



**A Round-up of What’s News in AZ**

Resorts, Hotels & Spas ..... page 1  
Arizona Attractions ..... page 4  
Arizona Tours ..... page 6  
Arizona Tourism Industry News ..... page 7  
Future ..... page 8  
Arizona Press Materials..... page 8

**Resorts, Hotels & Spas**

***Greater Phoenix and Central Arizona***

**Lake Powell Resorts & Marinas Introduces 59-foot, State-Of-The-Art “Wanderer” Fleet**

[Lake Powell Resorts & Marinas](#) has announced the newest addition to its fleet of houseboats – the *Wanderer*. The *Wanderers* are 59-ft. long and 18-ft. wide, two full feet wider than most four bedroom boats, with four queen-sized staterooms, two bathrooms, a screened upper deck driving helm that includes a wet bar and a barbeque. The top deck includes convertible dinettes, a 48-inch LED TV with Blu-ray players and an enclosed water park-inspired spiral tube slide. The *Wanderer* is built for Lake Powell with a reverse design, placing living areas in the aft section maximizing views of the scenery from all living areas and allowing for greater privacy in the bedrooms. The *Wanderer* accommodates up to 12 passengers. In addition, Lake Powell Resorts and Marinas offers rentals ranging from powerboats, to water toys that include ski tubes, wakeboards, kayaks, water skis, paddle boards, and kneeboards. The six new custom-built *Wanderer* houseboats, are available for rental in June 2017.

**FOUND:RE Phoenix Officially Opens Offering One-Of-A-kind Lifestyle Hotel Experience**

[FOUND:RE Phoenix](#), a one-of-a-kind lifestyle hotel experience with every design detail inspired by local contemporary art, culture, fashion and music, recently opened in Phoenix. The 105-room hotel welcomes guests and Valley residents to delve into the museum-worthy spaces as well as the creative programming woven throughout. The newly unveiled on-site restaurant, [MATCH Cuisine & Cocktails](#), sizzles as Phoenix’s newest culinary dining destination. An art and hotel concept unlike any other, FOUND:RE Phoenix sparks curiosity and brings the creative culture together.

**Hermosa Inn Completes Renovation and expansion**

[The Hermosa Inn](#), a AAA Four Diamond boutique hotel nestled in the heart of Paradise Valley, recently completed the second phase of a \$5.5 million dollar renovation and expansion. Situated on six pristine acres of Sonoran Desert landscape with panoramic mountain views, the renovation included the addition of 10 deluxe 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.

**AC Hotel Phoenix Tempe Downtown Opens on Tempe Town Lake**

AC Hotel Phoenix Tempe/Downtown, which opened in June 2016, is the first hotel to be located on iconic Tempe Town Lake, a popular destination for recreational activities and annual special events. The six-story hotel features a rooftop pool with views of Tempe and Arizona State University’s Sun Devil Stadium, along with a fitness center with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the iconic “A” Mountain. The 159 guest rooms have hardwood floors and modern furnishings. Guests can enjoy local craft beers, specialty wines on tap, signature cocktails and tapas-style small bites in the AC Lounge. The AC Kitchen offers a European-inspired continental breakfast. [www.marriott.com/phxac](http://www.marriott.com/phxac)

[www.visitarizona.com](http://www.visitarizona.com)

<http://hiltongardeninn3.hilton.com/en/hotels/arizona/hilton-garden-inn-phoenix-downtown-PHXDOGI/index.html>

### **Marriott to Open Dual-Hotel Property on Downtown Phoenix Historic Site**

Marriott has announced two brands coming to downtown Phoenix in 2017. Now under construction on the northwest corner of Central Avenue & Madison Street, the all-new Luhrs City Center Marriott will be a 19-story, 320-room property. Designed to blend seamlessly with its historic neighbors while still offering state-of-the-art guest amenities, the hotel will house two brands: a Courtyard by Marriott and a Residence Inn by Marriott, which will share a lobby and other amenities, including a fourth-floor pool. When finished in 2017, Luhrs City Center Marriott will complete the Hansji Corporation's decade-long preservation and revitalization efforts of this landmark city block.

### **Andaz Scottsdale Resort & Spa Opens**

Hyatt Hotels Corp. opened the Hyatt-affiliated Andaz Resort & Spa in Scottsdale November 2016. The resort includes 201 guestrooms and suites, ranging in size from 350 to 500 square feet configured in bungalow-style clusters of six units each; private terraces, including some with outdoor showers; a large pool and sundeck with a luxurious 12,000-square-foot spa facility and a fitness center; and more than 20,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor meeting and event facilities. The resort is designed in the "1950s desert art" style, drawing inspiration from designers like Frank Lloyd Wright. <http://www.scottsdale.andaz.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html>

### **The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess Expands**

The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, a AAA Five Diamond Southwest resort, opened an additional 102 new guest rooms for a total of 750 (summer 2016). This expansion also includes three luxury suites, a white sand beach, a new pool, Great Lawn and new 1880s Western town which features two saloons, an outdoor sate and dance floor. <http://www.fairmont.com/scottsdale/>

### **Saguaro Scottsdale Hotel Undergoes Event Space and Room Renovations**

The renovations bring the hotel's event and meeting space to more than 12,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space with the addition of the Agave Ballroom and Patio, a 5,285-square-foot event complex with a wraparound patio with fireplaces, fire pits and multiple outdoor dining and entertaining spaces. The hotel also unveiled its 194 renovated guest rooms that include sound-proof wood doors; technology that allows guests to check-in and access their rooms via smartphone; pillow-top mattresses and ergonomic desks; 42-inch flat screen cable TVs, Keurig coffee makers, mini-refrigerators, natural wood vanities and Lather bath products. <http://thesaguaro.com/scottsdale>

### **Mountain Shadows Resort Now Open**

Known as a landmark property in the 1960s and 1970s, [Mountain Shadows](#) has made its long-awaited return to Paradise Valley, 10 minutes from Downtown Scottsdale in the shadow of Camelback Mountain. The \$100-million project has been 12 years in the making and is the first resort to open in Paradise Valley in eight years. The boutique resort features 183 guest rooms, a presidential suite facing Camelback Mountain, a full-service restaurant, two pools, a high-tech fitness facility, an 18-hole par-3 golf course and grill, as well as 37,500 square feet of indoor and outdoor event space. Led by notable executive chef Charles Wiley, Hearth '61 offers an experience ingredient-driven American cuisine and inventive cocktails. Designed by renowned golf course architect [Forrest Richardson](#), The Short Course is a relatively quick play featuring 18 par-3 holes. The fully rebuilt course is designed to be challenging for experienced golfers yet approachable for novice players. It is among only a handful of high-end, resort par-3 courses in the U.S. featuring a full 18 holes. Curated by notable local gallery director John Reyes, The Gallery at Mountain Shadows features both public and private collections, including pieces that are available for sale. Art receptions will be held every two months to coincide with each new exhibition. [www.mountainshadows.com](http://www.mountainshadows.com)

### **Marriott Courtyard Sedona Opened**

Veteran hotel developers Marriott opened the doors to their brand new Courtyard Hotel in October 2016 in Sedona, home of the majestic Red Rock. The room layouts offer multi-functional areas designed either for sleeping, relaxing or preparing for the Arizona outdoors. Soft lighting, multi-plugs and handy luggage drops use technology to ease the headache of travelling logistics. But hotel-tech isn't the only convenience of this new-build. Uptown Sedona, five

[www.visitarizona.com](http://www.visitarizona.com)

minute drive away, offers a diverse shopping experience, restaurants and art galleries. Uptown is also the gateway to Arizona outdoor activity bookings and Tlaquepaque Arts & Crafts Village- the starting block for 300 miles of hiking trails. <https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/flgcs-courtyard-sedona/>

### **Hilton Sedona Resort at Bell Rock Debuts Following Major Renovation**

The former Hilton Sedona Resort & Spa has debuted a new name, Hilton Sedona Resort at Bell Rock, following a multi-million dollar renovation completed last spring along with a full resort rebranding and repositioning.

[www.hiltonsedonaresort.com](http://www.hiltonsedonaresort.com)

### **Sedona Super 8 Changes to Andante Inn of Sedona**

As of August 2016, Sedona Super 8 became the Andante Inn of Sedona, offering newly renovated guest rooms and adding a fitness room. Balconies will be added to the 66 guest rooms. <http://www.andanteinn.com/>

## *Northern Arizona*

### **Marriott Residence Inn and Fairfield Inn & Suites Opening Spring 2017 in Flagstaff**

Flagstaff's historic downtown core has not seen new hotel construction for more than 60 years, but the corner of Aspen Avenue and Humphreys Street is currently undergoing a transformation. A 110-room Marriott Residence Inn is under construction at this convenient downtown location and is scheduled to open May 2017. The east edge of Flagstaff will also soon be home to new lodging options with a Fairfield Inn & Suites under construction just off Interstate 40 at the Country Club Drive exit. The property is scheduled for completion in spring 2017.

### **Best Western Premier Grand Canyon Squire Inn Adds New Additions**

The Best Western Premier Grand Canyon Squire Inn recently announced the completion of its latest major additions, including a resort-style outdoor patio and pool, outdoor bar, and guest rooms and suites, are all part of a larger plan to expand the property over the next 10 years. The recently-completed project includes a new building with standard rooms and suites, a re-imagined indoor and outdoor pool area, a fitness center, and a full-service patio bar.

## *Tucson and Southern Arizona*

### **Loews Ventana Canyon Resort Completes Renovations**

Loews Ventana Canyon Resort underwent comprehensive renovations to enhance the overall guest experience and elevate its presence in the Tucson marketplace. The multi-million dollar remastering of the guest rooms, meeting space, lobby, fitness center, signature Lakeside Spa and Flying V Bar & Grill was recently completed. The new look creates modern refinement throughout the property while preserving the original intention of blending the property with its striking desert surroundings. <http://www.loewshotels.com/ventana-canyon/>

### **Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Undergoes Renovations**

Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf & Tennis Resort, the iconic Tucson resort nestled at the base of the Santa Catalina Mountains, has embarked on a multimillion dollar renovation that will encompass all areas of the property. Uniquely Southwest experiences are at the heart of the renovations to bring new indoor/outdoor amenities, refreshed guestrooms, creative garden concepts and wildlife and nature programs to the resort. All renovations will be complete by spring of 2017. <http://www.hiltonelconquistador.com/>

### **Marriott Hotels to Open New Property in Downtown Tucson**

Although not ready to take reservations, Tucson's newest downtown hotel is one step closer to existence. The eight-story AC Hotel by Marriott will have 137 rooms and be located at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Broadway Street. It is scheduled to open in summer 2017.

## **Arizona Attractions**

[www.visitarizona.com](http://www.visitarizona.com)

### *Greater Phoenix and Central Arizona*

#### **OdySea Aquarium Now Open**

In September 2016, the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community brought the sea to Scottsdale with the opening of OdySea Aquarium. This 16-acre complex is the largest aquarium in the Southwest, spanning 200,000 square feet over two levels. OdySea Aquarium promises guests a high-tech, high-entertainment, oceanic adventure with floor-to-ceiling windows that offer aquatic life viewing – even in the restrooms – and underwater acrylic tunnels that lead to each level. [www.odyseeaquarium.com](http://www.odyseeaquarium.com)

#### **LEGOLAND® Discovery Center at Arizona Mills Opened April 2016**

LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Arizona is a 40,000 square-foot indoor attraction featuring more than one million LEGO® bricks, LEGO® themed rides, a 4-D cinema and themed build-and-play areas providing a world of creativity and learning for young children. Families with young children can explore their imagination, color and build in the ultimate indoor LEGO® playground.

[www.legolanddiscoverycenter.com/arizona](http://www.legolanddiscoverycenter.com/arizona)

#### **Tilt Studio Opens in Tempe at Arizona Mills**

Tilt Studio opened in August 2016 in Tempe's Arizona Mills next to Harkins IMAX Theater. This two-story 40,000 square foot family entertainment center features a unique combination of “food, fun and 'freshments” (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), and so much more, in a safe, clean and welcoming environment. Guests enjoy Tilt Studio's dynamic roster of more than 150 classic and modern interactive video and redemption prize games for all skill levels. An entire retro gaming area on the second level is home to your favorite pinball and arcade games such as Space Invaders, Pac Man and Asteroids. Tilt Studio also offers exciting interactive games such as Monster Drop Extreme, Sponge Bob and Ghostbusters. [www.tiltstudio.com/tilt-studio-arizona-mills](http://www.tiltstudio.com/tilt-studio-arizona-mills)

### *Northern Arizona*

**Arizona Snowbowl in Flagstaff** opened for the 2016-17 winter ski season on November 11, with a new feature, the new [Grand Canyon Express](#). The Grand Canyon Express is Arizona's only high-speed six-person lift and is aptly named because riders can see Grand Canyon from the lift. It will transport skiers up the mountain in six minutes. The new lift is just over a mile in length (5,801 feet) with a vertical rise of 1,546 feet and will provide access to more than 80 percent of the ski area. The top terminal is located on Ridge Trail at 10,900 feet in elevation. Lift capacity is 1,800 persons per hour. This year's opening day is the earliest opening in the resort's history.

#### **Model Train Has Been Installed in the Flagstaff Visitor Center**

The train engine is a scaled-down replica of an historic logging train called “Two Spot” that worked in Flagstaff from 1911-1949, also known as Baldwin Locomotive #35938. The actual locomotive is on display in downtown Flagstaff just a block east of the [Flagstaff Visitor Center](#) and is on the National Register of Historic places. People will be able to visit and see both the original and the model while visiting downtown Flagstaff. The model train track circles the perimeter of the Visitor Center interior.

### *Southern Arizona*

#### **Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Adds Stingray Exhibit**

Although the Sonoran Desert may be known for its dry climate, the Gulf of California (Sea of Cortez) and the stingrays that flow through it are critically important and the primary reason the Sonoran Desert is known as the “lushest desert on earth.” Visitors are able to create their own moments with these captivating creatures at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum's new *Stingray Touch* experience which opened in August 2016.

<https://www.desertmuseum.org/stingrays/>

#### **Miraval Resort & Spa Announces New Bee Programs**

[www.visitarizona.com](http://www.visitarizona.com)

Miraval Resort & Spa in Tucson is offering a new bee curriculum led by resident beekeeper and local Tucson resident, Noel Patterson. In addition to building new hives at Miraval, Noel has developed a series of new bee programming, including an immersive beekeeping experience that involves donning beekeeping suits for an up-close and personal look at the hives, a honey tasting experience designed to introduce guests to the unique terroirs of Tucson and an informational lecture on bees' role in our ecosystem. [www.miravalresorts.com](http://www.miravalresorts.com)

### *Western Arizona*

#### **Arizona Peace Trail Utilizes 700 Miles of Off-Road Trails and Roads**

[The Arizona Peace Trail](#) is a loop system utilizing existing off-road trails and roads in Western Arizona connecting Bullhead City to Yuma. The Arizona Peace Trail was developed through partnership with more than 14 Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) clubs who worked with city, county, state and federal agencies to keep the trails open for public use and public awareness. Signage is still being installed, but, when completed it will be one of the longest signed and mapped trail system offering more than 700 miles to explore untouched desert and wilderness with towering rock formations and wildlife. To fully complete the approximately 700 mile loop, takes five days. The Arizona Peace Trail website references points of interests along the trail which include petroglyphs, ghost towns, scenic stops and historic mines. The trail's elevation spans from 170 feet to over 7,000 feet above sea level.

#### **New Riverfront Parks and Trails in Yuma**

Over the past 15 years, the banks of the Colorado River in Yuma have been transformed - and now there is a new guide to all the riverfront parks and trails, thanks to a joint effort by the City of Yuma Parks and Recreation Department, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, Yuma Visitors Bureau, and the Quechan Indian Tribe. Since 2000, the Yuma community, in partnership with the Quechan Indian Tribe, has restored 400 acres of wetlands, built three riverfront parks, and developed an extensive trail network. This new brochure includes maps for parks, biking and hiking trails. [An online version may be downloaded here](#)

### **Arizona Tours**

#### *Northern Arizona*

#### **Grand Canyon West Offers Weekend Colorado River Tour**

Grand Canyon West is now offering "The Walapai Experience"; a guided weekend tour of Grand Canyon's West Rim that takes adventurers from the rapids of the Colorado River to an overnight encampment in Spencer Canyon then into the sky by helicopter to tour the Grand Canyon's West Rim. The tour begins in March and runs every weekend (weather permitting) through October.

#### **New Tours on Hopi Indian Reservation**

Starting July 2016, visitors to the Hopi reservation can now enjoy tours leaving daily from the lobby of the Moenkopi Legacy Inn & Suites. The Hopi people live in 12 villages located in four regions referred to as First, Second, and Third Mesa. Tours connect visitors with unique landscapes, Hopi culture, art, and artists. Experience Hopi Tours provides a unique opportunity to visit the Hopi mesas and experience one of North America's oldest yet vibrant Native American cultures. Tour descriptions and information for reservations is available at [www.ExperienceHopi.com](http://www.ExperienceHopi.com).

#### **Petrified Forest National Park Now Offering Classes and Hiking Tours**

The Petrified Forest Museum Association (PFMA) has launched its inaugural season of the Petrified Forest Field Institute (PFFI). PFFI offers outdoor learning opportunities – the park is the classroom. Classes will cover geology and paleontology, archaeology, human history and photography in this first season. Petrified Forest National Park in northeast Arizona preserves some of the most pristine and colorful deposits of petrified wood from the Late Triassic Era (200 – 225 million years ago).

PFFI provides an opportunity to explore the Petrified Forest with expert guides to:

- Learn more about the fascinating events which sculpted the land
- Take part in and contribute hands-on with fossil excavation of an ancient lake
- Record rock-art (petroglyphs) on newly acquired park lands
- Learn how to use light and shadow to capture exquisite pictures of the Painted Desert.

For more, visit [www.petrifiedforestfieldinstitute.org](http://www.petrifiedforestfieldinstitute.org).

### **Eco-Friendly Raft to Launch Trips Through the Grand Canyon**

In partnership with the National Park Service, Colorado River Discovery is introducing a new raft to their fleet that is 100% electric and the first of its kind in the region. The raft, named "Helios" in honor of the Greek God of the Sun, will produce zero emissions and reduce noise pollution on the Colorado River. The Colorado Rafting Trips will run from March to November each year, starting and ending at Colorado River Discovery's Welcome Center in Page, Arizona. [www.raftthecanyon.com](http://www.raftthecanyon.com)

### ***Greater Phoenix and Central Arizona***

Tour company [DETOURS](#) is now offering a day visit to the Verde Valley from the Phoenix metropolitan area. The Verde Canyon Railroad and Jerome day trip is a fully narrated excursion with hotel pick-ups in the Scottsdale and Phoenix area. The tour stops in Jerome for some time to shop and learn about the mining history of the area. Next, guests visit the new Arizona Copper Museum, for an educational, hands-on experience about the discovery of copper and its many uses today. The afternoon is spent enjoying views from a first-class seat, with lunch on the Verde Canyon Railroad. The tour operates on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and is \$235 per adult which includes lunch, unlimited bottled water and all entrance fees.

### **Tempe Launches Interactive Story Map**

The old brick and adobe buildings lining Mill Avenue have stories going back to the 1800s. Now, as you walk through downtown Tempe, you can learn the secrets of the buildings, see what they looked like when they were new and hear about their original owners and uses. The City of Tempe launched (September 2016) the [Downtown Tempe – Walk Through History interactive StoryMap](#). The map is meant to be used on a smart phone while exploring downtown.

### **Arizona Tourism Industry News**

### ***Greater Phoenix and Central Arizona***

#### **British Airways Increases Flights out of Phoenix**

The carrier, which offers one daily year-round flight between Phoenix Sky Harbor International and London's Heathrow Airport, will offer a second flight three times a week in May and June to accommodate the summer travel rush.

#### **Air Canada Expands Service to Phoenix**

Beginning May 1, 2017, Air Canada will offer service from Vancouver to Phoenix on a daily basis year-round. The non-stop flights will be operated by Air Canada Express. The announcement came as Air Canada plans to add six new routes to the U.S. next spring.

### ***Northern Arizona***

#### **Painted Desert Community Complex at Petrified Forest National Park Designated National Historic Landmark**

In January 2017, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced the designation of 24 new National Historic Landmarks, to include the Painted Desert Community Complex located at the northern end of Petrified Forest National Park. As headquarters for Petrified Forest National Park, the Painted Desert Community Complex is the largest and the most fully articulated expression of the decade-long National Park Service 'Mission 66' program which addressed

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postwar national park needs for up-to-date facilities and improved visitor experiences while limiting impacts to natural resources. Designed by renowned architects Richard J. Neutra and Robert E. Alexander in the International Style, the complex contains a visitor center, restaurant, gift shop, a plaza, and park offices. The designation will help protect the Complex as an important example of mid-century modern architecture and as operational headquarters of Petrified Forest National Park for decades to come. <https://www.nps.gov/nhl>

### *Southern Arizona*

#### **Aeromar Airlines and CalJet Begin Service between Arizona and Mexico**

Aeromar Airlines announced it will begin non-stop service between Tucson and Hermosillo, Sonora on a 46-passenger ATR-42 turboprop. Flights will operate Fridays, Sunday, Mondays and Thursdays. Direct flights to Guaymas/San Carlos, Sonora, will also begin in October 2016 when Carlsbad, California-based **CalJet** will begin flying a 50-seat Bombardier CRJ200 jet four times a week between Tucson and Guaymas, as well as between Phoenix and Guaymas.

#### **American Airline Launches Nonstop Service Between JFK and TUS**

American Airlines will kick off daily nonstop service between New York City's JFK Airport and Tucson International Airport starting October 7, 2016. This service not only opens up nonstop service to Tucson's largest feeder market for leisure travel, but also creates one-stop travel to and from numerous international destinations, as well as for cities across the northeast United States. The daily flights between Tucson and New York will be aboard a 160-passenger Boeing 737-800 aircraft.

#### **Tucson Named UNESCO City of Gastronomy**

In December 2015, Tucson became the first American city to become part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network for gastronomy, honoring its 4,000 years of agricultural history, active preservation and promotion of native/heritage crops as well as the variety of dining opportunities available.

**Willcox has been recognized as an American Viticulture Area (AVA)**, a designated wine grape-growing area with geographic features and boundaries defined by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) of the United States Department of the Treasury. Willcox is the second wine region in Arizona to be designated as an AVA. September 2016.

#### **Sierra Vista Launches Bike-Friendly Program**

Sierra Vista's Bike-Friendly Business program is the first of its kind in Arizona. This program identifies businesses who have committed to providing amenities for bicyclists, like free water refills, WiFi, or bike repair tools. While not all businesses offer the same amenities, a Bike-Friendly Business does provide special services geared toward bike travelers. Look for this special decal in business windows!

### **Future**

#### **Arizona State Parks Celebrates 60 Years**

Arizona State Parks is proud to celebrate its 60th "Diamond" Anniversary in 2017! During the last 60 years the agency has grown to include management of 32 parks. We invite you to explore and uncover the many secret places and stories that are still to be found in Arizona's state parks. Adventures in camping, fishing, hiking, boating, and much more await those individuals with an adventurous attitude. <http://azstateparks.com/>

### **Arizona Press Materials**

Curious about Arizona's official state bird or wonder when it became a state? Check out our fact sheet and other press materials about the Grand Canyon State here: <http://www.visitarizona.com/press-kit-and-materials>

**For More Information:**

For more information on this topic and others see the official Arizona travel and vacation guide from the Arizona Office of Tourism at [www.visitarizona.com](http://www.visitarizona.com). Find in-depth AZ visitor information and videos about visiting the state of Arizona, including comprehensive directories of Arizona hotels, dining and shopping, as well as things to do and places to visit throughout the Grand Canyon State.