



Mesa, Ariz.



► DAYTRIP:

Mesa's East Valley is full of adventure, so don't miss the opportunity to immerse yourself in an Old West version of it at **Goldfield Ghost Town** (480-983-0333, goldfieldghosttown.com), home to Arizona's only narrow-gauge railroad, which gives riders a narrated tour of the area. **Apache Trail Tours** (480-982-7661, apachetrailtours.com) offers jeep tours on the historic Apache Trail and is worth its weight in gold for how much

you can learn about the local history and lore from your driver. Stop for some prickly pear ice cream at **Tortilla Flats** (480-984-1776, TortillaFlatAZ.com) to cool down, or book a "Junior Grand Canyon" tour on **The Dolly Steamboat** (480-827-9144, dollysteamboat.com) to see the wilderness while cruising across **Canyon Lake**. When you're ready for a real Western meal, head over to **The Dutchman's Hide Out Mesquite Steakhouse** (480-982-3181, dutchmanshideout.com),

which was voted Best Steakhouse in the Valley in 2014.

► WEEKEND:

1 Start your weekend with breakfast at **T.C. Eggington's** (480-251-1551, tcegg.com), where the Farmer's Market Ben E. Dict does not disappoint. Then head to **Saba's Western Store** (480-981-3730, sabas.com) to gear up, while also supporting Arizona's multi-generational family business. Actually, multi-generational operations are abundant in the East Valley, as is food production. Head to **Schnepf Farms** (480-987-3100, schnepffarms.com), Arizona's largest peach grower, to not only pick your own fresh produce, but to visit the farm's Family Museum, housed in an 1800s stagecoach

stop. And be sure to check the schedule at **Horseshoe Park and Equestrian Centre** (480-358-3710, queencreek.org) to see if there is a rodeo or roping going on. For dinner, check out **Joe's Farm Grill** (480-563-4745, joesfarmgrill.com) where, according to owner Joe Johnston, they specialize in "common food, done uncommonly well."

2 Head for the hills to ride through the saguaro with **Fort McDowell Adventures** (480-816-6465, fortmcdowelladventures.com). Don't be surprised to cross paths with ancient petroglyphs, wild horses, and if you're lucky, javelinas. Then, take refuge from the desert sun inside the **Gilbert Historical Museum** (480-926-1577, gilberthistoricalmuseum.org) to soak up the history of the former Hay Shipping Capital of the World. Dairy was another big industry in the area, so hop down the street to **Zinburger** (480-387-5000, zinburgeraz.com) for juicy burgers and

creamy milkshakes. Ward off the notion of a nap by going on a treasure hunt at **Flashback Antiques** (480-503-2255). If treasure hunting isn't getting the blood flowing, head to **Norton's Country Corner** (480-882-1231) for some good 'ol Western boot-scootin'.

► VACATION:

For a true vacation, do all of the above and then some. Jaunt up to **Cave Creek** to visit **Watson's Hat Shop** (602-419-6436, watsonshatshop.com) to have the nation's youngest master hatter get you fitted for your custom hat. Then, check out some incredible, authentic wares at Scottsdale's **River Trading Post** (480-444-0001, rivertradingpost.com). And for a total Western getaway, stay at the **Flying E Dude Ranch** (888-684-2650, flyingeranch.com) in **Wickenburg**, where guests experience the past and the present while saddling up with this working dude ranch.

