

TUCSON

OFFICIAL TRAVEL GUIDE

CARLOTTA FLORES

El Charro Café

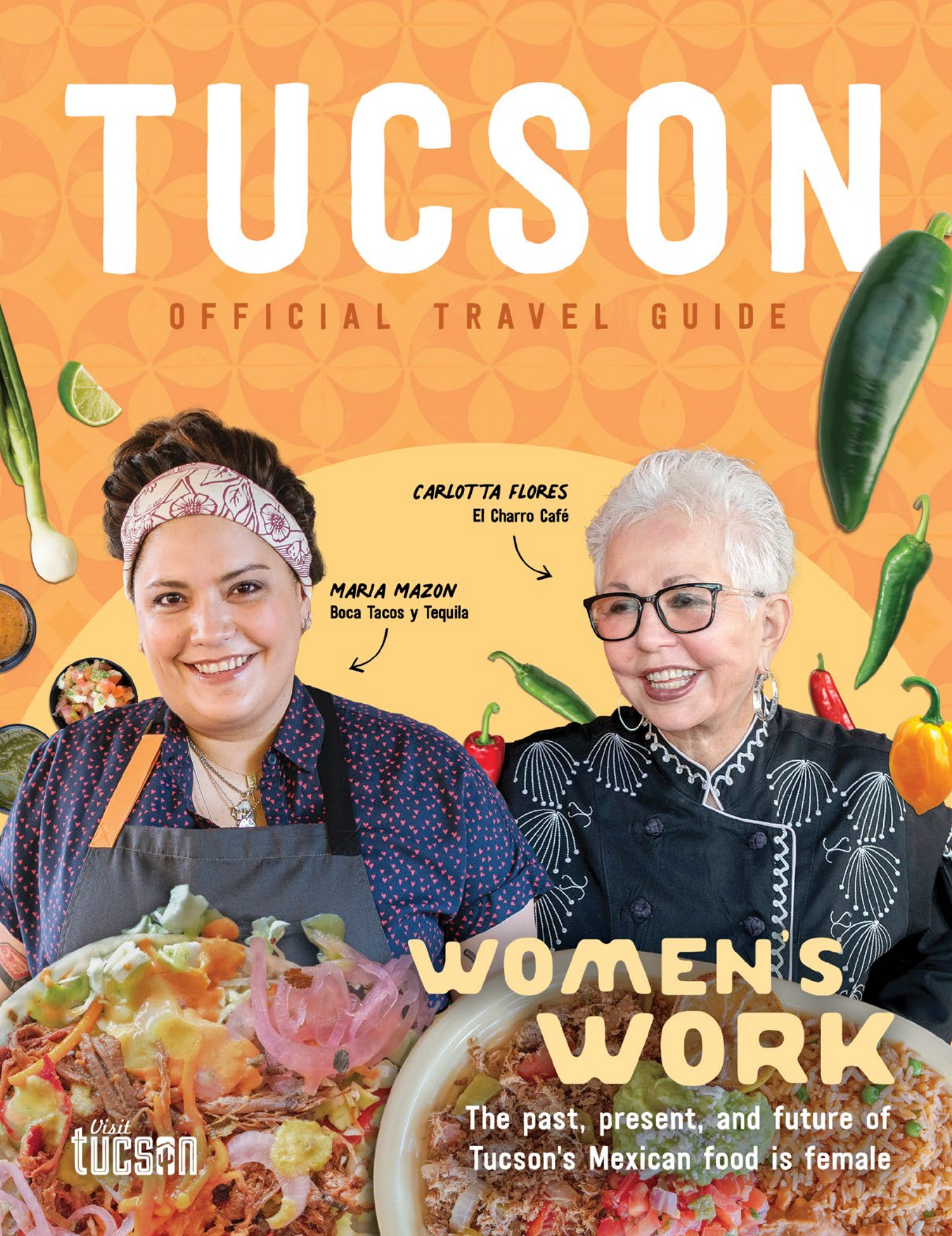
MARIA MAZON

Boca Tacos y Tequila

WOMENS WORK

The past, present, and future of
Tucson's Mexican food is female

Visit
tucson





NONSTOP FOR TUCSON

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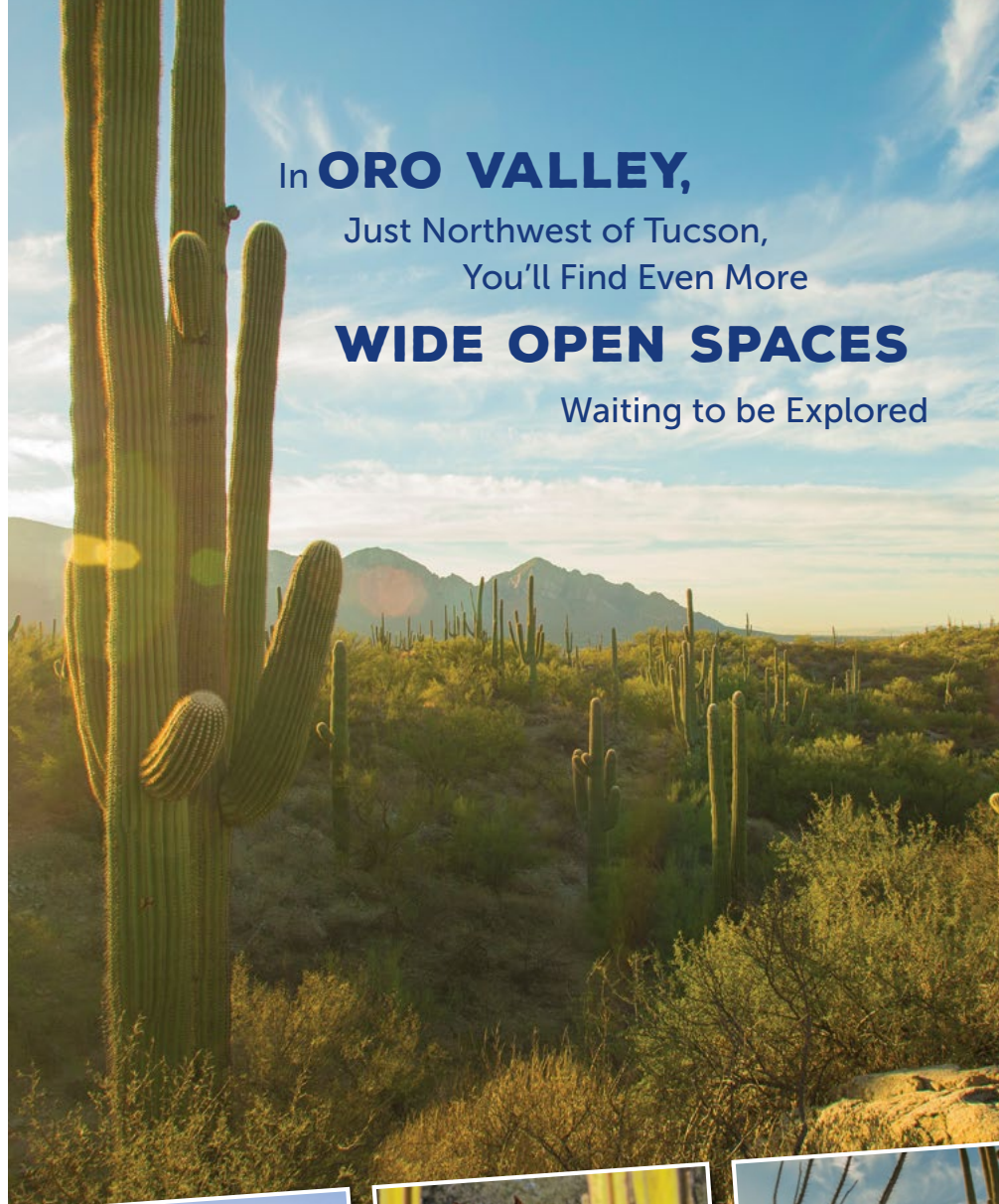
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WELCOME TO TUCSON & SOUTHERN ARIZONA!

We're thrilled you picked up the 2022 Tucson Official Travel Guide and hope you read it from cover to cover. This year's lead story, "Women's Work" is about the women behind Tucson's culinary traditions. Carlotta Flores is one of only two women at the helm of El Charro Café since it opened 100 years ago in 1922. Maria Mazon is a self-trained chef who owns and operates Boca Tacos y Tequila and was a Season 18 finalist on "Top Chef." While Chefs Carlotta and Maria are featured on our cover, we'll introduce you to several other women who helped establish Tucson's international food reputation.

The Outdoors section presents the fast-growing sport of gravel biking and discovers the unique topography of Southern Arizona's Sky Islands Mountains, while the Explore section showcases the brand-new Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum and highlights the uniqueness of Tucson's top resorts. Don't miss the Culture section which covers everything from our music scene to art in the neighboring town of Oro Valley along with great local artisans and shops.

As robust as this year's magazine is, it only offers a glimpse into everything Tucson and Southern Arizona have to offer. You can find more inspiration and trip planning advice on our website VisitTucson.org, or, if you prefer, you can speak with a local expert by calling 800-638-8350. Come and experience for yourself Tucson's wide-open spaces and 325+ sunny days each year. We look forward to seeing you soon!



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ON THE COVER

Tucson boldly claims to have the best Mexican food north of the border. Discover the chefs and restaurateurs – many of whom are women – whose passion and dedication make this claim a reality.

GASTRONOMY



Jackie Tran

Women's Work 20

The inspiring women behind Tucson's legendary Mexican cuisine.

Great Moments in Tucson Mexican Food History 26

The story of Tucson's Sonoran Desert cuisine goes way back.



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Courtesy of JTH Tucson

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David Seaber

Oro Valley Arts 60

There's art all over Tucson, including the part of our community in the shadow of Pusch Ridge.

12 *MUST-SEE* ATTRACTIONS

1 Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum

Further broaden your scientific horizons at **Biosphere 2**, **Richard F. Caris Mirror Lab**, and **Titan Missile Museum**.

SEE MORE
ON PAGE 50



Courtesy of Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum

2 Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

Branch out on the nature paths at **Tohono Chul**, **Tucson Botanical Gardens**, and **Yume Japanese Gardens of Tucson**.

Pete Gregoire



3 Arizona State Museum

Delve deeper into culture and heritage at **Amerind Museum**, **Arizona History Museum**, **Etherton Gallery**, **Jewish History Museum**, and **Tucson Presidio Museum**.

4 Catalina State Park

Keep on trekking at **Oracle State Park**, **Patagonia Lake State Park**, **Picacho Peak State Park**, or **Roper Lake State Park**.

Julie Foskett



5 Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium

Keep your focus skyward with tours of **Kitt Peak National Observatory**, **Mt. Graham International Observatory**, **Mt. Lemmon SkyCenter**, and **Whipple Observatory**.





6 Colossal Cave Mountain Park

You can also head underground for a different caving experience at **Kartchner Caverns State Park**.

7 Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures

There's even more fun to be had at **Children's Museum Tucson/Oro Valley**, **Reid Park Zoo**, **Trail Dust Town** and **Tucson Rodeo Parade Museum**.

8 Mission San Xavier del Bac

Find other examples of historical architecture at **St. Augustine Cathedral**, **Tubac Presidio State Historic Park**, and **Tumacácori National Historical Park**.

9 Mt. Lemmon

Set your sights on such other birding hotspots as **Madera Canyon**, **Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve**, **Ramsey Canyon**, **Sabino Canyon**, and **Sweetwater Wetlands Park**.

10 Pima Air & Space Museum

Check out other ways to get around at the **Southern Arizona Transportation Museum** and **Franklin Auto Museum**.



11 Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block

Be further inspired at **Center for Creative Photography**, **DeGrazia Gallery in the Sun**, **Museum of Contemporary Art**, and **University of Arizona Museum of Art**.

12 Saguaro National Park

Discover ever more Sonoran Desert beauty at **Ironwood Forest National Monument** and **Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument**.



85% OUTDOORS 100% ADVENTURE

ENJOY TWO MILES OF SCENIC WALKING TRAILS WHILE
VISITING ANIMAL AND PLANT FRIENDS.



Center for Creative Photography

The Center for Creative Photography on the University of Arizona campus is one of the world's finest academic art museums and study centers for the history of photography. Home to a world-renowned collection of American photographic fine art and archives, the CCP explores how photographs continue to evolve over time and influence our understanding of society.

Visit ccp.arizona.edu for more information about upcoming exhibitions, programs, membership and events.



Gallery Hours

Tuesday - Saturday: 10:00 AM - 4:30 PM

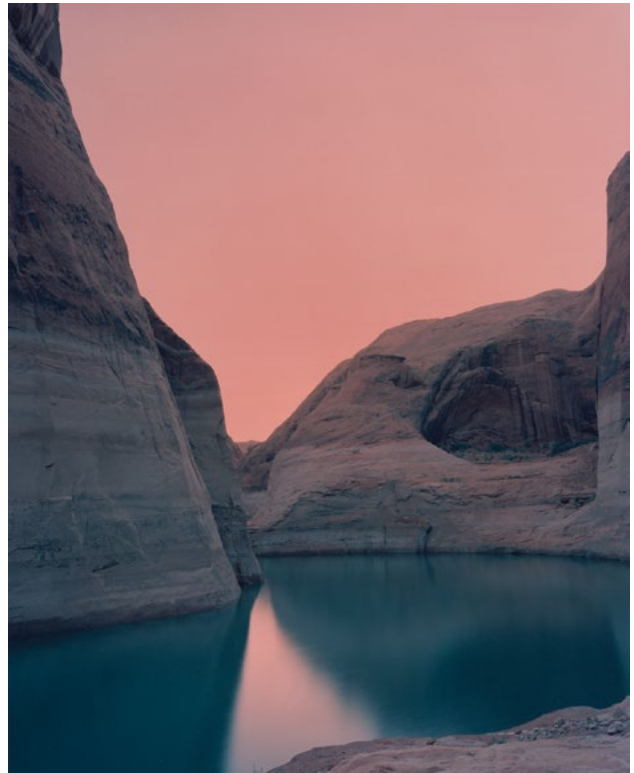
Sunday - Monday: Closed



Scan this QR code to learn
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Arizona Arts



Peter Goin, *View down the canyon last night, Willow Creek Canyon, Escalante River, Lake Powell*, 2003, chromogenic print, 39.5 x 49.2 cm, Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona: Water in the West Archive. © Peter Goin, 2021

INSIDE Scoop

Make The Most Of This Very Important Place With Local History And Insider Tips



Left:
Monsoon Chocolate

Below:
Oasis Fruit Cones



Courtesy of Monsoon Chocolate

Jackie Tran

Sweet Treats

Who doesn't enjoy a bit of dessert? Not saying you promised a kid that you'd get them something sweet after going on a hike, but it happens. Even if that's not the scenario, don't miss an opportunity to enjoy something delicious that also has a touch of the Sonoran Desert. Yes, you might have to take what you can get during peak chocolate season between Valentine's Day and Mother's Day, but the demand is high at **Monsoon Chocolate** for a good reason. Their bon bons and other creations are incredible

and feature local ingredients like **Whiskey del Bac**, **chiltepin**, and **prickly pear**. Also, of course, there's Tucson's semi-official summer treat, the raspado. Found at **Oasis Fruit Cones**, **Sonoran Delights**, and dozens of other locations around town, you can enjoy the shaved-ice, fruit, ice cream, and sweetened condensed milk snack any time during the year, although they do taste a bit better when the temperatures rise.



Wine Country

Southern Arizona wine continues to grow in prominence and quality. A nice plus: you can take a great roadtrip southeast to see the wineries in action or you can stay in town and try a glass (or more) at one of the tasting rooms in Tucson itself, including Tucson's very own wine-themed hotel downtown, The Citizen. With winery Sand-Reckoner's barrels occupying the rock-lined basement, you can stop by or stay the night knowing that you'll have plenty of opportunities to tip a glass. The wineries in the Sonoita, Willcox, and Elgin areas also often have tasting rooms amongst their vines, plus the drive down that direction is enjoyable on its own.

For more information on the wineries, head to the [winery guide on our website](#).

They're All Good Birds

Seems like everyone is birding these days and the biodiversity of Southern Arizona's "sky islands" provide a wide variety of opportunities to add another species to your notebook. You might need to stay long term to catch the elusive Elegant Trogon – considered by some to be the most beautiful bird in the Northern Hemisphere with its bright green back and red breast – since there might be fewer than 100 that summer in the United States, but it's worth a try to spot it. Madera Canyon, near Green Valley, is where you'd most likely spot the Trogon, but there are also over 250 species of birds that have been spotted there, including 15 hummingbird species. Keep an eye out for the purple crown and green throat of the male Rivoli's Hummingbird, for example. Even in the city itself, you'll have the opportunity to spot the striking, red-bodied Vermillion Flycatcher.

The Tucson Audubon Society is a spectacular resource for all things birding, from organized tours to books, binoculars, and advice at their [University Boulevard Nature Shop](#).





Julie Foskett

 Rune Winery

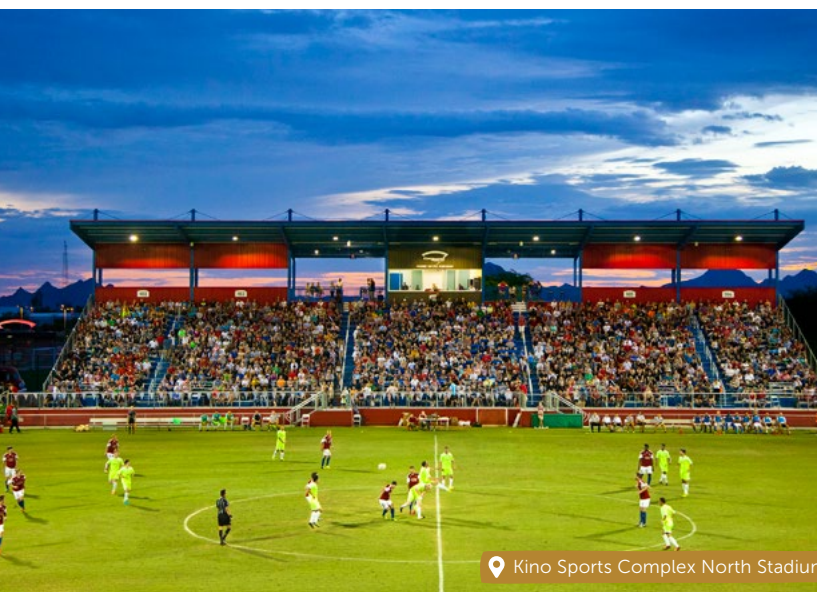


History Street by Street

Spend any time looking through photos on Instagram featuring #tucson and you'll see them: photos of brightly painted doors. There's a good reason for these ever-present images (they're even a classic backdrop of senior photos here). The character and color of downtown Tucson's historic neighborhoods comes through clearly and beautifully in each photo, showing glimpses of the generations of history that has been and still lives behind those walls and doors.

You can easily walk some of these areas and see architecture from the 1840s to the mid-century styles of the 1950s. Armory Park saw rapid growth following the arrival of the railroad in 1880, Barrio Anita once hosted a local baseball team in the 1930s (and might have Tucson's best red chili beef burrito these days at Anita's Street Market), Barrio Libre has more pre-statehood adobe buildings that anywhere else in Tucson. The Presidio neighborhood hosts the Tucson Museum of Art and a recreation of the Spanish fort founded in 1775. Up for seeing these areas on two wheels? Tucson Bike Tours offers a nine-mile journey for riders of all abilities.

Find more, including a guide to the architecture styles, on the [City of Tucson's self-guided tour site](#).



Courtesy of Kino Sports Complex

Sports, Sports, Sports

Want to catch some sports while you're in Tucson? The University of Arizona has 18 varsity teams participating in NCAA action, plus a number of club teams. Here basketball often reigns supreme, with coaches Adia Barnes and Tommy Lloyd ushering another era of success on the hardwood, but from beach volleyball to rugby, there's a Wildcat team to cheer on year-round. On the pro end, there's soccer, hockey and indoor football. FC Tucson offers men's and women's professional soccer at Kino North Stadium while the Tucson Roadrunners (the top-flight minor league team for the NHL's Arizona Coyotes) and Tucson Sugar Skulls (of the Indoor Football League) share the Tucson Convention Center.



To see which teams might be in action while you're in town, head to our handy calendar at [VisitTucson.org](#).

WHERE NATURE MEETS NURTURE

Nestled at the base of the Santa Catalina Mountains on 80 acres of Sonoran Desert, Westward Look Wyndham Grand Resort & Spa is a true desert oasis. With a new \$10 Million renovation, suite sized guest rooms, Sonoran Spa, award winning cuisine and three sparkling pools, Westward Look is the perfect spot for your next getaway.



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ANNUAL EVENTS

A YEAR IN TUCSON AND SOUTHERN ARIZONA IS PACKED WITH FUN THINGS TO DO, INDOORS AND OUT. AT ANNUAL EVENTS LIKE THESE, YOU CAN GET TO KNOW THIS SPECIAL PLACE.

January

Dillinger Days
hotelcongress.com

TAR Soccer Shootout
fortlowellshootout.org

Tucson Desert Song Festival
tucsondesertsongfestival.org

Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase
tucsongemshow.org

Tucson Jazz Festival
tucsonjazzfestival.org

Wings Over Willcox
wingsoverwillcox.com

February

24 Hours in the Old Pueblo
epicrides.com

Cochise Cowboy Poetry & Music Gathering
cowboypoets.com

Cologuard Classic PGA TOUR Champions Event
cologuardclassic.com

La Fiesta de los Vaqueros Rodeo & Parade
tucsonrodeo.com

MLS Preseason in Tucson
fctucson.com

Rillito Park Winter Meet
rillitoracetrack.com



Brian Leddy

24 HOURS IN THE OLD PUEBLO

Savor Food & Wine Festival
saaca.org/savor

Tubac Festival of the Arts
Tubacaz.com

Tucson Gem and Mineral Show®
tgms.org

Tucson Winter Chamber Music Festival
arizonachambermusic.org

Wa:k Pow Wow
facebook.com/wakpowwow

April

Arizona International Film Festival
filmfestivalarizona.com

Cyclovia Spring Ride
cycloviatucson.org

Pima County Fair
pimacountyfair.com

TenWest Impact Festival
tenwest.com

Tucson Folk Festival
tucsonfolkfest.org

Tombstone Rose Festival
tombstoneroseetree.com

March

Arizona Distance Classic
arizonadistanceclassic.com

Fourth Avenue Spring Street Fair
fourthavenue.org

Sugar Skulls Indoor Football Season Opens
tucsonsugarskulls.com

Tucson Cine Mexico
tucsoncinemexico.org

Tucson Festival of Books
tucsonfestivalofbooks.org

Tucson Invitational Games
tigsports.com

Food to the finest in crafts, there's something for everyone at the **Fourth Avenue Street Fair**



May _____

Agave Heritage Festival
agaveheritagefestival.com

Mt. Lemmon Hill Climb
gaba.clubexpress.com

San Ysidro Festival
missiongarden.org

Tucson International Mariachi Conference
tucsonmariachi.org

Willcox Wine Country Spring Festival
willcoxwinecountry.org

June _____

El Dia de San Juan Fiesta
facebook.com/diadesanjuan-committee

Ha:San Bak Saguaro Festival
colossalcave.com

July _____

HarvestFest-Sonoita Vineyards
sonoitavineyards.com

Sweet Corn Festival
appleannies.com

August _____

HoCo Fest
hocofest.com

Southeast Arizona Birding Festival
tucsonaudubon.org

Southwest Wings Festival
swwings.org

Tucson Presidio Birthday Celebration
tucsonpresidio.com

September _____

Chile Festival
heirloomfm.org

El Tour Loop the Loop
eltourdetucson.org

Oktoberfest on Mt. Lemmon
skithelemmon.com

Sonoita Labor Day Rodeo
sonoitafairgrounds.com

Sonoran Restaurant Week
sonoranrestaurantweek.com

Tucson Fall Gem Shows
tucsongemshow.org

October _____

Amerind Autumn Fest
amerind.org

Film Fest Tucson
filmfesttucson.org

Patagonia Fall Festival
patagoniafallfestival.com

Rex Allen Days
rexalldays.org

Tucson Pride in the Desert
tucsonpride.org

Tucson Meet Yourself
tucsonmeetyourself.org

Tucson Modernism Week
tucsonmod.com

Tucson Roadrunners Ice Hockey Season Opens
tucsonroadrunners.com

Vamos a Tucson Mexican Baseball Fiesta
mexicanbaseballfiesta.com



Nicci Radhe

November _____

All Souls Procession Weekend
allsoulsprocession.org

Dusk Music Festival
duskmusicfestival.com

El Tour de Tucson
eltourdetucson.org

GABA Bike Swap
bikegaba.org

Holiday Artisans Market
tucsonmuseumofart.org

Loft Film Fest
loftfilmfest.org

December _____

A Southwest Nutcracker
tucsonregionalballet.org

Holiday Nights
tohonochulpark.org

La Fiesta de Guadalupe
degrazia.org

La Fiesta de Tumacácori
nps.gov/tuma

The Barstool Sports Arizona Bowl
thearizonabowl.com

Open Studios Tour
ost.artsfoundtucson.org

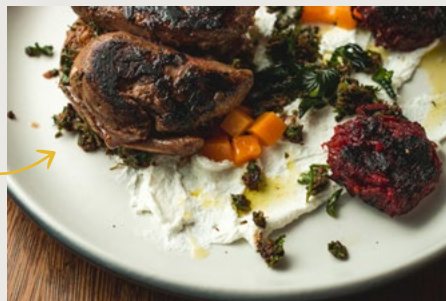
Parade of Lights & Festival
downtowntucson.org

Patronato Christmas at San Xavier Del Bac
patronatosanxavier.org

Tamal and Heritage Festival
casinodelsol.com

Tucson Marathon
tucsonmarathon.com

SONORAN RESTAURANT WEEK



Tucson Foodie

Find out more at:

VisitTucson.org/events



TUCSON GEM MINERAL & FOSSIL SHOWCASE

The World's Greatest Treasure Hunt

Official Dates:

January 29th - February 13th, 2022

Some shows may start early or extend beyond the official dates

Find Complete Show Listings at TucsonGemShow.org

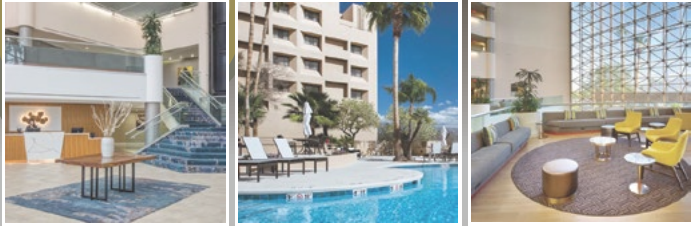
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AT TUCSON ARENA

JANUARY

WED. 26	VS	BAKERSFIELD		6:30PM
FRI. 28	VS	BAKERSFIELD		7:00PM
SAT. 29	VS	BAKERSFIELD		7:00PM

FEBRUARY

SAT. 19	VS	HENDERSON		7:00PM
MON. 21	VS	HENDERSON		6:00PM
SAT. 26	VS	ONTARIO		7:00PM
SUN. 27	VS	ONTARIO		4:00PM

MARCH

WED. 16	VS	SAN JOSE		6:30PM
FRI. 18	VS	SAN JOSE		7:00PM
SAT. 19	VS	SAN JOSE		7:00PM

APRIL

FRI. 1	VS	ROCKFORD		7:00PM
SAT. 2	VS	ROCKFORD		7:00PM
TUE. 5	VS	IOWA		6:30PM
WED. 6	VS	IOWA		6:30PM
FRI. 15	VS	COLORADO		7:00PM
SAT. 16	VS	COLORADO		7:00PM

PLAYOFFS RUN THROUGH JUNE

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
TUCSONROADRUNNERS.COM

BIENVENIDOS A TUCSON

We invite you to follow local custom and "free yourself" in laid-back Tucson. Fancy dress is optional. You can explore nature on a hike, bike, or horseback ride, discover real science at a University of Arizona attraction, or take a relaxing spa break.



IT'S A DRY HEAT

Tucson's climate is mostly dry and clear, with about 325 days of sunshine each year. **Hats, sunglasses, lightweight skin-covering clothing, sunscreen, and reusable water bottles are advised year-round.** In the summer: enjoy indoor activities; venture outdoors at sunrise and after sundown; visit nearby mountains; seek shade at the swimming pool. Stay hydrated! Drink water before feeling thirsty.



HISTORY

In the heart of the Sonoran Desert region of the American Southwest, Tucson and surrounding area have been continuously inhabited for more than 4,000 years. First by Native Americans including the Tohono O'odham and the Pascua Yaqui and more recently by Europeans. Spanish explorers founded Presidio San Agustín del Tucson, which became the City of Tucson, on August 20, 1775.



TIME ZONE

Tucson is in the **Mountain Standard Time zone**. Except for the Navajo Nation, Arizona does not observe Daylight Saving Time. Make sure you set your watch right, so you don't miss last call at 2:00 a.m.



TWO-NATION VACATION

Head across the international border to Mexico for a "two-nation vacation" with beaches, shops, and restaurants. Travelers are required to present a valid passport at the border and are encouraged to verify auto insurance requirements before driving in Mexico.

For information or to make hotel or other travel arrangements, call **520-225-0531** when in the U.S. Visit Tucson operates Spanish-speaking visitor centers in Hermosillo and Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, Mexico.

To make Tucson hotel and other travel reservations from Mexico visit **VamosATucson.com**.



BLEISURE TRAVEL

Tucson is open for business and leisure travel. You can host your group meeting here and experience the area through team-building and other planned activities.

Contact our convention and sports sales teams at **800-638-8350** or **TucsonOnUs.com**.



GETTING HERE

Tucson International Airport
Nonstop service to more than 15 destinations, with connections worldwide.

520-573-8100, flytucson.com

Amtrak Passenger Rail

Located in downtown Tucson's Historic Train Depot, the Amtrak station is served by the Sunset Limited train.

800-872-7245, amtrak.com

GETTING AROUND

Sun Tran Regional Bus Service

Transit centers are located at major destinations throughout the metro Tucson area. The fleet uses such clean-burning fuels as compressed natural gas (CNG), biodiesel, and hybrid technologies

520-792-9222, suntran.com

Sun Link Streetcar

In central Tucson, the four-mile Sun Link streetcar connects exciting dining and entertainment districts: University of Arizona, Main Gate Square, Historic Fourth Avenue, Downtown Tucson, the Convention Center complex, and Mercado San Agustín.

520-792-9222, suntran.com

Shuttle Service, Car Rental & Cab

Shuttle service, car rental, taxis, and ride-sharing platforms are widely available in Tucson.

AVG. TEMP
High / Low(°F)

DEC-FEB
67°/38°

MAR-MAY
82°/50°

JUN-AUG
100°/71°

SEPT-NOV
85°/55°



Courtesy of Pima County

Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center

Start your exploration of Tucson at the Southern Arizona Heritage & Visitor Center where knowledgeable volunteers share their insights and recommendations, and beautifully crafted displays tell the story of the region's history, its people, and the land. Located in the Historic Pima County Courthouse, this hub of culture and tourism-related information and activities also includes the University of Arizona Alfie Norville Gem and Mineral Museum and Tucson's January 8th Memorial.

Visit **SouthernArizona.com**
1-800-638-8350.

115 N. Church Ave.



TUCSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

WIDE OPEN
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SPACES

When you land at Tucson International Airport (TUS), you have arrived in the heart of the unique Sonoran Desert; the only place on Earth that is the natural habitat of the majestic saguaro cactus. You can be unpacked and start your outdoor adventure in a matter of minutes after you are on the ground.

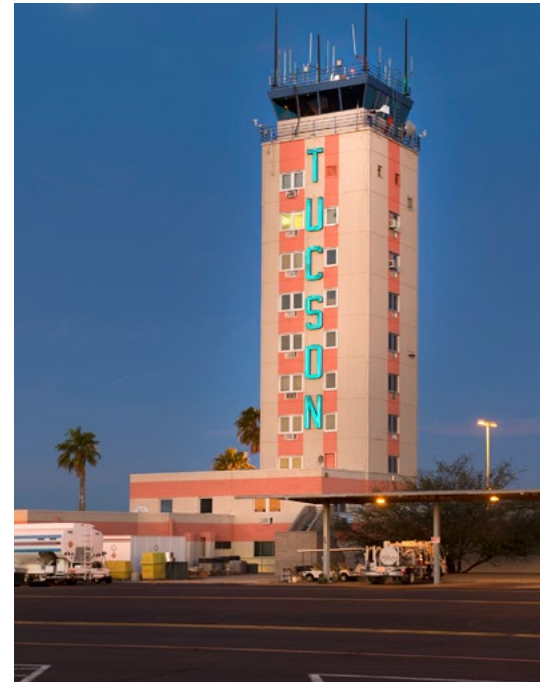
Eight airlines – Alaska, American, Avelo, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, Sun Country and United – fly nonstop to TUS from 19 airports – Atlanta, Chicago Midway and O’Hare, Dallas/Fort Worth, Denver, Everett (North Seattle), Hollywood Burbank, Houston Hobby and Intercontinental, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Oakland, Phoenix, Portland, Salt Lake City, San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle. In addition, there are convenient one-stop connections under 2½ hours from more than 345 other cities around the globe that erases the need for a long trek from any other airport.

The only airport honored by the Arizona Office of Tourism for instituting innovative health and safety solutions in response to the global pandemic, the team at TUS prides itself on leading from the front when it comes to cleanliness, safety and making travel a low-stress experience.

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EXPLORE THE
UNIQUE FLAVORS
OF THE SONORAN
DESERT

GASTRONOMY

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GREAT MOMENTS IN
TUCSON MEXICAN
FOOD HISTORY



El Charro Cafe
Photo by Jackie Alpers

WOMEN'S WORK

BY JACKIE ALPERS

WHO'S BEHIND TUCSON'S INCREDIBLE MEXICAN FOOD?
A SERIES OF TALENTED WOMEN UNAFRAID
TO BREAK DOWN SOME WALLS.

Close your eyes and think of what a chef looks like. What you imagine probably varies – it might be someone in a white coat with a tall hat, it might be a specific celebrity chef, or a guy in a leather apron with arms full of tattoos.

What you might not have pictured, especially if you're not deeply acquainted with Tucson's UNESCO-City-of-Gastronomy-designated culinary scene, is a woman running the show.

Tucson's Mexican food which is (let's just say it) the best outside of Mexico has a history written by women at the stove and at the counter.

Tucson's world-renowned Mexican cuisine would not exist if it had not been for the women who forged ahead no matter what the circumstances and who, in the past, mostly worked behind the scenes, as wives

or family members of male proprietors, the unsung heroes of Tucson's Mexican food scene. Nanas and Tias and working moms trying to survive, to thrive.

They are pioneering in every sense of the term.

And Tucson's women chefs are still serving it up Sonoran style, meaning they are contributing to one of the most unique regional cuisines in the world. Sonoran style Mexican cuisine would not exist if it had not been for a long list of these women.

We could fill this entire publication with their stories (someone can feel free to steal that for a book idea), but in this case, there are two who currently share the spotlight, albeit for very different reasons and with very different stories. In the end, however, they're among Tucson's brightest culinary stars because they both share a passion for people and for food.





Meredith Amandee

MARIA MAZON

BOCA TACOS Y TEQUILA

It's the height of the pandemic in Portland, Oregon. A television camera is focused on Maria Mazon who has left her twelve-year-old son at home in Tucson with her partner Lily to compete in Season 18 of Top Chef: Portland.

I'm watching from home. Maria and her team have just aced the "Restaurant Wars" episode. She looks confidently, directly into the camera and explains that one of the reasons she won was because she is like, "Monica on Friends," once she steps out of the kitchen and into the dining room, she's, "The Hostess with the Mostest."

Maria ended up just missing the finale, leading to one of the most emotional episodes of television I can remember. While she wasn't the season's winner, the show did create an opportunity for America (and the world, seemingly) to get an invitation to Tucson and its distinct over-the-top hospitality. It's not often, after all, that someone here is scolded, like Maria was on the show, for providing too much food.

Yes, she's now starring in commercials and the lines seemingly keep getting longer at her restaurant, Boca, on Fourth Avenue, but her story is defined by pushing uphill, not by showing up to immediate success.

Fifteen years earlier, Alice Mazon was there for Maria who had moved back to town from Sonora, Mexico for college and was living in an apartment in the Foothills. She got a job waitressing at a nearby restaurant called Papagayo. The experience was a turning point in her life and Alice Mazon was part of the catalyst for change. Alice wasn't cooking at Papagayo, but in taking care of business, she taught Maria how to be a restaurant owner first and a chef second.



Maria's modern take on classic tacos

Jackie Tran





Jackie Tran



Alice let Maria develop special menus and cook even though she had no kitchen experience. The first menu Maria developed is now framed in her home. Papagayo Mexican Restaurant is where Maria discovered her love and passion for cooking for which she will be forever grateful.

The years passed. Maria married and divorced, had a son, Rene Jr., opened Boca Tacos y Tequila (then near the University of Arizona on Speedway Blvd.), met and then married Lily (one of the first female firefighters in Tucson and deserving of a story of her own).

Over the years, she moved from the former home of Greasy Tony's to 4th Avenue, growing her business in her own building. Her loyal fans followed, eagerly awaiting a tray of Maria's wild and adventurous salsas, freshly made tortilla chips, and out-of-this-world tacos.

And to think, there was a time when Maria was struggling to buy ingredients or sleeping on her restaurant floor to watch the beans on the stove...but like any great story, the difficult times helped create the hero she is today. If there's a banana salsa in the metal tray that comes to your table, that's a callback to when bananas were on clearance, forcing Maria and her trusty blender to come up with a sauce that worked with what she had. PBR will also be on the menu at Boca because that's the beer her friends bought for her to serve before she could afford anything else to serve to her guests on Speedway.

When Maria thinks of the challenges she overcame to become the chef and restaurant owner she is today, she says she is most proud that she listened and paid attention to her fear. "I gave my fear a place, like, okay, I get it. I'm afraid. Like, 'Hey, what's up fear? How you doin'?"

A James Beard nomination, a long run on the most important food show on TV, appearances in commercials on her résumé, with a lot more to come – it's fair to say she's doing well in the face of fear.



Jackie Alpers

CARLOTTA FLORES

EL CHARRO CAFÉ

If you tried to count the Mexican restaurants in Tucson, you'd probably find that a new one opened up before you finished your tally. This is an incredible city with a wide variety of choices on that front, but ask most people here where you should go if you have one opportunity to try to de facto cuisine of Southern Arizona and they'll say El Charro, probably the historic downtown location.

And for good reason. As El Charro Café celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2022 – the longest-operating family run Mexican restaurant in the country – their story is one of two indomitable women: Monica Flin and her grand-niece, Carlotta Flores, each basically running the business for 50 of those 100 years.



Julie Foskett

In 1922, after the death of her husband, Monica Flin returned home to Tucson from Mexico and decided to open a restaurant. One of her sisters lent her money for the rent needed to open the restaurant in a small storefront. She named it after the "gentlemen horsemen" of Mexico... El Charro Café.

Money was tight, but Monica was resourceful. In what her family often lovingly referred to as an early adaptation of micro-funding, Monica would take a diner's order, run out the back door to the neighboring Chinese grocer for ingredients, rush back and prepare the meal, serve it, get paid, then dash back to the grocery to pay her bill. It worked. The restaurant thrived for decades, before seeing some struggles in the early seventies.

In 1972, three years before her death, she passed the restaurant on to the grand-niece who turned one restaurant into an empire, **Carlotta Flores**.



The
Famous
Tucson-born
Chimichanga



Carlotta was no novice in the kitchen when she took over the family restaurant – she ran a catering company in the Los Angeles area at the time – but thankfully she had the vision to see what El Charro could be become, since her original mission coming home was to close out the business’s affairs. As Carlotta told Jane and Michael Stern in their cookbook collecting El Charro’s recipes in 2002: “I took one look at [the building] and remembered all it meant to me, to Monica, and to so many people in Tucson, and I said to Ray [my husband], “We cannot sell it!”

Carlotta began modernizing the restaurant and its menu, while still retaining the history and tradition of the culinary landmark. Presciently, one of Carlotta’s innovations was to make the menu subtly healthier, a trend that continues across their brand today, although the classic chimichanga will also continue to be a delightfully fried exception. She kept the star dishes of El Charro’s menu intact while expanding and developing new dishes of her own.



David Seeber

El Charro is now the oldest family-owned Mexican restaurant in the United States, and as they mark 100 years, Carlotta and her family are both celebrating and reflecting on how Monica's dream of owning a restaurant evolved into a successful corporation. The Flores family could probably just hit copy and paste El Charros, but instead, Carlotta thrives on expanding both what's possible for her company and using the spirit of collaboration to take the organization farther than Monica could have ever imagined.

There's a casual eatery in the suburbs south of Tucson (Pub 1922), an incredible steak and seafood concept (Charro Steak and Del Rey) downtown, a plant-focused healthy take on borderlands cuisine (Charro Vida), and a sandwich-and-salad-centric collaboration with fellow James Beard award nominee Don Guerra of Barrio Bread, the fittingly-named Barrio Charro.

And then, in this 100th year of El Charro cuisine, it all comes full circle in some ways. Downtown Tucson is now the home of The Monica, a kitchen and patio in the City Park building on Congress Street. Somewhat surprisingly, this isn't a Mexican-forward restaurant, but instead, a celebration of the from-scratch recipes that make Tucson great. Family-oriented, made with love. What more would you expect from a restaurant honoring one of Tucson's hospitality pioneers?

Mexican food history is truly told through the lives of women, and this area couldn't be luckier.

WHY I ❤️ TUCSON



Erika Muñoz

Starting with a trailer, Erika Muñoz and her husband, Jake, quickly built Seis, a celebration of the distinct culinary regions of Mexico, into a local mini-empire. First, the nearly-always-packed location at the Mercado San Agustin, followed by spots in the Foothills and Oro Valley, each offering vibrant, delicious meals (plus the can't miss, appropriately-named cold brew/horchata fusion "cochata").

What keeps you in Tucson?

We love Tucson! Tucson is such a warm, friendly, and welcoming community filled with awesome diversity amongst the locals. Amazing Food! Music! Culture! All in the lush Sonoran Desert.

What's the one thing you suggest every visitor to Tucson do while they're here?

Eat! Tucson is an amazing food city! We were the first US City of Gastronomy. We have some outstanding locally-owned restaurants and local chefs offering exquisite menus, with true care and attention to the food they prepare. A visitor should definitely make lots of time to indulge in our local Tucson eateries.

What restaurant would you recommend to visitors?

Well, there is this award-winning regional Mexican spot called Seis everyone should check out. Ha! All kidding aside, we do officially have the "Best 23 Miles of Mexican Food" right here in Tucson so any restaurant that falls within that parameter is a must.

What's your favorite time of year here?

Spring and Fall are excellent times for a visit. Weather is just perfect most of the year actually, so a Tucson stay anytime of the year is quite nice.

What's your favorite Tucson event?

Definitely the All Souls Procession. What a moving experience. Everyone should experience the peace and beauty of this event.

MEXICAN FOOD GREAT MOMENTS

GREAT MOMENTS IN TUCSON MEXICAN FOOD HISTORY

1936

El Minuto Cafe

Rosalva, who was from Nogales, Mexico opened El Minuto with her husband Juan Shaar, a Lebanese immigrant. In the 1950s their daughter added her own recipes to the mix, including her beloved carne seca. El Minuto is now owned by their great-granddaughter Zulema Salinas and her family.



1952

Mi Nidito

Alicia and Ernesto Lopez truly created a little nest for their family when they moved to Tucson from Sonora and opened a restaurant in South Tucson together. Alicia developed the recipes and did all the cooking, and the restaurant is still owned by their family. They named it Mi Nidito because of its small size, and they don't take reservations, so expect a wait to be seated.



Casa Molina

Gilbert Molina built Casa Molina to showcase his sister Maria's cooking after her divorce. Eventually Maria decided to return to Mexico, leaving the restaurant to her sister-in-law Louisa and her husband Elias Molina. A family restaurant grew from there. Casa Molina birthed five baby El Molinito restaurants as well as La Casita De Molina, and generations of Molinas and Molinitos continue to thrive.

1947



TUCSON MEXICAN FOOD

1984

Anita's Street Market

Until Mario and Grace Soto decided to sell Grace's red chile burritos and handmade tortillas alongside the beer and cigarettes, Anita's Street Market was just what its name implies, a tiny corner store tucked away on a mostly residential street. The food became legendary, and the market became a legacy. Grace, who died from Covid last year, taught her granddaughter Gracie how to make her cherished recipes. Gracie takes that legacy very seriously, carefully recreating Grace's recipes with the same love and devotion as her grandmother.



Tumerico

Wendy Garcia grew up on a small farm near Hermosillo, Mexico where every family meal was made from scratch, with ingredients fresh from the fields. She loved standing next to her father and helping him cook. After moving to Tucson, the hard life of working in restaurants made her yearn to have her own place, and she began to make tamales to sell, while experimenting with vegan twists on her father's meaty recipes. Her friends helped find a space and Tumerico was born, with tasty plant-based takes on carne seca and machaca drawing raves from visitors like Guy Fieri of *Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives*.

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OUTDOORS

WARM SUN ON YOUR SKIN,
BREATHING IN COOL AIR

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GRAVEL=GOOD

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LOVING THE LOOP

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A PROUD HISTORY
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HIKING THE SKY
ISLANDS



GRAVEL = GOOD

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN MOUNTAIN AND ROAD BIKING LIES
THE OF-THE-MOMENT THRILLS OF GRAVEL RIDING

BY ALI KNUTSON

Fun fact: about a third of America's roads are unpaved, some a mix of dirt, rocks, and earth. When the bicycle was invented in the 19th century, the roads weren't as manicured as those we traverse today. So...is gravel riding the actual original form of bike riding? In the '80s and '90s, mountain bikes covered most of the space other than road bikes, but as the years went by, those bikes got more specialized and gravel bikes came into prominence. Gravel riding lets riders get out of the city, but not too far, experiencing some adventure on two wheels then making it back in time for happy hour.

To find the gravel, you need to get a little out of town, with plenty of options within an hour or two of Tucson. Head to Patagonia, home of the Gravel House, hosted by Cyclist Menu, a retreat for gravel riders. The Patagonia 30 is an easier route for beginners with a 1,700-foot gain that leads through the Harshaw Creek wooded area. If you're a more advanced rider, the Spirit World 100 course with more than 7,000 feet of elevation gain climbs Montezuma Pass into Coronado National Forest with an amazing view across the Mexican border.

For a real adventure, head out to the Spider Tom ride, which crosses over into parts of the Canelo Hills section of the Arizona Trail. Mixing single and doubletrack riding, it's a remote ride with rocky and rough sections. The Tucson area's most notable ride might be the trek up Mt. Lemmon's control road on the "back side" of the mountain – a massive climb of 4,400 feet in 13 miles and an accompanying descent that is one of the longest and most scenic in the West.

Keep in mind that supplies are key to these rides. A bike computer can be helpful for times when cell phone service is choppy or nonexistent. Hydration vests and water bottles are a must as many local rides don't have water available. Snacks are a good idea in any context, and gravel riding is no exception. Plus, you'll need the basics – tools and a simple repair kit will come in handy if your bike takes a hit, and tubeless tires are a gamechanger in our very pokey desert. Don't forget to take the weather into account, which can get as hot as you'd expect or cooler than you might imagine. There's also dust involved, so get yourself a stylish bandana.

Most of all, have fun and make some two-wheel memories out in the Sonoran Desert.

—
Image:
Spirit World 100
Patagonia, AZ





Some local shops that can help you on your gravel journey:

Transit Cycles

267 S Avenida del Convento, Unit 10
(520) 396-4525
transitcycles.com

Fair Wheel Bikes

1110 E Sixth St
(520) 884-9018
fairwheelbikes.com

Campfire Cycling

15 E Toole Ave
(800) 717-2596
campfirecycling.com



Courtesy of Pima County

Voted
**Best Recreational
Trail in the US**
by USA Today

LOVING *THE* LOOP

BY MARY REYNOLDS

WALK, BIKE, SKATE YOUR WAY AROUND PIMA COUNTY ON THE CHUCK HUCKELBERRY LOOP

Ride your bike past Old West ranches and New West solar panels. Walk beneath mesquite trees and sculptures on your way to a Farmers Market. Ride horseback in sandy riverbeds with mountain views. Stop for coffee or lunch along the way. Do all of this on the 137-mile Chuck Huckelberry Loop that encircles Tucson and connects to Marana and Oro Valley.

Voted the Best Recreational Trail in the United States by USA Today, The Loop is a shared-use paved path that lets you explore Tucson from the banks of the Santa Cruz River, Rillito Creek, Pantano Wash, Julian Wash, and Cañada del Oro Wash.

Kids will love the fun sculptures at Brandi Fenton Park, along with its splash pad and playground. Other parks with playgrounds include Fort Lowell Park, Juhán Park, Children's Park, and Flowing Wells District Park and its BMX pump track.

Almost 90% of Tucson metro area residents live within minutes of The Loop, making it the go-to place for walking the dog, pushing a stroller, skating, walking, and recreational bicycling. Many visitors can conveniently walk or bike to The Loop from where they are staying; and trailheads offer parking for those driving to The Loop. Most trailheads have water fountains and restrooms. Other facilities can be found at parks adjacent to The Loop.

"My job is to travel the country teaching people how to be running coaches," says Randy Accetta, Director of Coaching Education for the national non-profit Roadrunners Club of America. "It is one of the best, if not the best city running trail in America."

With marked distances, and the opportunity to run on paved or soft surfaces, runners have the desert experience with beautiful mountain views in a safe and well-marked environment.

"I like the feeling that I'm solitary but also part of the community," Accetta says about running on The Loop. "There's so much space and room to run, but there's so many other people around exercising, I'm part of something bigger."

Need refreshment? Commercial districts on The Loop offer restaurants, coffee shops, and Farmers Markets. Loop users along the Cañada del Oro Wash can visit shopping centers where First Avenue crosses the path in the Town of Oro Valley. Along the Rillito Creek, the Rillito Racetrack Farmers Market and St. Philip's Plaza shopping center provide food and drink near Campbell Avenue. Downtown on the Santa Cruz River, Mercado San Agustin and the MSA Annex are less than half a mile from where Congress Street crosses The Loop.

Businesses in other locations also welcome Loop users. "Local and visiting cyclists come into our business from The Loop," says Jessie Mance Zugeran, owner of the Tucson Hop Shop, at the Metal Arts Village on Dodge Boulevard. "We knew cyclists would be a huge demographic for our business. Proximity to this major cycling artery was a cornerstone in finding a location for our shop."

FOR INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION VISIT:
pima.gov/theloop

Here you'll find a terrific resource if you're planning to explore The Chuck Huckelberry Loop while in Tucson! You can find everything from detailed maps that reveal where public art projects can be enjoyed along The Loop's 137 miles, locations of historically-significant places, and up-to-date advisories on maintenance projects and adjacent road closures.



WHY I ❤️ TUCSON



Sarita Mendez

Sarita Mendez is a native Tucsonan who believes in pursuing a life outdoors. She is drawn to open spaces and increasing her awareness on how to keep nature wild. She believes the outdoors is for all and hopes that more people of different backgrounds can share these experiences. She can be found exploring all over Southern Arizona, working in craft beer, and plotting her next adventure.

What keeps you in Tucson?

The stunning beauty and resilience of the desert along with the surrounding Sky Islands that offer world class hiking, biking, and climbing.

What's the one thing you suggest every visitor to Tucson do while they're here?

Watch the sunset at either Gates Pass (to ensure you get a large dose of Saguaro views) or Windy Point in the Santa Catalinas (to experience the rich biodiversity that Tucson has to offer).

What restaurant would you recommend to visitors?

The Little One, downtown.

What's your favorite time of year here?

Monsoon season. The city is quiet, the monsoon shows are dramatic, and the sweet smell of creosote fills the air. It's a special time seeing the desert so green and full of life.

What's a Tucson hidden treasure?

Barrio Viejo. My grandmother grew up in the Barrio and I currently live here. While it's a wonderful area to check out, there's a great deal of history to learn from the area. If you plan to visit, I highly recommend reading *La Calle* by Lydia Otero.

Do you have a favorite Tucson roadtrip?

Sonoita in Arizona wine country. Not only is the drive filled with gorgeous views of rolling hillsides and mountain ranges, but the wine is also delicious as there are some incredible winemakers.

A PROUD HISTORY OF GOLF

TEE UP IN TUCSON



Courtesy of JW Marriott

Image:
JW Marriott Tucson
Starr Pass



BY BRIAN J. PEDERSON

Tucson’s sporting history runs back more than a century, from the first athletic teams fielded by the University of Arizona to a variety of minor league teams. Perhaps the richest corner of this history centers around professional golf. Tucson’s golf scene has it all, and the area’s most famous courses continue to foster great stories to tell today.

Tucsonans have been hitting the links since at least the 1930s, when El Rio was the region’s first full-service country club. Now one of five municipal courses – along with Dell Urich, Fred Enke, Randolph North, and Silverbell – El Rio served as host for Tucson’s first PGA Tour event in 1945.

The first-ever Tucson Open saw a field of 47 duffers vie for a \$5,000 prize pool, with Ray Magnum edging out the legendary Byron Nelson for a cool \$1,000. That started an ongoing run of more than 75 consecutive years of pro tournaments in the Tucson area, with this year’s PGA Tour Champions Cologuard Classic being held at Omni Tucson National’s Catalina Course, February 25-27, 2022, and boasting a \$255,000 purse.

A variety of other courses have hosted a version of the Tucson Open in that span, including Forty-Nine Country Club, Randolph North, and the Tournament Players Club at Starr Pass (now called Starr Pass Golf Club). More excellent golf experiences arrived in the 1980s, including El Conquistador Golf & Tennis, the Ventana Canyon resort courses, and La Paloma Country Club, a 27-hole gem designed by Jack Nicklaus. In 1991, 20-year-old Phil Mickelson became only the third amateur to win a PGA TOUR event when he birdied the 18th at Starr Pass while Tom Purtzer made a double bogey to finish one shot behind.

Tucson’s newest course is the Sewailo Golf Club at Casino Del Sol. The 7,400-yard layout was designed by Notah Begay III, a college teammate of Tiger Woods, who is also the only Native American to have played regularly on the PGA TOUR. Sewailo is also home for the University of Arizona men’s and women’s teams, ensuring Tucson’s rich golf traditions endure.



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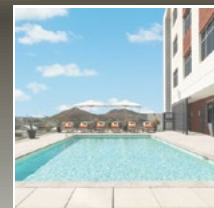
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HIKING *THE* SKY ISLANDS

GETTING INTO THE MOUNTAINS
AROUND TUCSON IS AN OPPORTUNITY
TO EXPLORE OTHER WORLDS

There is something completely magical about the mountains surrounding Tucson. You can't see it just by looking at the big picture. Fly over in a plane, for example, and when you look out the window you see swaths of brown scrub buckling up into green-dark mountains: the Santa Catalinas to the north of Tucson, the Santa Ritas to the south, Rincons to the east, and Tucson Mountains to the west.

But step out in this wilderness on foot, and the brown scrub comes into crystalline focus: the accordion folds of cacti swell with water and compress in the sun. Delicate bright wildflowers hide under prickly pear paddles. The acidic herbal smell of creosote haunts the breeze. There is more diversity in the Sonoran Desert than in any other desert in the world.

That diversity comes from what biologists have coined our "Sky Islands." Separated by wide swaths of desert, these mountain ecosystems have isolated biomes, created by the unique mix of plants and animals that hop from one island to another. The Santa Catalina Mountains host species from the Canadian Rockies, such as black bear and alpine fir. But just two hours south, the Santa Rita Mountains are surrounded by the golden waves of Chihuahua



Julie Foskett



Desert grasslands. This range contains subtropical species from the Sierra Madre Occidental, including dozens of hummingbirds and the rare sighting of northern jaguar.

It all depends on water, and Tucson may be the only city where residents run outside in monsoon thunderstorms to revel in the rain. The most coveted hikes of this region have water features at their heart, like the polished granite grotto of Romero Pools or the surging waterfalls at Seven Falls and the Douglas Spring Trail.

Surrounding all of this is a sea of granite and volcanic rock. Towering orange cliffs lord over Sabino Canyon; a fractured grey monolith shelters Sycamore Reservoir, and the jagged pinnacle of Finger Rock can be seen from the city. Any hike in the Sky Islands is a tour through geologic history.

Hikers take special considerations out here. Chief among them is bringing plenty of water on the trail: at least a gallon per person per day. Almost all trails in the Wild West are rocky; hiking boots or rugged footwear are recommended to protect your feet.

Wide hats and sunglasses are necessary in the all-day sun, and long lightweight layers can keep the rays off your skin and help you feel a little cooler in summer. Weather can roll in quickly and dramatically in the mountains, particularly during summer monsoons; an extra layer or waterproof jacket can give you security in a downpour.

And local hikers bring a comb or tweezers to pick out cactus needles, which are especially handy when hiking with a dog. (Pups are welcome on some trails, like Marshall Gulch, but prohibited in Saguaro National Park and the Pusch Ridge Wilderness, which covers much of the Santa Catalinas. Check land management guidelines before venturing out with a dog.)

With the Sonoran Desert, Chihuahu Desert grasslands, oak and juniper woodlands, and subalpine forest all within reach, it's no wonder that hundreds of miles of trail weave through the mountains around Tucson. A dozen different worlds are waiting to be explored.

—
Clockwise from Left:
Santa Catalina Mountains
Mount Lemmon
Santa Rita Mountains

ANY HIKE IN THE SKY ISLANDS IS A TOUR THROUGH GEOLOGIC HISTORY.



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SONORAN DESERT
STAYS

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HOW TO GEM SHOW

50

ALFIE NORVILLE
GEM & MINERAL
MUSEUM

ADVENTURE
AWAITS
IN THE
SONORAN
DESERT

EXPLORE

SONORAN DESERT STAYS

**WITH SO MANY OPTIONS, YOU MAY NEED TO EXTEND
YOUR VACATION AND TRY MORE THAN ONE!**

Much like the incredible diversity of birds and wildlife that call this desert city home, so many places to stay in Tucson have unique features that set them apart from the others. If you're yearning for an authentic western adventure, look no further than White Stallion Ranch. Their firm commitment to the idea that there's a horse for every single guest underscores their remarkable award-winning customer service. If you want a wide variety of activities but are still thinking about saddling up, Tanque Verde Ranch — first established in 1868 — offers mountain biking, guided hikes, and the signature blueberry pancakes that traditionally accompany their morning horseback ride, all within a 640-acre expanse.

Prefer your lodging experiences on the intimate side? There's no shortage of unforgettable boutique accommodations in Tucson. The Ball-Paylore House has been nationally recognized as one of the most

historically significant examples of mid-century modern architecture. The House was built in 1952 with entirely custom furnishings and distinctive rolling shutters designed with our 325 days of yearly sunshine in mind. Looking for adorable but still awash in stunning Sonoran scenery? Look no further than JTH Tucson, a wonderfully hip six-unit adobe treasure with perhaps our favorite patio and fire pit deep within Saguaro National Park West.

Whatever kind of travel experience you're seeking, whether it's a family retreat, a romantic getaway, a wellness journey, or something more motivated by cultural or sporting pursuits — Tucson has ideal accommodations waiting for you! The following pages highlight some of our top resorts to assist in your planning.

—
Image:
JTH Tucson





Courtesy of JTH Tucson





Omni Tucson National

The 325 days of annual sunshine here have long made this city a winter haven for golf fanatics looking to thaw out, and Omni Tucson National Resort is THE place for the pros (and everyone else!) to play in Southern Arizona. Home to the Cologuard Classic, a PGA TOUR Champions tradition that goes back more than 70 years in Tucson, enjoy either the Catalina Course — with eight sparkling lakes and 80 bunkers of challenge, or the Tom Lehman-designed Sonoran Course — with its desert-style fairways in full view of the Santa Catalina Mountains. Bring your clubs and take your best shot! .

JW Marriott Starr Pass



Nestled in the gorgeous landscape of Saguaro National Park West, Tucson's JW Marriott Starr Pass Resort & Spa is no less steeped in the traditions of the borderlands. One of our favorite examples of this is their Tequila Toast, which happens daily at 5:30pm on their expansive Salud Terrace. Guests of this magnificent resort raise their complimentary tequila shot, chosen from over 150 artisan tequilas, and repeat along with the legend of Arriba, Abajo — a toast rooted in the tale of a man asking a woman's father for her hand in marriage. Come raise a glass to this delicious Southwestern folklore!





Westin La Paloma



Much like a covey of Gambel's quail that can be seen skittering adorably around the edge of the desert, families looking to play together and have a great time will discover how great Tucson is for just that — with the perfect accommodations awaiting at The Westin La Paloma Resort and Spa! With their giant waterslide, five outdoor pools with cabanas, and shimmering waterfalls, it's an ideal choice for families to relax and unwind no matter what time of year you're here. (They've got fantastic wellness options for adults, too.) Pack your beach towel and make a splash!

Casino Del Sol



Tucson has long been home to an incredibly vibrant local music scene drawing from the region's rich multicultural well. Little wonder then that one of its premier resorts, Casino Del Sol, would make hosting top-notch recording artists a highlight of their award-winning accommodations and numerous amenities. Their state-of-the-art AVA Amphitheatre, named for one of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe's visionaries, Anselmo Valencia, boasts 1,700 seats with a gentle ascending slope to a lawn space where another 1,000 concertgoers can roll out a blanket and enjoy those wonderful live sounds on a cool desert night.





Hacienda Del Sol



Tucson and Tinseltown go way back, with our majestic natural surroundings serving as the perfect backdrop for Hollywood westerns for decades. The historic Hacienda Del Sol Guest Ranch Resort — which began as an elite boarding school in 1929 — took on a shiny silver screen aura in the late 1940s as a stunning off-set hideaway for the likes of Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, John Wayne, and Clark Gable. Today, more visitors than ever can enjoy this renowned Forbes Four-Star resort as Hacienda underwent an expansion in the spring of 2021, giving guests fantastic mountain views.

Westward Look Wyndham Grand

Every worthwhile story has a beginning, and Tucson's terrific tradition of tranquil hospitality began with the Westward Look Wyndham Grand Resort & Spa. Westward Look was originally a hacienda-style homestead set on 80 acres of pristine Southern Arizona desert built in 1912. Today, this upscale resort offers wonderful wellness experiences by way of their award-winning Sonoran Spa, featuring holistic spa treatments including relaxing massages, energizing scrubs, and restorative facials — each incorporating natural desert botanicals and therapeutic herbs grown from their own garden! You'll come away refreshed and relaxed in the most Tucsonic way possible.



Julie Foskett



Hilton El Conquistador



As Tucson sits so close to our southern neighbor, there is a tangible borderlands influence everywhere, from the goods in gift shops throughout Southern Arizona to the cultural offerings you can explore at El Conquistador Tucson, A Hilton Resort. There you can take part in a ritual known as Renewal of the Flame. It is a collective experience in which guests gather to expel their negative energy, if present, and release it into a roaring fire, following that with three deep breaths to channel positivity. You may also enjoy works by Diana Madaras, an award-winning Tucson landscape painter whose colorful works are on display throughout the resort. Come ready to be inspired!



Loews Ventana Canyon

In Tucson, you learn to expect the unexpected. Great views and wonderful amenities are something you look for no matter where you may travel – but what about a guacamolier? Yes! This is just how serious the food scene is in Tucson, and a sign of how dedicated Loews Ventana Canyon Resort is about the authenticity of the dining experiences you can have at their Flying V Bar & Grill. Chef Tyler Lapotosky exhibits a southwestern touch on everything from steaks, chops, and seafood to favorites such as quesadillas and short-rib tacos. Arrive hungry!



Julie Foskett

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THE SOL
OF TUCSON

CASINO DEL SOL

BY SARAH BURTON

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CASINODELSOL.COM

Just 15 minutes from Tucson International Airport and downtown, you'll discover Casino Del Sol, The Sol of Tucson, where guests can unwind and enjoy the exciting gaming environment, seasonal dining selections and luxury resort amenities. As a successive five-time recipient of a AAA Four-Diamond rating, Casino Del Sol is in the business of exceeding expectations and providing the perfect getaway.

Casino Del Sol Resort, Spa and Conference Center is the Pascua Yaqui Tribe's jewel in the desert and Southern Arizona's premier luxury and business travel destination. This gorgeous high-rise, 215-room hotel is adjacent to Casino Del Sol and La Estrella, their new 151-room hotel with stunning views.

In addition to the impressive amenities featured in the resort, the incredible selection of casino games add to the fun. No matter your preference, Casino Del Sol has something for you. Home to more than 1,300 state-of-the-art slots, a variety of table games including craps, roulette and mini-baccarat, bingo and poker, Casino Del Sol is a gaming destination for everyone, from the casual slots player to the seasoned veteran.

Golf enthusiasts will enjoy every shot at Sewailo Golf Club, a Notah Begay III designed 18-hole, par-72 championship golf course, featuring Jack Nicklaus Academy of Golf, designed to embrace Tucson's natural landscape.

SolSports, the Casino Del Sol Sportsbook, has the most competitive lines in Arizona offering full bar and food service, jumbo flat screen TVs and high-def viewing wall with luxury seating and 8 self-service betting kiosks.

From fine dining and Asian fusion to fast, easy Mexican food, and now a modern Italian eatery, Casino Del Sol will please your appetite with a dazzling selection of culinary delights. Enjoy decadent steaks and seafood nightly, along with Tucson's finest wine list and gracious service at PY Steakhouse. Ume presents a blend of unique sushi and one-of-a-kind Asian creations, Bellissimo Ristorante Italiano features an array of classic Italian favorites, the 24-hour all-American diner, Moby's, welcomes you home to the foods you love, and Abuelitas turns up the heat for a quick lunch and dinner.

Casino Del Sol was created with one thing in mind, providing guests with extraordinary service and amenities in a setting that is unique to the Southwest. A truly unrivaled and spectacular place to stay and play, make your next getaway to Casino Del Sol – The Sol of Tucson.



HOW TO GEM SHOW

**THE TUCSON GEM, MINERAL & FOSSIL
SHOWCASE CAN BE OVERWHELMING, BUT YOU
CAN DO IT LIKE A PRO.**

BY APRIL BOURIE

It was certainly easier to navigate the first Tucson Gem & Mineral Society show in 1955, held at a local elementary school. After all, there were only 1,500 attendees and 15 vendors. Now, it would be nearly impossible to count the vendors across the 40+ shows where nearly 50,000 shoppers hunt for treasure. We asked veteran merchants, show hosts, and regular Gem Show attendees for their tips to a fun and successful experience.



FIGURE OUT HOW YOU'LL GET AROUND

You can definitely see more in Tucson with a car – Saguaro National Park, Mission San Xavier del Bac, and Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum are on the edges of town beyond the reaches of public transportation, for example. Getting around the various shows (and parking, although some shows offer valets) can sometimes be a challenge, even if it can be easier to haul away your finds in your own vehicle. Consider using GemRide, a free shuttle service connecting nearly all the shows in several convenient loops. (unavailable in 2022).

 **PLAN AHEAD, WAY AHEAD**

Hotel rooms book up exceptionally fast. Tucson is essentially full during the busiest part of the Showcase, so once you decide you want to attend the next show, start planning as soon as possible. With your hotel booked, make reservations for resort or downtown restaurants as well since those, unsurprisingly, fill up quickly, too.

 **THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX**

Even with gems, minerals, and fossils in the larger event name, there's plenty to see beyond those. The African Art Village is a favorite of visitors, with more than 100 exhibitors offering art, clothing, beads and more. Or think way outside the box and consider heading over to Centennial Hall on the University of Arizona campus for a Broadway show.



 **USE INSTAGRAM TO YOUR ADVANTAGE**

Want to get a preview of what to expect at a show? Search for the location on Instagram. In the social media era, excited shoppers share what they're seeing online, so you can get a sneak peek before heading over.



LET US HELP

At Visit Tucson, we aim to be your Gem Show resource: We publish a guide each year with listings for all the shows, (whether they're open to the public) with location, hours, and more. Plus, we have a website that aims to keep attendees updated with the latest in Showcase news. If you're at the airport or the convention center during the Showcase, visit our information tables for personal assistance.

— • —
Find out more at
Tucsongemshow.org

ALFIE NORVILLE GEM & MINERAL MUSEUM

BY GENEVIEVE DAHL

Not Everything That Glitters is Gold (But Some of It Is)

Walking into University of Arizona's Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum feels a bit like stepping into the vault of a wealthy and extravagant collector. Floor to ceiling glass enclosed cases are lined with delicate gems, fossils, giant crystals, petrified wood, and meteorites. Each piece is staged with an individual spotlight and numerical identifier that allows visitors to verify exactly what they are looking at, where it came from, and when it was acquired.

Though a part of the museum is dedicated to regional gems and minerals, a visit provides a chance to see, and in some cases touch, rocks and crystals from all over the globe. There are thousands of specimens, each one as striking as the next. You'll stand head-to-head with an intact sabre-tooth tiger skull. You'll learn that while stibnite is gorgeous, it's more than just a pretty mineral. It's also the main source of the element antimony, which is used in batteries and semiconductors.

It's a special experience to simultaneously take in the beauty of the world's minerals while exploring the science of gemology and mineralogy. The interactive exhibits at the



Courtesy of Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum

WHY I ❤️ TUCSON



Ashley La Russa

Ashley La Russa founded Roux Events in 2019, an event management company with a primary focus on supporting the growth of organizations and community leaders that foster equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives.

Ashley is the Project Lead at the largest accessible directory of Black businesses in Arizona, BlaxFriday.com, as well as partnering with organizations, hotels, co-working spaces, and event venues to strategically plan how to serve the community as a whole.

What keeps you in Tucson?

The community. Loved ones across this city who are supportive of my endeavors and share insight on their beautiful accomplishments.

What's the one thing you suggest every visitor to Tucson do while they're here?

Quesabirras. Dipping this delightful deliciousness into warm beef soup is on another level and a delightful culinary treasure.

What restaurant would you recommend to visitors?

El Rustico for some quesabirras and then Smokey Mo for the burnt ends.

What's your favorite time of year here?

The Fall. Cooler nights and special occasions.

What's your favorite Tucson event?

Soul Food Wednesdays.

What's a Tucson hidden treasure?

All our local breweries.

Do you have a favorite Tucson roadtrip?

I love trips to Barrio Viejo.

What's your most "Tucson" memory?

Stopping in the middle of the road so a family of quails could cross and having the most audible, "Ah!" while looking at the smallest baby in the procession.



museum present an opportunity to unleash your inner geologist. You will see what miners in nearby Bisbee experienced on quests for copper with a cave replica and photo timeline. Around the corner, step into the crystal lab and create your own gemstone or put yourself to the test and find out if you know what mineral is inside of your toothpaste.

Who knows? A visit to this museum just might inspire a career change and encourage you to apply to University of Arizona's first ever Gem Science degree program. Located at 115 N. Church Avenue, the Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum is sure to please crystal lovers, science enthusiasts, and general aesthetes alike.

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DISCOVER
CULTURE
AROUND EVERY
CORNER

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SOUNDS OF TUCSON

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SHOP LIKE A LOCAL

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ORO VALLEY ARTS

CULTURE



El Tiradito Shrine
Photo by Julie Foskett



SOUNDS OF TUCSON

BY ERIC SWEDLUND

Can you hear the sound of Tucson in the music played here? The Sonoran Desert, the borderlands, the cross-cultural influences, the sunbaked vibe can all exist—in one way or another—in the fusion of styles and sounds prevalent in the local scene.

In the shadow of Sentinel Peak, near the historic birthplace of Tucson, you might catch an exciting young band like Los Esplifs, a synth-forward cumbia act, on the open-air stage at MSA Annex, the sky full of stars and a venue full of people dancing. On one of the recently opened jazz stages downtown, at the Westerner, or in the front room at Hotel Congress, Arthur Vint could be behind the drum kit, leading a band of luminaries through standards and originals, all performed with skill and swing. Maybe you'll be lucky enough to see Peter McLaughlin's bluegrass act, Sonoran Dogs at Monterey Court, finding out why he's won numerous awards for his guitar prowess. These might not be the options when you happen to be in Tucson, but most nights, your options will be just as good, if not more plentiful.

No one sound or style defines Tucson music—not in the past and certainly not today—but, like the chefs who make up the city's renowned culinary scene, musicians deftly borrow from different traditions and add their own personal touches. So, whether it's the spaghetti-western desert noir of Calexico, the indie-mambo of Orkesta Mendoza, or XIXA's cumbia-tinged psychedelic rock, there's plenty of inspiration in Tucson for captivating music. This is the city where you have the musical experience that turns into a mildly-bragging anecdote someday – "You saw them back then? In a venue that small?" Every Tucsonan has their version – whether it was the 1975 on the Hotel Congress stage or Green Day way back when at the Downtown Performance Center.

Courtesy of Rhythm & Roots. Photo by C. Elliott

Top:
Hotel Congress,
Club Stage

Right:
Hotel Congress,
Plaza Stage



Courtesy of Rialto Theatre. Photo by C. Elliott



Any night of the week, clubs and venues clustered in the city's historic core along Fourth Avenue and throughout downtown offer jazz, folk, rock, and blues in myriad combinations. Community radio station KXCI91.3 FM has played local music on the airwaves for more than 35 years. With its long-standing "Locals Only" program and a studio in the Hotel Congress, KXCI is committed to its slogan: Real people, real radio.

Left:
Rialto Theatre

Below:
Fox Tucson Theatre

Courtesy of Fox Tucson Theatre. Photo by Emily Pratt

Congress Street's downtown entertainment strip is anchored by two historic theaters: to the east, the Rialto Theatre, which hosts top touring rock, hip-hop, dance, and country bands (just take a look at their calendar online, you'll certainly find something you want to see); and to the west, the Fox Tucson Theatre, a fully seated venue known as the "Crown Jewel" of downtown, beautifully restored to its southwest art-deco vaudeville-era glory. Also, in the heart of downtown is Club Congress, the longest-running venue of its kind west of the Mississippi, with music seven nights a week: local and national, indoors and out. These venues are so entwined that if you head to Congress after a show at the Rialto, you might just see the band that just sold out a show on the westside of the street grabbing a drink on the eastside of Congress and Toole.

The world's mega-acts also make stops here in Tucson, including the stages of the Tucson Convention Center, the summertime shows at the AVA Amphitheater at Casino Del Sol, and at the University of Arizona's Centennial Hall.





Courtesy of Tucson Jazz Festival

The Tucson Jazz Festival happens every **January**

Tucson’s creative soul is a restless one, spawning a variety of off-the-beaten-path settings for enjoying music beyond traditional venues. There’s a wealth of talented acts playing in converted warehouses and breweries, including 191 Toole, MotoSonora, and Borderlands Brewing Company, beloved neighborhood bars such as local-favorite Che’s Lounge, hip-hop beats at Mr. Heads or Thunder Canyon, and Tucson’s legendary Fourth Avenue LGBTQ+ club, IBTs. Plus, you can find live music just about anywhere in Tucson, possibly including the place you’re thinking of staying, if hotels like Hotel McCoy, The Downtown Clifton, or The Tuxon are in your plans. What might be most magnificent about Tucson’s music scene: there’s rarely a barrier to enter, like some coolness factor that must be reached to enjoy the fun. Just show up, ready for a new experience.

In a town known for its fiestas, it’s no surprise that Tucson’s musical scene loves a big get-together. Annual music festivals span the calendar in 2022, regrouping from the perils of the pandemic. The Tucson Jazz Festival arrives in January, with nearly two weeks of performances from national headliners and locals alike, spanning the full spectrum from traditional to avant-garde to Latin jazz. In April, the long-running Tucson Folk Festival fills downtown for a weekend of free roots-music performances by more than 120 acts.

Check the calendar for the annual Dusk Festival, which draws uber-hip EDM, hip-hop, and rock performers for fans of Coachella and Lollapalooza. And the big daddy of them all—the Tucson International Mariachi Conference— will celebrate its 40th year in May 2022. This gathering of mariachi bands and folklorico dancers includes masterful performances, an outdoor festival, and a traditional mariachi Mass.

C. Elliott





Above:
The Folk Shop and
Old Paint Records

Musicians can search the shelves and storerooms of institutions such as the **Chicago Store** and **The Folk Shop** for instruments and gear like that next guitar just waiting to be found. Local studios with state-of-the-art equipment and talent—**WaveLab**, **Dust & Stone**, and **Midtown Island**—actively record local and touring bands, each carving out a niche, blending vintage and top-of-the-line gear. For putting the music out into the world, Tucson’s small independent record shops—check out **Wooden Tooth Records** and **Old Paint Records**—are a bin-hunter’s dream.

If Austin is the new Live Music Capital of the World, Tucson is the up-and-coming sibling, the next big thing. So, catch on now. Go see a band tonight.

WHY I ❤️ TUCSON



Herm Guzman

Fiercely dedicated to enforcing the “No Parking on the Dancefloor” rule, Herm Guzman can be found behind the turntables at the best events in town or online, showcasing his unique musical blends. It’s impossible to peg DJ Herm down to a specific style, but know that wherever he’s playing, dancing is a certainty.

What keeps you in Tucson?

Our people, our culture, our beautiful desert landscape, our tame winter weather, and the fact that Tucson is relatively unpretentious.

What restaurant would you recommend to visitors?

I know most visitor guides suggest the same 4-5 places, but I highly recommend going off the beaten path. Or rather, the path less taken by tourists. Venture down to the southside! There are mom & pop spots on every block, both brick ‘n mortar and on wheels (taco trucks). Chances are, mamá and pápa are there, in the kitchen, on the register, wiping down tables.

What’s your favorite time of year here?

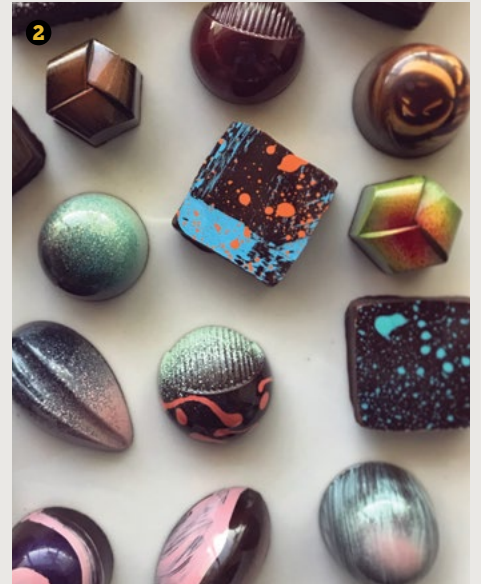
Late October/early November, just before winter kicks in. That “might need a hoodie tonight... might not” weather.

What’s a Tucson hidden treasure?

La Cocina/Old Town Artisans is a true Tucson gem tucked away in plain sight. Where else can you enjoy a delicious meal in a gorgeous courtyard, pick up some dope records, get an amazing tattoo, find a gently-used vintage jacket like the one you had in high school, learn the history behind the beautiful Native American-made necklace you just bought (You had to! It goes with the jacket!), and pick up some handmade pasta and fresh bread for dinner...It’s like the adult version of your favorite mall hangout.

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Find The Perfect Gift Or A Quirky Souvenir At Tucson's Boutique Businesses.



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7

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11



ORO VALLEY ARTS

WORDS BY SARAH BURTON
PHOTOS BY DAVID SEEBER

From pre-Columbian etchings to contemporary works, you'll find it all in OV

Just northwest of Tucson, with the dramatic Pusch Ridge as its backdrop, Oro Valley reads like a treasure map of exploration for fans of the arts. This scenic town takes the arts seriously, requiring commercial developers to provide funding for public art.

With more than 200 pieces of public art here, expect to see a full range of mediums and subjects, from whimsical bronze sculptures of children playing to interpretive reflections of the surrounding terrain. Fans of sculptures, mosaics, and other large-format installations will want to visit Oro Valley's website for the free guided tours of the town's public artwork, occurring twice monthly, September-June.

A visit to Tohono Chul is a must while in the area. Explore the 49-acre grounds dedicated to preserving and celebrating the natural wonders of the Sonoran Desert. Although the park is surrounded by a bustling urban center, once you're wandering through the trails, you're instantly transported to a garden of serenity. The property includes a charming old adobe home-now gallery-chock-full of regional artists' work.



If your interests extend beyond the arts into heritage and culture, Oro Valley has several noteworthy sights. Discover the Hohokam people who thrived in this area for a thousand years at Catalina State Park where a short hike brings you to Romero Ruin. In nearby Honeybee Canyon, less than a mile from the trailhead, marvel at the petroglyphs they left behind. Hundreds of years later, ranchers settled in this area, and you can find remnants of their past along both trails. Today, residents and visitors alike visit Steam Pump Ranch for weekly farmers markets and other events. Settled by German immigrants in the 1870s, this ranch is listed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks.

If you're looking to purchase something to remember your visit, stop at the Western National Parks Association store where you can find Mexican and Native American art and handmade crafts, such as baskets, jewelry, carvings, and pottery. And when you buy that piece of art, feel good knowing that proceeds support the national parks of the West. Think of it as your investment in both the natural and cultural arts of the region.



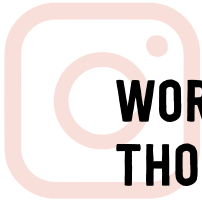
Left:
Tohono Chul

Top:
Oro Valley Festival
of the Arts

Right:
Toscana Gallery



David Seeber



WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Tucson has an incredibly inspired Instagram community, and we're continually floored by the amazing images that our visitors and neighbors post.

Share yours by tagging **@VISITTUCSON** + **#VISITTUCSON**



@johnprolly snaps some sick Southern Arizona shredding ❤️



A gorgeous day at Oro Valley Aquatic Center from @barb1962 ❤️



@raycleveland shoots centennial sunshine at @hotelcongress ❤️



The @desertmuseum in full bloom by @frankiemclister ❤️



@xreinaa1 and friends enjoy the wide open spaces at @ziparizona ❤️



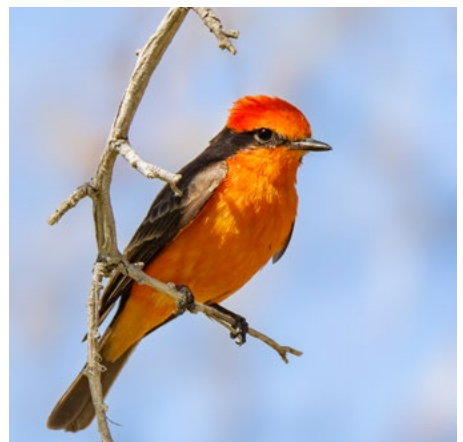
An epic monsoon sunset at Mission San Xavier del Bac by @jochoa15 ❤️



Rolled tacos, birria ramen, and tortas on deck from @rolliestucson ❤️



@allophe_ with a stunning display of colorful architecture in El Presidio ❤️



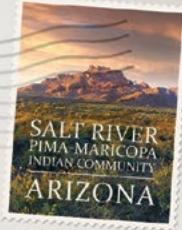
An adorable Vermilion Flycatcher captured by @jklewis52 ❤️

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2020 was a hard year for everyone, but our commitment to delivering safe and memorable entertainment options for you, your friends and your family has not wavered! The Salt River Indian Community's Talking Stick Entertainment District is Arizona's biggest and best place to play and stay and we hope that when you return to the valley, you'll find time to explore new properties like Great Wolf Lodge AZ, Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament and the USS Arizona Memorial Gardens at Salt River. The Salt River Indian Community's heritage of hospitality is shining through and we look forward to seeing you soon!



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