



Arizona Travel E-News
July / August 2013



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What's New: Arizona's new Summer Campaign, Accommodations, Attractions and Arizona future news.



Have you ever tried cactus?

I bet you have and you didn't even know it. There are over 540 edible plants in the Sonoran Desert and some have been harvested for hundreds of years. According to ethnobotanists, there are more edible wild plants in the Arizona -Sonoran Desert area than anywhere else on Earth.



Short Drive. Long Overdue.

Summer in AZ !

Summer fun is closer than you think! the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) launched its Summer in AZ regional campaign, website and sweepstakes marketing the Grand Canyon State's exhilarating summertime destinations. Launched just in time for visitors to start planning summer vacations, the campaign promotes visitation to statewide attractions that are just a short drive away.



One of the popular types of edible plants in Arizona is the cactus. The most well known to cook with is the the prickly pear. The prickly pear cactus has three edible parts including the pad, the petals of the flower, and the pear. In Arizona one of the ways to cook with this prickly pear is by using the fruit to make a syrup, sauce or candy. For example you can try dishes prepared with this sweet fruit at the [Jade Grill](#) in Superior.



Chef and owner Lucy Wing of the Jade Grill uses this ingredient to reinterpret the flavors of southeastern Asian food. Featured are some prickly pear sauces paired with Asian favorites spring rolls.

Through the campaign's interactive website, SummerInAZ.com, the three-month regional campaign encourages visitors to choose their own Arizona adventure and discover how to experience it.



Whether it's kayaking down the Colorado River, soaring through the air in a hot air balloon above the Sonoran Desert, relaxing poolside at a world-class resort, or exploring the wonder of the Grand Canyon National Park, the Summer in AZ website is filled with easy-to-travel-to trip ideas and activities.

In addition to the great trip ideas, there is a chance to win a vacation getaway with the Summer in AZ "Pin It 2 Win It" sweepstakes. Website visitors are encouraged to start pinning from the "Pin It 2 Win It" sweepstakes Pinterest board to create the perfect Arizona getaway. Visitors will be automatically entered to win a getaway valued at \$1,500. More details are available at SummerInAZ.com.

Advertising will appear in newspapers, magazines and online, and will be supported by mobile, social media, outdoor digital billboards, and cinema placements. All advertising directs consumers to the SummerInAZ.com website, built with responsive design making it accessible to any PC, mobile, or tablet device. AOT collaborated with the Off Madison Ave. + Spin Six marketing firm on the concept, design and execution of this campaign.



Also located in Superior, Arizona is the [Boyce Thompson Arboretum](#). The arboretum is located at the base of the towering Picketpost Mountain. It brings together plants from the Earth's many and varied deserts and dry lands and displays them alongside unspoiled examples of the native Sonoran Desert vegetation. No matter what the season, you will enjoy a moving and memorable experience of the beauty, majesty, and mystery of arid land plants. One of the tours offered to visitors during June through August is the [Edible Medicinal Desert Plant Tour](#).

Here people will be educated on all types of edible plants including the prickly pear cactus and other cacti found in the desert landscape. Visitors can also enjoy a workshop called "[How to Juice Prickly Pear Cactus Fruit](#)" this workshop is offered once a month from August to Labor Day.



Scottsdale's Only Bed and Breakfast Opens Downtown

Experience the laid-back ambiance of Scottsdale's newest downtown property, BeSpoke Inn, Café and Bicycles. As Scottsdale's only bed and breakfast, the quaint four-room BeSpoke Inn offers a tailored experience for visitors seeking elegance and privacy while staying in Scottsdale's buzzing epicenter. Or stay in the upstairs suite and rent out the living and dining room, offering views of the 43-foot infinity edge pool. Stop by the in-house restaurant The Café, where an espresso bar, house-made pastries, gourmet breakfasts, salads, soups and sandwiches await. Exploring downtown's art galleries and myriad independent restaurants and bars is easy with Bespoke Bicycles, an onsite boutique bike shop that provides guests with complimentary transportation. For more information visit [Bespoke Inn](#).

Another great way visitors can enjoy the prickly pear is by making a stop at Cheri's Desert Harvest is in the city of Tucson, located in the southern part of the state. Cheri's products are all natural and are made from fresh fruits and vegetables indigenous to the Sonoran Desert. Only the freshest prickly pear cactus fruit are used in her preserves. The fruit is hand-harvested at the peak of ripeness to capture the best flavor, color and nutrient content that nature created. Her products make great souvenirs and visitors can sample anything from syrups, candies and jellies. She also offers recipes for cactus margaritas on her website.



Located in Phoenix the [Desert Botanical Gardens](#), is home to the one of the world's largest and most diverse collection of desert plants. A stroll through the Garden's meandering trails will show how much life and beauty the desert holds. The one-third mile Desert Discovery Trail winds past thousands of plants, including more than half the cactus, century plants, and aloe species in the world. The Taste of the Southwest Cooking Demo & Lunch Tour offers guests a guided tour showcasing all the plants that can be used as food, tools and shelter. After the tour you are led to a private dining location where you will learn how to prepare the food and then have a delicious garden lunch. This tour is also offered as a dinner experience. There is a guest minimum so please check out their website for more [information](#).



(Photo Credit: Twin Arrows)

First Navajo Nation Casino Opened Near Flagstaff

Located just east of Flagstaff off I-40, Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort opened on Memorial Weekend. The 267,000 square foot facility showcases Navajo culture and features state-of-the-art gaming, luxurious resort accommodations, fine dining and culturally infused architecture. Phase one of the \$230M facility includes 1,089 slot machines, 18 table games and 12 poker tables, live Keno, a 5-story hotel with 90 rooms and suites, a 16,000 square foot banquet and conference center, fully equipped fitness center, heated indoor pool and six distinct dining concepts. For more information visit [Twin Arrows](#).



Restaurant & Refurbished Garden Shop Open at Desert Botanical Garden



Another famous cactus used by many is the agave. Agave is a main ingredient in Tequila. [Cruz Tequila](#) based in Scottsdale, AZ was launched by Saulo and Joseph "Pep" Katcher, and a friend Todd Nelson in 2008. Tequila lovers can find Cruz all over Arizona. Cruz tequila is made from 100% blue agave and has a smooth taste. The agave is steamed in a traditional brick oven for two days.

The cooked agave is allowed to cool before the juice is gently extracted and then slowly fermented. It is then double distilled before being aged in oak barrels.

Here's a list of other Arizona tequilas people can try:

[Mexican Moonshine](#)

[Senior Rio](#)

[3 Amigos](#)

[Luna Malvada](#)

The Desert Botanical Garden re-opened The Garden Shop. The renovation of The Garden Shop is part of a larger construction project that included the Garden's new restaurant, Gertrude's, that features ingredients right from the farm to the plate. The Garden Shop and Gertrude's are located next to each other in the Ottosen Entry Garden. A "Phoenix Point of Pride", the Desert Botanical Garden is one of only a few botanical gardens accredited by the American Association of Museums. For more information visit [Gertrudes](#) and the [Desert Botanical Gardens](#).



Yume Japanese Gardens Blooms in Tucson

The first authentic Japanese garden opened in Tucson. The Yume Japanese Gardens showcases five traditional Japanese garden designs on $\frac{3}{4}$ quarters of an acre. Yume, meaning "dream" in Japanese, the gardens conduct visitors through metaphors that summon the creative force of centuries of Japanese culture. The Gardens are projected to draw as many as 20,000 visitors during the first year of operation. Executive director, Patricia Deridder, describes Yume as a place where you can get in touch with nature and with yourself. Pathways and layered plantings offer intimate courtyard views of classical Japanese imagery. A Zen contemplative garden, a stone and gravel garden representing sea and islands, and a tranquil strolling pond garden with koi provide further examples of Japanese garden styles. For more information visit [Tucson Japanese Gardens](#).



For the foodie lovers all around the state, visitors can try cactus at a variety of restaurants. For example in the north central part of the state in Sedona, the Cowboy Club serves cactus fries. The cactus is cut into strips then breaded and deep fried.



Also in Sedona, Oaxaca serves grilled cactus pads (nopales) as an appetizer with a roasted pepper and tomato sauce.

For some other cactus bites in the Phoenix area, you can try the prickly pear cactus fries at [Rustler's Rooste](#) a steakhouse with a variety of southwest options for all family members. At [Kai](#) a high, a end restaurant owned by the Gila River Indian Tribe located inside the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa, a Tribal Buffalo dish is served with a saguaro blossom syrup. In Scottsdale you can build your own salad with prickly pear as one of your ingredients at [SWB](#),

Future Arizona News

Scottsdale Museum of the West

The Scottsdale's Museum of the West will be located at the north-west corner of Marshall Way at First Street. The museum is currently under design and construction is expected to begin in late 2013.

The museum site is in the heart of Scottsdale's historic downtown. This area is home to the Gallery and Old Town Districts, known for their arts and cultural amenities, historic buildings, retail and dining establishments. It is situated adjacent to the current Loloma Transit Center. This project will enhance and utilize the currently abandoned transit center.

Scottsdale's Museum of the West will be constructed and owned by the City of Scottsdale, and operated by the nonprofit "Museum of the West" organization. The Museum's Board of Directors has entered into a development and operating agreement with the City of Scottsdale to participate fully in the planning and development of the project, and upon completion become its sole operator. Centered near the heart of downtown this Museum will create a perfect partnership with the arts district galleries, studios, dining and shopping venues directly to the north and throughout the Downtown area.

Calendar of Events

July

Cordes Junction: [Italian Night](#)

Dragoon: [4th Annual Garlic Festival and Benefit](#)

Sierra Vista: [22nd Annual Southwest Wings Birding & Nature Festival](#)

August

Prescott: [10th Annual Western History Symposium](#)

Sedona: [Hummingbird Festival](#)

a southwest bistro located in the Hyatt Regency Gainey Ranch or try the the Pear salad with a prickly pear vinaigrette.

For more information on Arizona's food culture visit [ArizonaGuide](#).

Arizona in the news

Sedona Makes Fodor's Top 10 Best Small Towns List

Sedona has made the Fodor's travel list of the one of the 10 best small towns in America to visit. Fodor's is the largest publisher of English language travel guides and books. Fodor's top 10 list is based on small towns' cultural, outdoor, dining and other tourism options for travelers. The New York-based travel publisher liked Sedona's spas, resorts, arts scene and restaurants, as well as its hiking options and serene Red Rocks mountain landscape. Sedona has also been a popular travel spot for spiritual and New Age travelers.

Metropolitan Tucson CVB Changes Name to "VISIT TUCSON"

The Metropolitan Tucson Convention and Visitors Bureau is shortening its name to [Visit Tucson](#) and unveiled its new brand positioning statement, "Free Yourself." Based on research done in preparation for the launch, "We believe we can own the concept of freedom," said Visit Tucson CEO and President Brent DeRaad. "The tagline conveys very clearly Tucson's free-spirited, offbeat personality that is different from any other destination." He said the test for his organization is to develop marketing campaigns that convey the spirit of "Free Yourself" and encouraging potential visitors to engage in hiking, cycling, mountain biking, birding and other geo-tourism attributes as well as visiting unique attractions, local restaurants, funky arts scene and special events."All of this is what is going

Willcox: [16th Annual Peach Mania](#)

September

Safford: [7th Annual SalsaFest](#)

Winslow: [15th Annual "Standin' on the Corner" Park Festival](#)

Cottonwood: [25th Annual Verde River Day](#)

October

Jerome: [11th Annual Jerome Ghostwalk](#)

Patagonia: [25th Annual Fall Festival](#)

Scottsdale: [4th Annual Taco Festival](#)

For a full listing of our calendar of events go to [Events Calendar](#)

Test your Arizona IQ

Be the **first to answer** this issue's Arizona Trivia question correctly and win a prize.

What cactus resembles "Mickey Mouse" ears?

Think you know the answer? Send it to [Kristin Swanson](#)

Congratulations to **Arlene Herman AAA Mid Atlantic** for being the first to answer last issue's trivia question correctly.

Last issue's trivia question

What southern Arizona town was named for a sailing ship?

Answer: Oracle

Need More Information on Arizona

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to comprise the new brand," DeRaad said. "I think a lot of folks are under the impression that this is simply a new logo for the bureau, when in fact, it's much more than that. The logo is just one component. This is an image, a perception of our city, an identity. The marketing campaigns that we develop will enhance and complement that messaging."

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Get "AZAPed" with Arizona Knowledge

The Arizona Accreditation Program (AZAP), is an online education program for travel agents to become travel specialists for the Grand Canyon State. The program gives an overview of Arizona travel product as well as key traveler information. It then offers several quizzes that test agents' knowledge of the destination. Upon successful completion of the quizzes, agents receive certification, continuing education credits with the Travel Institute, and from the CITC and are eligible for monthly prizes. Become an Arizona Specialist today by clicking on the logo below.



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