centers are designed in such a way that they are fully functional along with sufficient energy and at the same time minimize the disturbance to the natural landscape. Factors such as the preservation of wildlife and the need to avoid disturbing the natural underdeveloped land have strongly been taken into consideration.

Displaying several historical artifacts and live snakes and several other beauties of nature, this center is bound to leave you with an impression you can never forget. Also, the Nature Center hosts a monthly feeding presentation named "Feeding Frenzy" and if you ever wondered about what scorpions, Gila monsters, and rattle-snakes eat and how they survive and various other natural habitats and the role they play in sustaining the food chain then, make sure to attend these events.

Another bonus factor for all the Astro-nerds out there, Nature Center also offers the facility of stargazing.

Also, you can contact the park supervisor directly or visit the park website if you are planning on booking a place that is connected to nature.

2.3. Camp Grounds

In this so-called "modern era" of the scientific revolution and

heavy industrialization, human life has come to be trapped within the confines of the four corners of their office table. Activities such as camping and hiking are rarely looked upon but to this day, it remains one of the pleasure activities that one can indulge in. Therefore, if you are looking to spend a night or two camping out, then the campground in Cave Creek surely is going to be the best choice you'll ever make.

The Cave Creek Regional Park offers a clean and peaceful family campground that is bordered by cholla, mesquite, and saguaro cactus, and has about 59 campsites in total. Horse corrals can be found at sites 10 and 20.

Each campground provides you with basic amenities such as water and electric hookups, picnic tables, a dump station, and a fire pit with barbeque racks. This regional park also comes with clean restrooms and good hot water and you can make your reservations through the Maricopa Regional Parks website.

2.4. Cave Creek Clay Mine Trails

This historical Clay Mine Trail is surrounded by several hills which once housed gold seekers during the late 1800s. Therefore, hiking through the Cave Creek Clay Mine gives the visitors a unique opportunity to travel back in time and contemplate how these settlers must have managed to find their way to this land. The ranger-led activities in the Cave Mine Trail also offer a Clay Mine Hike and informational program that

highlights the historical background of this place and how its contents were used back in the day.

Note: the rangers supply you with hard hats and it is recommended to bring your water, flashlights, and close-toed shoes.

2.5. Hiking Trails

Winding up with the most intriguing point of this article, you will now be reading about the exotic hike and bike trail locations of the Cave Creek Regional Park.

The Cave Creek Regional Park hosts around 15 miles of exquisite hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian trails which fall on the scenic upper Sonoran Desert. Although the hikers and the visitors will have to endure through some serious elevation gains, their efforts will be treated to some of the best and most astonishing views of the surrounding area.

The trails in the area are meant for people of all ages and experiences. If you are looking for a low-key hike then listed below are some of the most reputed hiking trails of the Cave Creek Regional Park.

2.5.1. Slate Trail

This 6.3 km is out and back Slate Trail which falls near Cave Creek, Arizona. It is usually considered to be an easy access route as it is an average of about two-mile roundtrip. Popularly known for hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking, one can also enjoy themselves in daytime peacefulness. You can also visit

the "Michelin Man" segmented saguaro by taking this trail.

The best time to visit this trail is October through May and dogs are welcome on a leash.

2.5.2. Go John Trail

The 9.8 km Go John Trail is often considered to be a moderately challenging loop your efforts will be treated with amazing sights and great views.

The trail is open year-round and is a perfect place to visit anytime.

2.5.3. Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area

The Spur Cross Ranch conservation area hosts 16 great trails ideal for an adventurous hike or family trip and hiking through this trail is bound to have you amazed at the scenic beauty of nature. The Sister Park in Spur Cross Ranch, which can be accessed by a very long hike or a short drive, shares Cave Creek Park's north border with it. Some of the best trails which fall under the area along with their respective lengths and estimated times are given as follows:

- Dragonfly Trail: Length- 2.9 km ; Est. Time- 39 mins
- Spur Cross Dragonfly Loop: Length-6.3 km ; Est. Time- 1hr 30 mins
- Elephant Mountain Loop: Length- 11.3 km; Est. Time- 3 hr 30 mins
- Metate Trail and Towhee Trail: Length- 4.3 km; Est. Time- 50 mins
- Spur Cross and Tortuga Trail Loop: Length- 5.1 km; Est. Time- 1hr 30 mins

- Skull Mesa Trail:
Length-18.3 km ; Est.
Time-6hr 10 mins

2.5.4. Clay Mine Trail

This 4.8 km hiking trail takes about an average of 1 hour 15 mins to complete and is generally considered to be a moderately challenging route. This renowned trail for hiking is best to visit from October through April. Dogs are welcome here but again, they must be on a leash.

3. Conclusion

To conclude, the Cave Creek Regional Park is an ideal location to pay a visit to persons of all ages. Irrespective of whether you are an outdoor activity enthusiast or a serious hiker or just an ordinary layman, looking for some quiet time in solitary, this place has it all in store for everyone.

Arizona 2023 wildflowers: Here's where the best blooms are

Arizona Republic
2:15 p.m. MST Apr. 24, 2023



Poppies line the Pipeline Canyon Trail at Lake Pleasant Regional Park north of Phoenix. ROGER NAYLOR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



In 2017, brittlebush added bursts of color to the Black Canyon Trail north of Phoenix, and should do likewise this April.

ROGER NAYLOR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



In 2017, brittlebush added bursts of color to the Black Canyon Trail north of Phoenix, and should do likewise this April.

ROGER NAYLOR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



In 2017, brittlebush added bursts of color to the Black Canyon Trail north of Phoenix, and should do likewise this April.

ROGER NAYLOR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



In 2017, brittlebush added bursts of color to the Black Canyon Trail north of Phoenix, and should do likewise this April.

ROGER NAYLOR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Poppies and blue dicks make a colorful bouquet along Pipeline Canyon Trail in Lake Pleasant Regional Park north of Phoenix. ROGER NAYLOR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers bloom on the Quail Trailhead at Estrella Mountain Regional Park on March 9, 2023, in Goodyear.

ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



Wildflowers bloom on the Quail
Trailhead at Estrella Mountain
Regional Park on March 9, 2023,
in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



A wildflower blooms out of the
group on the Quail Trailhead at
Estrella Mountain Regional Park
on March 9, 2023, in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



A honey bee gathers pollen from
a wildflower on the Quail
Trailhead at Estrella Mountain
Regional Park on March 9, 2023,
in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



Wildflowers bloom on the Quail
Trailhead at Estrella Mountain
Regional Park on March 9, 2023,
in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



A honey bee gathers pollen from
a wildflower on the Quail
Trailhead at Estrella Mountain
Regional Park on March 9, 2023,
in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



Wildflowers bloom on the Quail
Trailhead at Estrella Mountain
Regional Park on March 9, 2023,
in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



A honey bee gathers pollen from
a wildflower on the Quail
Trailhead at Estrella Mountain
Regional Park on March 9, 2023,
in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



Wildflowers bloom on the Quail
Trailhead at Estrella Mountain
Regional Park on March 9, 2023,
in Goodyear.
ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE
REPUBLIC



Rob and Sandra McGarva, who are visiting from Canada, walk along the Quail Trailhead at Estrella Mountain Regional Park to look for blooming wildflowers on March 9, 2023, in Goodyear. ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE REPUBLIC



A pair of hikers walk on the Quail Trailhead at Estrella Mountain Regional Park on March 9, 2023, in Goodyear. The trail was dotted with purple and yellow wildflowers. ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Rainbow Valley Trail at the Estrella Mountain Regional Park in Goodyear on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Rainbow Valley Trail at the Estrella Mountain Regional Park in Goodyear on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Rainbow Valley Trail at the Estrella Mountain Regional Park in Goodyear on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Rainbow Valley Trail at the Estrella Mountain Regional Park in Goodyear on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Rainbow Valley Trail at the Estrella Mountain Regional Park in Goodyear on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Black Rock Loop at the White Tank Mountain Regional Park in Surprise on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Black Rock Loop at the White Tank Mountain Regional Park in Surprise on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Black Rock Loop at the White Tank Mountain Regional Park in Surprise on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Black Rock Loop at the White Tank Mountain Regional Park in Surprise on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Black Rock Loop at the White Tank Mountain Regional Park in Surprise on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC



Wildflowers along the Black Rock Loop at the White Tank Mountain Regional Park in Surprise on March 9, 2023. DIANNIE CHAVEZ/THE REPUBLIC

On The Rocks – Yavapai Point Trail

[Claudia Collins](#) Posted April 26, 2023 at 8:11 am – Sports360AZ.com

Hey everyone! Welcome to On The Rocks, I'm your trail guide, Claudia Collins. I'm taking you along for my adventures as I check hikes, waterfalls, and other outdoor activities off of my Arizona bucket list. Today, we're heading to Lake Pleasant Regional Park to hike Yavapai Point Trail. This family-friendly trail is 3.0 miles long with 450 feet of elevation gain. Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3f16gz8Glog>

Fire Ban in Desert Parks and Preserves

[Open Audio Article Player](#)
By Staff | on April 25, 2023

By City of Phoenix

The [Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department](#) will put into effect its annual ban on open fires in the city's desert parks and mountain preserves starting Monday, May 1. The **Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department's annual fire ban goes into effect the same day.**

In consultation with the Phoenix Fire Department, smoking and charcoal fires are included in the ban due to the extreme fire danger that the combination of low humidity, increased temperatures, excessive dry vegetation, and frequent high winds create each spring.

The ban applies to Camelback Mountain, Deem Hills Recreation Area, Lookout Mountain, Papago Park, Phoenix Mountains Park and Recreation Area, Phoenix Mountains Preserve, Phoenix Sonoran Preserve, North Mountain Park, Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area, and South Mountain Park/Preserve.

The ban does not apply to the city's flatland parks.

For those using the city's desert parks and preserve land, the fire ban stipulates the following:

- Open wood and charcoal fires are prohibited
- Propane or gas grills may be used, but only in established picnic areas
- Smoking outside enclosed vehicles is prohibited year-round
- Fireworks are prohibited year-round

Motorists traveling through or near Phoenix’s desert parks and mountain preserves should use extreme care with smoking materials and dispose of those only in their vehicle’s ash tray.

To protect their homes, residents whose property borders the city’s preserve land may remove dry shrubs, brush and grasses, and trim dead branches from trees within the 10-foot strip of land that borders their property. By creating this 10-foot “buffer zone” residents can help to protect their homes from potential brush fires in the adjacent preserve land.

Preserve neighbors also should check irrigation lines and pool back-flush hoses to ensure that water is not seeping into the preserve. Outside water sources encourage unnaturally dense vegetation growth, which increases fire risk.

For general information regarding removing vegetation, residents can contact a Phoenix Park Ranger at 602-495-5458 or natural.resources.pks@phoenix.gov.

As the temperature increases and humidity drops this time of year, those utilizing the city’s desert parks and mountain preserves should use extra caution. Heat-related illness is common from May to October, and generally occur because the victim has been overexposed to heat or overexerted their body based on physical condition or age.

The Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department and Phoenix Fire Department remind

trail users to “[Take a Hike. Do it Right.](#)” when enjoying the city’s desert parks and mountain preserves. [View a hiking safety checklist and guidelines.](#)

For the safety of pets, dogs are prohibited on any City of Phoenix trail when the temperature is 100 degrees or warmer. The Arizona Humane Society advises that temperatures in the 90s are also unsafe for pets to be outdoors. [Learn how to keep pets safe during Arizona’s warm weather months.](#)

Detailed information about Phoenix’s 41,000-plus acres of desert parks and mountain preserves, and 200-plus miles of trails, is available at Phoenix.gov/Parks.

Community comes together to celebrate conservation

[CITYSunTimes](#)

Published on Apr 21, 2023



Image courtesy of Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce

Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT), along with Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce, hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony last week to celebrate the [conservation of nearly 30 acres of critical land](#) adjacent to the **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**. The Town of Cave Creek, Maricopa

County and DFLT collaborated to protect this land, ensuring its preservation for future generations.

For several years, the Town of Cave Creek, Maricopa County and DFLT have worked together to identify and protect lands surrounding the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. The recent listing of a critical property for sale presented an opportunity to protect the land forever.

Thanks to a partnership between the Land Trust, the town and the county, the land has now been protected. The town and county own the land, and DFLT holds a conservation easement to ensure its protection in perpetuity.

Thanks to a partnership between the Desert Foothills Land Trust, the Town of Cave Creek and Maricopa County, 30 acres of critical land near the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area have been protected forever.

Speaking at the ribbon cutting ceremony were several community leaders, including Steve Feld, executive director of the Carefree Cave Creek Chamber; Vicki Preston, president and CEO of DFLT; Chairman Clint Hickman, Maricopa County board of supervisors, District 4; RJ Cardin, director, Maricopa County parks and recreation; Carrie Dyrek, Cave Creek town manager; Bob Morris, Cave Creek mayor; and Luke Kautzman, Town of Cave Creek development services director/zoning administrator.

The protection of this property for future generations is a significant achievement for the Town of Cave Creek, Maricopa County and DFLT. It marks a notable step forward towards preserving Arizona's natural beauty through the power of collaboration.

Fire bans begin May 1 in Phoenix desert parks, preserves

Camelback Mountain is among the areas affected by Phoenix's annual fire ban in desert parks and preserves.

Posted Friday, April 21, 2023 10:23 am

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Phoenix is implementing its annual open fire ban in the city's desert parks and mountain preserves beginning next month.

The Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department will put the ban in effect starting Monday, May 1, the same day **Maricopa County's** annual ban begins, according to a city release.

In consultation with the Phoenix Fire Department, smoking and charcoal fires are included in the ban "due to the extreme fire danger that the combination of low humidity, increased temperatures, excessive dry vegetation and frequent high winds create each spring," city officials said in the release.

The ban applies to Camelback Mountain, Deem Hills Recreation Area, Lookout Mountain, Papago Park, Phoenix Mountains Park and Recreation Area, Phoenix Mountains

Preserve, Phoenix Sonoran Preserve, North Mountain Park, Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area and South Mountain Park/Preserve.

The ban does not apply to the city's "flatland parks," officials said.

The ban stipulates the following:

- Open wood and charcoal fires are prohibited.
- Propane or gas grills may be used, but only in established picnic areas.
- Smoking outside enclosed vehicles is prohibited year-round.
- Fireworks are prohibited year-round.

"Motorists traveling through or near Phoenix's desert parks and mountain preserves should use extreme care with smoking materials and dispose of those only in their vehicle's ash tray," officials said.

Detailed information about Phoenix's 41,000-plus acres of desert parks and mountain preserves, and 200-plus miles of trails, is available at [Phoenix.gov/Parks](https://phoenix.gov/Parks).

Arizona Road Trip Ideas: 11 Best Road Trips + Itinerary

Posted in [Arizona Road Trips](#) April 21, 2023 by [Melissa Mahoney](#)

Need some Arizona road trip ideas? There's nothing like hitting the open road and discovering things along the way. And with a state as large

as Arizona, there is plenty of open roads that lead to awe-inspiring destinations. Whether you want to discover the state's most magnificent natural wonders, landmarks, small towns, or state and national parks, there's an Arizona road trip itinerary for you.

1-Day Road Trip In Arizona

Route: Tumamoc Hill > Catalina Highway > Saguaro National Park > Desert Botanical Garden > Different Pointe of View
Distance: 266 miles
Trip Time: 5 hours 21 minutes

[Your Arizona road trip](#) adventure begins at Tumamoc Hill where you'll watch the sunrise before embarking on a scenic drive along the Catalina Highway. You'll then make a stop at Saguaro National Park where you'll be able to see millions of saguaro cacti thriving in the Sonoran Desert in Tucson. After, head north to Phoenix to the Desert Botanical Garden and then dine at Different Pointe of View at Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs Resort while watching the sunset. What a perfect day trip!

3-Day Weekend Road Trip In Arizona

Route: Grand Falls > Water Wheel Falls > Carlson Creek Vineyard > Callaghan Vineyards > Charron Vineyards > Tanque Verde Falls > Arizona Falls > Stetson Winery

Distance: 839 miles

Trip Time: 15 hours

Looking for a multi-day road trip to do over a long weekend? Well, here's a [three-day Arizona road trip itinerary](#). Along this route, you'll discover waterfalls and wineries around the state. We have also tossed in some

suggested overnight accommodations as well. You'll start this road trip at extraordinary Grand Falls, otherwise known as Chocolate Falls, in the Navajo Nation within the Painted Desert near Flagstaff. The road trip ends at Stetson Winery in Kingman with several stops in between over the course of three days.

Arizona Route 66 Road Trip

Route: Lake Havasu City > Oatman > Seligman > Williams > Flagstaff > Winslow
Distance: 289 miles
Trip Time: 5 hours 24 minutes

Have you ever gotten your kicks on Route 66? Well, take this [Arizona Historic Route 66 road trip](#) and you can. Traveling this route is a step back in time complete with quirky roadside attractions, eateries, gas stations, and small towns. Take your time along the way and travel slow the way travel used to be. There's plenty to see and do in each town along the way. From the London Bridge in Lake Havasu City to the Grand Canyon National Park in Williams, and more, there are plenty of adventures to be had. And when you get to Winslow, don't forget to get a photo of you standing on the corner in Winslow, Arizona!

Arizona Hidden Gems Road Trip
Route: **Martinez Lake > Dateland Travel Center & Date Gardens > Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument > Gila Bend > Estrella Mountain Regional Park > Kofa National Wildlife Refuge**

Distance: 430 miles
Trip Time: 11 hours 43 minutes

Hidden gems abound in the

Grand Canyon State. It's no wonder with a state this huge there are plenty of areas we all have yet to discover. On this [ultimate Arizona hidden gems road trip](#), you'll probably discover at least one place that's new to you. Whether its the decadent dates at Dateland, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument located close to the Arizona-Mexico border, or the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge, make sure to allow plenty of time to explore each destination. Best Arizona Road Trip For Spring

White Tank Mountain Regional Park/Facebook

Route: **Estrella Mountain Regional Park > White Tank Mountain Regional Park > Cave Creek Regional Park > McDowell Sonoran Conservancy > South Mountain Park Preserve > Usery Mountain Regional Park > Picacho Peak > Peridot Mesa**
Distance: 353 miles
Trip Time: 7 hours 23 minutes

When spring arrives, the Arizona desert landscape is in full bloom. And poppies are among the wildflowers that love the weather we have here. Want to see several poppy fields in one go? Take this eye-popping [poppy fields of Arizona road trip](#) and you'll certainly get your fill of these bright-colored beauties against the southwest landscape. To see the poppies, you'll have to trek along hiking trails so keep that in mind and come prepared to hike!

Best Summer Road Trip In Arizona
Route: **Salt River Canyon Wilderness Area > Butcher**

Jones Cove > The Scott Resort & Spa > Goldwater Lake > River Island State Park > Gateway Park

Distance: 535 miles
Trip Time: 10 hours 14 minutes

The Grand Canyon State might not be the first place you think of when you hear the word "beach," but there are quite a few around! And you'll discover several of them on the [Arizona hidden beaches road trip](#). Perfect for summer, you can escape the heat by taking a dip in some refreshing water. These places are like finding an oasis in the desert, and that's exactly what they are!

Best Arizona Road Trip For Fall
Route: **San Francisco Peaks > Lockett Meadow > Aspen Nature Lollipop Trail > Arizona Snowbowl > Bill Williams Mountain Trail > West Fork of Oak Creek Trail #108 > Verde Canyon Railroad > Forest Houses Resort**

Distance: 202 miles
Trip Time: 5 hours

While you'll have to head to northern Arizona to view the colorful hues the leaves turn during the fall, it's well worth the drive. On this [Arizona fall foliage road trip](#), you'll be in awe of how gorgeous the trees look and realize that New England isn't the only region of the USA that gets some breathtaking fall colors. From the San Francisco Peaks to the famous Aspen Nature Lollipop Trail in Flagstaff to Oak Creek Canyon in the Sedona area, your jaw will drop once you see all the colors in the fall.

Best Winter Road Trip In Arizona

Route: Courthouse Square > WildLights at Heritage Park Zoological Sanctuary > Valley of Lights at Fain Park > Main Street Lights in Jerome, Clarkdale, & Cottonwood > Tlaquepaque Arts & Craft Village > Little America Hotel > Bearizona Wildlife Park > Route 66 Lights

Distance: 140b miles

Trip Time: 3 hours 36 minutes

During the winter season, holiday cheer is found all over the Grand Canyon State. If you love looking at colorful twinkling lights, you must take this [Christmas lights road trip in Arizona](#). From Prescott to Jerome, from Sedona to Flagstaff to Williams, this family-friendly adventure will put everyone in the spirit of the season!

Family-Friendly Arizona Road Trip

Route: Navajo Moenave Dinosaur Tracks > Pangaea Land of the Dinosaurs > Pangaea Dinosaur Grill

Distance: 218 miles

Trip Time: 3 hours 18 minutes

Just about everyone is fascinated by dinosaurs and there are a few dinosaur attractions here in the Grand Canyon State. This dinosaur-themed, [family-friendly road trip in Arizona](#) starts at a set of dinosaur tracks in Northern Arizona and ends at Pangaea Land of the Dinosaurs in Scottsdale which will spark the imagination of any child. Either before or after visiting the dinosaur museum, head to Pangaea Dinosaur Grill for a bite to eat. The kids will love this one!

Road Trip to Arizona Landmarks & Natural Wonders

Route: Red Rock State Park > Lava River Cave > Grand Canyon > Antelope Canyon > Monument Valley > Canyon de Chelly > Petrified Forest National Park > Meteor Crater > Tonto Natural Bridge

Distance: 883 miles

Trip Time: 14 hours 49 minutes

Want to see the best that Arizona has to offer? Try out this road trip through northern Arizona that will introduce you to some of the most stunning landscapes you will ever set your eyes on! On this epic [natural wonders of Arizona road trip](#), you'll see the Red Rocks of Sedona with its otherworldly rock formations. Another stop is Canyon de Chelly National Monument where you can either trek along one of its hiking trails starting at the Visitor Center or take a scenic drive. Monument Valley, located along the Arizona-Utah border, is a beautiful place with plenty of rock formations. And, of course, you can't miss the Grand Canyon, one of the top bucket list destinations of the world. Whether you start at the North Rim or the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, everyone will love the jaw-dropping views and hikers will love the hiking trails and may want to tackle the 13-mile Rim Trail. It seems like everywhere you go in Arizona, there's a natural wonder to be discovered! You'll want to allow plenty of time for this road trip which can be done over the course of a few days or weeks.

Road Trip to Best Small Towns in Arizona

Route: Alpine > Greer > Pinetop-Lakeside > Snowflake >

Heber-Overgaard > Pine > Strawberry > Cottonwood > Clarkdale > Jerome

Distance: 309 miles

Trip Time: 6 hours 17 minutes

Does witnessing a bit of Arizona's small-town charm sound like the perfect way to spend a day or weekend? This road trip will take you through some of Arizona's best small towns, such as Pinetop, Greer, Strawberry, and Jerome. It's perfect for exploring a bit of Arizona history! You'll love stopping at each location along this [Arizona small towns road trip](#).

Ready for an adventure of a lifetime? Tell us, which of these best Arizona road trip ideas do you like best?

20 THINGS TO DO IN PHOENIX

By [Layla Hughes](#) –

Travel2Next.com

20 April 2023 Updated on Apr 20th, 2023

Phoenix, Arizona, is a wide and vast gem of southwest culture: peppered with attractive cityscapes, stunning desert scenery, and year-round sunshine. From its busy big-city ballparks and glitzy eateries to hidden lakes and sprawling desert hikes, it's no surprise that Phoenix is considered one of the top cities in the United States.

With so much to explore, from nature's finest attractions to history's best-preserved secrets, it can be difficult to decide where to start. Luckily, we've got you covered with these exciting things to do in Phoenix that will make your trip memorable.

20 THINGS TO DO IN PHOENIX

Looking for things to do in Phoenix, Arizona? Check out our top 20 list.

1- HIKE TO THE ICONIC HOLE IN THE ROCK

Hole In The Rock is widely considered the best place to watch the sunset near Phoenix, and it's easy for beginners and experts.

Located in Papago Park – a favourite with the locals – the Hole in the Rock hike takes you to a natural formation of sandstone buttes that you can sit or stand inside.

The hike is only 0.3 miles (0.4 km), making it a quick and easy trip that requires little to no preparation.

For even more relaxation, you may like to join a private guided yoga session at Papago Park.

The view from the top overlooks the whole of Phoenix and its skyline is especially impressive when viewed through the titular hole in the rock.

Don't miss out on one of Phoenix's most infamous hikes and beloved panoramic views, and head to Hole in the Rock for a bit of exercise with a big reward.

Hole in the Rock is at 625 N Galvin Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

2- CATCH A BASEBALL GAME AT CHASE FIELD

Chase Field is a retractable roof stadium located in Downtown Phoenix, and it's home to Major League Baseball's Arizona Diamondbacks.

In addition to hosting several Major League Baseball games at this stadium, Chase Field has also held concerts for artists as renowned as NSYNC, Elton John, and Guns N' Roses.

Chase Field is best known for its swimming pool located in right-centre field; it's rented out to patrons during games for around \$3500 per game.

If you're visiting Phoenix during the regular season, consider heading to the ballpark and watching a game.

Visiting during the off-season? Consider reserving a guided field tour, and enjoy seeing all that the ballpark has to offer.

Chase Field is at 401 E Jefferson St, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

3- RELAX AT THE JAPANESE FRIENDSHIP GARDEN

Relaxing in the Japanese Friendship Garden is another thing to do in Phoenix.

If you want to unwind after a busy day, you'll want to enjoy a serene stroll through the Japanese Friendship Garden of Phoenix.

The garden covers 3.5 acres (1.4ha) of stunning scenery, and it's recognized as an authentic Japanese Garden in partnership with Phoenix's sister city of Himeji, Japan.

Some of the garden's best attractions include a tea garden and tea house, a koi pond and a fascinating 12-foot (3m) waterfall.

You can stroll through the Japanese Friendship Garden of Phoenix on your own or make your experience more immersive with one of the many weekly events and workshops they offer.

Tickets range from \$7 to \$12, depending on your age and rank, and they can be purchased online in advance or at the gate in person.

The Japanese Friendship Garden of Phoenix is at 1125 N 3rd Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85003.

4- ADMIRE ART AT THE PHOENIX ART MUSEUM

Dive into world-class art and culture at the Phoenix Art Museum, the largest visual arts museum in the Southwest United States.

The Phoenix Art Museum was opened in 1959 and was followed by an expansion in 1965 due to its popularity and success.

As a visitor to the museum, you'll be greeted with a dynamic assortment of more than 20,000 unique art pieces across nine diverse collections.

The Phoenix Art Museum is best known for its modern art collection, multiple photography exhibits, and The Thorne Rooms: architectural reconstructions of actual colonial bedrooms.

Check out the museum's permanent "infinity-room" installation created by artist Yayoi Kusama which mirrors the experience of being surrounded by dancing fireflies.

Phoenix Art Museum is at 1625 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

5- ENJOY THE SCENIC VIEWS AT CAMELBACK MOUNTAIN

Visiting Camelback Mountain is one of the things to do in Phoenix, AZ.

Located just outside Phoenix's city bounds, Camelback Mountain is a wildly popular hike that offers visitors jaw-dropping scenic views.

There are two different trails to choose from when hiking Camelback Mountain: Echo Canyon Trail, a 2.5-mile (4 km) round-trip journey, and Cholla Trail, a 2.6-mile (4.1 km) out-and-back adventure.

Both trails are challenging rocky ascents with little-to-no shade and a steep increase in elevation, so pack lots of water and plan accordingly.

Some of the plantlife and wildlife you'll enjoy during your visit to Camelback Mountain include roadrunners, desert tortoises and a wide array of cacti.

Breathe in the fresh air and exercise while catching can't-miss panoramic views at Phoenix's beloved Camelback Mountain.

Camelback Mountain is at 5700 N Echo Canyon Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85018.

6- STROLL THROUGH THE DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN

Exploring the Phoenix Botanical Garden is one of the family things to do in Phoenix.

The Desert Botanical Garden is a popular attraction that walks visitors through stunning arrays of desert plants and flowers.

Home to over 50,000 plants, the Desert Botanical Garden houses a diverse selection of cacti, succulents, wildflowers, and more.

Visitors will also find many accessible trails within the gardens, including the Sonoran Desert Nature Loop Trail and the Desert Wildflower Loop Trail.

Desert Botanical Garden is also home to delightful dining options for refreshing and relaxing during your visit, with brunch, lunch, dinner and drink selections.

Soak in the beauty of the Sonoran Desert at the Desert Botanical Garden, and reserve your tickets in advance: this is a hotspot for locals and tourists alike.

The Desert Botanical Garden is at 1201 N Galvin Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85008. [This tour](#) includes a visit to the Desert Botanical Garden.

7- PAY A VISIT TO THE PHOENIX ZOO

Visiting Phoenix Zoo is one of the fun kid-friendly things to do in Phoenix.

Phoenix Zoo is one of the world's largest nonprofit zoos, coming in at an impressive 125 acres (50 ha) of excitement and discovery.

This family-friendly stop is perfect for visitors of all ages and is full of sights and

activities to keep you entertained.

Over 400 unique species are represented at the Phoenix Zoo, with more than 3000 animals total, from eagles and elephants to bears and baboons.

There are many different paths to take through this fun-filled zoo, including the Africa Trail, the Arizona Trail and the Tropics Trail.

Visitors may also want to partake in some of the several events and programs hosted by the zoo, such as their popular nature walks or photography classes.

Admission ranges from \$20 to \$40 depending on your age and the time of your visit, so plan your trip in advance for the best possible experience.

The Phoenix Zoo is at 455 N Galvin Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85008. [Skip the line and book your tickets here](#) and if you're visiting with kids, you may also like to [pre-book tickets to the SEA LIFE Aquarium](#).

8- GO ON A DAY TRIP TO THE GRAND CANYON

Taking a trip to the Grand Canyon is one of the best things to do from Phoenix.

Leave the city behind you for a day and embark on one of the most popular day trips from the Phoenix area: a visit to the infamous Grand Canyon.

The Grand Canyon is a scenic wonder and regularly attracts tourists from all around the world who are hoping to

glimpse its breathtaking natural beauty.

There are around 233 miles (374 km) between Phoenix and the Grand Canyon, which comes out to around three and a half hours of driving either way.

Once you've arrived at the Grand Canyon, you'll be greeted by jaw-dropping canyon views, with the stunning Colorado River flowing thousands of feet below.

With multiple entrances and routes to choose from on your visit to the Grand Canyon, you may consider joining an exciting guided tour to make the most of your visit.

The Grand Canyon is at 20 South Entrance Rd, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

9- ENJOY NATURE AT BUTTERFLY WONDERLAND

Admiring butterflies is one of the lovely things to do in Phoenix.

Step into a whole new world at Butterfly Wonderland, a magical transportive experience in Phoenix's neighbouring city of Scottsdale.

Butterfly Wonderland is an enclosed indoor attraction that mirrors tropical rainforest habitats and is the largest butterfly conservatory in North America.

Over 70 species of butterflies call Butterfly Wonderland home, fluttering among the flowers and coming close to their human visitors.

In addition to the charming array of butterflies, Butterfly

Wonderland hosts a delightful rainforest reptile exhibit and an interactive honeybee display.

Tickets to the Butterfly Wonderland are \$30 per person and can be purchased online or in person.

Butterfly Wonderland is at 9500 East Via de Ventura F100, Scottsdale, AZ 85256.

10- ENJOY THE STREET ART IN DOWNTOWN PHOENIX

There's no end to the fun and entertainment visitors enjoy in Downtown Phoenix, from bustling nightlife and high-end shopping to photo-ops and street art.

Downtown Phoenix is a business and entertainment district with big-city skyscrapers and unique artsy murals.

Enjoy Phoenix's downtown district's vibrant art and culture by taking a self-guided walking tour of the local street art scene.

For the best street art in Downtown Phoenix, head to the Roosevelt Row Arts District, where you'll find streets lined with life-size murals.

From picture-perfect wall art to walkable shopping and dining, a trip downtown makes for a can't-miss outing to include on your Phoenix itinerary.

Downtown Phoenix is at 1 E Washington St, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

Top tour: [RoRo Street Art Tour in Phoenix](#).

11- GO HIKING IN THE SUPERSTITION MOUNTAINS

Heading to Superstition Mountain is one of the things to do in Phoenix in the summer.

The Superstition Mountains are a well-known mountain range located east of Phoenix, and they're the perfect destination for all outdoor recreational needs.

Located 65 miles (104 km) from the heart of Phoenix, a drive to the Superstition Mountains takes approximately an hour and a half.

Once you've arrived at the iconic mountain range, you'll be greeted by miles of natural beauty, from the rugged mountains to the surrounding cacti-draped hills and teeming fields of flowers.

Hiking trails in the Superstition Mountains include the Hieroglyphic Trail, a 2.9-mile (4.6 km) hike that leads to a small waterfall, and Wave Cave Trail, a 3-mile (4.8 km) trail with unmatched panoramic views.

If you want to turn your day trip into an overnight experience, consider camping at the nearby Lost Dutchman State Park.

Superstition Mountains is at 4087 E Apache Trail, Apache Junction, AZ 85119.

12- ENJOY WATERSPORTS AT THE LOWER SALT RIVER RECREATION AREA

Phoenix's beloved Salt River is a popular summer destination for watersports and sightseeing that visitors won't want to pass up.

The Salt River spans 200 miles (321 km) and is a perfect spot for tubing, kayaking, or swimming.

Most locals frequent the Lower Salt River Recreation Area, a portion of the river around 40 minutes from Phoenix's downtown.

But Salt River is also a hidden gem for watching wildlife: in particular, it's regularly visited by several wild horses, who are often spotted cooling down in the river around sunrise and sunset.

Whether you're looking to take in fascinating scenic views or hoping to make a splash in the temperate water, the Salt River has it all.

The Lower Salt River Recreation Area is at G8WR+G9, Mesa, AZ 85264.

Top tour: [Salt River Kayaking Trip](#).

13- EXPERIENCE A SECRET SPEAKEASY AT STARDUST PINBAR

Stardust Pinbar is a David Bowie-inspired speakeasy and pinball bar that can only be accessed via a hidden entrance in a local pizza joint.

To find Stardust Pinbar, head to Ziggy's Magic Pizza Shop and enter a set of inconspicuous double doors that will take you from the casual pizza place to the neon, bright pinball bar.

With an illuminated dance floor, trendy cocktails, and an array of retro pinball games, Stardust Pinbar is a unique experience that you won't find anywhere else.

Stardust Pinbar is at 401 W Van Buren St Suite C, Phoenix, AZ 85003.

14- VISIT THE HISTORIC TOVREA CASTLE

Hailed a "Jewel of the Sonoran Desert", Tovrea Castle is an intriguing historic landmark that has captivated visitors since its inception in 1931.

Alessio Carrero built Tovrea Castle in his native Italian architectural style and was later purchased by E. A. and Della Tovrea.

The castle features a bizarre dome-like shape, and it is rumoured that E. A. Tovrea purchased it for his wife as a duplicate of their wedding cake.

An array of saguaro cacti surrounds Tovrea Castle, and visitors can tour the castle grounds and interior for only \$22 during the weekend.

Tovrea Castle is at 5025 E Van Buren St, Phoenix, AZ 85008.

15- ADMIRE THE ARCHITECTURE AT HERITAGE SQUARE

Heritage Square is known for being Phoenix's oldest residential square, and its photogenic architecture attracts locals and tourists alike.

The buildings in Heritage Square were constructed in a traditional Victorian style, and they remain as a towering slice of Phoenix's history to this day.

Most well-known amongst Heritage Square is the Rosson House Museum, a fully restored

Queen Anne Victorian house with fully-furnished rooms.

Visitors are also welcome to enjoy this walkable city block and photograph the site's numerous historical buildings and points of interest.

Heritage Square is at 113 N 6th St, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

16- PERUSE THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MUSEUM

Visiting the musical instrument museum is one of the fascinating things to do in Phoenix.

The Musical Instrument Museum is an unusual museum that displays a worldwide collection of instruments and related objects.

It houses a collection of over 15,000 musical instruments, including rare treasures from little-known corners of the world.

The Musical Instrument Museum also hosts live concerts that cover a variety of genres and holds events to introduce little-known instruments and their history.

Whether you're a musician or have a casual interest in the subject, the diverse selection at this museum is bound to delight and entertain just about anyone.

The Musical Instrument Museum is at 4725 E Mayo Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85050.

17- SIGHTSEE AT LAKE PLEASANT REGIONAL PARK

Lake Pleasant Regional Park is a popular water recreation area

bordering Phoenix's northwest bounds.

Some of the many activities that visitors to Lake Pleasant Regional Park can enjoy include hiking, swimming, fishing, boating, and even camping.

Nestled in the Sonoran Desert, you'll find signature desert-themed nature, such as the towering saguaro cacti, which make for a perfect picture set against the backdrop of the lake.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park also hosts a guided Moonlight Scorpion Hunting tour, a fun and unordinary activity for visitors of all ages.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park is at 41835 N Castle Hot Springs Rd, Morristown, AZ 85342.

Top tour: Stunning Sunrise or Sunset Guided Hiking Adventure in the Sonoran Desert.

18- GET YOUR SHOP ON AT BILTMORE FASHION PARK

Biltmore Fashion Park is an outdoor shopping centre home to the best of Phoenix's luxury fashion scene.

This bustling fashion mogul has been around since 1963 and has provided a welcome escape for affluent locals and tourists ever since.

Visitors can enjoy shopping at well-known high-end retailers like Saks Fifth Ave, Ralph Lauren, and J. Crew.

You can refuel during or after your shopping spree with some of Biltmore Fashion Park's popular dining options, including The Cheesecake Factory,

California Pizza Kitchen, and Zinburger.

Biltmore Fashion Park is at 2502 E Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85016.

19- SPEED TO THE PHOENIX INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY

Immerse yourself in high-speed entertainment at the Phoenix International Raceway, a thrilling motorsport track and event destination.

The raceway opened in 1964 and has been hosting top-notch entertainment ever since; it currently holds two NASCAR race weekends yearly.

In addition to watching the bi-annual NASCAR shows, visitors can get behind the wheel and speed along the professional racetrack.

The Phoenix International Raceway is at 7602 Jimmie Johnson Dr, Avondale, AZ 85323.

20- CATCH A PANORAMIC VIEW AT DOBBINS LOOKOUT

You'll find lots of things to do in Phoenix after dark too.

See the city at sunset from the elevated viewpoint of Dobbins Lookout, a scenic observation point that can be reached by foot or car.

The lookout is a large stone watchtower atop South Mountain Park, built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s.

Not only does Dobbins Lookout provide visitors with stunning views of the Phoenix cityscape,

the surrounding desert scenery is also more than worth a look.

Drive up to the lookout during golden hour, or take the long way around and choose from several hiking trails to enjoy Phoenix's finest nature.

Dobbins Lookout is at North Summit Rd, South Mountain Park, Phoenix, AZ 85042.

An Inside Look at The Wigwam Resort—an Elegant Retreat in Phoenix's West Valley

[CHRISTIAN WAIZINGER](#),
Wigwam Resort
[APRIL 20, 2023](#)

Experience the Height of Luxury at This Sumptuous Four-Diamond Phoenix Retreat Rich in history, brimming with scenery and the pinnacle of luxury—these are just a few ways [The Wigwam](#), a world-class, four-diamond resort in Phoenix's West Valley, continues to woo its guests. What began as a small lodge in 1929 has expanded to a 440-acre sprawling resort bedecked with vintage yet posh aesthetics, one of the largest and most [prestigious golf expanses](#) and a litany of opportunities to dine, relax and play, making it a perfect stay for nearly every occasion. Featuring over 330 uniquely styled and packaged rooms and suites, 54 holes of championship golf and a dazzling sun-soaked pool area, [The Wigwam](#) is a marvel and a must-stay for those looking to escape to the natural beauty of the Sonoran Desert.

When it comes to keeping its guests entertained and immersed, [The Wigwam](#) makes a conscious effort to have every interest covered—and it shows. For those looking to relax and soak up the sun, seek out their expansive pool area, featuring three unique [swimming pools](#), cabana rentals and even a dual 25-foot water slide for the little ones. For those seeking serenity, [The Wigwam's LeMonds Aveda Salon-Spa](#) boasts an impressive treatment menu and selection of steam rooms and saunas. It also offers enriching skincare and wellness treatments, many of which incorporate natural elements and ingredients to help enhance your connection to the natural beauty that surrounds the resort. For golf aficionados, [The Wigwam](#) is a paradise, and a trip to the resort would not be complete without an afternoon spent on one of their three 18-hole championship courses, some of which have even hosted some of the most prestigious and anticipated tournaments and events in the professional golf world.

While [The Wigwam's](#) resort property alone is certainly capable of satiating any guests' desire to escape the hustle and bustle of their everyday life, it is the surrounding natural beauty that offers arguably the most stark and mesmerizing contrast to life in the city. The resort is just moments away from the staggering white granite cliffs, valleys and ravines of the [White Tank Mountain Regional Park](#) and mere steps away from the pristine, undisturbed desert landscape of the [Estrella Mountain Regional Park](#), so

guests are presented with ample opportunities for hiking and sight-seeing. For those seeking something a little less rugged, [The Wigwam](#) also sits in proximity to [two prominent zoos](#) and wildlife parks as well as the lush [Desert Botanical Garden](#), making the resort a perfect gateway into the stunning natural beauty of the Sonoran Desert.

Rooms and Suites: The Wigwam's Iconic "Collections" [The Wigwam](#) offers three distinct "collections" of rooms, suites and casitas, each showcasing a different slice of their idyllic, vintage ambiance that allows them to cater to guests' ideal vision for their trip. [The Adobe Collection](#) features an elegant portfolio of rooms and suites intended to give guests a taste of the resort's rich history and a sense of comfort and warmth, all while nestled neatly near some of the resort's most popular amenities. But for those seeking a higher dose of seclusion and tranquility, [The Wigwam's](#) super-exclusive [Oasis Collection](#) cannot be beaten.

The rooms and suites of the [Oasis Collection](#) feature cozy fire pits, private lounges, a gated pool area and lush garden surroundings. And finally, the property's [Fairway Collection](#), situated beside the three sprawling golf courses, is for the lovers of the game and offers a specially tailored ambiance and proximity to the golf course pro shops and first tees.

Farm-to-Table Dining
With three unique dining and lounge experiences to

enjoy, [The Wigwam](#) impressively maintains its core principles of providing fresh, farm-to-table dishes and drinks at each one. [The Wigwam Bar](#) as well as [Red Allen's Bar & Grill](#) both offer ambient, lively experiences that are perfect for a casual outing or an after-dinner drink. But the star of the show is undoubtedly [Litchfield's](#), the resort's very own world-class fine-dining restaurant. Loved by Phoenix residents and visitors alike, [Litchfield's](#) is home to an impressive menu featuring innovative and nuanced dishes that are unique yet approachable and undeniably delicious. Some menu favorites are the Cedar River Prime Filet, served with a side of mouthwatering gouda mac 'n' cheese, and the Scottish Salmon, prepared with a decadent sherry-maple glaze.

Happenings and Happy Hours
Aside from the amenities and activities available year-round, [The Wigwam](#) also proudly offers an exciting array of seasonal activities, special events and, of course, rotating happy hour specials. This can include everything from live music performances at the [Wigwam Bar](#) to food and drink specials, such as their ever-popular Taco and Tequila Tuesdays. Additionally, keep an eye on their [calendar](#) for special outdoor activities like Pilates and yoga classes, seasonal spa treatments and even special art gallery showcases and charity auctions!

Annual fire bans at Phoenix and Maricopa

County parks start May 1

Apr 19, 2023, 4:05 AM
| Updated: 5:37 am



BY [KTAR.COM](https://www.ktar.com)

PHOENIX — Maricopa County and the city of Phoenix will initiate their annual fire bans for parks and mountain preserves on May 1.

Charcoal grills and wood campfires and fire pits are prohibited while the ban is in effect, but gas and propane grills are allowed in designated areas. Phoenix's flatland parks are excluded, [the city said](#). The restrictions usually run through September but could be extended, depending on conditions.

Officials are concerned about an elevated wildfire risk in the coming months after an exceptionally wet winter created an abundance of plant growth.

"As the temperatures begin to rise, this vegetation is drying out and quickly becoming an ideal source for wildfire ignition," R.J. Cardin, director of the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department, [said in a press release](#). "Implementing a fire ban limits the possibility of starting a brush fire, which could cause severe damage to park resources, threaten park visitor safety and pose a danger to homes near many of our parks."

Here are the Phoenix parks and mountain preserves affected by the fire ban:

- Camelback Mountain.
- Deem Hills Recreation Area.
- Lookout Mountain.
- Papago Park.
- Phoenix Mountains Park and Recreation Area.
- Phoenix Mountains Preserve.
- Phoenix Sonoran Preserve.
- North Mountain Park.
- Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area.
- South Mountain Park/Preserve.

Here are the Maricopa County regional parks impacted:

- Adobe Dam Regional Park.
- Buckeye Hills Regional Park.
- Cave Creek Regional Park.
- Estrella Mountain Regional Park.
- Hassayampa River Preserve.
- Lake Pleasant Regional Park and Desert Outdoor Center.
- McDowell Mountain Regional Park.
- San Tan Mountain Regional Park.
- Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.
- Utery Mountain Regional Park.
- White Tank Mountain Regional Park.

Maricopa County institutes annual burn ban

By Carly Moran | The Center Square contributor
Apr 18, 2023

(The Center Square) – This year's copious rain showers

may have created an unexpected problem, one that may actually increase the risk of wildfires.

Now that the state has returned to hotter weather, the excess vegetation that grew during monsoon season will now dry up, creating an abundant fuel source for [wildfires](#). Because of this, the Maricopa County and City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Departments will be reinstating the annual fire ban on May 1.

"This winter, Maricopa County received an abundance of rain, which provided us with a beautiful super bloom of wildflowers in the parks," R.J. Cardin, [Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department](#) director, [said](#). "As the temperatures begin to rise, this vegetation is drying out and quickly becoming an ideal source for wildfire ignition. Implementing a fire ban limits the possibility of starting a brush fire, which could cause severe damage to park resources, threaten park visitor safety, and pose a danger to homes near many of our parks."

The ban includes all campfires, fire pits and charcoal grills. Gas and propane fires are a safe and legal alternative. Violators will be fined under [Rule 314 Section 313](#).

Community Comes Together to Celebrate

By [Sonoran News](#)
April 18, 2023



Cave Creek, Arizona – On April 11, 2023, Desert Foothills Land Trust along with Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the conservation of nearly 30 acres of critical land adjacent to the **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**. The Town of Cave Creek, Maricopa County, and the Desert Foothills Land Trust collaborated to protect this land, ensuring its preservation for future generations.

For several years, the Town of Cave Creek, Maricopa County, and Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT) have worked together to identify and protect lands surrounding the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. The recent listing of a critical property for sale presented an opportunity to protect the land forever. Thanks to a partnership between the Land Trust, the Town, and the County, the land has now been protected.



The Town and County own the land, and DFLT holds a conservation easement to ensure its protection in perpetuity.

Speaking at the ribbon cutting ceremony were several community leaders, including Steve Feld, Executive Director of the Carefree Cave Creek Chamber; Vicki Preston, President & CEO of Desert Foothills Land Trust; Chairman Clint Hickman, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, District 4; RJ Cardin, Director, Maricopa County Parks & Recreation; Carrie Dyrek, Cave Creek Town Manager; Bob Morris, Cave Creek Mayor; and Luke Kautzman, Town of Cave Creek Development Services Director/Zoning Administrator. The protection of this property for future generations is a significant achievement for the Town of Cave Creek, Maricopa County, and the Desert Foothills Land Trust. It marks a notable step forward towards preserving Arizona’s natural beauty through the power of collaboration.

Follow Desert Foothills Land Trust land conservation journey on FB and IG::
[@desertfoothillslandtrust](https://www.instagram.com/desertfoothillslandtrust)

Living in San Tan Valley, AZ: Pros and Cons You Need to Know

Donald Muirhead, Neighbor
April 17, 2023 – The Patch

San Tan Valley is an unincorporated community located in the southeast part of the Phoenix metropolitan area. It has become a popular residential area due to its lower cost of living and proximity to major highways.

Pros:

1. **Affordability** - San Tan Valley offers a more affordable cost of living compared to other areas in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Home prices are lower and property taxes are also more reasonable.
2. **Outdoor recreation** - San Tan Valley is located near the **San Tan Mountains Regional Park**, which offers numerous outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Additionally, there are several other parks within the community that offer playgrounds, basketball courts, and picnic areas.
3. **Proximity to amenities** - Despite being a more rural area, San Tan Valley is still relatively close to major amenities such as grocery stores, shopping malls, and restaurants.
4. **Weather** - The weather in San Tan Valley is warm and sunny for most of the year, making it an ideal location for outdoor activities.

Cons:

1. **Commute times** - San Tan Valley is located further from downtown Phoenix, which can result in longer commute times for those who work in the city.
2. **Limited job opportunities** - While San Tan Valley is growing, job opportunities can still be limited in certain industries. Many residents commute to nearby cities for work.
3. **Public transportation** - Public transportation options are limited in San Tan Valley, which can be an

issue for those who do not have a car.

4. Crowded schools - As more families move into the area, schools can become overcrowded and class sizes increase.

15 Places That Are Swarming With Retirees

If you are 60 or older, one of these places might be calling your name.

Chris Kissell • April 17, 2023 • Money Talks News

Once the kids are grown and savings are large enough, millions of Americans retire and leave home to spend their golden years somewhere else.

Recently, SmartAsset looked over data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 1-year American Community Survey, the [latest available](#) edition, to reveal which cities gained the most [residents 60 and older](#) during 2021.

Following are the cities that are swarming with retirees.

15. Tampa, Florida

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 727

Florida has always been a hotspot for retirees, but Tampa has become a little more expensive for newcomers lately. The city is among the ["10 Places Where Home Prices Have Skyrocketed Since the Pandemic."](#)

14. Nashville, Tennessee

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 773

If Nashville is calling, now might be the time to respond. The city is among the ["10 Places With the Most Home Sellers Slashing Prices."](#)

13. Norman, Oklahoma

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 784

Retirees who want to use their newfound free time to pursue more education might find Norman to be an attractive place for relocation. The city is home to the University of Oklahoma.

12. St. Petersburg, Florida

Brian Lasenby / Shutterstock.com

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 789

The Gulf Coast city of St. Petersburg is located in Pinellas County, which is one of ["The 10 Best U.S. Counties for Retirees in 2023."](#)

11. Peoria, Arizona

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 807

Residents of Peoria can enjoy [Lake Pleasant Regional Park](#), which attracts boaters, anglers and even those who love scuba diving.

10. Raleigh, North Carolina

Sharkshock / Shutterstock.com
Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 830

Until recently, Raleigh's housing market was on a tear. That might be why the city is among the ["12 Places With More Million-Dollar Homes in 2023."](#)

9. Jacksonville, Florida

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 843

If you decide to move to Jacksonville and purchase new digs, it helps if your pockets are deep. Jacksonville is among the ["10 Places Where Many Homebuyers Pay All Cash."](#)

8. Miami

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 947

Some people want a quiet retirement. Others want to live it up.

If you are in the latter camp, consider Miami, which ranks high on the list of the ["15 Most Glamorous Cities in the U.S."](#)

7. Frisco, Texas

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 960

Want to spend your retirement lounging by your own private body of water? Frisco, part of the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area, is among the ["15 Best Cities to Own a Swimming Pool."](#)

6. Wilmington, North Carolina

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 992

If you are looking to retire in a smallish coastal city with Southern charm, Wilmington could be a top candidate. The city is just two hours from Raleigh, which also made this list.

5. Boise, Idaho

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 1,098

Boise home prices have skyrocketed in recent years. But

things look a bit better now for new residents, as the city is one of the [“10 Pandemic Boomtowns Where Housing Now Is Cooling.”](#)

4. North Las Vegas, Nevada

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 1,107

Health-conscious retirees will be glad to know that they won't be rolling the dice when trying to stay hydrated in North Las Vegas. The metro is among the [“18 Best Cities for Water Quality.”](#)

3. San Antonio

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 1,164

Retirees who buy a home in San Antonio shouldn't worry too much about a housing crash. The city is one of the [“15 Housing Markets That Are Most Likely to Keep Their Value.”](#)

2. Henderson, Nevada

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 1,602

If you want to live in a vibrant, growing community, Henderson might be a good choice. The Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise area is one of the [“The 15 Fastest-Growing Metro Areas in the U.S..”](#)

1. Mesa, Arizona

Net number of residents age 60 and older that this city gained in 2021: 3,629

Retirees who do not want to buy a home might want to consider Mesa. It made the roll call of affordable places for tenants in our story [“In Only 10 Big Cities Is Rent Actually Affordable.”](#)

Maricopa County regional parks to implement annual fire ban May 1

By [Bridget Dowd](#)

Published: Monday, April 17, 2023 - 2:32pm

The annual fire ban at [Maricopa County's regional parks](#) will go into effect May 1 this year. It prohibits campfires, fire pits and charcoal grills.

County officials also discourage smoking in the parks due to the extremely dry conditions. Using gas or propane grills in designated areas like camping sites will still be allowed under the ban.

Other temporary fire bans could be implemented before the May 1 date if the National Weather Service issues a red flag warning, meaning conditions are ideal for sparking a wildfire.

The city of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department's annual fire ban will also go into effect May 1.

The bans are typically lifted on Sept. 30 each year, but an extension is possible based on conditions. People who violate the ban may be subject to fines.

Here Are The Top Three Vacations You Can Take Within 50 Minutes Of Phoenix

BY [JACKSON NDIRITU](#)

PUBLISHED APR 13, 2023

Looking for a quick and convenient getaway from Phoenix? Look no further than these places, all within 50

minutes of the capital city of Arizona.

Phoenix is the lively and bustling capital city of the US state of Arizona. With its perfect location, tourists can easily explore the surrounding areas and experience the diversity of the Southwest. With so many [incredible places to visit in Arizona](#), it can be a challenging task to narrow down where to make a trip. The following are the top three vacations tourists can take within 50 minutes of Phoenix, offering stunning landscapes, outdoor adventures, and cultural experiences that are sure to satisfy any traveler's thirst for adventure.

From the breathtaking views of Sedona to the historical landmarks and lively towns, these destinations are a must-see for anyone visiting Phoenix. Whether people are tourists seeking a weekend escape or an extended vacation, these three destinations are sure to make their travels unforgettable.

Visit Sedona - One Of The Best Small Towns In Arizona

Sedona is one of the [most beautiful small towns in Arizona that should be on anyone's bucket list](#). This destination is situated in the mountains of Northern Arizona. The breathtaking Red Rocks have become an iconic symbol of this area, and once travelers visit Sedona, they are guaranteed to experience an unforgettable view. While there are a few routes to take to get to Sedona from Phoenix, travelers can choose from several different scenic drives or drive along various mountain roads. There

are three primary routes that offer stunning views, including Arizola Pass and [Coconino Overlook Road](#); both routes are perfect for those seeking adventure in their vacation plans.

Things To Do In Sedona

Go hiking: Sedona offers some of [the most beautiful hikes in Arizona](#), with trails ranging from easy to difficult. Some popular trails include Cathedral Rock, Bell Rock, Devil's Bridge, and the West Fork Trail. The town also offers fantastic opportunities to go rock climbing, and with a proper [guide on how to rock climb and the best places to rock climb in Sedona](#), visitors can have an unforgettable experience.

Visit vortex sites: Sedona is known for its energy vortexes, where people believe the earth's energy is particularly powerful. Some popular vortex sites include Cathedral Rock, Bell Rock, and Boynton Canyon. Take a Jeep tour: Explore Sedona's rugged landscape on a guided Jeep tour. Tourists will see some of the most scenic areas of Sedona, and their guide will provide interesting facts and stories about the area. Go stargazing: Sedona has some of the clearest skies in the country. Tourists can take a guided tour. Visit Chapel of the Holy Cross: This beautiful chapel is built into the red rocks of Sedona and offers stunning views of the surrounding landscape.

Visiting the Sedona Heritage Museum: Visitors can learn about the past of Sedona and the neighborhood in the [Sedona](#)

[Heritage Museum](#). The museum has displays on early settlers, mining, and ranching.

Go wine tasting: Sedona has a number of wineries and tasting rooms where travelers can sample local wines and enjoy beautiful views of the surrounding area. Some popular wineries include Page Springs Cellars and Oak Creek Vineyards.

Sedona Activity Prices

Hiking and Jeep tours start at around \$50, and admission to state parks is \$7 per vehicle.

Accommodation In Sedona

Sedona Accommodation: A variety of lodging options are available to suit all tastes and budgets, from camping to luxury resorts.

Sedona can be quite crowded, especially on weekends and during peak season. Try to visit during the week and book accommodations in advance.

Lake Pleasant - One Of The Best Places For A Relaxing Vacation In Arizona

Lake Pleasant is a reservoir located in the northwestern part of the Phoenix metropolitan area in Arizona, United States. It was created in 1927 by the construction of the [Waddell Dam](#) on the Agua Fria River. The lake is just a 45-minute drive from Phoenix and has a surface size of around 10,000 acres, and is encircled by the [Lake Pleasant Regional Park](#).

Things To Do At Lake Pleasant

- Boating: Boating is one of the main attractions at Lake Pleasant. The lake has plenty of boat ramps and marinas, making it

easy to launch your own boat or rent one for the day.

- Fishing: The lake has many species, including catfish, largemouth bass, and striped bass. Both from a boat and the shore, tourists can go fishing.
- Camping: There are several campgrounds in the area, including Desert Tortoise, Roadrunner, and Cottonwood. Tourists can camp in tents, RVs, or cabins.
- Hiking: Lake Pleasant Regional Park has over 15 miles of hiking trails. For fantastic views of the lake and the region, visitors can trek along the beach or up into the hills.
- Wildlife Viewing: Bald eagles, coyotes, and javelina are just a few of the animals that call Lake Pleasant home. Visitors can watch for wildlife from the shore or from a boat.

Lake Pleasant Boating Price
Boating rentals start at \$200 for a half-day, and guided tours start at \$50 per person.

Scottsdale - Home To Some Of The Best Resorts In Arizona

It is a city located in the east of Arizona. It is a neighborhood in the Greater Phoenix Area and is well-known for its opulent resorts, spas, golf courses, and designer outlet malls. Scottsdale hosts numerous events throughout the year, including the [Scottsdale Arabian Horse Show](#), the [Barrett-](#)

[Jackson Auto Auction](#), and the Waste Management Phoenix Open golf tournament. Visitors can also [experience the high life at one of the many Scottsdale luxury resorts](#), such as the [Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North](#).

In addition to golf and spas, Scottsdale is also known for its vibrant nightlife. The city has a wide range of bars, nightclubs, and restaurants, making it a great destination for those looking to have some fun after dark. Visitors can enjoy live music, dancing, and delicious food and drinks in the many establishments throughout the city.

Things To Do In Scottsdale
Visit the Desert Botanical Garden: Tourists should take in the breathtaking desert scenery and discover the wide variety of local plants.
Take a hike: [Camelback Mountain](#) and [Pinnacle Peak](#) are just two of Scottsdale's fantastic hiking paths. The city and the adjacent desert are both visible from them.
Go shopping: With its abundance of high-end boutiques and designer shops, Scottsdale is well recognized for its upscale shopping. Check out Scottsdale Fashion Square or the Kierland Commons for some of the best shopping in the area.
Visit Old Town Scottsdale: Together with stores, galleries, and eateries, this historic area hosts a weekly farmers market and an art walk.
Go on a hot air balloon ride: Visitors should take a hot air balloon flight to admire the Sonoran Desert from the air.

Visit the Musical Instrument Museum: This museum houses a collection of over 15,000 instruments and offers interactive exhibits.

See bursts 'super blooms' in the West and learn where to find them

USA TODAY
April 12, 2023

Large wildflower blooms are blanketing areas across the West's normally arid open spaces after a wet winter that dumped heavy winter snow and rain.

The intense weather caused deaths and damage to infrastructure while also helping provoke a flood of wildflowers. Brilliant orange blooms – often called “super blooms” – are bursting in fields of poppies near Los Angeles.

Due to the heat and drought conditions, poppies haven't blanketed Southern California's hillsides since the 2019 bloom.

According to NASA, California's iconic super blooms occur sporadically, usually after winters with higher than average precipitation, and attract many sightseers – so much so that one town barred visitors from its bloom fields ahead of the season.

Many towns have cautioned visitors this year in the name of both safety and conservation.



Arizona is also experiencing a spectacular explosion of wildflowers this season across the desert, according to the Arizona Republic, part of USA TODAY Network. In dry years, blooms are sparse but always present. In years like this, bouquets of colorful petals burst.

Where to see Arizona wildflowers

- Bush Highway to Saguaro Lake
- **Cave Creek Regional Park**
- Peridot Mesa
- **Lake Pleasant Regional Park**
- Black Canyon Trail
- Lost Dutchman State Park

Discover The Beauty Of Arizona On These 10 Scenic Drives Near Phoenix

BYHAZEL BLOOM
PUBLISHED APR 7, 2023

Arizona is famous for its rugged terrain, towering red rocks, and stunning desert landscapes. Arizona is considered one of the best U.S. National Parks to visit in winter, and there are numerous incredible places to visit while there. It comes as no surprise that some of the best scenic drives in the state can be found near Phoenix. Whether you're a seasoned road tripper or a first-time adventurer, there's no

better way to explore the beauty of Arizona than on a scenic drive. Buckle up, roll down your windows, and get ready to take in some of the most breathtaking scenery in the Southwest on these 10 scenic drives near Phoenix. From iconic Route 66 to lesser-known back roads, each drive will take you through unique landscapes, offering a glimpse into the diverse natural beauty of Arizona.

10. The Apache Trail Scenic Drive

The Apache Trail Scenic Drive is a 40-mile route that winds through the Tonto National Forest, showcasing Arizona's most breathtaking landscapes. The Superstition Wilderness Area, towering mountains, and sparkling lakes are just a few of the stunning sights you'll encounter.

Roosevelt Lake Scenic Drive is a 30-mile journey that traverses the Sonoran Desert and the shores of Arizona's vast Roosevelt Lake. The drive begins at State Route 188 and winds through rugged mountains, towering saguaro cacti, and crystal-clear lake waters. The route offers plenty of viewpoints for soaking up the scenery and exploring the Tonto National Monument, which boasts ancient ruins and cliff dwellings dating back to the 13th century.

The Apache Trail Scenic Drive Highlights : towering mountains, sparkling lakes, towering saguaro cacti, plenty of viewpoints, Tonto National Monument

9. Route 66

Route 66, also known as the Main Street of America, spans over 2,400 miles from Chicago to Santa Monica, passing through eight states, including Arizona. The Arizona stretch of Route 66 takes you through picturesque areas like the Petrified Forest National Park and the Painted Desert. You can also experience vintage diners, historic buildings, and roadside attractions, offering a nostalgic glimpse into the 1950s and 1960s.

Route 66 Highlights : Petrified Forest National Park, the Painted Desert, vintage diners, historic buildings, roadside attractions

8. The Bartlett Lake Scenic Drive

The Bartlett Lake Scenic Drive is a 20-mile journey that runs through the Sonoran Desert and along the shores of Bartlett Lake. Starting at Bartlett Dam Road, the route winds through Tonto National Forest's rugged mountains, showcasing towering saguaro cacti and mesquite trees. As you approach Bartlett Lake, the road takes you past crystal-clear waters, surrounded by towering mountains. The lake offers water sports, fishing, hiking, picnic areas, and campgrounds. If visitors prefer luxury to camping, Phoenix features a wide selection of top-rated resorts, as well as budget-friendly hostels.

The Bartlett Lake Scenic Drive Highlights: rugged mountains, towering saguaro cacti, mesquite trees, Bartlett Lake, water sports, fishing, hiking, picnic areas, and campgrounds.

7. The Tonto National Forest Scenic Drive

The Tonto National Forest Scenic Drive is a 30-mile journey that takes you through some of the most rugged and remote landscapes in Arizona. The drive starts in the town of Globe, which is about 90 miles east of Phoenix, and takes you through the Tonto National Forest, the fifth-largest national forest in the United States.

As you drive along the route, you'll see stunning canyons, rushing rivers, and towering mountains. You'll also pass by several historic mining towns that were once booming during the mining boom of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Along the way, you can stop at several viewpoints to take in the stunning scenery, including the Salt River Canyon Vista, which offers breathtaking views of the Salt River Canyon. You can also explore the Tonto National Monument, which is home to cliff dwellings and ancient ruins dating back to the 13th century. The Tonto National Forest Scenic Drive Highlights : stunning canyons, rushing rivers, towering mountains, historic mining towns, several viewpoints, Tonto National Monument

6. The Sonoran Desert Scenic Drive

The Sonoran Desert Scenic Drive is a 27-mile journey that takes you through the heart of the Sonoran Desert in Arizona. The route begins in the city of Goodyear and ends at the Estrella Mountain Regional Park.

As you drive along the route, you'll be surrounded by stunning

desert landscapes, towering saguaro cacti, and rugged mountain vistas. You'll also have the opportunity to explore several scenic pullouts and trails, including the Skyline Regional Park, which offers panoramic views of the valley below.

Along the way, you may encounter various types of wildlife, including coyotes, javelinas, and desert tortoises.

The Sonoran Desert Scenic Drive Highlights : stunning desert landscapes, towering saguaro cacti, rugged mountains, wildlife spotting

5. The Verde Valley Scenic Drive

The Verde Valley Scenic Drive is a 90-mile journey that takes you through some of the most picturesque parts of Arizona. The route begins in the town of Camp Verde, located about 70 miles north of Phoenix, and winds through the scenic Verde Valley.

The drive offers stunning views of the surrounding landscape, including towering red rocks, rushing rivers, and the stunning Sedona landscape. Along the way, you can stop at various viewpoints, picnic areas, and hiking trails to fully experience the beauty of the area. If visitors are looking for the most beautiful hikes in the U.S., Arizona should be on their list.

The Verde Valley Scenic Drive Highlights : towering red rocks, rushing rivers, various viewpoints, picnic areas, hiking trails

4. The Salt River Canyon Scenic Drive

The Salt River Canyon Scenic Drive is a 45-mile journey that takes you through the heart of the Salt River Canyon Wilderness Area in Arizona, USA. The drive offers stunning views of the rugged canyon terrain, towering mountains, and rushing rivers, making it one of the most scenic drives in the state.

The route starts at the top of the canyon and winds down to the bottom, offering breathtaking views of the 2,000-foot-deep canyon walls as you descend. Along the way, you'll see stunning rock formations, such as the famous "hoodoos" that are unique to the area.

The Salt River Canyon Scenic Drive Highlights: rugged canyon terrain, towering mountains, rushing rivers, stunning rock formations

3. The Carefree Highway Scenic Drive

The Carefree Highway Scenic Drive is a 28-mile journey that takes you through some of the most stunning parts of the Sonoran Desert in Arizona. The drive starts in the town of Phoenix and continues northward along State Route 74 toward the town of Wickenburg.

Along the way, you'll be treated to breathtaking views of the rugged mountain landscapes and the iconic saguaro cacti that are native to the region. The route also passes through the Tonto National Forest, offering a glimpse of the lush vegetation that thrives in this arid region.

One of the highlights of the drive is the scenic overlook at the Carefree Highway and 7th Street. This viewpoint provides panoramic views of the surrounding desert and mountains, including the iconic landmark of Black Mountain.

The Carefree Highway Scenic Drive Highlights: rugged mountains, saguaro cacti, lush vegetation, a scenic overlook at the Carefree Highway and 7th Street

2. The Old West Highway Scenic Drive

The Old West Highway Scenic Drive is a 60-mile journey that takes you through some of the most historic parts of Arizona. The route starts in the town of Globe and heads east along Highway 60, passing through several small communities and historic mining towns along the way before ending in the town of Show Low.

As you drive along the route, you'll see towering red rocks, rushing rivers, and historical landmarks that offer a glimpse into the state's rich cultural heritage. The drive takes you through the Tonto National Forest, offering stunning views of the rugged mountains, towering pine trees, and expansive desert landscape.

The Old West Highway Scenic Drive Highlights: several small communities, historic mining towns, towering red rocks, rushing rivers, and historic landmarks

1. The Lake Pleasant Scenic Drive

drive that winds through the beautiful desert scenery

surrounding Lake Pleasant. Starting from the Lake Pleasant Regional Park, the drive provides awe-inspiring vistas of the lake and the nearby mountains along its twisting road.

The Lake Pleasant Scenic Drive
Highlights: desert scenery, mountains, Lake Pleasant

Arizona wildflower update: The 2023 bloom is still going strong. Here are 6 places to look

Roger Naylor
Special for The Arizona Republic
April 5, 2023



Wowza! What a season it has been for wildflower enthusiasts like me. And it ain't over yet. The past several weeks have seen an explosion of wildflowers across the Arizona desert. Estrella Mountain Regional Park in Goodyear put on a brilliant display of blooms in January and February. For most of March, Picacho Peak State Park served as the beating heart of spring with rivers of poppies spilling down the high slopes. It was the best showing I've seen at Picacho and I visit every spring.

But don't fret, even if you've missed some of the early blooms. April promises to be just as spectacular.

Here's the thing about the 2023 wildflower season. It's been downright chilly. Cool temperatures, lack of consistent sunshine and lingering rains led the season to unfold in segments. Color has been dazzling but also localized. Now warmer temperatures and the calendar (buds are bound to turn into blooms at some point) are extending the season into April.

What Arizona wildflowers to look for in April

At this late stage of wildflower season, poppies are going to be fickle. But as their blooms begin to fade, the brittlebush begins to take over. When you start noticing whole hillsides suddenly turning yellow, that's often thanks to this underappreciated perennial.



Brittlebush are the unsung heroes of wildflower season. They don't garner the adoration that poppies do but they are absolute workhorses, the most reliable of all desert flowers.

As perennials, they show up every single spring. In dry years, blooms are sparse but always present. In years like this, they go nuclear. The bushy plants are capped with a spray of beautiful blooms, like individual bouquets — yellow petals surround a golden center.

With a constellation of plants covering the slopes, it can look like the sun has been pulled from the sky and splashed across desert hillsides. While you'll find brittlebush on most desert trails for much of April, here are a couple of sweet highlights.

Here are six places to savor the second half of Arizona wildflower season.

Bush Highway to Saguaro Lake

Since about mid-March, the hillsides along Bush Highway between Saguaro Lake and State Route 87 have been absolutely painted with poppies. They are the kind of color-laden fields that feel like they can be seen from space. How long they will last depends on temperatures. Poppies tend to fade when it turns hot.



One of the best viewing spots is the Pobrecito Recreation Area. It's essentially an OHV staging area with a couple of picnic tables. But dirt paths lead along the base of the hills where the poppies massed. Please stay on the trail and don't trample the flowers. You do need a Tonto Pass (\$8 per day) or an America the Beautiful Pass to park here.

Keep a watchful eye because it's not just petal peepers like me who have been enjoying the season. The Salt River wild

horses are frequently spotted just across the road grazing in a narrow green valley laced with poppies. I spent a lovely March afternoon beneath a satiny sun watching dozens of wild horses cropping grass among the saguaros and wildflowers. I'm hard pressed to think of a more perfect Arizona day.

Cave Creek Regional Park

Color came late to the sloping hills of Cave Creek. I hiked there in mid-March on trails lined with a medley of blues and purples; a cheery mix of lupines, scorpionweed and blue dicks were prevalent. I'll say without hesitation that 2023 has been the best year for lupines that I can recall. Some nice pools of poppies arrived by the end of the month and thick stands of brittlebush unfurled their yellow blossoms soon after.

Visitor center staff suggested combining three trails – Go John, Quartz and Slate – into a 3.5-mile loop to enjoy some of the best wildflowers in the park.

Details: 37019 N. Lava Lane, Cave Creek. \$7 per vehicle. 602-506-2930 Ext. 8, <https://www.maricopacounty.parks.net>.

Peridot Mesa

This rocky mesa on the San Carlos Apache Reservation east of Phoenix has been covered in poppies for the past three weeks. According to the report I received from a San Carlos resident and forwarded by the Globe-Miami Chamber of Commerce, poppies still had buds at the beginning of April and were expected to continue their bold brassy blooms for another two weeks or so.



That's excellent news for poppy aficionados. Plus, you'll enjoy a great wildflower drive traveling U.S. 60 toward Globe. Peridot Mesa is down a dirt road a short distance off U.S. 70 east of Globe on the San Carlos Reservation. The road can normally be managed in a passenger car.

A \$10 tribal day-use permit is required and you can get specific directions then. Pick up a permit at the Circle K in Globe (2011 U.S. 70), or the San Carlos Recreation & Wildlife Office on U.S. 70 in Peridot. Details: <https://www.sancarlosrecreationwildlife.com>.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park

At Lake Pleasant, the rolling hills above the water are vibrant with brittlebush, globemallows, desert marigolds and lupines.



The heaviest concentration of poppies can be found on Pipeline Canyon Trail, especially from the southern trailhead to the floating bridge a half-mile away. The bridge is guarded by

some extremely robust globemallows the size of landscape shrubs. A nice assortment of blooms also lines the Beardsley, Wild Burro and Cottonwood trails.

Details: 41835 N. Castle Hot Springs Road, Morristown. \$7 per vehicle. 602-506-2930, ext. 2; <https://www.maricopacounty.parks.net>.

Black Canyon Trail

The Black Canyon National Recreation Trail stretches 80 miles from Carefree Highway north past Mayer, skirting the base of the Bradshaw Mountains and crisscrossing the Agua Fria River.

From the parking area, the path winds through open desert, reaching a split at 0.7 mile. Bear left for the Horseshoe Bend segment or right for the K-Mine segment. Both are moderate trails that support a nice mix of wildflowers with an abundance of brittles. Peak color should be through mid-April. Both trails descend quickly to the Agua Fria River in about 2 miles.



Bonus: Once you're back at the trailhead, you're just a stone's throw from Rock Springs Café. The former stage stop dishes up a full menu but they're probably most famous for their pies, most notably the Jack Daniels

pecan. Treat yourself. It's spring in Arizona.

To reach the trailhead, take I-17 north to Exit 242 (Rock Springs). Go west and proceed to the stop sign. Turn north onto the frontage road, drive about 100 yards to Warner Road and turn west. Follow Warner Road 0.3 mile to the parking area.

Lost Dutchman State Park

Sadly, a late February freeze wiped out most of the poppies at Lost Dutchman. But the park does contain a healthy portion of brittlebush that should be in full bloom around mid-April. For some of the best viewing, start up the Siphon Draw Trail, and then circle back on Jacob's Crosscut and Treasure Loop. Details: 6109 N. Apache Trail, Apache Junction. \$7 per vehicle. 480-982- 4485, <https://azstateparks.com/lost-dutchman>.

Floods damage Maricopa County parks, officials urge caution

Lake Pleasant, Spur Cross among regional parks affected Maricopa County officials urge caution for those planning to visit several regional parks. Posted Monday, April 3, 2023 11:16 am INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA



(MARICOPA COUNTY)

Maricopa County's regional parks system is feeling the effects of melting high-country snow and recent rain that have damaged trails and forced the removal of bridges, officials said.

Last week, several trails at the **Hassayampa River Preserve** suffered extensive damage as the river hit its highest point in years, according to a county release. And bridges that typically provide park visitors a safe passage across the creek in the **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area** had to be removed.

Lake Pleasant Regional Park has begun to experience the aftermath of the flooding, as "an enormous amount of debris has washed into the lake," the release stated.

"Over the next couple of weeks, we anticipate the amount of debris entering the **lake** from the Agua Fria River will continue to increase as the snow melts," said R.J. Cardin, Maricopa County parks and recreation director.

"Lake staff are marking impacted areas as quickly as possible; however, park visitors must also be diligent as they are recreating at the lake."

The bulk of the debris will gravitate toward the shoreline, officials said. But those towing float devices, jet skis, paddleboards and other types of vessels "are encouraged to exercise caution and keep a watchful eye on the waterways while recreating to avoid boat damage and injuries."

For more: www.maricopa.gov/parks

Start Your Scottsdale Trek: 10 Best Hiking Trails In & Around Scottsdale

BYANSA JAVIAD
PUBLISHED APR 2, 2023
Embark on an adventurous journey to explore some of the best hiking trails in and around Scottsdale, Arizona.

Downtown Scottsdale, Arizona Scottsdale, Arizona, is known for its beautiful desert landscapes and sunny weather, an ideal vacation destination for outdoor enthusiasts. However, one of the best ways to explore the region's natural beauty is by hitting the hiking trails.

From easy, scenic walks to more challenging, adventurous treks, Scottsdale, Arizona, have no shortage of amazing hiking destination. This article this some of the best hiking trails in and around Scottsdale to satisfy one's adventurous lust. So, pack the bag and get ready to hit the beautiful desert trails.

10. Camelback Mountain Trails
Located in the heart of Scottsdale, Arizona, Camelback

Mountain is a popular hiking destination known for its distinctive hump-shaped peak, resembling the back of a camel. The mountain is 2,707 feet high and offers two hiking trails, namely, Echo Canyon Trail and Cholla Trail.

The Echo Canyon Trail: The trail is a 2.5 miles long, challenging hike reaching up to 1200 ft elevation, with steep inclines and rocky terrain.

The Cholla Trail: This trail is a relatively easy 3-mile-long hike, running along the stunning views of the desert landscape.

9. Pinnacle Peak Trail

Located in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve in Scottsdale, Arizona, Pinnacle Peak is a popular 3.5-mile loop summit reaching up to 1300 ft of elevation. The trail is a moderate hike, offering incredible views of the Sonoran desert along with a variety of desert plants and wildlife, such as saguaro cacti, lizards, and birds. The trail to pinnacle peak is a dog-friendly terrain, with no restroom facilities along the trail, so it's important to plan accordingly.

8. McDowell Mountain Regional Park Trails

Located in northeast Scottsdale, Arizona, McDowell Mountain Regional Park is a popular hiking destination that offers over 40 miles of hiking trails winding through the beautiful Sonoran Desert landscape. Here are some of the popular hiking trails in the park.

Pemberton Trail: The Trail is a 15.3-mile loop trail that winds through a variety of rocky slopes and washes.

- Granite Mountain Trail: The trail is a 6.9-mile round-trip hike that offers stunning views of the surrounding mountains and desert landscape.
- Scenic Trail: The trail is a 4.4-mile round-trip hike that offers beautiful views of the natural rock formations and diverse plant life.
- Dixie Mine Trail: It is a 5.8-mile round-trip hike leading to the site of an old gold mine, offering stunning views of the desert landscape.
- Wagner Trail: It is a 9.2-mile round trip hike mostly popular with bikers and horseback riders, offering a variety of terrain and beautiful views of the desert landscape.

7. Tom's Thumb Trail

Situated in Scottsdale, Arizona, Tom's Thumb Trail is a popular hiking destination named after the iconic rock formation known as "Tom's Thumb," which can be seen from various parts of the trail. The trail is a moderately challenging 4.1-mile round-trip hike that elevates up to 1,300 feet. Along the trail, hikers are rewarded with stunning views of the desert landscape and unique rock formations, offering an unforgettable Sonoran Desert experience.

6. Gateway Loop Trail

Gateway Loop Trail is a popular hiking trail in McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Scottsdale, Arizona, offering panoramic views of the incredible Arizona desert and surrounding landscape. The trail is a moderate 4.4-mile loop with an elevation gain of over 550 feet, with well-marked and easy-to-follow instructions, making it

an ideal hike for hikers of all skill levels. The trail offers parking, drinking water, and restroom facilities with picnic tables and grills along the way for the hiker to make the most out of their little adventure.

5. Brown's Ranch Trail

Brown's Ranch Trail is a hiking trail in Scottsdale, Arizona, named after the historic Brown's Ranch, located nearby, providing a glimpse into the area's history, with preserved buildings and artifacts showcasing the ranching lifestyle of the early 20th century. The Trail is a 3.5-mile round-trip hike that gains about 800 feet of elevation and offers incredible views of the desert landscape. Besides hiking,

4. Lost Dog Wash Trail

Lost Dog Wash Trail is a moderate 5.5-mile round-trip hike with an elevation gain of about 550 feet. The trail is well-marked and easy to follow, offering stunning views of the unique rock formations and diverse plant life. Hikers may encounter wildlife such as lizards, snakes, and birds along the trail. One of the highlights of the Lost Dog Wash Trail is the Lost Dog Lookout, which offers panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and desert landscape. Hikers can take a break and enjoy the views before returning down the trail.

3. Sunrise Trail

Located in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve in Scottsdale, Arizona, the sunrise trail is a moderately difficult 4.6-mile hiking loop with an elevation gain of about 1,200 feet, making it a suitable option for more experienced hikers. One of the

highlights of the Sunrise Trail is the summit, which offers panoramic views of the surrounding desert landscape with various species of plants and wildlife, including snakes, lizards, and birds.

2. Windgate Pass Trail

Windgate Pass Trail in Scottsdale, Arizona, is a moderately difficult 4.5-mile round-trip hike with an elevation gain of about 1,100 feet, offering stunning views of the surrounding mountains and unique rock formations with diverse desert flora and fauna. One of the highlights of Windgate Pass Trail is the Windgate Pass which offers panoramic views of the desert landscape for the hikers to soak in the incredible desert beauty before making their way back down the trail.

1. Usery Mountain Regional Park Trails

Usery Mountain Regional Park is a hiking destination located near Mesa, a few minute's drive from Scottsdale, Arizona. The park offers a variety of hiking trails with varying difficulty levels, from easy to strenuous, ranging from 1 to 7.5 miles in length. Some of the most popular hiking trails in the park include

- Wind Cave Trail: It is a moderate 3.2-mile round-trip hike with an elevation gain of about 800 feet, leading to a natural cave formation, the Wind Cave, providing incredible views of the surrounding area.
- The Pass Mountain Trail: It is a moderately strenuous 7.5-mile round-trip hike with an elevation gain of about 1,500 feet, leading to the

summit of Pass Mountain with panoramic views of the desert landscape.

- The Merkle Trail: A 1-mile loop trail that offers great views of the park's scenery
- Moon Rock Trail: This is a 0.6-mile trail that leads to a unique rock formation resembling the moon's surface.