

# HIT THE TOWN(S)

FROM HIP URBAN SCENES TO FAMILY-FRIENDLY FUN, THE DIVERSE COMMUNITIES OF GREATER PHOENIX AWAIT

BY ELIZABETH EXLINE



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## SCOTTSDALE

### THE LUXE LIFE

Plush living is as easy as spending a few days in Scottsdale, home to posh resorts, spas, restaurants and nightlife, as well as spectacular landscapes. Start your day with a hike on the 3.5-mile Pinnacle Peak Trail or 4-mile Tom's Thumb Trail before exploring **OdySea Aquarium**, indoor skydiving at **iFLY**, or an off-road adventure.

Shopping centers, spas and art galleries—many of which are located in Scottsdale—provide plenty of daytime entertainment. Evenings, however, give way to indulgence, whether you're trying one of the city's acclaimed restaurants or sipping a wine flight at a downtown Scottsdale wine-tasting room. Alternatively, check out **Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament**, which takes entertainment to a whole new dimension with sword-wielding knights who challenge each other in an arena as guests tuck into a four-course dinner.

**Don't miss:** Dinner at FnB Restaurant, where Charleen Badman—the 2019 recipient of the James Beard Award for Best Chef: Southwest—serves up a creative farm-to-table seasonal menu.

*Top to bottom*  
Old Town Scottsdale;  
Chef Charleen Badman of FnB Restaurant

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# DOWNTOWN AND CENTRAL PHOENIX

WHERE CULTURE MEETS CULINARY INNOVATION

Downtown and Central Phoenix run the gamut from speakeasies and hipster coffee bars to hyper-local retail and Sunday Funday brunch, and Phoenix's many mixed-use concepts are a must.

The Newton PHX is an adaptive reuse project where visitors can read, dine, gather and shop. Uptown Plaza, built in 1955, blends mid-century modern architecture with local retailers and restaurants. Relax with a craft beer at **Huss Brewing Co.** before heading on to your next stop. The Colony, which offers shopping and dining, provides a wholly local experience. Swing into **Phoenix General** for one-of-a-kind Phoenix gear, candles and decor.

Grab a bike courtesy of Grid Bike Share, and pedal through historic neighborhoods, along the canal or down Roosevelt Row to see art galleries, murals and boutiques. Be sure to stop by historic Heritage Square to see its 19th-century Rosson House and eat at two restaurants helmed by James Beard Award-winning chefs: chef Nobuo Fukada's **Nobuo at Teeter House** and chef Chris Bianco's **Pizzeria Bianco**. Or, drop in at **Anhelo**, the square's newest restaurant, where uber-seasonal ingredients and contemporary cuisine shine.

For a liquid refreshment, head to the downtown outpost of **Arizona Wilderness Brewing Co.**, with its national reputation for Arizona-centric beer. Or swing by **Little Rituals** for the Big City Nights cocktail (spoiler alert: It comes topped with a replica of the bar's Phoenix-inspired mural).

**Don't miss:** The weird and wonderful events held year-round at Margaret T. Hance Park, a 32-acre oasis that routinely hosts food and drink festivals, concerts such as M3F and cultural events.



JILL RICHARDS

NICK LAESSIG PHOTOGRAPHY

Top to bottom  
Leah Huss of Huss Brewing Co.;  
Arizona Wilderness Brewing Co.





## MESA

### OUTDOOR FUN AWAITS

If variety is the spice of life, then Mesa delivers in spades. Stop and smell the cider at **Cider Corps**, where as many as 15 different hard ciders pay tribute to military veterans with names like Mango Foxtrot and Semper Vera.

Head outdoors to enjoy more than 3,000 acres of multiuse trails at Usery Mountain Regional Park, which also accommodates camping. Or pay a visit to the **Arizona Museum of Natural History**, where you'll encounter a family-friendly history of the Southwest that ranges from dinosaur digs to native peoples.

Kayak, tube or fish the Salt River for a true Arizona experience. In spring, take in a Chicago Cubs or Oakland A's **Cactus League Spring Training** game at Sloan Park or Hohokam Stadium.

**Don't miss:** The theater shows, concerts, festivals and contemporary art exhibits at Mesa Arts Center, conveniently located along the Valley Metro Rail.

Top to bottom  
Cider Corps; Spring training at Sloan Park





@amberperr

## TEMPE

### UNIVERSITY VITALITY

Tempe offers an amalgam of outdoor pursuits, local gastronomy and high-brow culture. This is a city where you can spend your days paddling on Tempe Town Lake and hiking through Rio Salado Park, or viewing contemporary art at the **ASU Art Museum** and catching a Broadway show at ASU Gammage. Come spring, join the festivities at the annual Innings Festival, a two-day celebration of music, food and spring training.

Like any self-respecting college town, Tempe also boasts a number of worthwhile breweries. One of the newest is **Fate Brewing Company**, which recently expanded from Scottsdale to bring its small-batch beers farther south. And when the occasion calls for more than beer, Tempe answers with creative cocktails. Helmed by Tamara Stanger of “Chopped” fame, **Cotton & Copper** sings a veritable ode to Arizona in cocktails, craft beers and plates.

**Don't miss:** The Tempe Festival of the Arts, which showcases a bonanza of arts and crafts for three days every spring and fall.

## GLENDALE

### SPORTS, ANTIQUING AND DOWN-HOME PERSONALITY

Glendale is home to the dynamic Westgate Entertainment District, where restaurants, shops and entertainment complement the games held at **Gila River Arena** (home to the NHL's Arizona Coyotes) and the adjacent State Farm Stadium (home to the NFL's Arizona Cardinals). Tours of **State Farm Stadium** provide a behind-the-scenes look at this engineering marvel.

Glendale also caters to those in search of a Main Street experience by way of its historic downtown. Here, tree-lined streets house independent boutiques as well as a diverse array of restaurants, such as **Little Saigon** and **Haus Murphy's**. Antique shopping along brick-trimmed sidewalks is big here, too, with stores purveying everything from secondhand furniture to vintage handbags.

**Don't miss:** The spectacular tradition of Glendale Glitters, when 16 city blocks twinkle with holiday lights between November and January.

Top to bottom

Sidewalk mural at Tempe Festival of the Arts;  
Arizona Coyotes fans at Gila River Arena



JANELLE ETZEL



Top to bottom  
Civana Wellness Resort & Spa; Buffalo Chip Saloon



FOSKETT CREATIVE

## CAVE CREEK AND CAREFREE

### COWBOY UP AND BLISS OUT

Those in the mood for a dash of Old West fun should head to Cave Creek, where saloons, rodeos and hiking trails dominate the social landscape.

Outdoor fun awaits at Cave Creek's Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, offering seven miles of hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails. Join Spur Cross Stables for a guided horseback ride through the scenic region.

Carefree is versatile, though, as evidenced by the arrival of **Civana Wellness Resort & Spa**, a destination resort where guests are encouraged to find their best selves through a variety of fitness classes, a series of indulgences or a little of both.

**Don't miss:** A night at The Buffalo Chip Saloon, a rustic retreat that offers up steakhouse fare, country dancing and, on select nights, live bull riding.