

## Overview of Arizona

The northwestern corner of Arizona encompasses one of the great natural wonders of the world: the awe-inspiring Grand Canyon. However, it's not the only reason to visit this ruggedly beautiful state. Arizona also has 27 State Parks and numerous natural wonders that provide access to a wide variety of activities, fauna and flora, and landscapes.

The Sonoran Desert and Saguaro National Park feature typical desert scenery, with canyons, red cliffs, and sandstone pinnacles, coyotes and rattlesnakes, and the giant multi-armed cacti that typify the Arizonian landscape. The Painted Desert and the magnificent sandstone spires of Monument Valley in the northeast, the spectacular Red Rock Country of Sedona, and the mountains and forests of Flagstaff are just some of Arizona's special natural attractions.

Phoenix and Tucson offer 21st-century comforts such as luxurious resorts, shopping plazas and golf courses, and provide a wonderful change of pace from the state's legendary natural beauty. Accompanied by continual air-con, these sprawling metropolises are oases in the desert. The region's continuous sunshine and dry desert air have restorative properties as well, and thousands of people continue to visit local health spas.

Outside the cities, the Native Americans who have lived in Arizona for centuries make up the majority of the population, and more than a third of the land is encompassed within Indian Reservations. Northeast Arizona is known as Indian country, where the Navajo and the traditional Hopi tribal groups reside, and is where the beautiful Canyon de Chelly, and numerous Ancestral Puebloan sites are to be found in the cliff walls and valleys. The Apache live in the southeastern mountains and were the last tribal group to concede to the US government. For those interested in Native American heritage Arizona is the ideal travel destination.

Fans of the Wild West should visit the old mining town of Tombstone, which is the site of the famous shootout at the OK Corral. Today, it has staged gunfights, swinging saloon doors and old wooden buildings that bring to life the harsh cowboy past.

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## Key Facts

### **Language:**

English is the most common language spoken but Spanish is often heard in the south-western states.

### **Passport/Visa:**

It is highly recommended that travellers' passports have at least six months' validity remaining after the intended date of departure from their travel destination. A visa is required for short visits unless travellers qualify for entry under the Visa Waiver Program. The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) enables citizens of certain countries to travel to the US for a stay of up to 90 days without a visa. Visitors under the VWP need to register online three days before travel and have an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). This allows the US government to screen all visitors before travel. Visitors entering the country under the VWP must have a machine-readable passport (MRP) that has a barcode on the photo page. Travellers under the VWP must have passports that include biometrics if they wish to enter the country without a visa, which means that passports must contain unique personal data such as fingerprints or iris details. All passports must contain a digital photo image in order to travel visa-free. All visitors to the USA have a photograph and two fingerprints taken by an inkless scanner on arrival, including those travelling visa-free under the VWP. As part of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI), all travellers travelling between the United States and Canada, Mexico, Bermuda, and the Caribbean region are required to present a passport or other valid travel document to enter or re-enter the United States. If departing from the USA, a valid passport is required by immigration authorities. Immigration officials often apply different rules to those stated by travel agents and official sources.

### **Currency:**

The official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm.

### **Electricity:**

Electrical current is 120 volts, 60Hz. Plugs are mainly the type with two flat pins, though three-pin plugs (two flat parallel pins and a rounded pin) are also widely used. European appliances without dual-voltage capabilities will require an adapter.

# Travel to Arizona

## Climate for Arizona

Arizona has mild winters and hot summers, with thunderstorms during the summer months between July and September. Extremes in temperature occur between day and night throughout the state, particularly in the desert areas where daytime temperatures of over 125F (52C) have been recorded.

During winter, temperatures average about 70F (21C), dropping to below freezing in the desert valleys at night. Summer temperatures vary from 80F (27C) during the day to 40F (4C) at night. Snow falls in the mountains, but not in the desert areas, and the mild temperatures in the southern desert attract many tourists in winter.

## Health Notes when travelling to United States of America

There are no specific health risks associated with travel within the USA. Medical facilities are excellent, but expensive. Only emergencies are treated without prior payment and treatment can be refused without evidence of insurance or proof of funds. Good medical insurance is essential. Visitors must be fully vaccinated with the primary series of an accepted COVID-19 vaccine to travel to the United States by plane if they are non-U.S. citizens.

## Safety Notes when travelling to United States of America

Travel within the United States is generally trouble-free, though travellers should be aware that the US shares with the rest of the world, an increased threat from terrorist incidents. Security has been heightened, particularly at airports. Restrictions on hand luggage apply and travellers are advised to check on the latest situation with airlines in advance. Travellers should also be alert to the dangers of car and street crime in cities and should use common sense and take basic precautions. Hurricanes are common between June and November, putting the southern USA, including the Gulf Coast and the eastern US at risk. There is a risk of wildfires in many dry areas in the US, particularly on the West Coast from March to November.

## Customs in United States of America

Laws vary from state to state, including speed limit, fines and punishment. The age at which alcohol may be legally bought and consumed is 21 years.

## Duty Free in United States of America

Travellers to the United States who are returning residents of the country do not have to pay duty on articles purchased abroad to the value of \$800 provided their stay was longer than 48 hours and their duty-free allowance was not used in the 30-day period prior. For passengers arriving from Samoa, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands, a duty-free allowance of \$1,600 is allowed. The following items are included in this: 50 cigarettes and 10 cigars and 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of alcoholic beverages or 150 millilitres (5 fl. oz.) of perfume containing alcohol. Restrictions may apply to goods from Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Burma (Myanmar), Angola, Liberia and Sudan. It is prohibited to import Cuban cigars from any country.

Travellers to the United States who are non-residents do not have to pay duty on the following items: 50 cigars or 200 cigarettes and gifts to the value of \$100 provided their stay in the USA is not less than 72 hours and that the allowance has not been used in the preceding six-month period.

Prohibited items for residents and non-residents include meat or meat products, poultry, narcotics, absinthe, plants, seeds, vegetables, fruits, soil, live insects and other living plants or animal pests. Fish is prohibited unless it carries disease-free certification. Wildlife and animals or their by-products carry restrictions. Dairy products and eggs from specified countries are not allowed. Firearms and ammunition are not allowed without the necessary license and permit.

## Doing Business in United States of America

In such a large country, filled with so many diverse groups, business practices may differ according to each state, however rarely to any large degree. The East Coast is traditionally more formal than the West Coast, though in states such as California, dress code and conservative appearance are as common as they would be in New York. Punctuality is important throughout the country and it is considered rude to be late for a meeting. Gift-giving is uncommon as it may be construed as bribery. Appropriate titles (Mr, Mrs, Ms) are used upon introduction and until otherwise stated. Americans favour politeness and greetings of 'Hello' and 'How are you?' are often expressed with sincerity. Business hours may vary in each state, but an 8am start and 5pm finish Monday to Friday is the most common with an hour over lunch.

Status and age are not necessarily indicative of seniority, nor do they carry much weight in themselves. Those doing business in the States should be mindful of this fact; foreigners should never make assumptions about someone's position or rank. Best practice is to be respectful to all parties. That said, the US upholds a hierarchal business structure, in which 'the boss' is the ultimate decision-maker. Senior leaders have the power of the last word, and can go against the grain just as easily as they can follow popular opinion. Foreigners should concentrate on winning over this individual, even if the greater group seems unsupportive. Americans value a direct style of communication. In this fast-paced, consumer culture 'time is money', and small-talk is viewed as unnecessary and wasteful. It's best for foreigners to get to the point quickly, speak about issues in a frank and open manner, and to avoid taking offence if someone questions or challenges them outright.

## Communication in United States of America

The international country dialling code for the United States is +1. Mobile networks cover most of the country, especially all urban areas, and WiFi is widely available.

## Tippling in United States of America

A 15 percent tip is expected by taxi drivers, bartenders, hairdressers and waiters, but travellers shouldn't tip in fast-food or self-service restaurants. In expensive restaurants or for large parties, the tip should be 20 percent of the bill. It is normal to tip staff such as valets and porters in hotels; this is discretionary, although a minimum of \$5 is expected. Most services are customarily tipped if the service is good.

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# Airports in Arizona

## Phoenix Airport (PHX)

### *Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport*

**www.skyharbor.com**

**Location:** Phoenix The airport is situated four miles (6km) southeast of Phoenix.

**Time:** Local time is GMT -7.

**Contacts:** Tel: +1 602 273 3300.

**Transfer between terminals:** The two terminals (Terminals 3 and 4) are connected by a free inter-terminal train system, the PHX Sky Train.

**Getting to the city:** The PHX SkyTrain transports passengers between terminals, parking lots, and the 44th Street METRO Light Rail, from where it is possible to connect to the city centre, all free of charge. The Valley Metro system, consisting of the Metro Light Rail and a fleet of buses, charges a standard fare. Airport-to-door shuttle vans can also be arranged. Many hotels and resorts provide a free pick-up service for their guests; taxis and mobile app-based taxi services such as Uber are also available.

**Car rental:** Car rental companies include Alamo, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Enterprise, Fox, National, Hertz, Payless, and Thrifty, among others.

**Airport Taxis:** Metered taxis are available outside each terminal.

**Facilities:** Facilities include shops, restaurants, animal relief areas, ATMs, currency exchange facilities, free WiFi, mailboxes, a chapel, and ground transportation facilities. All terminals are fully wheelchair accessible.

**Parking:** Parking at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport offers a range of daily maximums depending upon the proximity of the car park to the terminals. Parking lots are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A free cell phone waiting lot is also provided.

## Tucson Airport (TUS)

### *Tucson International Airport*

**www.flytucson.com**

**Location:** Tucson The airport is situated nine miles (14km) south of downtown Tucson.

**Time:** GMT -7

**Contacts:** Tel: +1 520 573 8100

**Getting to the city:** The Sun Tran bus company operates service into Tucson from the airport on two routes. Airport shuttles, taxis, and rental cars are also available.

**Car rental:** Car rental agencies based at Tucson Airport include Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Dollar, Hertz and National. Counters are located in the Rental Car Facility east of the Terminal.

**Airport Taxis:** Taxis are located on the commercial roadway in front of the baggage claim area. VIP Taxi and Yellow Cab are under contract with the airport to meet arriving flights.

**Facilities:** Various dining and shopping options are located within the terminal, as too are ATMs, mailboxes, smoking areas, a pet relief area, meeting rooms, massage chairs, a military lounge, shoeshine services, and a lost and found.

**Parking:** Parking is available in the Cell Phone Waiting Lot, the Garage and in the Economy Lot. Drivers can pay hourly or daily rates.

## Phoenix

Arizona's capital city, Phoenix, has risen from the mythical ashes of an ancient agricultural Indian village to become a sprawling modern metropolis and the fifth most populous city in the US. Its rapid urban growth has filled what is known as the Valley of the Sun, encompassing the neighbouring towns of Scottsdale, Mesa, and Tempe as suburbs. It's one of America's fastest-growing urban centres, claiming to have more five-star hotels than any other city in the US.

With luxurious resorts and spas, glitzy shopping plazas, upmarket restaurants, and superb golf courses, together with over 300 days of sunshine a year, the area has become a popular winter getaway for the rest of the country.

However, while some may know Phoenix as a retirement community, it is home to both the University of Phoenix and the University of Arizona, as well as over a dozen other colleges, ensuring a huge student population that keeps Phoenix young.

Phoenix has a number of interesting museums, including the Heard Museum of Native American culture and the Phoenix Art Museum. A scattering of parks, a wide variety of restaurants, and a well-developed arts scene makes a holiday in Phoenix an attractive prospect for travellers of all ages.

Phoenix's greatest attraction is its location, with the city surrounded by a vast cactus-studded desert and the magnificent scenery of the Red Rock Country around Sedona. It's a landscape of canyons, pinnacles, and red cliffs that have been the setting for numerous Wild West films and novels. The Apache Trail is a winding scenic drive that passes through some of the beautiful rugged terrain of central Arizona, passing ghost towns, ancient ruins, and the Superstition Mountains.

## Getting around in Phoenix

Phoenix is spread out, meaning distances between places of interest tends to be significant. A rental car is ideal outside the downtown area. The Valley Metro Light Rail in Phoenix is one of the busiest light rail systems in the country, making getting around much easier for visitors. Stations run right by some of the city's top attractions, such as the Phoenix Art Museum, the Heard Museum, and the Arizona Science Centre.

Valley Metro buses access areas the light rail doesn't reach and the rail and bus routes have the same basic fares. Tickets can be purchased from vending machines at all stations. There is also a free central city shuttle bus service, called DASH (Downtown Area Shuttle), which is useful for accessing attractions such as the state capitol and major shopping malls. Taxis are freely available from local companies but tend to be expensive and are not recommended for travelling long distances.

## Climate in Phoenix

With its arid climate, Phoenix has been ranked the hottest city in the United States, and one of the hottest in the world. The temperature in Phoenix registers at least 100F (38C) or more on an average of 90 days of the year, mostly between June and September, which are the summer months.

Most days are sunny and hot, and rainfall is scarce, although there are thunderstorms sometimes between July and September, caused by humid air blowing in from the Gulf of California. Winters bring mild, sunny days, with occasional fog. Snow is rare, but has been recorded; frost is frequent in the winter months.

## Sightseeing in Phoenix

Phoenix shimmers in the heat of the biologically unique Sonoran desert in central Arizona. For decades people have chosen to travel to Phoenix for the sunshine, and found a modern metropolis with a thriving tourist district, an art neighbourhood packed with galleries, and a number of fascinating natural and historical attractions. The city offers some good sightseeing and a great restaurant scene, but most travellers use Phoenix primarily as a travel hub for excursions into the glorious desert landscapes on the city's doorstep. Within the city, popular sights include the Heard Museum, the Desert Botanical Garden, St Mary's Basilica, and Taliesin West, the former home and school of renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Travellers are spoilt for choice when it comes to excursions, as Camelback Mountain, South Mountain Park, Piestewa Peak, and many other scenic spots lure hikers and photographers just beyond the city. Many people choose to travel further afield on a day trip to famous attractions such as the Grand Canyon, Lake Mead and Hoover Dam. Golfers are very well catered for through Phoenix's scenic courses, and there are many spas and health resorts for those who enjoy pampering. Hikers can enjoy excursions to the surrounding mountains.

## Phoenix Attractions

## Sedona

Sedona is one of the most striking geographical locations in the US. Located in the heart of Red Rock Country, the sandstone cliffs and plateaus provide a stunning backdrop for this small yet bustling town. Only 120 miles (193km) north of Phoenix, Sedona is fast becoming one of Arizona's top holiday destinations.

Sedona is a paradise for outdoor activity. Visitors can mountain bike, quad bike, hike, rock climb, horseback ride, and camp to popular trails such as the Broken Arrow, Cathedral Rock, Devil's Bridge, Bell Rock, and Soldier's Pass.

A unique attraction of Sedona is its reputation as the site of the confluence of five large vortexes. It is said that the strong magnetism of the earth in Sedona has natural healing properties. As a result the city has a thriving New Age medicine industry.

Visitors will find a multitude of spas, herbalists, healers and spiritual guides. The vortices are said to be concentrated at Bell Rock, Airport Mesa, Cathedral Rock, Boynton Canyon, and Schnebly Hill, and there are many guided tours of these sites available from Sedona.

Shopping in Sedona offers a number of stores filled with Native American arts and crafts as well as New Age shops stocking crystals and healing products. For the culture lovers, Hozho Plaza is home to a number of art galleries, featuring local artists' sculptures, paintings, and jewellery.

Tourists eating out have a variety of restaurants and bars to choose from, catering to every budget and taste, some rated among the best in Arizona. Whether travellers journey to Sedona for the thrill of climbing the cliffs and diving into the rock pools, or to be soothed and pampered in a local spa, Sedona receives and accommodates all.

## The Grand Canyon

A mile deep, 277 miles (446km) long, and up to 18 miles (29km) wide, the breath-taking grandeur of the Grand Canyon is so impressive that words simply cannot do it justice. One of the great natural wonders of the world, it was formed by the cutting action of the Colorado River over millions of years. The hard rock formations survive as great cliffs, pinnacles and buttes, and the different layers of rock span a range of colours, from purple, fiery-red and pastel-pink to yellow, brown, grey and soft tones of blue.

Whether by foot or on horseback, from a plane or helicopter, aboard a raft down the mighty Colorado River or by merely gazing in awe from the rim, the canyon's seemingly infinite depths can be experienced in a variety of ways and is a sight not to be missed however visitors choose to see it. The park receives hordes of visitors from around the world, who never fail to be transfixed by the sculpted rock shapes, the shifting colours that change with the light, and a tiny glimpse of the Colorado River far below.

The Grand Canyon National Park comprises two separate areas: the South Rim and the more remote North Rim. Separated by the 10-mile (16km) width of the canyon, it is a 215-mile (346km) drive from one Visitor Centre to the other. The South Rim is the most accessible and has more facilities, and as a result it attracts the bulk of visitors to its boundaries. The North Rim is higher in elevation, wetter, with thicker surrounding forests, is more remote, and is cut off by snowfall from October to May. Many people, however, prefer its comparative peacefulness and less-crowded lookouts.

Grand Canyon West has recently opened the Grand Canyon Skywalk, a glass-bottomed, horseshoe shaped deck that juts almost 70 feet (21m) from the canyon's rim. It gives visitors the sensation of being suspended amid the canyon's towering red rock walls above a faint sliver of Colorado River flowing 4,000 feet (1,219m) below. There is an additional charge for the Skywalk, which is not for those with a fear of heights. Another great way to tour the Grand Canyon is on the Grand Canyon Railway, a vintage steam train that winds its way around the area.

Both rims have numerous drives and walkways along the edge with various scenic viewpoints, and some hiking trails into the canyon where visitors can overnight at Phantom Ranch on the canyon floor. The impact of more than four million visitors a year to the South Rim, especially during the busy summer months, is one of overcrowding and traffic congestion; but seeing the most spectacular examples of natural erosion in the world more than makes up for any inconvenience.

There are also several educational and cultural attractions at the Grand Canyon, including the Tusayan Museum and Ruin (near Desert View), the Yavapai Museum of Geology, and the Verkamps Visitors Center.

**Website:** [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)

## Taliesin West

Taliesin West was legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright's winter home and school from 1937 until he died in 1959, aged 91. Today the facility can be visited as the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, with tours providing a general introduction to Wright and his hugely influential theories of architecture. The building has been constructed with the natural stone of the region, a reflection of Wright's philosophy that local materials should be used in design wherever possible. There are a range of tours available to suit the visitor's level of interest. For the rookie, a basic introductory tour is recommended, while devotees will want the behind-the-scenes exposé.

**Website:** [www.franklloydwright.org](http://www.franklloydwright.org)

## Desert Botanical Garden

The Desert Botanical Garden gets high ratings not only for the size and range of its collection, but also the inventive ways visitors can immerse themselves in the desert. With about 21,000 plants representing 139 species, the Desert Botanical Garden was founded in 1939 to provide a fascinating and colourful introduction to the ethnobotany of the region. A highlight is the Plants and People of the Sonoran Desert Trail, which allows visitors to make their own yucca-fibre brush and grind corn as the Native Americans once did. Over November and December the gardens are lit up at night by beautiful luminarias (candles inside small bags), meaning plenty of worthy photography material.

**Website:** [www.dbg.org](http://www.dbg.org)

## Heard Museum

The Heard Museum is home to America's finest collection of Native American art, making this an essential attraction for visitors looking to gain an understanding of the country's original inhabitants. In total there are more than 39,000 works of cultural and fine art ranging across textiles, katsina dolls, pottery, jewellery, baskets, cradleboards, paintings, and sculpture. There are about 10 galleries with dynamic and imaginatively curated exhibitions. Visitors shouldn't miss the annual Guild Indian Fair and Market (March), which includes traditional dance performances along with arts and crafts. The museum's signature exhibitions are 'Home: Native People in the Southwest' and 'Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories'.

**Website:** [www.heard.org](http://www.heard.org)

## Lake Mead and Hoover Dam

The 1.5 million acre Lake Mead Recreation Area was created in 1936 as part of Roosevelt's New Deal programme. A popular excursion from Las Vegas or even Phoenix, Lake Mead is a haven for outdoor recreation such as boating, swimming, canoeing, fishing, waterskiing, lake cruises, and even scuba diving. Five marinas ring the lake, ranging from small family-owned operations such as Hemingway Harbor to large resorts such as Forever Resorts at Callville Bay.

The rest of the shoreline of Lake Mead is made up of rocky coves and sandy beaches good for sunbathing. Land-based activities such as camping and hiking are available in the surrounding area. The Alan Bible Visitor Center, also known as the Lake Mead Visitor Center, provides information about activities and resources at Lake Mead. There are also some educational exhibits, including a garden of cactus plants native to the Mojave Desert. Lake Mead is formed by the giant Hoover Dam, a popular tourist attraction. Attracting nearly 3,000 people each day, Hoover Dam is an engineering marvel, standing 726 feet (221m) tall and 1,244 feet (379m) wide. The enormous dam supplies 90 percent of Las Vegas' water, and visitors can take guided tours of the facility.

**Website:** [www.nps.gov/lake/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/lake/index.htm)

## Petrified Forest National Park

Located in the northeastern corner of Arizona, Petrified Forest National Park was designated a national monument in 1906. The trees within the park are over 225 million years old, and have over that period transformed into brilliantly-coloured minerals, the world's largest concentration of petrified wood. Aside from the trees, there is a variety of wildlife to see in the park, including bobcats, coyotes, owls, porcupines, mule deer, and various desert lizards and rodents. There are several trails leading to popular sites in the park, making it a great place for desert hiking. Visitors should be aware that it is illegal to remove petrified wood from Petrified Forest National Park.

**Website:** [www.nps.gov/pefo/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/pefo/index.htm)

## Kingman

Kingman is a nostalgic tourist destination in Arizona. Located in the northeastern corner of the state, between the Grand Canyon and Las Vegas, the city is a popular fuelling stop between the two destinations. However, Kingman is most famous for having been a major stop along the celebrated Route 66. There are a few old buildings and museums dedicated to this era, including the aptly named Route 66 Museum, and though most of the road has been replaced by Interstate I-40, the longest remaining stretch runs from Kingman to Ash Fork. There are some good restaurants and bars in Kingman and wonderful hiking can be enjoyed in the area.

**Website:** [www.gokingman.com](http://www.gokingman.com)

## Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park

Located surprisingly close to downtown Phoenix, the Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park is the site of the remains of a 1,500-year-old Hohokam village. The site is a National Historic Landmark and the largest preserved archaeological site in the region. Mysteriously abandoned around 1450, all that remains of the village is enclosed in a small museum with artefacts and exhibits showing daily life in the settlement. Hiking trails wind around the ruins and replicas themselves, so visitors should come prepared for the hot weather of southern Arizona. The site hosts the Pueblo Grande Indian Market each December, featuring more than 250 local artisans. For those who miss the market, there is a museum shop open year-round.

**Website:** [www.phoenix.gov/parks/arts-culture-history/pueblo-grande](http://www.phoenix.gov/parks/arts-culture-history/pueblo-grande)

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## Tucson

Tucson is surrounded by a ring of mountain ranges with the Santa Catalina Mountains as a backdrop. Found in the Sonoran Desert, it is one of the fastest-growing cities in the country and one of the most attractive holiday destinations in Arizona.

Combining the amenities of a modern metropolis with a small-town atmosphere, the almost constant sunshine and dry desert air provide an oasis where visitors can rest and rejuvenate by the popular health resort.

Its proximity to the Mexican border is evident in its architecture and cuisine, and a long history that has left the city with a dynamic legacy of Spanish, Mexican, American, and Native American influences.

With naturally eroded cliff forms, cacti, bird life, and old cowboy towns in the area, Tucson is also a good central base from which to explore the many natural wonders beyond the city limits. Horseback riding and hiking along the wilderness trails are excellent ways to explore the region.

Nearby attractions include the Saguaro National Park, with the highest concentration in the world of the desert-symbol Saguaro cactus, the Spanish-style Mission San Xavier del Bac, and the first-class Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum that features almost every kind of local desert fauna and flora in an outdoor setting.

The old mining town of Tombstone attracts crowds of tourists to the site of the shootout at the O.K. Corral, the most famous shootout in Wild West history. There's no reason to ignore Tucson's city centre though. With a number of museums, parks, shops, restaurants, and nightspots, Tucson has a lively atmosphere that will keep any visitor thoroughly entertained.

## Getting around in Tucson

Tucson has an extensive public bus system operated by Sun Tran. The city also has a large network of bike routes and with its flat terrain is considered bike-friendly, but the heat makes this option less attractive in the summer months. The roads are easy to follow and driving is relatively pleasant, though the streets are congested at certain times of day. As with most cities in the US, things are fairly spread out and many tourists find it most convenient to hire a car, especially as so many of Tucson's top attractions are just outside the city.

## Climate in Tucson

Tucson experiences a desert climate, meaning that temperatures are high and rainfall is too low to sustain much vegetation at all. There are two major seasons, summer and winter, with three minor shoulder seasons: autumn, spring, and the monsoon.

Early summer, particularly June, enjoys low humidity and clear skies, with daytime highs reaching above 100F (38C) and average overnight temperatures ranging between 66F (19C) and 85F (29C). In July and August, temperatures are much the same but it is much more humid and rain is very common, as this is the monsoon season.

Flash floods are possible in late summer. Winters, between December and February, are mild, with average daytime highs between 40F (4C) and 68F (20C). The milder weather of winter is usually most pleasant for tourists.

## Sightseeing in Tucson

Much like nearby Phoenix, Tucson is primarily celebrated as a gateway to the glories of the desert. The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Sabino Canyon, the Mission San Xavier del Bac, the Tucson Mountain Park, and Madera Canyon are very close by.

The incredible caves in the Colossal Cave Mountain Park and Kartchner Caverns State Park provide spectacular scenery for hikers and spelunkers. The iconic cowboy town of Tombstone is also in the area, attracting travellers keen to experience the rough charm of the Wild West.

Within the city of Tucson, popular stops on the tourist trail include the Tucson Botanical Gardens, the Tucson Rodeo Parade Museum (between January and March), and a number of interesting art museums and galleries, such as the University of Arizona Art Museum and the Degrazia Gallery in the Sun.

## Tucson Attractions

## Tombstone

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The University of Arizona Art Museum is situated on campus as part of the Edward J. Gallagher Memorial Collection. It is home to an impressive permanent collection including works by Jackson Pollock, Franz Kline, and Mark Rothko. The museum houses the C. Leonard Pfeiffer Collection of American paintings and the Samuel H. Kress Collection of European works, from the 14th to the 19th century. Temporary exhibitions are also hosted by the museum so travellers should check the official website to see what's available during their visit. The University of Arizona campus is also the location of the Center for Creative Photography, displaying various works by leading artists such as Edward Weston and Ansel Adams. Lovers of art in all forms will find a visit rewarding while in Tucson.

**Website:** [www.artmuseum.arizona.edu](http://www.artmuseum.arizona.edu)

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At the Tucson Rodeo Parade Museum, pioneer artefacts and a recreated Western Main Street represent what Tucson looked like, and what it had to offer in the way of businesses and services, back in the old days of the Wild West. The museum also has an inventory of about 150 vehicles, with everything from small buggies to wagons and coaches on display. The museum hosts the Tucson Rodeo Parade each February, which is great fun for those in the area at the time. Outside of Rodeo Week, the museum is sadly only open between January and March, with guided tours available daily at 10am and 1pm. There are hopes to extend the opening season once sufficient funds have been raised.

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## Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

This world-renowned museum is more like a zoo, with the majority of the exhibitions outside showcasing the surrounding desert's creatures in their natural habitats. Exhibits include mountain lions, otters, coyotes, bighorn sheep, lizards, and a walk-in aviary. Located in the Sonoran Desert, the setting of the museum also offers awesome views of the surrounding mountain ranges, which visitors can enjoy while touring the botanical garden, natural history museum, art gallery, and aquarium. The gift shop has an excellent selection of Sonoran desert souvenirs. The interactive museum is a must for any visitor staying in Tucson for more than just one day, and kids will love seeing the animals and experiencing the desert landscapes.

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**Website:** [www.tucsonvalleyofthemoon.com](http://www.tucsonvalleyofthemoon.com)

## Events in Tucson

### Fiesta de los Vaqueros

#### Thursday February 20, 2020 (20 February)

**Where:** Tucson Rodeo Grounds

A popular event held in early spring is the Fiesta de los Vaqueros, also called the Tucson Rodeo. While the fiesta is a sporting event, it includes what has been declared the world's largest non-mechanised parade. Join a crowd of more than 200 000 people to enjoy the Wild West-themed floats, horse drawn carriages, Mexican folk dancers, marching bands, and the riders who will take part in the rodeo. The parade still keeps the spirit and style of the first event back in 1925. The Rodeo Parade is such a popular event that schools give two rodeo days off instead of Presidents Day. Traditional Western attire is seen throughout the city during the Fiesta, marking the beginning of the rodeo season in the United States. This is the premiere event of the rodeo year is not to be missed.

<http://www.tucsonrodeoparade.org>

### Tucson Meet Yourself

#### Monday October 11, 2021 to Wednesday October 13, 2021 (TBC)

**Where:** Downtown Tucson

Each October for the last 40 years, the Tucson Meet Yourself festival has celebrated the faces of the many ethnic groups in southern Arizona and northern Mexico that contribute to the rich cultural identity of the city. Experience a weekend of artwork, singing, dancing, and food from more than 30 different ethnicities in the downtown area. The variety of local performers bears testament to the region's cultural and ethnic diversity. Although this is essentially a celebration for locals, revolving around the preservation of living traditional arts, travellers in the region in October should find the festival fascinating.

<http://www.tucsonmeetyourself.org>

## All Souls Procession Weekend

**Monday November 09, 2020 to Tuesday November 10, 2020 (TBC)**

**Where:** Downtown Tucson

One of the largest festivals in Tucson, the All Souls Procession is celebrated annually in the first weekend of November. Inspired by the Mexican Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), thousands of people in vibrant costumes gather to acknowledge the deceased and the grand mystery of death. Experience the Fine Art Photography Exhibition, the Evolving Community Altar, the Dance of the Dead, and the Procession of Little Angels. On Sunday evening, the All Souls Procession snakes through the historic Fourth Avenue of Tucson to the culmination of the festival where a large urn filled with the hopes and offerings to those who have passed is burned.

<http://www.allsoulsprocession.org>

## Airports in Tucson

### Tucson Airport (TUS)

*Tucson International Airport*

<http://www.flytucson.com>

**Location:** Tucson The airport is situated nine miles (14km) south of downtown Tucson.

**Time:** GMT -7

**Contacts:** Tel: +1 520 573 8100

**Getting to the city:** The Sun Tran bus company operates service into Tucson from the airport on two routes. Airport shuttles, taxis, and rental cars are also available.

**Car rental:** Car rental agencies based at Tucson Airport include Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Dollar, Hertz and National. Counters are located in the Rental Car Facility east of the Terminal.

**Airport Taxis:** Taxis are located on the commercial roadway in front of the baggage claim area. VIP Taxi and Yellow Cab are under contract with the airport to meet arriving flights.

**Facilities:** Various dining and shopping options are located within the terminal, as too are ATMs, mailboxes, smoking areas, a pet relief area, meeting rooms, massage chairs, a military lounge, shoeshine services, and a lost and found.

**Parking:** Parking is available in the Cell Phone Waiting Lot, the Garage and in the Economy Lot. Drivers can pay hourly or daily rates.

# Arizona Attractions

## Overview

Arizona is home to some of America's most striking natural landscapes, making it one of the best road tripping destinations in a country. The iconic Route 66, or the Main Street of America as it became known, still attracts droves of travellers. The state boasts some renowned natural sights, including Saguaro National Park, the Petrified Forest National Park, and the famous Grand Canyon National Park.

Unique physical features in Arizona include Monument Valley, setting the scene for many a cowboy movie; Cathedral Rock and the other peaks that form the backdrop to the desert town of Sedona; the 40,000-year-old Barringer Crater, the best preserved impact crater on Earth; the Canyon de Chelly, full of otherworldly sandstone formations; and the breathtakingly blue Havasu Falls of the Grand Canyon.

The surprisingly colourful desert landscapes are interrupted by Wild West-style towns, old mining centres, and Native American reserves. The old world charm is punctuated by the popular, sprawling cities of Phoenix and Tucson, full of resorts and top-quality modern amenities. Phoenix and Tucson, as well as charming Sedona, are full of interesting sightseeing attractions and act as the natural travel hubs for visitors to the state.

## Sedona

Sedona is one of the most striking geographical locations in the US. Located in the heart of Red Rock Country, the sandstone cliffs and plateaus provide a stunning backdrop for this small yet bustling town. Only 120 miles (193km) north of Phoenix, Sedona is fast becoming one of Arizona's top holiday destinations.

Sedona is a paradise for outdoor activity. Visitors can mountain bike, quad bike, hike, rock climb, horseback ride, and camp to popular trails such as the Broken Arrow, Cathedral Rock, Devil's Bridge, Bell Rock, and Soldier's Pass.

A unique attraction of Sedona is its reputation as the site of the confluence of five large vortexes. It is said that the strong magnetism of the earth in Sedona has natural healing properties. As a result the city has a thriving New Age medicine industry.

Visitors will find a multitude of spas, herbalists, healers and spiritual guides. The vortexes are said to be concentrated at Bell Rock, Airport Mesa, Cathedral Rock, Boynton Canyon, and Schnebly Hill, and there are many guided tours of these sites available from Sedona.

Shopping in Sedona offers a number of stores filled with Native American arts and crafts as well as New Age shops stocking crystals and healing products. For the culture lovers, Hozho Plaza is home to a number of art galleries, featuring local artists' sculptures, paintings, and jewellery.

Tourists eating out have a variety of restaurants and bars to choose from, catering to every budget and taste, some rated among the best in Arizona. Whether travellers journey to Sedona for the thrill of climbing the cliffs and diving into the rock pools, or to be soothed and pampered in a local spa, Sedona receives and accommodates all.

## Tombstone

Tombstone is probably the most famous town in the Wild West, attracting thousands of tourists with its old Western-style buildings, saloons, stagecoach rides, gunslingers, dusty streets, and shootout re-enactments. Many Hollywood movies have been shot here against the rugged mountain backdrop. Originally a silver boomtown in 1877, it rose to notoriety in 1881 when lawmen Wyatt Earp, his two brothers, and Doc Holliday confronted a band of outlaws in a gunfight. This event has come to epitomise the spirit of the Wild West and the star attraction of the town is the O.K. Corral, one of southern Arizona's most visited tourist sites. There is a staged 30-second shootout each day at 2pm, and exhibits relating to the event inside the corral. The Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park features an old courtroom where several renowned trials took place, as well as some excellent exhibits, including alternative versions of the O.K. Corral shootout and a museum dedicated to the Tombstone Epitaph, the oldest newspaper in Arizona. Although a classic tourist-trap town, with souvenir shops and restaurants galore, many people love the Wild West atmosphere and the rugged setting of Tombstone, and relish the chance to play cowboy for a day.

**Website:** [www.ok-corral.com](http://www.ok-corral.com)

## The Grand Canyon

A mile deep, 277 miles (446km) long, and up to 18 miles (29km) wide, the breath-taking grandeur of the Grand Canyon is so impressive that words simply cannot do it justice. One of the great natural wonders of the world, it was formed by the cutting action of the Colorado River over millions of years. The hard rock formations survive as great cliffs, pinnacles and buttes, and the different layers of rock span a range of colours, from purple, fiery-red and pastel-pink to yellow, brown, grey and soft tones of blue.

Whether by foot or on horseback, from a plane or helicopter, aboard a raft down the mighty Colorado River or by merely gazing in awe from the rim, the canyon's seemingly infinite depths can be experienced in a variety of ways and is a sight not to be missed however visitors choose to see it. The park receives hordes of visitors from around the world, who never fail to be transfixed by the sculpted rock shapes, the shifting colours that change with the light, and a tiny glimpse of the Colorado River far below.

The Grand Canyon National Park comprises two separate areas: the South Rim and the more remote North Rim. Separated by the 10-mile (16km) width of the canyon, it is a 215-mile (346km) drive from one Visitor Centre to the other. The South Rim is the most accessible and has more facilities, and as a result it attracts the bulk of visitors to its boundaries. The North Rim is higher in elevation, wetter, with thicker surrounding forests, is more remote, and is cut off by snowfall from October to May. Many people, however, prefer its comparative peacefulness and less-crowded lookouts.

Grand Canyon West has recently opened the Grand Canyon Skywalk, a glass-bottomed, horseshoe shaped deck that juts almost 70 feet (21m) from the canyon's rim. It gives visitors the sensation of being suspended amid the canyon's towering red rock walls above a faint sliver of Colorado River flowing 4,000 feet (1,219m) below. There is an additional charge for the Skywalk, which is not for those with a fear of heights. Another great way to tour the Grand Canyon is on the Grand Canyon Railway, a vintage steam train that winds its way around the area.

Both rims have numerous drives and walkways along the edge with various scenic viewpoints, and some hiking trails into the canyon where visitors can overnight at Phantom Ranch on the canyon floor. The impact of more than four million visitors a year to the South Rim, especially during the busy summer months, is one of overcrowding and traffic congestion; but seeing the most spectacular examples of natural erosion in the world more than makes up for any inconvenience.

There are also several educational and cultural attractions at the Grand Canyon, including the Tusayan Museum and Ruin (near Desert View), the Yavapai Museum of Geology, and the Verkamps Visitors Center.

**Website:** [www.nps.gov/grca](http://www.nps.gov/grca)

## Taliesin West

Taliesin West was legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright's winter home and school from 1937 until he died in 1959, aged 91. Today the facility can be visited as the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, with tours providing a general introduction to Wright and his hugely influential theories of architecture. The building has been constructed with the natural stone of the region, a reflection of Wright's philosophy that local materials should be used in design wherever possible. There are a range of tours available to suit the visitor's level of interest. For the rookie, a basic introductory tour is recommended, while devotees will want the behind-the-scenes exposé.

**Website:** [www.franklloydwright.org](http://www.franklloydwright.org)

## Desert Botanical Garden

The Desert Botanical Garden gets high ratings not only for the size and range of its collection, but also the inventive ways visitors can immerse themselves in the desert. With about 21,000 plants representing 139 species, the Desert Botanical Garden was founded in 1939 to provide a fascinating and colourful introduction to the ethnobotany of the region. A highlight is the Plants and People of the Sonoran Desert Trail, which allows visitors to make their own yucca-fibre brush and grind corn as the Native Americans once did. Over November and December the gardens are lit up at night by beautiful luminarias (candles inside small bags), meaning plenty of worthy photography material.

**Website:** [www.dbg.org](http://www.dbg.org)

## Heard Museum

The Heard Museum is home to America's finest collection of Native American art, making this an essential attraction for visitors looking to gain an understanding of the country's original inhabitants. In total there are more than 39,000 works of cultural and fine art ranging across textiles, katsina dolls, pottery, jewellery, baskets, cradleboards, paintings, and sculpture. There are about 10 galleries with dynamic and imaginatively curated exhibitions. Visitors shouldn't miss the annual Guild Indian Fair and Market (March), which includes traditional dance performances along with arts and crafts. The museum's signature exhibitions are 'Home: Native People in the Southwest' and 'Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Stories'.

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## Lake Mead and Hoover Dam

The 1.5 million acre Lake Mead Recreation Area was created in 1936 as part of Roosevelt's New Deal programme. A popular excursion from Las Vegas or even Phoenix, Lake Mead is a haven for outdoor recreation such as boating, swimming, canoeing, fishing, waterskiing, lake cruises, and even scuba diving. Five marinas ring the lake, ranging from small family-owned operations such as Hemingway Harbor to large resorts such as Forever Resorts at Callville Bay.

The rest of the shoreline of Lake Mead is made up of rocky coves and sandy beaches good for sunbathing. Land-based activities such as camping and hiking are available in the surrounding area. The Alan Bible Visitor Center, also known as the Lake Mead Visitor Center, provides information about activities and resources at Lake Mead. There are also some educational exhibits, including a garden of cactus plants native to the Mojave Desert. Lake Mead is formed by the giant Hoover Dam, a popular tourist attraction. Attracting nearly 3,000 people each day, Hoover Dam is an engineering marvel, standing 726 feet (221m) tall and 1,244 feet (379m) wide. The enormous dam supplies 90 percent of Las Vegas' water, and visitors can take guided tours of the facility.

**Website:** [www.nps.gov/lake/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/lake/index.htm)

## Petrified Forest National Park

Located in the northeastern corner of Arizona, Petrified Forest National Park was designated a national monument in 1906. The trees within the park are over 225 million years old, and have over that period transformed into brilliantly-coloured minerals, the world's largest concentration of petrified wood. Aside from the trees, there is a variety of wildlife to see in the park, including bobcats, coyotes, owls, porcupines, mule deer, and various desert lizards and rodents. There are several trails leading to popular sites in the park, making it a great place for desert hiking. Visitors should be aware that it is illegal to remove petrified wood from Petrified Forest National Park.

**Website:** [www.nps.gov/pefo/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/pefo/index.htm)

## Kingman

Kingman is a nostalgic tourist destination in Arizona. Located in the northeastern corner of the state, between the Grand Canyon and Las Vegas, the city is a popular fuelling stop between the two destinations. However, Kingman is most famous for having been a major stop along the celebrated Route 66. There are a few old buildings and museums dedicated to this era, including the aptly named Route 66 Museum, and though most of the road has been replaced by Interstate I-40, the longest remaining stretch runs from Kingman to Ash Fork. There are some good restaurants and bars in Kingman and wonderful hiking can be enjoyed in the area.

**Website:** [www.gokingman.com](http://www.gokingman.com)

## Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park

Located surprisingly close to downtown Phoenix, the Pueblo Grande Museum and Archaeological Park is the site of the remains of a 1,500-year-old Hohokam village. The site is a National Historic Landmark and the largest preserved archaeological site in the region. Mysteriously abandoned around 1450, all that remains of the village is enclosed in a small museum with artefacts and exhibits showing daily life in the settlement. Hiking trails wind around the ruins and replicas themselves, so visitors should come prepared for the hot weather of southern Arizona. The site hosts the Pueblo Grande Indian Market each December, featuring more than 250 local artisans. For those who miss the market, there is a museum shop open year-round.

**Website:** [www.phoenix.gov/parks/arts-culture-history/pueblo-grande](http://www.phoenix.gov/parks/arts-culture-history/pueblo-grande)

# Currency

The official currency is the US Dollar (USD), which is divided into 100 cents. Only major banks exchange foreign currency. ATMs are widespread and credit cards are widely accepted. Banking hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 3pm.

## Exchange rate for 1 USD - U.S. Dollar

<b>0.00</b> BMD Bermudan Dollar	<b>0.93</b> EUR Euro	<b>0.80</b> GBP U.K. Pound Sterling	<b>152.99</b> JPY Japanese Yen	<b>1.37</b> CAD Canadian Dollar	<b>0.91</b> CHF Swiss Franc
<b>1.52</b> AUD Australian Dollar	<b>39.40</b> UAH Ukrainian Hryvnia	<b>443.91</b> KZT Kazakhstani Tenge	<b>93,075.00</b> LBP Lebanese Pound	<b>4.86</b> LYD Libyan Dinar	<b>6.86</b> BOB Bolivian Boliviano
<b>0.00</b> NPR Nepalese Rupee	<b>0.00</b> OMR Omani Rial	<b>0.00</b> QAR Qatari Rial	<b>1.35</b> SGD Singapore Dollar	<b>10.82</b> SEK Swedish Krona	<b>0.00</b> TTD Trinidad Tobago Dollar
<b>0.00</b> VEF Venezuelan Bolivar	<b>58.11</b> DOP Dominican Peso	<b>0.00</b> HRK Croatian Kuna	<b>16.95</b> MXN Mexican Peso	<b>610.53</b> XOF West African CFA Franc	<b>0.00</b> PGK Papua New Guinean kina
<b>0.00</b> BSD Bahamian Dollar	<b>0.00</b> FJD Fiji Dollar	<b>0.00</b> HNL Honduran Lempira	<b>133.87</b> DZD Algerian Dinar	<b>0.00</b> MMK Myanma Kyat	<b>0.00</b> BWP Botswana Pula
<b>3.72</b> PEN Peruvian Nuevo Sol	<b>938.44</b> CLP Chilean Peso	<b>386.84</b> AMD Armenia Dram	<b>23.29</b> CZK Czech Koruna	<b>17.63</b> MDL Moldova Lei	<b>139.89</b> ISK Icelandic Krona
<b>12,582.40</b> UZS Uzbekistan Sum	<b>3.72</b> ILS Israeli New Sheqel	<b>0.71</b> JOD Jordanian Dinar	<b>0.00</b> KWD Kuwaiti Dinar	<b>38.15</b> UYU Uruguayan Peso	<b>0.00</b> MUR Mauritian Rupee
<b>0.00</b> NIO Nicaraguan Córdoba	<b>10.88</b> NOK Norwegian Krone	<b>4.03</b> PLN Polish Zloty	<b>3.75</b> SAR Saudi Riyal	<b>0.00</b> LKR Sri Lanka Rupee	<b>36.79</b> THB Thai Baht
<b>3.66</b> AED U.A.E Dirham	<b>5.09</b> BRL Brazilian Real	<b>4.63</b> RON Romanian New Leu	<b>7.81</b> HKD Hong Kong Dollar	<b>610.53</b> XAF Central African CFA Franc	<b>25,405.70</b> VND Vietnamese Dong
<b>878.36</b> ARS Argentine Peso	<b>0.00</b> XCD East Caribbean Dollar	<b>0.00</b> GTQ Guatemalan Quetzal	<b>10.06</b> MAD Moroccan Dirham	<b>0.00</b> BHD Bahrain Dinar	<b>1.00</b> PAB Panamanian Balboa
<b>1.70</b> AZN Azerbaijan Manat	<b>3,920.00</b> COP Colombian Peso	<b>88.42</b> KGS Kyrgyzstan Som	<b>362.00</b> HUF Hungarian Forint	<b>10.89</b> TJS Tajikistan Ruble	<b>16,073.70</b> IDR Indonesian Rupiah
<b>47.95</b> EGP Egyptian Pound	<b>1,358.84</b> KRW South Korean Won	<b>7,456.52</b> PYG Paraguayan Guaraní	<b>4.74</b> MYR Malaysian Ringgit	<b>508.31</b> CRC Costa Rican Colón	<b>1.67</b> NZD New Zealand Dollar
<b>277.87</b> PKR Pakistani Rupee	<b>91.39</b> RUB Russian Rouble	<b>18.51</b> ZAR South African Rand	<b>3.13</b> TND Tunisian Dinar	<b>0.00</b> BBD Barbadian Dollar	<b>1.82</b> BGN Bulgarian Lev
<b>32.33</b> TRY Turkish Lira	<b>57.28</b> PHP Philippine Peso	<b>32.31</b> TWD New Taiwan Dollar	<b>1,164.84</b> NGN Nigerian Naira	<b>0.00</b> XPF CFP Franc	<b>0.00</b> GHS Ghanaian Cedi
<b>0.00</b> JMD Jamaican Dollar	<b>0.00</b> ANG Neth. Antillean Guilder	<b>0.00</b> BND Brunei Dollar	<b>108.90</b> RSD Serbian Dinar	<b>7.24</b> CNY Chinese Yuan	<b>6.94</b> DKK Danish Krone
<b>3.49</b> TMT New Turkmenistan Manat	<b>83.42</b> INR Indian Rupee				