ARIZONA
THE GRAND CANYON STATE
DISCOVER UNFORGETTABLE PLACES & AMAZING WONDERS

TRAVEL GUIDE 2020

Visit TheUSA.co.uk
TRAVEL TIPS

GETTING AROUND

AIR Most international travellers arrive at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX), the largest in the state. Tucson International Airport (TUS) is the second-largest airport. Regional airports include Phoenix-Mesa Gateway (AZA), Flagstaff Pulliam (FLG), Yuma International (YUM) and Grand Canyon National Park (GCN).

RAIL Amtrak offers two routes: the Southwest Chief through Flagstaff, and the Sunset Limited/ Texas Eagles through Tucson; amtrak.com

COACH Greyhound offers intercity routes with stations throughout the state; greyhound.com

SHUTTLE SERVICE Visit the websites of Phoenix Sky Harbor, Tucson International and Phoenix-Mesa Gateway airports for companies offering shuttle service between airports and cities throughout the state. Flixbus and National Park Express are also options.

CAR RENTAL International car-hire firms offer service from Phoenix and Tucson airports.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT Light rail and local bus services are available in the greater Phoenix area. Tucson has bus service and a limited streetcar route.

RESOURCES

VISITARIZONA.COM The official website of the Arizona Office of Tourism offers comprehensive information including travel ideas, events, maps and attraction listings, as well as travel deals.

DIAL 511 or AZ511.GOV Information on road closures, delays, public transport, weather and more.

BRETTAPPROVED.COM A travel website for people with disabilities, with information on accessible hotels, restaurants, attractions and more.

TIME ZONE: MOUNTAIN STANDARD TIME

With the exception of the Navajo Nation in Northern Arizona, the state does not observe daylight savings time.

WEATHER

Average of 36 DAYS of Rainfall

Average of 286 DAYS of Sunshine

Temperatures

Desert

Mountain

0°C 2°C 4°C 8°C 12°C 16°C 20°C 24°C 28°C 32°C 36°C 0°C 2°C 4°C 8°C 12°C 16°C 20°C 24°C 28°C 32°C

Timing your visit

During any season in Arizona, some part of the state enjoys ideal weather. Generally, the peak season in the desert areas (central and southern parts of the state) is January – March. Visitors can find the greatest values in the hot summer months (June-August). Peak and value seasons in the mountain areas (northern half of the state) are the opposite of those in the desert region. Peak season in mid-climate areas, such as Sedona, is March – May and September – October. Value season in Page and Grand Canyon National Park is January and February.
One mile deep. 277 miles long. A kaleidoscope of colours. The canyon’s red-gold cliffs and pink-tinged pinnacles, stretching as far as the eye can see, are layers of geological time, carved out by the Colorado River. As you watch the changing play of light and shadow throughout the day, you’ll know that you are gazing at one of the world’s greatest natural wonders.

SOUTH vs NORTH
Open year-round, the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park is easily reached from Phoenix, Sedona, Flagstaff and Williams. It has the most amenities and attractions – and the most visitors. Enjoy stunning viewpoints, historic sites, delicious dining and family-friendly experiences.

Quieter and more remote, the canyon’s rugged North Rim offers a more outdoor-minded experience. It has fewer visitors and fewer services. Its higher elevation brings cooler temperatures and heavy winter snowfalls and it is open mid-May through mid-October.

No matter how many pictures you’ve seen, nothing matches your first sight of the incredible Grand Canyon. Standing on the rim, breathing in the crisp air and ethereal silence from the rocky depths, you’ll feel as if you’re staring into infinity.

BREATHTAKING.
JAW-DROPPING.
UNFORGETTABLE.

River rafting at the Grand Canyon
GETTING AROUND
At the South Rim, free shuttle buses help keep the air clear and the park green. Running every 15-30 minutes, the four interconnecting routes link the visitor centre, viewpoints, hiking trails and other facilities with lodging inside and outside the park.

The early-morning Hiker’s Express Shuttle brings walkers to the South Kaibab Trailhead. For a $90 fee (one way), the Trans-Canyon Shuttle makes the trip between the North and South rims. Distances can be surprising. The North Rim is 212 miles from the South Rim, while the Skywalk at Grand Canyon West is 240 miles away. Both trips take about 4 hours one way.

THE GRAND CANYON RAILWAY
Want to arrive at the Canyon in style? Take a rollicking ride on a vintage steam train from Williams to Grand Canyon Village. Whether you opt for a daytrip with cowboy characters and western music, or stay on at the Canyon overnight, it’s a fun family experience. thetrain.com

BEST TIME TO VISIT
MARCH – MAY and OCTOBER – FEBRUARY. If you don’t mind snow, visit in January/February to beat the crowds.

PEAK SEASON
MAY 1 – NOVEMBER 1
With the long school holidays, summertime is the busiest time of year at the Grand Canyon. If you’re visiting then, book your lodging early as reservations start filling up nine months or more in advance. For cooler weather and lighter crowds, plan your trip during the shoulder seasons. Snow is likely during January and February.

WHERE TO STAY
Some of the best places to stay are right in the park itself. The historic Bright Angel Lodge and Cabins, designed by Mary Colter in 1935, offer rustic lodgings at the top of Bright Angel Trailhead. Built in 1905, the chalet-style El Tovar Hotel features fine dining and magnificent views from the edge of the South Rim. At the historic Grand Canyon Lodge North Rim, you’ll find cozy cabins and spectacular cliffside views. The town of Tusayan, five miles from the south entrance, offers a good range of accommodation.

BOOK AHEAD
Grand Canyon National Park celebrated its centennial in 2019 and it’s never been more popular. Book well ahead for lodging within the park, mule rides and other special activities. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/grca

TOP THINGS TO DO
EXPLORE THE CANYON RIM TRAIL Walk this easy path along the edge of the Canyon leading to eight stunning viewpoints. When you get tired, just catch the shuttle back along Hermit Road.

WATCH THE SUNSET FROM HERMITS REST This most westerly viewpoint on the South Rim is a stunning place to watch the sun set over the canyon.

VISIT KOLB STUDIO Get a fascinating glimpse of the park’s early days at this cliffside home of pioneer photographers.

HIKE THE SOUTH KAIBAB TRAIL For a shorter hike on this steep, 7-mile trail, stop at Ooh-Ah Point for awesome views.

GO STARGAZING The Grand Canyon is a certified International Dark Sky Park – meaning it’s a great place to see the stars.
There's no finer American playground than the Valley of the Sun. Spreading out from the state capital, Phoenix, this dynamic metro area embraces the cities of Scottsdale, Mesa, Tempe and beyond, linked by fast motorways that zip you from one fun attraction to the next.

Collectively they offer visitors everything under the ever-blazing sun. From street art to world-class galleries and museums, you’re surrounded by Southwest culture. Pamper yourself at the Phoenix area’s celebrated spas. Indulge in its vibrant dining and cocktail scene. Fill your suitcase with fashion mall bargains and boutique shopping. And enjoy outdoor adventures on horseback, on hiking trails and on renowned championship golf courses.

DON’T MISS

With an outstanding collection of traditional and contemporary Native American art and artefacts, the Heard Museum is among the nation’s leading museums of its kind. From cool displays on legendary musicians to interactive exhibits and a vast array of instruments from around the globe, you can get lost for hours in the melodic world of the Musical Instrument Museum. Expand your view of Western life and culture through art, photographs and memorabilia at Western Spirit: Scottsdale’s Museum of the American West.
**FAMILY FUN**
Head for Papago Park, where you can stroll through an enchanting landscape of Sonoran splendour at the Desert Botanical Garden, or visit the Phoenix Zoo. At Discover Salt River and Talking Stick Entertainment District, enter a magical atrium of tropical plants and fluttering beauties at Butterfly Wonderland, America's largest butterfly conservatory. Nearby is the massive OdySea Aquarium.

**ART ATTRACTIONS**
Known for its first-rate exhibitions and contemporary installations, the Phoenix Art Museum is a good place to see distinguished Southwest painters. In RoRo – downtown’s Roosevelt Row Arts District – enjoy murals, markets, galleries and artist studios, especially on First Friday Art Walks. The Thursday evening Artwalk is a great time to explore the galleries in the Scottsdale Arts District. Check out the cutting-edge exhibitions at the Scottsdale Museum of Contem-porary Art (SMOCA). In Tempe, the ASU Art Museum focuses on ceramics and contemporary Southwestern and Latino art.

**SHOPPING HOT SPOTS**
From luxury brands to bargain outlets, you’ll find fabulous shopping across the Valley. For high fashion, head to Scottsdale Fashion Square, an indoor mall full of high-end designer stores. Open-air Biltmore Fashion Park has premium retailers such as Saks Fifth Avenue. Find brand-name bargains at Phoenix Premium Outlets. Browse Old Town Scottsdale for quality Western souvenirs.

**DRINK AND DINE**
From James Beard Award-winning restaurants to gastropubs, and from craft beers to innovative cocktails made with desert plants and herbs, you’ll discover a vibrant dining and drinks scene. Try simple Native American staples at The Fry Bread House, or have a five-star meal made with indigenous ingredients such as buffalo and cholla buds at Kai in the Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass. Chomp on authentic Mexican street tacos at Backyard Taco, or enjoy modern Latin cuisine at The Mission Old Town. Whatever your mood or budget, the flavours of Central Arizona are diverse and delicious.
Its landmark is the towering saguaro cactus. Its hub is the delightfully laid-back city of Tucson. Here in Southern Arizona, the Old West never really died, and you can embrace your inner cowboy amidst rodeos, trail rides, historic pioneer sites and intriguing desert landscapes.

You’ll find accents of this region’s friendly border culture everywhere, from vibrant Mexican art and crafts to lively mariachi bands to its chile-peppered cuisine. At the end of the day, ride off into a magnificent sunset of soft pink, bright magenta and flaming orange skies.

GO WEST

In search of the Old West? Head for Tombstone, a real frontier town where Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday once graced the boardwalks and saloons, and the gunfight at the O.K. Corral is re-enacted daily. Many Westerns were filmed at Old Tucson Studios, and with can-can dancers, shoot-outs and panning for gold, it’s a great family day out. Prospect for fun at Bisbee, an atmospheric old copper mining town with quirky art galleries and local characters. Visit the lovely Spanish missions of Tumacácori and San Xavier del Bac. Or hit the desert trail on horseback at a dude ranch.
WINE TRAILS
South-east Arizona is an outstanding wine-growing area. Beneath the tall grass and rolling hills of the high desert is rich soil that compares to that of France’s Burgundy region or Ribera del Duero in Spain. Surprised? Sip the wine and see for yourself at over a dozen tasting rooms, a few miles apart on the Sonoita-Elgin wine trail. Charron Vineyards’ white merlot, and award-winning reds at Callaghan or Flying Leap Vineyards, are firm favourites. You’ll also find tasting rooms in the grape-growing area of Willcox.

TAKE A BITE
With rich culinary traditions that stretch back centuries, Tucson was named the first UNESCO City of Gastronomy in the USA. Native Americans planted ancient vegetable crops and harvested cactus flowers to make sweet syrups and jams. Spanish missionaries brought heritage fruit trees and white Sonoran wheat. Mexican cooks devised amazing dishes using cactuses and chiles. Today, Tucson’s creative chefs blend all these things into a distinct and exciting food scene. Whether it’s a bacon-wrapped Sonoran hot dog from El Güero Canelo, a classic family recipe from El Charro Café, or a fine dining hot spot, Tucson delights with every bite.

BACK TO NATURE
Take the Sky Island Scenic Byway to the summit of Mount Lemmon for glorious views and miles of hiking trails. Southern Arizona is one of the top five birdwatching spots in the U.S., especially for hummingbirds. Visit the Tucson Audubon’s Paton Center for Hummingbirds in Patagonia. See huge flocks of sandhill cranes near Willcox, and dozens of bird species in Ramsey, Madeira and Sabino Canyons. Or explore amazing underground worlds at Kartchner Caverns State Park and Colossal Cave Mountain Park.

TOP SHOPPING
The charming art colony of Tubac has dozens of galleries ranging from fine art to colourful home ornaments and crafts. Take home a taste of the Southwest from the Santa Cruz Chile Factory in Tumacácori. A handcrafted Native American flute from High Spirit Flutes in Patagonia makes a special souvenir.

SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK  Walk through forests of giant, multi-armed saguaro cactuses and explore the fascinating desert environment.
ARIZONA-SONORAN DESERT MUSEUM  Watch raptors in free flight and meet javelinas, coyotes and other desert creatures at this impressive, open-air zoo, aquarium and botanical garden.
TUCSON MUSEUM OF ART  See galleries of Western art, Latin American folk art and more, surrounded by downtown’s oldest historic buildings.
CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL MONUMENT  Hike scenic trails amidst a wonderland of hoodoos and other stunning rock formations.
AMERIND MUSEUM  A superb collection of Native American artefacts is on display at this impressive museum in Dragoon, along with a Western Art gallery.

DON’T MISS
Northern Arizona is a land of superlatives. Vast stretches of seemingly sparse, high desert lead to dramatic pockets of otherworldly geology, ponderosa pine forests, whitewater rivers and snow-topped mountains, all preserved in a stunning group of national parks and monuments. Much of this region lies within tribal lands, where Native Americans have dwelled for centuries.

For at least part of your journey, you’re likely to drive along I-40, the modern incarnation of Route 66. It crosses Northern Arizona east to west, leading to delightful small towns and the regional hub, Flagstaff. From the Navajo Nation to the Grand Canyon and beyond, this is the place for a classic American road trip.

Arizona is home to 22 American Indian tribes, whose lands cover about a quarter of the state. While each tribe has its own customs and rules, together they offer visitors a wealth of recreational and cultural experiences. For tribal etiquette tips and information, see visitarizona.com/uniquely-az/american-indian-tribes.
VERMILION CLIFFS NATIONAL MONUMENT A dizzying swirl of shimmering red canyons, sandstone waves and domes rippled with red, white and gold is on display at this rugged, remote area.

SUNSET CRATER VOLCANO NATIONAL MONUMENT Hike through a lava-strewn landscape where astronauts trained for lunar landings.

PETRIFIED FOREST NATIONAL PARK Huge, fossilised tree trunks are scattered across an alien, badlands terrain, sprinkled with petroglyphs, hoodoos and colourful buttes.

LITTLE COLORADO RIVER NAVAJO TRIBAL PARK Peer into a mini-Grand Canyon from the overlook above this deep river gorge.

UPPER AND LOWER ANTELOPE CANYON Take a guided tour to see the swirling colours and light beams of this narrow, twisting slot canyon.

MONUMENT VALLEY The chiseled sandstone buttes and mesas soaring above the desert are one of the West’s most iconic images.

NATIVE HERITAGE
Navajo and Hopi lands cover the north-east corner of the state. The Navajo Nation Museum at Window Rock and the Explore Navajo Interactive Museum at Tuba City are excellent places to delve into the history, culture and ceremonial life of the people. On the Hopi Tribal Lands, visit ancient pueblos where artisans on the three mesas specialise in different crafts. There are stunning cliff dwellings at Canyon de Chelly and evocative ruins of ancestral pueblos at the Wupatki, Walnut Canyon and Navajo national monuments.

GET YOUR KICKS
Though it’s been superseded by I-40, the spirit of Route 66 lives on in Northern Arizona. Holbrook’s Wigwam Motel, with its teepee rooms, and Winslow’s Standin’ on the Corner Park are Route 66 landmarks. In Flagstaff, the longest stretch of preserved highway, pick up a Route 66 walking tour to nostalgic downtown sights. At Williams, eat breakfast at Goldie’s Route 66 diner. You’ll find more themed diners and shops at Seligman, where you can catch Historic Route 66 and drive an original stretch of the Mother Road all the way to Kingman.

MOUNTAIN HIGHS
You’ll find year-round fun in the mountain town of Flagstaff, dubbed the “craft-beer town of Arizona.” Its historic downtown buildings contain laid-back cafes and lively bars and restaurants. Murals, mosaics and sculptures splashed around town are a clue to its vibrant arts scene, which includes theatre, concerts and a symphony orchestra. Visit the Arboretum, a botanical oasis of native plants, and the esteemed Lowell Observatory. The Museum of Northern Arizona is a hidden gem, with a superb collection of Southwestern cultural artefacts. It holds several Native American festivals each year. Head to Arizona Snowbowl for great downhill skiing in winter and scenic chairlift rides in summer.
It’s been called “the most beautiful place on Earth”. The magnificent red-rock country of Sedona is a New Age energy magnet, a filmmaker’s dream and a hiker’s paradise. Whether you explore it on foot, on horseback, in a jeep or a hot air balloon, this dramatic landscape will touch your soul.

Here in the heart of Arizona, ranchers, copper miners and Native Americans have left a legacy of delightful small towns and historic sites. Ghost towns have reincarnated as art colonies, Victorian buildings house characterful bars and restaurants, and hiking trails and scenic drives provide gateways into this region’s natural splendour.

**SEDONA SPIRIT**

Its glowing red and orange sandstone is found nowhere else. Whether you’re seeking the famous energy vortexes or simply soaking up the awesome natural beauty, you don’t need a sixth sense to feel Sedona’s special vibe. Head for stunning landmarks like Cathedral Rock, and recharge your well-being along picturesque hiking trails. Indulge mind, body and spirit with healing spa sessions, or at cafes and restaurants serving deliciously creative and healthy dishes. It’s no surprise that Sedona’s red rock wonder has inspired artists...
HAVE A DRINK ON WHISKEY ROW  In Prescott, historic saloons, art galleries and shops line this infamous street from the town’s heyday.

EXPLORE THE GRANITE DELLS  Walk, bike or paddle around Prescott’s Watson Lake to see these incredible rock formations.

VISIT A GHOST TOWN  With its Victorian buildings clinging to the mountainside, the old mining town of Jerome has come back to life as a charming art colony.

RIDE A HERITAGE TRAIN  Take a 20-mile journey through glorious mountain scenery on the Verde Canyon Railroad, which runs from Clarkdale to Perkinsville.

COOL OFF IN OAK CREEK  Drive through scenic, shady Oak Creek Canyon and swim in a natural water chute.

TAKE A JEEP TOUR  Rumble through Sedona’s red-rock country on a thrilling four-wheel-drive excursion.

SIP AND SAVOUR  Taste seriously good local vintages in 23 tasting rooms on the Verde Valley Wine Trail.

HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS
On a ridge above the Verde River Valley, the Tuzigoot National Monument preserves the pueblo ruins of the Sinagua people, who lived in this region in the 12th–15th centuries. You can see their evocative cliff dwellings at Montezuma Castle National Monument, and at the Palatki Heritage Site in Sedona. Prescott’s Smoki Museum displays pottery, clothing and ceremonial artefacts from local and regional Native American tribes. The Sharlot Hall Museum features historical buildings and exhibits from the town’s pioneer days. Fort Apache Historic Park preserves a frontier military post and an Apache heritage museum.

TOP THINGS TO DO
of every stripe, and a visual feast awaits in the numerous galleries and public art around town. There’s great retail therapy too, in the uptown boutiques and crafts village.

HIT THE TRAIL
From gentle strolls to backcountry treks, this beautiful region has a scenic hiking trail to suit everyone. An hour’s walk on the Anna Mae Trail at Tonto Natural Bridge State Park brings you to the only travertine bridge in the country. Prescott’s Peavine National Recreation Trail is a 6-mile, mixed-use path that runs along Watson Lake and into the giant boulders of the Granite Dells. The 2-mile Verde River Greenway in Dead Horse Ranch State Park winds through lush riverside habitat for birds and wildlife. Sedona’s popular Devil’s Bridge Trail ends in a scramble to the top of a 50-foot natural arch for panoramic views. Or test your mountain biking skills on the challenging Templeton Trail, with stunning views of Cathedral Rock.
After powering through the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River carves out Arizona’s western border from Lake Mead to Mexico. Along this mighty waterway are glittering lakes and reservoirs that make a perfect oasis for fun in the sun. Enjoy boating, swimming and all types of watersports against the bluest of desert skies.

This arid landscape holds surprisingly lush pockets of natural beauty where you’ll find wildlife havens, historic sites and even wineries. Discover plucky communities that hold a rugged charm along old Route 66, and the city of Yuma, the sunniest place on earth. And, if you dare, walk the Skywalk above the west side of the Grand Canyon, near Peach Springs.

**TOP ATTRACTIONS**

Get an eagle’s eye view from the Skywalk, a glass-bottom bridge that curves out into thin air 1,220 metres above the chasm at Grand Canyon West. Learn about local Native American life, culture and history at the Colorado River Indian Tribes Museum in Parker. In Arizona’s south-west corner, Yuma gets more sunshine per year than any other city in the world, and you’ll find plenty of ways to enjoy it, from historic sites to wetlands to river sports.
BEACH IT  White-sand beaches in Lake Havasu State Park make this sprawling reservoir a favourite water playground.

RIDE IT  Feel the power of the Colorado River on a thrilling whitewater rafting trip with Hualapai River Runners, starting from Peach Springs at Grand Canyon West.

LAUNCH IT  Hire a boat at the marina in Lake Havasu City and cruise the river’s Bridgewater Channel beneath the famous London Bridge.

PADDLE IT  Explore the lower Colorado River by kayak or canoe and soak up the amazing views on a guided tour with Desert River Outfitters in Bullhead City.

PARK IT  Make a splash with the kids at Waylon’s Water World, a Yuma water park with 15 slides, mat racers, a lazy river and more.

ALONG THE MOTHER ROAD
Route 66 continues through Arizona’s West Coast on a nostalgic stretch of the old Mother Road. You’ll find plenty of kitsch in Kingman at the Historic Route 66 Museum. With diners, neon signs and classic car events, the town has a fun, retro vibe. You can also sip wine at the Stetson Winery, or taste locally-made agave rum, whiskey and vodka at the Desert Diamond Distillery. The old gold-mining town of Oatman, with its wooden boardwalks and resident burros, is another Route 66 gem.

NATURAL BEAUTY
From river canyons to red-rock mountains, Arizona’s West Coast has a rugged beauty. Visit historic sites at the Pipe Spring National Monument in Fredonia, a desert oasis which provided refuge for wildlife, the Kaibab Paiute Indians and westward pioneers. The hiking trails in Buckskin Mountain State Park at Parker afford striking views of the area's jagged mountains. In Yuma, the scenic Kofa National Wildlife Refuge is home to Sonoran pronghorn, bighorn sheep, Gila monsters and desert iguanas.
Want to fall in love with Arizona?

This is your dating app.

Customise your Arizona vacation with the Visit Arizona App. Choose your travel interests, and the app will match your preferences and location with one-of-a-kind experiences you’re sure to love.

It’s like your own personal travel guide, right in the palm of your hand.

Download the Visit Arizona app now: