



**February 2026**

**A Roundup of What’s New in AZ**

Resorts, Hotels & Spas..... page 1  
 Arizona Attractions..... page 6  
 Arizona Tours..... page 10  
 Arizona Tourism Industry News..... page 11  
 Arizona Accolades..... page 13  
 On the Horizon..... page 15

**Resorts, Hotels & Spas**

***Greater Phoenix and Central Arizona***

**AC Hotel Scottsdale Old Town**

Visitors can stay footsteps away from [Old Town Scottsdale's](#) nightlife and charming Arts District at [AC Hotel Scottsdale Old Town](#), a new hotel opening in February 2026. Here, guests can spend their day poolside at the rooftop pool before dining at Cielito, the rooftop restaurant that offers Northwest Mexico-inspired cuisine and stunning views of the city. After long days of exploring or attending conferences, guests can wind down in their desert-inspired, pet-friendly rooms. Opening February 2026.

**New Luxury Residence Opens at Enchantment Resort in Sedona**

Families seeking a longer-term stay can book the [Canyon Vista](#), a new private residence offered at [Enchantment Resort](#), located in Boynton Canyon in [Sedona](#). Canyon Vista is a two-bedroom home with a fully equipped kitchen and floor-to-ceiling windows in the living room so guests can soak in views of the canyon. The home’s patio overlooks the heated pool and offers stunning views of Sedona’s dark skies at night. Guests can enjoy the resort’s amenities including the spa, golf course, onsite restaurants and the Trail House, an epicenter for outdoor adventures. Opened in early 2026.

**Sanctuary Camelback Mountain Completes \$7 million renovation**

[Sanctuary Camelback Mountain](#) in [Scottsdale](#) completed a \$7 million renovation of 8,000 square feet of its indoor and outdoor spaces so that their design is in harmony with the resort's desert setting. Also,

architectural improvements were made, including adding storefront windows to the West and North buildings, and The Views Lawn and Terrace now have flexible seating options. Completed in early 2026.

### **The Villas at Canyon Suites at The Phoenician Scottsdale**

[The Canyon Suites at The Phoenician, a Luxury Collection Resort, Scottsdale](#), opened [The Villas at Canyon Suites](#) in early 2026. Canyon Suites is a resort-within-a-resort offering guests the opportunity to stay in eight new luxury standalone villas with multiple rooms. Ideal for visitors seeking a private escape and an extended stay, these contemporary Southwest-designed villas offer views of Camelback Mountain, outdoor patio fire tables and a private swimming pool complex with cabanas. Opened early 2026.

### **Scottsdale Golf Retreat at Troon North**

Visitors can experience the ultimate golf getaway at [Scottsdale Golf Retreat at Troon North](#), a new luxury resort in [Scottsdale](#), only a few steps from Troon North Golf Club. The resort's 26 modern desert villas offer two to four bedrooms right next to Troon North's clubhouse and first tee. Golfers can play the challenging Monument and Pinnacle courses while soaking in the beauty of the desert landscape and views of Pinnacle Peak. Opening early 2026.

### **Denū Hotel & Spa**

Travelers who want to stay in the heart of [Downtown Phoenix](#) should consider [Denū Hotel & Spa](#), a new retreat just down the street from Chase Field and the Phoenix Convention Center. Denū draws inspiration from the desert's energy, and encourages guests to embrace renewal by unwinding at the full-service wellness spa and soaking in the rooftop pool overlooking the stunning city skyline. This new lifestyle hotel will feature 236 rooms, 16 suites, an urban-designed presidential suite and more than 22,000 square feet of meetings and event space. Opening late 2026.

### **New Atari Hotel Announced for Downtown Phoenix in 2028**

[Atari Hotel](#) has announced plans to open an 11-story video game-inspired hotel in downtown [Phoenix](#) in 2028. This retro-futuristic designed hotel inspired by the video game brand will be a world-class entertainment destination with an esports arena, a sportsbook and an interactive gaming space with augmented reality and virtual reality experiences. In between gaming and live events, guests can enjoy high-tech rooms or VIP suites, see a concert, dine at the onsite restaurants and shop at the onsite retail. Located on Roosevelt Row, guests will be footsteps away from the city's popular street art and close to downtown's biggest attractions.

### **Kimpton Miralina**

Visitors seeking serenity can stay at the new [Kimpton Miralina](#) in [Scottsdale](#), formerly the Scottsdale Plaza Resort & Villas. The reimagined resort offers over 400 guest rooms, suites and villas along with many wellness amenities. Guests can spend the day lounging at one of six pools or at the spa where they can participate in mindfulness experiences including sound bathing and yoga. Guests can end the day with artisanal Mexican cuisine at the resort's new restaurant, Hecho Libre. Opened January 2026.

### **Outbound Sedona**

Families will enjoy views of [Sedona's](#) famous Bell Rock when staying at the new [Outbound Sedona](#), a reimaged and renovated property formerly known as Poco Diablo Resort. The 137-room resort will feature redesigned guestrooms and an enhanced spa where guests can relax in the dry sauna or take a cold plunge. The resort's pool area, Moonwater, features two pools, two hot tubs and fire pits with unmatched views of Bell Rock — the perfect place to enjoy stargazing at [Sedona's dark skies](#). Visitors will enjoy Southwestern cuisine with a twist at the on-site restaurant, Lucida. Opening May 2026.

### **L'Auberge de Sedona's \$30 Million Transformation Complete**

First-time [Sedona](#) visitors can expect a lavish stay at [L'Auberge de Sedona](#), which recently completed a \$30 million property-wide renovation, including new lodging at [The Cliffs](#). The Cliffs' 70 elevated guest rooms and suites feature a contemporary Southwestern design and balconies with picturesque views of Snoopy Rock. The resort's new heated pool, the "Duck Pond," sits cliffside so guests can enjoy phenomenal red rock views. Guests can spend their days achieving holistic wellness at the [L'Apothecary Spa](#) and enjoy fine dining at [Cress on Oak Creek](#). Opened late 2025.

### **Hilton Scottsdale Resort & Villas \$24 Million Renovation Complete**

Guests can stay in one of the new 45 redesigned villas at the [Hilton Scottsdale Resort](#), which recently completed the second phase of its \$24 million renovation. The new villas are ideal for large groups vacationing together, including family reunions, since they are arranged in clusters of five. Guests can enjoy private access to a new pool area during the day and make s'mores at the fire pits at night. Families can dine at the three on-site restaurants, explore nearby Old Town Scottsdale or golf at one of the nearby world-class courses. Opened late 2025.

### **The Spa at the JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn Resort & Spa Undergoes \$24 Million Transformation**

The redesigned [Spa at JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn](#) invites guests to experience the wellness benefits of the Sonoran Desert. The transformed spa embraces the arIVéa philosophy, an individually crafted pathway to holistic health that combines the natural energy of Arizona's deserts with timeless rituals and treatments. This sanctuary offers desert-inspired treatments using indigenous ingredients, a trio of tranquil hydrotherapies and a studio where guests can engage in mindfulness sessions. Opened in February 2026.

### **The REMI Scottsdale is Now Open**

The [REMI Scottsdale, Autograph Collection](#), is a boutique hotel located in the heart of [Scottsdale's Entertainment District](#). Intertwining luxury with a dynamic atmosphere, this 161-room hotel features five dining venues, VIP access to the adjacent Maya Day + Nightclub and stunning sunset views from its rooftop pool, the highest one in the city. Guests looking to soak up the sun can book one of the two Loft Suites patios that open to the hotel's pool deck. They can enjoy the hotel's culinary experiences, including savory dishes at the Japanese Steakhouse, elevated comfort food at the modern diner and curated cocktails at the Rooftop Bar alongside the pool. The REMI Scottsdale opened in July 2025.

### **Enjoy an AI-Powered Massage at the W Scottsdale**

Those ready to combine technology and tradition should experience a one-of-a-kind massage at the [AWAY Spa](#) in [W Scottsdale](#), now offering Arizona's first AI-powered massage in collaboration with Aescape. This cutting-edge treatment features intelligent robotic arms guided by advanced AI technology to deliver a customized full-body massage. Guests can personalize their session by selecting pressure levels, target areas, and massage styles while the system responds and adjusts in real-time. This new massage started in June 2025.

### **Hotel Valley Ho in Scottsdale Completed its \$18 million Renovation**

The historic, mid-century designed [Hotel Valley Ho](#) in [Old Town Scottsdale](#) completed an \$18 million renovation to refresh its rooms, fusing vintage aesthetic with modern design. This marks the largest renovation since opening in 1956. Renovated rooms in the hotel's original wings are now open to guests to enjoy after exploring Old Town's galleries, dining at the on-site restaurant, [Zuzu](#), or learning about the hotel's storied history on the 90-minute Magical History walking tour. The renovated rooms opened in July 2025.

### **Top of The Lodge: A New Stay at Castle Hot Springs**

Perfect for a girls' getaway or a trip with extended family, [Top of The Lodge](#) is a new luxury suite at [Castle Hot Springs](#). The suite features three bedrooms, four bathrooms and a wraparound deck with stunning views of the Sonoran Desert. Just steps away from Castle Hot Springs' Bar, 1896, and its farm-to-table restaurant, Harvest, guests have easy access to exceptional dining. On-site activities include swimming in the remedial hot springs, touring the farm and hiking or biking. This new suite opened in July 2025.

### **Cottonwood's Tavern Hotel Offers a Paw-Sitively Perfect Escape**

[The Taven Hotel](#) has new luxurious accommodations just for four-legged friends. In addition to the [Tavern Dog Cottage](#), which opened a couple of years ago, The Tavern has a new [Dog Suite](#) designed with furry best friends in mind. The all-new Dog Suite is a 450-square-foot retreat for two humans and up to two pups (65 lbs. max), with a lavish bathroom, plush king bed, soft-topped mattress and plenty of space to spread out. Visitors and their furry friends can pick up some new toys at the nearby [Paw on Main Street](#), take a walk through [Dead Horse Ranch State Park](#) and grab a puppuccino at the walk-up window at [Crema Craft Kitchen + Bar](#) across the street. Opened in August 2025.

### **Mountain Modern Sedona Now Open**

The new [Mountain Modern Sedona](#) is ideal for guests seeking wellness or adventure. In addition to numerous wellness activities and "noctourism" classes, the hotel offers an on-site restaurant, pool and custom storage for guests' outdoor adventure gear. Wellness activities include crystal bowl sound baths, chakra exploration and exploring Sedona's famous vortexes. The pet-friendly hotel offers a full-service outdoor dog spa, pet-focused activities and a menu for furry friends at the onsite restaurant. After spending the day exploring Sedona's red rocks, visitors will soak in views of Sedona's dark skies at

Mountain Modern's evening yoga and stargazing sessions. In the mornings, guests can wake up to a sunrise ceremony inspired by American Indian traditions. Opened in April 2025.

### **Stay at the Taawaki Inn, A Hopi-owned and Operated Hotel In Clarkdale**

[The Taawaki Inn](#) in [Clarkdale](#) is the only [Hopi](#)-owned and operated hotel outside the Hopi sovereign nation, offering visitors an opportunity to experience Hopi culture while staying in the Verde Valley. The Hopi-inspired design of this 44-room hotel, which opened last summer, has an aesthetic that mirrors a traditional Hopi home, allowing guests to see Hopi artists' artwork and craftwork on display. Visitors can shop for authentic Hopi handcrafted goods at the on-site gallery, participate in one of the resort's cultural events, or visit [Tuzigoot National Monument](#), an ancient pueblo site along the Hopi migration route, to get a glimpse of how Hopi ancestors lived. Celebrating its 1st anniversary in July 2025.

### **Hidden Gem Getaway: Acoustic Cellars Lodge in Verde Valley Wine Country**

Those who want to enjoy wine, wellness and live music can now visit the newly opened [Acoustic Cellars Lodge](#) in [Cornville](#), nestled in the [Verde Valley](#), one of Arizona's three American Viticultural Areas. Options include joining the lodge's AZ Wine Crawler tour and visiting several wineries in Sedona and Verde Valley, where guests can savor award-winning wines while soaking in the picturesque scenery. At this cozy lodge, visitors can spend the day playing pickleball, petting the alpaca and relaxing in the hot tub. In the evening, they can unwind at intimate onsite concerts from the lodge's owner, Leon J, an award-winning Heritage Blues Hall of Fame artist. Opened July 2025.

## ***Northern Arizona – Resorts, Hotels and Spas***

### **Highland Grand Canyon is the Newest and Closest Glamping Retreat to Grand Canyon's South Rim**

*Opened in May 2025*

[Highland Grand Canyon](#) is just four miles from the [Canyon](#). Nestled beneath tall ponderosa pines, it offers a quiet forest setting where guests can stay close to the park, yet feel worlds away from the crowds. With five safari tents, Highland combines the simplicity of an off-grid retreat with the comforts of home, including king-size memory foam beds, hot showers and free WiFi. Shared spaces include communal bathrooms, an outdoor kitchen, picnic tables and a fire pit. When evening falls, Highland reveals some of Arizona's darkest skies, perfect for unforgettable stargazing. Elk and deer often pass through the property, and with the Canyon minutes away, it is the perfect setting for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Grand Canyon. Highland is open seasonally from May 1 to Oct. 20.

### **Tin Can Alley Airbnb Welcomes Travelers on Route 66**

With the Route 66 Centennial celebration next year, [Kingman](#) is ready to welcome visitors to the newly opened [Tin Can Alley](#). Here, guests can stay overnight in renovated vintage Airstream trailers, footsteps away from the city's numerous museums, retro diners and memorabilia shops. Visitors can start every adventurous day at [Mud on 66](#), the onsite coffee shop in a transformed mid-century tavern, and end it at [Scoops on 66](#), a refurbished 1939 Mobile gas station serving ice cream. Opened May 2025.

### **New Campground Near Petrified Forest National Park**

Visitors can watch a vibrant sunset over the vast, tranquil badlands near [Petrified Forest National Park](#) at the recently opened [Tickled Pink Flamingos Vintage Campground and Retreat Center](#). Directly off Route 66, roadtrippers can relax in one of the five cozy campers and enjoy a campfire under the stars while taking in the peaceful solitude of their remote surroundings. [Tickled Pink Flamingos](#) blends vintage charm with nature's beauty, making it an ideal stop when exploring the Mother Road during its upcoming 2026 centennial. Opened May 2025.

### **Flagstaff's First-Ever Dual-Branded Hotel Opened in August 2025**

Visitors participating in Flagstaff's numerous outdoor activities can stay at the city's first dual-branded hotel featuring [Home2 Suites by Hilton](#) and [Tru by Hilton](#). The 113 suites at Home2 Suites by Hilton are ideal for guests seeking an extended stay to explore Flagstaff, while 91 streamlined guest rooms at Tru by Hilton are designed for Route 66 roadtrippers looking for a quick, yet vibrant pitstop near the Mother Road. Just a short drive away from Lowell Observatory and Flagstaff Extreme Adventure Course, guests can unwind after a day of adventure in the hotel's heated pool and dine at the onsite Pines Bar & Bistro. Opened August 2025.

### **Trailborn Grand Canyon**

The [Trailborn Grand Canyon](#) is a newly restored hotel on [Route 66](#) in [Williams](#), a historic town known as the Gateway to the Grand Canyon. Thanks to Trailborn's location, guests can easily ride the [Grand Canyon Railroad](#) to visit the [South Rim of the Grand Canyon](#) or enjoy the retro diners and shops along [Route 66](#) in Williams. Families can book off-site excursions with local experts to go on guided hikes, stargazing tours and helicopter rides. This is an ideal stay for road trippers eager to visit Arizona during the [Route 66 centennial celebration](#) in 2026. Opened early 2025.

## **Arizona Attractions**

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

#### **2026 Cactus League Spring Training Begins in February**

The [2026 Cactus League Spring Training](#) season starts in late February (February 20, 2026) with baseball games occurring daily across central Arizona through late March. Watch 15 Major League teams compete while you enjoy Arizona's weather, affordable ticket prices and energetic fan-filled stadiums. After a game, fans can [explore Metro-Phoenix](#) or extend their stay to explore Northern and Southern Arizona.

#### **International Dark Sky Discovery Center**

Families will be able to peer into the galaxy at the new [International Dark Sky Discovery Center](#) in [Fountain Hills](#), which will feature the largest telescope in the Phoenix metro area open for public viewing. At the center, visitors will learn about astronomy by marveling at the Craig and Ruth Gimbel Planetarium, equipped with state-of-the-art tilted dome technology. Visitors will also enjoy views of dark skies at the Inspiration Theater. Space enthusiasts of all ages will be eager to explore the

interactive exhibit hall and become scientists with hands-on learning experiences. Opening fall/winter 2026.

### **2026 NCAA Women's Final Four**

The legendary college basketball tournament will be hosted in [Phoenix](#) for the first time this April. The [NCAA Women's Final Four](#) experience features a collection of events in addition to the games that will be played at the [Mortgage Matchup Center](#) in downtown. In between games, visitors can explore downtown's museums, dining and nightlife. Fans should extend their trip to embark on adventures across the state to experience Arizona's breathtaking landscapes and hidden gems. Games are April 2-5, 2026.

### **The Rough Rider: A New Biking Race**

Bikers can race through the Prescott National Forest competing in [The Rough Rider](#), a new three-day gravel stage race in [Prescott](#) that combines challenging terrain, scenic views and Western charm for a one-of-a-kind race. The three-day race starts in the mining town of Jerome with racers conquering switchbacks before arriving at Watson Lake in Prescott. On the second day, riders pedal through the pines of the Prescott National Forest until racing back into downtown Prescott. On the last day, racers take off from downtown to the Thumb Butte corridor into the wilderness before finishing the race at downtown Prescott's Courthouse Square. Race is Oct. 30 - Nov. 1, 2026.

### **Reimagined Dorrance Planetarium in Phoenix**

Visitors and locals can explore the galaxy at the reimagined [Dorrance Planetarium](#) at the [Arizona Science Center](#) in downtown [Phoenix](#), which reopened on Oct. 18, 2025. The planetarium is the most technologically advanced in North America, 100 times brighter than most planetarium projection domes, thanks to a partnership with the immersive tech company Cosm. This 8K+ resolution digital dome transports guests into space, black holes and the stars of Arizona's dark skies. It's a must-visit for space lovers, science enthusiasts and anyone looking for an awe-inspiring journey beyond Earth. Reopened in October 2025.

### **Arizona's First Upscale Supper Club Opens in Scottsdale**

Elevated fine dining and entertainment can be enjoyed at the new [SHIV Supper Club](#) in [Scottsdale's Entertainment District](#). This luxurious and intimate culinary experience offers world-class cuisine paired with craft cocktails and immersive entertainment. On weekends, the Supper Club transforms into [The Dessert Room](#), where guests can indulge in 12 ever-changing, unique desserts crafted by acclaimed Pastry Chef Nundi Harris. Reservations are required. Opened in May 2025.

### **Phoenix Zoo's New 'Big Cats of Arizona' Habitat Opens**

Guests at [Phoenix Zoo](#) can enjoy an up-close view of mountain lions and jaguars thanks to the new "Big Cats of Arizona: This new area includes the Zoo's first-ever "catwalk," allowing guests to walk directly below the big cats as they move overhead. Visitors can view the majestic cats from multiple angles while learning the importance of conserving these species. Opened in April 2025.

### **Enjoy American Indian Art on the New Salt River Arts Trail**

Visitors should take time to observe baskets, paintings and sculptures made by members of the [Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community](#) (SRPMIC) while driving along the new [Salt River Arts Trail](#) woven throughout the Talking Stick Entertainment District. Driving to and stopping at all 13 stops along the trail provides guests a way to experience SRPMIC's culture, creation stories and meaningful symbols. Those who visit the majority of the artwork along the trail will earn enough points to receive a free, exclusive T-shirt made by SRPMIC artist Dwayne Manuel at the Salt River Visitor Center. Visitors can then rock their custom shirt while gaming at [Talking Stick Casino](#) or catching a baseball game at [Salt River Fields](#), spring training home of the Arizona Diamondbacks and Colorado Rockies, just to name a few other fun activities available within the area. Opened early 2025.

### **New Mountain Bike Trail System Opens in Prescott**

The new [Bean Peaks Gravity Flow Trail System](#) in [Prescott](#) is designed so every biker, including recumbent hand-pedaled bikers, can experience the thrill of mountain biking through towering ponderosa pines. The first of its kind in the state, the 9.2 miles of gravity flow trails are bike-specific for all mountain bikers to enjoy, offering varying difficulties, multi-lap options and bike-only areas. The second phase added 6.9 miles of trails to the public in Fall 2025.

### **Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott is Now an Officially Recognized Arboretum**

Plant lovers can wander among 89 species of trees and woody plants at [Sharlot Hall Museum](#) in Prescott, a newly recognized arboretum. Visitors can explore the museum's four-acre campus, including the Yavpé Ethnobotany Garden, created with the help of the Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe. Or, they choose to stroll through the stunning Memorial Rose Garden, home to 180 rose varieties and dedicated to Arizona's early pioneer and frontier women. Visitors can also explore the museum's eight historic buildings, including the log cabin Governor's Mansion built in 1864 for the first Governor of the Arizona Territory, John Goodwin. This landmark houses exhibits on pioneer life, the history of the Yavapai people and early vehicles. The museum earned the Arboretum recognition in April 2025.

## ***Northern Arizona – Arizona Attractions***

### **Highway Hot Dog Opens On Route 66**

Road trippers can enjoy all-beef hot dogs at the newly opened [Highway Hot Dog](#) in [Seligman](#). Families can stop here for hot dogs, sandwiches, lattes and gelato before exploring Seligman's history and gift shops. Located in a historic building that was a theater and a sweet parlor, Highway Hot Dog is owned by the same restaurant entrepreneurs of Seligman's beloved Westside Lilo's Cafe. Opened in early 2026.

### **GPS Guided Route 66 Audio Tour**

The recently launched [GPS Guided Route 66 Audio Tour](#) provides road trippers with historic information and driving instructions as they cruise along Arizona's Route 66. Created by the [Historic Route 66](#)

[Association of Arizona](#) and developed by the Guide Along, the audio tour offers intriguing tidbits and tips. Visitors can purchase the tour for \$26 from the Guide Along website, the App Store or the Play Store. Drivers can also purchase additional tours for area attractions, including the [Grand Canyon National Park South Rim](#) and the [Petrified Forest National Park](#). It is available for download throughout the centennial celebration.

### **New Route 66 Experiences in Flagstaff**

In Flagstaff, [Route 66 to the Grand Canyon](#), a family-friendly comedy written by acclaimed filmmaker and writer Peter Kershaw debuted at the [Doris Harper-White Playhouse](#) on February 8, 2026. This interactive and heartfelt play will also be held at the [Museum of Northern Arizona](#) throughout 2026. Along with the play, the Museum of Northern Arizona offers a new exhibit, "[Wagon Road to Mother Road](#)" which showcases the evolution of travel in northern Arizona from the Beale Wagon Road to Route 66. The exhibit runs through October 26, 2026, and is based on the museum's archaeological surveys in [Petrified Forest National Park](#). Lowell Observatory has opened a new tour called "[Cosmic Highways: A Centennial Tour](#)" that follows the astronomical discoveries of Percival Lowell, the founder of Lowell Observatory, made along Route 66 in Arizona. In addition, Flagstaff will host a Route 66 Centennial celebration on June 6, 2026.

### **Meteor City Reopens with a New Dino Drive-Thru**

Families can spot more than 30 towering dinosaur statues at [Meteor City](#), a longtime Route 66 roadside attraction recently revived for the next generation of roadtrippers. Easily recognizable by its massive geodesic dome, Meteor City is located 20 miles west of Winslow. Once a trading post and Texaco gas station, Meteor City continues to evolve, offering fun activities while embracing the quirky spirit of Route 66. At the new [Dino Drive-thru](#), travelers can drive through the one-of-a-kind dinosaur park with over 30 dinosaurs on display. Families can spend the afternoon mining for gemstones, creating graffiti art on a vintage Volkswagen and playing retro arcade games. Reopened in May 2025.

### **Route 66 Dog Park Newly Opened in Kingman**

[Kingman](#) erected a drive-thru Route 66 shield for visitors to take the perfect photo and commemorate their drive along Route 66. For those traveling with their fur babies, Kingman offers yet another reason to make a stop. The newly opened [Route 66 Dog Park](#), located next to the Route 66 Museum, provides plenty of space for dogs to run and offers a dog drinking fountain. The most bark-worthy attraction at the park is a 5-foot-tall dog walk-through Route 66 shield. Opened September 2025.

### **Enjoy New Musical Road Driving Into Winslow**

Route 66 roadtrippers can now hear their tires play the iconic tune of The Eagles' "Take it Easy" while cruising into [Winslow](#) thanks to the new custom-designed singing road installed as part of the Route 66 centennial celebration in 2026. The city of Winslow, with the help of ROADTUNES, installed a synthetic asphalt material that, when driven over at the exact speed of 35 miles per hour, will make the tires vibrate and create the tune of a verse in the song "Take it Easy" that mentions Winslow. Located on the east side of town near the 9/11 Memorial Park, drivers can roll down their windows and hear their tires play the catchy verse, "Standin' on a corner in Winslow, Arizona, such a fine sight to see," to kick off

their visit before exploring Winslow's Standing on the Corner Park, Old Trails Museum and La Posada Hotel. Opened in September 2025.

### **Grand Canyon Caverns & Inn Reopens**

Travelers in Northern Arizona can once again explore [Grand Canyon Caverns & Inn](#), located along Arizona's Historic Route 66 and home of the largest dry caverns in the U.S. The famous site reopened to visitors in June after extensive renovations. Visitors can descend 220 feet underground to tour the caverns, winding through the rock walls while learning about the cavern's history. After working up an appetite, visitors are encouraged to enjoy a meal at the [Crystal Restaurant](#), which is located directly inside the caverns. The property also has newly renovated accommodations, including a ranch house, cabins, a bunkhouse, standard rooms or a tent site. Visitors can also stay at the [on-site RV Park](#), which features bathhouses for roadtrippers to enjoy. The Caverns make a great stop when driving along Route 66 to celebrate its centennial in 2026. Reopened in September 2025.

### **Petrified Forest Museum Association's 'The Bend on 66' Opens in Holbrook**

The Petrified Forest Museum Association recently opened ['The Bend on 66'](#), its new headquarters, educational outlet and store in downtown [Holbrook](#). The store offers a blend of park information, books and nostalgic collectible items. Designed to embody the classic retro flair of Route 66, the store serves as a great starting point for visitors to learn more about the Petrified Forest before visiting the park. Opened July 2025.

### ***Southern Arizona – Arizona Attractions***

#### **Tucson Auto Museum Reopened**

Car enthusiasts can enjoy the [Tucson Auto Museum](#) at its new, easily accessible location. More than 70 cars are displayed through the museum, including vintage, Hollywood-inspired and limited edition vehicles. Visitors can catch a glimpse of two rare Davis Divan cars, of which only 17 were ever produced, and an Aqua Car that can ride on water, and take a picture in front of a replica of the Batmobile from the famed Batman TV series of the 1960s. Car meet-ups and car shows are held in front of the museum all year-round. The museum reopened in April 2025.

### **Arizona Tours**

#### **Prescott's New Whiskey Trail Pass**

*Launched in September 2025*

Visitors can immerse themselves in the Western charm of [Prescott's](#) famous Whiskey Row with the new [Prescott Whiskey Trail](#), a free digital pass that showcases the best bars downtown. After downloading the pass, thirsty participants can explore 24 bars and saloons, each offering signature whiskeys or pints. At each stop, users check in by completing a custom trivia challenge or scavenger hunt-style riddle to earn points to unlock prizes and perks along the way. Download the pass [here](#).

#### **New Arizona Wild Bunch: Family Pass**

Families traveling with kids can discover all of Arizona's best family-friendly activities with the new [Arizona Wild Bunch: Family Pass](#). The free passport offers an interactive map and guide that showcases more than 60 kid-approved attractions and destinations across the state. With this pass as a resource, families can easily plan their trip and embark on fun adventures like riding the [Grand Canyon Railway](#) in Williams, expressing creativity at the [i.d.e.a Museum](#) in Mesa, or exploring five completely different environments at [Biosphere 2](#) near Tucson. With an abundance of outdoor adventures, museums, zoos and hands-on activities, there's something fun to discover for the whole family. The pass launched in the summer of 2025.

### **Visit Mesa Launches a New Digital Accessibility Travel Guide**

[Mesa](#), the world's first Autism Certified City, now offers a new digital [Accessibility Travel Guide](#) that helps people on the autism spectrum and their families easily plan and enjoy their visit. The new guide showcases the city's sensory-friendly attractions, autism-certified businesses and firsthand stories from travelers to support inclusive travel. As the first city to earn a Destination Verified Seal from [Wheel the World](#), a website dedicated to connecting people with disabilities with recommended activities in destinations, Mesa's new guide also includes accessible trails, accommodations and resources. The new guide was launched in May 2025.

### **Arizona Tourism Industry News**

#### ***Greater Phoenix and Central Arizona – Arizona Tourism News***

#### **Porter Airlines New Seasonal Flights to Phoenix**

[Porter Airlines](#) now offers Canadian visitors new seasonal routes to [Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport](#) from Vancouver, British Columbia, and will soon launch routes from Ottawa, Ontario, starting February 7. Porter launched its first-ever transborder service from Vancouver on February 2, 2026, a nonstop flight to Phoenix that operates daily until April 19, 2026. The upcoming Ottawa service marks the first nonstop route between Phoenix and Canada's capital city, with the flight operating three times a week until April 18, 2026.

#### **MICHELIN Guide Launches Southwest Edition**

MICHELIN Guide announced the launch of the [MICHELIN Guide Southwest edition](#) to showcase the culinary gems of the Southwest including Arizona along with Nevada, New Mexico and Utah. This marks MICHELIN's second regional guide in North America created to highlight the unique restaurants in both the metropolitan hubs and rural areas of the Southwest that provide the best experiences and regional flavors. The guide is expected to debut later this year.

#### **Two Arizona Dude Ranches to Celebrate Centennials in 2026**

There are two dude ranches in Arizona celebrating their centennial anniversaries this year: [Circle Z Ranch](#) in [Patagonia](#) and [Kay El Bar Guest Ranch](#) in [Wickenburg](#). Circle Z Ranch is tucked away in the Sonoran Desert at the base of Sanford Butte, surrounded by dramatic landscapes in every direction.

And, at Kay El Bar Guest Ranch, visitors can discover saguaro forests and slot canyons along rocky mountain trails.

### **New Nonstop Flights Connect Asia to Arizona**

Two Taiwan-based airlines now offer service from Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport to [Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport](#), marking the first nonstop flights between Asia and Arizona. [China Airlines](#) started service from Taipei to Phoenix on Dec. 3, 2025, while [STARLUX Airlines](#) launched nonstop flights on Jan. 15, 2026.

### **RetrievAir Launched at Scottsdale Airport**

Travelers who love bringing their pets on vacation will want to fly to Arizona on [RetrievAir](#), an aviation service that allows pets to fly right next to their owners. Recently featured on “Shark Tank”, RetrievAir will offer flights to [Scottsdale Airport](#) from Los Angeles, Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago, New York and Tampa. Launched February 2026.

### **American Airlines New Routes**

[American Airlines](#) is adding new routes to [Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport](#) from Santa Maria, Calif., Sun Valley, Idaho and Fort Myers, Florida.

### **STARLUX Airlines Announces Partnership with American Airlines**

Following the announcement of its new nonstop flights between [Phoenix](#), Arizona, and Taipei, Taiwan [STARLUX](#) has revealed a new partnership with American Airlines. As a key hub in the Southwestern U.S. for American Airlines, Phoenix offers strategic advantages for travelers. STARLUX has scheduled its Phoenix flights to allow smooth connections to American flights bound for major U.S. cities such as New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Charlotte, Miami, Dallas, Las Vegas and more. Announced in August 2025.

### **New Nonstop Frontier Flight between Tucson and Dallas-Fort Worth Began in October**

Frontier Airlines offers nonstop service between [Tucson International Airport \(TUS\)](#) and Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) twice a week, starting Oct. 9, 2025. This marks Frontier Airlines' third nonstop destination since returning to TUS earlier in the year. The new flight was announced in July 2025.

### **Air France Increases Nonstop Flights between Phoenix and Paris**

Air France now offers nonstop service between Phoenix and Paris five times a week on an Airbus A350-900, a fuel-efficient aircraft known for its reduced environmental impact. This increase in flights for Air France's first-ever nonstop flight between [Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport \(PHX\)](#) and Paris Charles de Gaulle International Airport started just in time for the inaugural flight's first anniversary in May 2025. The news of the increase in flights was announced in May 2025.

### **New Aeromexico Nonstop Flights Between Phoenix and Mexico City Commenced Spring 2025**

In March 2025, Aeromexico and Delta Airlines partnered to launch new daily nonstop flights between [Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport](#) and Mexico City International Airport. This marks the second airline at Phoenix Sky Harbor to offer non-stop flights between Phoenix and Mexico City, as demand for routes between these destinations keeps growing.

### ***Northern Arizona – Arizona Tourism News***

#### **Flagstaff Celebrates 25 Years as the World's First International Dark Sky City**

This year marks the 25th anniversary of [Flagstaff](#) being designated the [world's first International Dark Sky City](#). To celebrate, Flagstaff is hosting stargazing events year-round so visitors can get lost in the stars.

Stargazers can glimpse into the galaxy at International Dark Sky Week in April, dance under the stars at the Full Moon Concerts in Buffalo Park held throughout the summer and participate in the 25th Anniversary Celebration events occurring on October 24, 2026. Space enthusiasts can learn and observe Flagstaff's dark skies anytime by visiting [Lowell Observatory](#) and the [Astronomy Discovery Center](#) at Lowell. Celebrate throughout 2026.

#### **Paleontologists Name A New Species of Tanystropheid Reptile at Petrified Forest National Park**

Paleontologists at [Petrified Forest National Park](#) named a new aquatic reptile whose fossils were discovered in the park. The Akidostropheus oligos, a tanystropheid reptile that lived in the Triassic period, was smaller than a pinky and had a long neck for its body size. In collaboration with the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, the Petrified Forest named the reptile after its distinct appearance, with Akidostropheus oligos meaning "tiny spiked back bone," referring to its distinctively small neck vertebra with a unique spike on top. The fossils were found in the "Thunderstorm Ridge" area of the park by collecting rocks, rinsing the rocks with water through a fine metal screen and looking at the sediments under a microscope to find the microfossils of the Akidostropheus oligos. Announced in August 2025.

### **Arizona Accolades**

#### ***Greater Phoenix and Central Arizona - Arizona Accolades***

#### **Six Arizona hotels recognized in Condé Nast Traveler's 10 Best Resorts in the Southwest**

Arizona dominated Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards 2025 list of the [10 Best Resorts in the Southwest](#) by having six hotels recognized with the [Fairmont Scottsdale Princess](#) earning first place. Guests can enjoy a luxurious stay at Fairmont Scottsdale Princess enjoying the sandy beach along the pool, unwinding at the acclaimed spa and creating new traditions at the resort's popular holiday events. Visitors can have remarkable stays at all the Arizona resorts recognized which include: [Rancho de los Caballeros](#) in [Wickenburg](#), the [Scottsdale Resort & Spa](#) in [Scottsdale](#), [Enchantment Resort](#) in [Sedona](#), [L'Auberge de Sedona](#) in [Sedona](#) and the [Arizona Biltmore](#) in [Phoenix](#).

### **2026 James Beard Award Semifinalists in Arizona**

The [James Beard Foundation](#), a nonprofit organization that celebrates the individuals transforming America's food culture, announced the 2026 semifinalists for the 40th annual Restaurant and Chefs Award. [Twelve of Arizona's chefs, mixologists and restaurants](#) made the list, including some past nominees and new additions.

### **Chef Yotaka Martin of Phoenix's Lom Wong Wins James Beard Award for Best Chef- Southwest**

Chef Yotaka Martin of Phoenix's [Lom Wong](#) earned the 2025 James Beard Award for Best Chef in the Southwest, making her the 12th Arizona chef to earn the award and marking the second consecutive year a Phoenix chef has won the title. (Chef Rene Andrade of Phoenix's Bacanora won the 2024 Award). Chef Martin showcases the flavors and culinary traditions of authentic Thai cuisine she grew up learning in Thailand at Lom Wong, offering diners a chance to try unique dishes from small villages across the country. This family-run restaurant invites guests to savor Won Pen's fried chicken, pork belly curry and egg noodles with a cocktail while enjoying the intimate yet welcoming atmosphere. [The James Beard Foundation](#) celebrates individuals transforming America's food culture by recognizing chefs and restaurants that uphold a standard of high quality. The restaurant earned the award in June 2025.

### **Phoenix Ice Cream Shop Named 'Best Ice Cream Shop in the Country' by Yelp**

[Novel Ice Cream](#) in downtown Phoenix has been named the [Best Ice Cream Shop in the Country in Yelp's Top 100 Ice Cream List in 2025](#). Visitors can devour unique handcrafted ice cream at this family-owned shop with specialties such as the signature Dough Melt, a sweet combination of ice cream and toppings stuffed in between a homemade donut, creating an award-winning ice cream sandwich. With 12 rotating flavors, including Bourbon Caramel Toffee Crunch and Sweet Tea Sorbet, Novel offers something for every sweet tooth. Visit one of Novel Ice Cream's three locations (downtown Mesa, Old Town Peoria or downtown Phoenix) for the best summer dessert. The ice cream shop earned the award in July 2025.

### **Phoenix's Little Rituals Wins 'Best U.S. Hotel Bar'**

Guests can check in and then grab a cocktail at [Little Rituals](#) in [Residence Inn/Courtyard by Marriott Phoenix Downtown](#), which earned the prestigious title of the [Best US Hotel Bar by The Tales of the Cocktail Spirited Awards 2025](#). An international competition, the Spirited Awards celebrates the excellence among beverage professionals and establishments across the globe. Little Rituals earned the award for offering consistently well-made drinks in a comfortable setting and upholding the tradition of the classic hotel bar. Visitors exploring downtown's nightlife will want to swing by to sip elaborate and seasonal cocktails while enjoying views of the city. The bar won the award in July 2025.

### **Castle Hot Springs Recognized in Travel + Leisure's Top 15 Resorts in the U.S.**

Travelers' growing desire for secluded luxury and connection to nature earned [Castle Hot Springs](#) in Morristown a spot on [Travel + Leisure's 2025 World's Best Awards' Top 15 Resorts in the US](#). This desert oasis and wellness resort was also named the [number one resort in Arizona](#) for the fourth consecutive

year, thanks to its mineral-rich hot springs, outdoor activities and exceptional service. An adults-only getaway, the resort offers rejuvenation through [Watsu pool therapy](#), an outdoor adventure course, farm-to-table dining and serene stays in their private cabins or bungalows. The resort earned this recognition in July 2025.

### **Verde Canyon Railroad Recognized By National Geographic as a Top 10 ‘Dreamiest Stargazing Train’**

Visitors can ride the rails beneath an endless starry sky on the [Verde Canyon Railroad](#) in [Clarkdale](#), named the third-best stargazing train in the U.S. on [National Geographic’s Top 10 Dreamiest Stargazing Trains list](#). Riders can witness a vibrant Arizona sunset transform into clear dark skies on the [Saturday Starlight Tour](#), as they journey into the magnificent Verde Canyon for an evening of stargazing and exploration of remote chasms accessible only by rail. The train earned this designation in April 2025.

### **Travel + Leisure Names Sedona ‘Most Mindful Destination on Earth’**

[Sedona’s](#) natural wonders and spiritual elements have earned the prestigious designation of ["Most Mindful Destination on Earth" by Travel + Leisure](#) in April 2025. After analyzing thousands of TripAdvisor reviews for three years, Sedona scored a 92 on the mindfulness scale, beating other wellness hotspots to claim the honor. Sedona's red rock formations, strong spiritual community and energy vortexes help many travelers discover serenity and inner transformation. In addition to the vortexes, visitors can enjoy world-class spas and resorts, scenic hiking trails and a thriving arts community. Sedona earned this designation in April 2025.

### ***Northern Arizona - Arizona Accolades***

#### **Lake Havasu Named Among Best Beaches in the US**

[Lake Havasu State Park](#) in [Lake Havasu City](#) was recently named the 13th best beach in [Condé Nast Traveler’s 15 Best Beaches in the US](#) as part of their Readers’ Choice Awards 2025. Despite being landlocked, Arizona still offers a beach experience thanks to Lake Havasu’s sandy shoreline amongst the desert, creating a desert oasis. Lake Havasu’s beaches offer clear blue-green water and countless water recreation opportunities including boating, fishing and kayaking.

### ***Southern Arizona - Arizona Accolades***

#### **Tucson Recognized in BBC’s 25 Best Places to Travel in 2025**

Southern Arizona’s largest city, [Tucson](#), earned a spot on the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) [25 Best Places to Travel in 2025](#) for its cultural experiences and thriving culinary scene. Head to this vibrant city in 2025 to celebrate both the 250th anniversary of Tucson’s founding and the 10th anniversary of Tucson becoming the [first U.S. city to earn recognition as a UNESCO City of Gastronomy](#). Tucson earned this designation in January 2025.

### **On the Horizon**

**2026**

- Thirty-year anniversary of the non-stop British Airways' direct flight between London Heathrow and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport
- NCAA Women's Baseball Final Four
- 250th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence
- 250th anniversary of the Juan Baptiste de Anza Trail
- Route 66 Centennial Celebration
  - Arizona's Route 66, also known as the Mother Road, has been more than a road. Its people and places have inspired writers, filmmakers, photographers, and artists. Its 100-year history boasts neon, classic cars, diners, and cowboys as well as spectacular vistas and mystical landscapes.
- 25th anniversary of Flagstaff having been designated the world's first International Dark Sky City on Oct 24, 2001

## 2028

- Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott Celebrates its 100th anniversary
- Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff Celebrates its 100th anniversary

## 2030

- Pluto's discovery at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff celebrates its 100th anniversary

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

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