

## Arizona Monthly Media Brief

April 2023



The Arizona Office of Tourism is pleased to provide this update of new and noteworthy items pertaining to Arizona's tourism industry.

### New Highway Signs Designating Arizona's Wine Regions

Travelers exploring Arizona will start seeing new highway signs that signify when they're entering one of Arizona's three officially recognized wine regions, or American Viticultural Areas (AVAs). The Arizona Office of Tourism partnered with the Arizona Department of Transportation to create and implement 13 wine region signs.

Arizona has three American Viticultural Areas (AVAs) across the state: [Verde Valley](#), [Willcox and Sonoita](#). Thanks to new Arizona wine highway signs going up this month, visitors can become familiar with Arizona's viticultural areas and enjoy Arizona's wine

country with 120+ vineyards and tasting rooms that attract almost 600,000 visitors and more than \$33 million in visitor spending annually.

## Industry



### Mesa Partners with Wheel the World

Mesa has partnered with Wheel the World, a program designed to provide travelers with advanced information on accessible experiences in Mesa and connect them with suggested itineraries based on their personal requirements. The program allows visitors to book hotels and tours and provides reliable accessibility information in advance to ensure their travel to Mesa is enjoyable. This free service is available to all visitors and can be accessed through [AccessibleMesa.com](https://www.accessiblemesa.com) and [WheeltheWorld.com](https://www.wheeltheworld.com)



## The PHX Sky Train Celebrates its 10th Anniversary this Month

The [PHX Sky Train](#) celebrates its 10th anniversary this month with the first stage of the train having opened on April 8, 2013. The PHX Sky Train has become popular with travelers throughout the years and currently serves 37,700 riders a day. The last stage of the train was completed in 2022.



### Spring And Summer Hours Change at Grand Canyon Visitor Center

Due to staffing shortages, the [Grand Canyon Visitor Center's](#) hours will be different during the spring and summer seasons. From April 2nd-15th, the Grand Canyon Visitor Center will be closed for seasonal interpretation training and no ranger programs will be offered. From April 16th - September 30th, the Visitor Center will be open Thursday through Monday from 8 a.m. -12 p.m. and closed every Tuesday and Wednesday.

Attractions



### **Whitewater Rafting on the Upper Salt River this Spring**

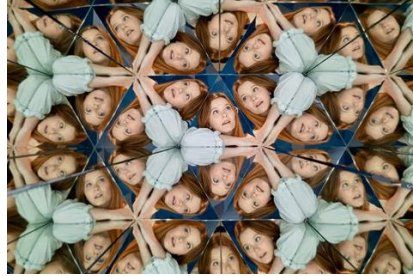
This spring experience the thrill of whitewater rafting on the Upper Salt River and enjoy the best river season in more than 25 years thanks to an exceptionally wet winter and spring in the West. From now til May, join [Salt River Rafting](#) to raft through the 2,000- foot deep Salt River Canyon, commonly referred to as "Arizona's Other Grand Canyon", with more than a dozen rapids to enjoy. A day trip away from Phoenix or Tucson, [whitewater rafting](#) the Salt River is an adventure to try this spring.



### **Grand Canyon IMAX Theater's New Release "Grand Canyon: Rivers of Time" Features IMAX with Laser**

[The Grand Canyon IMAX Theater's](#) new release, *Grand Canyon: Rivers of Time*, takes

guests on a journey through time to explore the human history of the Grand Canyon from the first inhabitants, the Ancient Puebloans, to the first crew to conquer the rapids of the Colorado River. [IMAX® with Laser](#) will give guests visiting the Grand Canyon crystal clear IMAX laser projection and precision sound to transport them into the Canyon.



### **New Museum of Illusions at Arizona Boardwalk**

Experience the impossible at the new [Museum of Illusions at Arizona Boardwalk](#) in Scottsdale. With more than 60 mind-bending exhibits, discover a collection of intriguing images and perspective-changing rooms that will challenge the way your brain interprets reality. The Museum of Illusions joins the attractions available at Arizona Boardwalk, an entertainment destination that has nine different attractions all in one location. The complex also offers multiple shopping and dining options.



### **Ripley's Believe It or Not! Reopens at Arizona Boardwalk**

[Ripley's Believe It or Not!](#) the world-famous attraction featuring oddities has reopened at Arizona Boardwalk in Scottsdale. The attraction showcases a large collection of the world's most bizarre and unbelievable items, including numerous new additions like a brick once part of the famous 'yellow brick road' from the motion picture, *The Wizard of Oz*; a larger-than-life statue of the 'Predator' made entirely from scrap metal; and a portrait of Tom Cruise - drawn with cigarette ashes!

## Accolades



### **Tucson is recognized in *TIME* magazine's *World's Greatest Places of 2023***

Tucson received the honor of being recognized in [TIME magazine's World's Greatest Places of 2023](#), a list of the 50 best destinations to explore in 2023. *TIME* emphasizes Tucson's extraordinary culinary scene focusing on the high-profile bakers and chefs bringing new flavors to America's first UNESCO City of Gastronomy. Visit Tucson's Barrio Viejo, which will earn National Historic Landmark status this year, and stay in the city's newest hotel, the Leo Kent Hotel.



## **Aji Spa And Kai Awarded Five Stars in Forbes' 2023 Travel Guide**

Aji Spa and Kai at [Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass](#) both received [Five Stars in Forbes' 2023 Travel Guide](#), a world-renowned authority in authenticating Five Star service. The resort's American Indian restaurant, [Kai](#), is the only restaurant in Arizona to earn the Five-Star accolade and has maintained this status for 15 years. This is the fourth time the resort's spa, [Aji Spa](#), has earned the Five-Star accolade, providing guests with native spa treatments.



## **Desert Diamond Distillery Awarded Gold Outstanding Medal**

The International World Spirit Competition has awarded a 99/99 (a perfect score) Gold Outstanding medal to [Desert Diamond Distillery](#), Arizona's oldest craft distillery located in Kingman, for their 11-year barrel-aged Rum. This award is the only perfect score for rum in 2023 and showcases Arizona's building reputation for aged spirits of all kinds.

Hotels



## Air Village: Boutique Lodging to Open in Prescott

Opening its doors this summer (2023), [Air Village](#), the first of its kind in Prescott, will offer boutique lodging featuring classic Avion trailers that have been completely renovated with a modern and luxurious style. Located alongside Granite Creek and just one block south of the Courthouse Square and Whiskey Row, Air Village offers 10 individual short-term “Avions” filled with modern amenities and a private outdoor seating area for guests to enjoy with their pets.



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Photos

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