



A Brief Update of News around Arizona

March 2017

The **Arizona Office of Tourism** is pleased to provide this monthly update of new and noteworthy items within Arizona's tourism industry. For more information, contact Becky Blaine at bblaine@tourism.az.gov, Kim Todd at ktodd@tourism.az.gov or Marjorie Magnusson at mmagnusson@tourism.az.gov.

Adventure

[iFLY Phoenix](#), the world's largest indoor skydiving operation, is now offering the dream of flight to adventure seekers in the Phoenix metropolitan area. The new location at 9206 Talking Stick Way in Scottsdale is the 28th iFLY facility in the U.S. People of all ages and abilities can experience the sensation of skydiving in a safe, comfortable and fun environment – without having to jump out of an airplane. Each indoor skydiving facility replicates the sensation of freefall. With the help of iFLY certified flight instructors, customers learn to fly, control their bodies in the air and experience true human flight. The new iFLY Phoenix is the latest addition to the Talking Stick Cultural and Entertainment Destination, which includes attractions such as the Spring Training home for the Arizona Diamondbacks and Colorado Rockies, a resort and casino, a butterfly exhibit, and indoor aquarium.

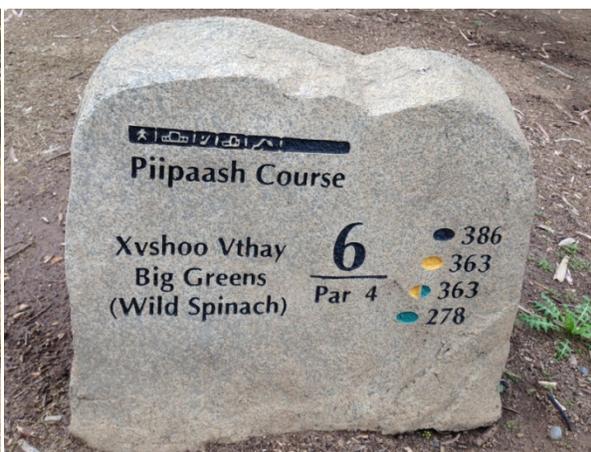
Culture/Heritage

Two passionate dude ranch owner/operators have partnered to save historic [Rancho de la Osa](#). The storied property dates from the 1700s and was operated as a guest ranch from 1925 to 2014. The new owners are reopening the ranch resort. La Osa has ties to Father Kino, the King of Spain, Pancho Villa, Hollywood stars and U.S. Presidents. The original adobe structure is believed to be the oldest continually used building in Arizona and was constructed by Jesuit missionaries to serve as a trading post for local tribes and a resting place for traveling missionaries. For much of the next century it was a large cattle ranch. The main hacienda still in use today was built in 1889 with adobe bricks made onsite. In 1916 Pancho Villa attempted to capture the ranch during the Mexican Revolution. A cannonball from the attack was removed from the adobe and is now on display. In 1925 La Osa was converted into a dude ranch. The partners Robert Bucksbaum, who owns the Majestic Dude Ranch outside of Durango, Colorado, and Russell True of Tucson, who grew up at and is now co-owner of the White Stallion Ranch plan to continue to showcase the ranch history and retain its traditional emphasis on fine cuisine, wines and tequila. They'll bring back the horses and cattle – essential for the authentic dude ranch experience. They also have ambitious plans to add more adventure to the guest experience. The 240-acre property with 10 buildings and 10 rooms abuts the 117,000-acre Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. La Osa is surrounded by pristine high desert vistas– including the Baboquivari Wilderness and the Tohono O'odham nation to the west and the Buenos Aires National Wilderness Refuge to the east. La Osa is located roughly 70 miles southwest of Tucson just outside of Sasabe, a community of some 2,500 residents that straddles the Arizona/Mexico border.

The Salt River Community Golf Enterprise renamed two courses at the [Talking Stick Golf Club](#) representing the two Native American tribes that comprise the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC). The "O'odham Course" replaces the "North Course" and represents the Pima, or "Akimel O'odham" (River People) and the "Piipaash Course" replaces the former "South Course" representing the Maricopa, or "Xalychidom Piipaash" (People who live toward the water). To enhance the cultural experience of golfers visiting the Talking Stick Golf Club, the individual golf holes on each course have also been renamed using the traditional language of both tribes, with English subtitles, on the corresponding course. New tee monuments and signage have also been installed with the new names. Native art and special culinary offerings with Native-inspired ingredients are an additional feature that promote the culture and enrich the visitor experience at Talking Stick Golf Club.



Formerly the "North Course"



Formerly the "South Course"

[The Verde Valley Archaeology Center](#) in Camp Verde is now the official non-profit partner of the National Park Service Montezuma Castle and Tuzigoot National Monuments. The center offers programs such as the [Verde Valley Archaeology Field Institute](#). The Field Institute allows visitors greater access to archaeological sites in central Arizona. Led by professional guides visitors will appreciate how interconnected all the sites in the Verde Valley are through archaeology classes and guided hiking field seminars. Programs will also allow visitors to explore a variety of archaeological subjects such as pottery identification, prehistoric architectural and agricultural methods.

[The Presidio San Agustín del Tucson Museum](#) is now offering guided walking tours of the Turquoise Trail. The Turquoise Trail is a 2.5-mile walking tour of downtown Tucson that follows a turquoise line and leads participants past Tucson's architectural and artistic gems. A printed brochure is available for self-guided walks. The staff at the Presidio Museum now provides paid tours from knowledgeable Museum docents. The tour begins at 10:00 a.m. at the Presidio Museum and ends at the Hotel Congress around 12:30 p.m. on select dates. The walking tour fee of \$12 includes all-day admission to the Presidio Museum. Pre-registration is encouraged. <http://tucsonpresidio.com/>

The newest wayside exhibit and designated segment of the historic Anza Trail was unveiled in Yuma in February. The wayside marker is located in a public overlook area with views of the Colorado River where members of the Quechan Indian Tribe helped Juan Batista de Anza and his band of Spanish colonists cross the river in December 1775. A section of a rustic riverside trail through the restored East Wetlands habitat was symbolically designated as an official segment of the Anza trail, though the expedition's exact route and crossing point has been lost to time and the meanderings of the river. The National Park Service worked with the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area to designate this landmark. The project is a partnership with the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, an NPS program that commemorates the Spanish settlement of the San Francisco Bay Area in 1776. The 1,200-mile Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail commemorates the Spanish colonial expedition that brought the first non-Native families overland into California. The expedition reached Yuma at the confluence of the Colorado and Gila Rivers on December 1, 1775. The crossing of the Colorado River with critical aid from the Quechan people was one of the most iconic chapters of the Anza expedition. The Anza Trail connects historic, cultural, and recreation sites across Arizona and California that reveal a legacy of our country's Hispanic heritage. The marker is located just outside the entrance to the Territorial Prison State Historic Park.



Hotel News

[The Hermosa Inn](#), a AAA Four Diamond boutique hotel in the heart of Paradise Valley, recently completed the second phase of a \$5.5 million dollar renovation and expansion. Situated on six acres of Sonoran Desert landscape with mountain views, the renovation included the addition of 10 deluxe, 700-square-foot, hideaway casitas, the complete renovation of 12 historic rancho casitas and an expansion of [LON's Last Drop](#) bar and patio, increasing the hotel's number of hacienda-style accommodations and casitas to 43. A stately fountain anchors the hotel's new entryway, that leads directly into the newly-built, ruggedly handsome lobby with beamed ceilings and a hefty fireplace that perfectly mirrors the understated, Old Arizona elegance and residential comfort of the original hacienda. Simultaneously, 12 historic rancho casitas were completely renovated, adding modern-day conveniences, while preserving their Old Arizona charm, historic touches and original adobe walls. The walls in both are appropriately adorned with Lon Megargee prints. Further paying homage to Megargee's love for a drink with fellow cowhands, LON's Last Drop doubled its interior seating capacity. LON's Last Drop, appropriately named after Megargee's most famous painting "Last Drop From His Stetson," was commissioned by the Stetson

Hat Company in the 1920's, and to this day still appears on the inside of every top-of-the-line Stetson hat. Consistently revered as the 'best dining patio in the Valley,' the outside patio also doubled in capacity. The Hermosa Inn is located at 5532 Palo Christi Road, Paradise Valley, Arizona 85253.



by Lon Megargee

General

[Butterfly Wonderland](#) in Scottsdale has been graced with its biggest butterfly yet — one that does not flutter about in the Conservatory. On display at the exterior foyer of Butterfly Wonderland located at the OdySea in the Desert entertainment destination, the *Las Mariposas* sculpture stands 45 feet tall, with the butterflies' expansive wings extending 25 feet from base to wing. Taking nearly a year to complete, *Las Mariposas* is considered to be the largest known butterfly sculpture in the world. New Mexico-based artist Robert Romero constructed his *Las Mariposas* sculpture of marine grade stainless steel, featuring an elaborate interior method that allows the structure to literally float on its own weight, while standing up to even the worst weather conditions.



Las Mariposas - sculpture by Robert Romero

Accolades

Scottsdale has been named one of the most romantic cities in the U.S. Reservation website OpenTable ranked the top 25 cities where romantic dining is inherently part of the culture. The [OpenTable Most Romantic Cities Index](#) was calculated using three variables: the percentage of restaurants rated “romantic” according to OpenTable diner reviews; the percentage of tables seated for two; and the percentage of people who dined out for Valentine’s Day in 2016. Scottsdale came in at No. 15 on the list. Scottsdale also was recently named the [No. 2 city for Valentine’s Day by website WalletHub](#). OpenTable also included Scottsdale restaurant Café Monarch on its list of the most romantic restaurants in America for 2017. ([OpenTable.com](#), Feb. 6; [WalletHub.com](#), Feb. 6)

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