

Arizona WELCOME

# ARIZONA

## *A Warm Welcome*

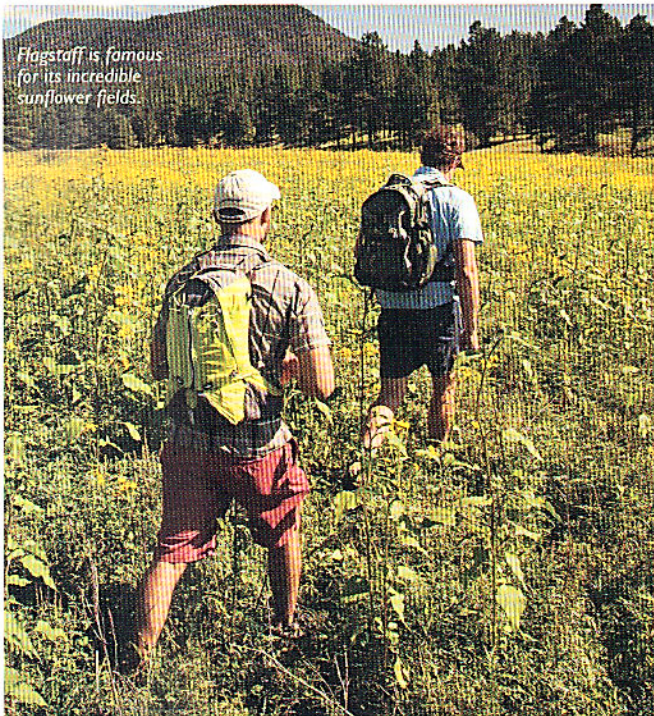
There are few destinations that can promise true diversity—and then deliver on that promise. But Arizona—my 'go-to' retreat—is one of them. Looking for fantastic scenery? Think Grand Canyon and Monument Valley. Vibrant culture? Dive into a landscape rich with the legacies of First Nations, American settlers and Spanish conquistadors. Whatever you crave, Arizona delivers in spades. Here's the lay of the land...

**By Josephine Matyas**

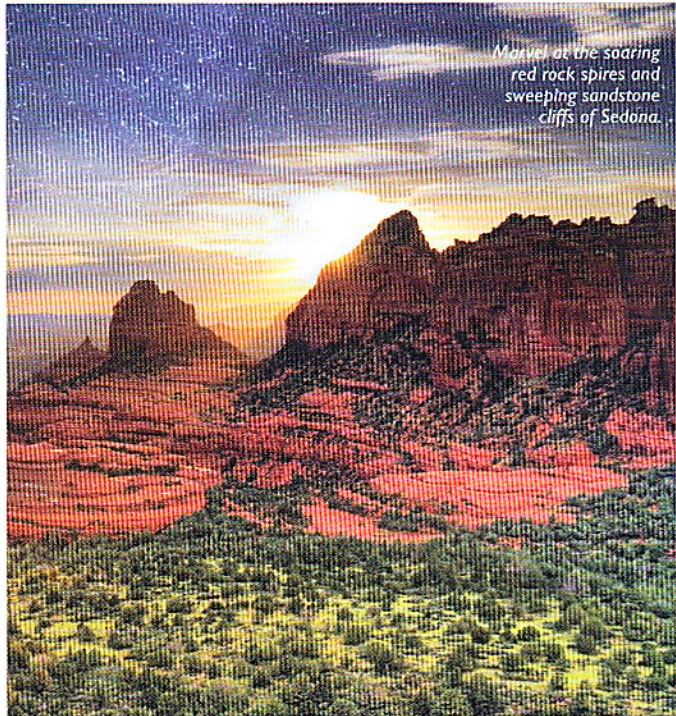


Explore rugged, historic trails  
on a Jeep tour in Sedona.





Flagstaff is famous for its incredible sunflower fields.



Marvel at the soaring red rock spires and sweeping sandstone cliffs of Sedona.

## PHOENIX AND CENTRAL ARIZONA

Everything is close at hand in the Valley of the Sun: outdoorsy pursuits, sporting events, shop-'til-you-drop outlets, foodie destinations, craft breweries and decadent spas. And it's all served up in relaxed southwest style.

Greater Phoenix bundles together a dozen smaller communities, including Mesa, Scottsdale, Tempe, Chandler and Glendale, and each offers a full range of outdoors activities, unique dining, history and culture. It's also a nirvana for golfers, with more than 200 courses of all layouts and skill levels to choose from.

City-lovers will be happy because there aren't enough hours in the day to tour all the world-class museums, art walks, galleries and public art installations. And those craving nature can soothe their souls with road trips, hot air balloon flights, horseback riding, Jeep excursions, river floats, hiking and mountain biking in the Sonoran Desert.

**HEAVEN FOR:** Busy families, romantic escapes, guys' or girlfriends' getaways and sports nuts needing a big league fix.

**WOW FACTOR:** Hot air balloon flights at sunrise over the Sonoran Desert come complete with the traditional post-flight Champagne toast or breakfast.

**I WASN'T EXPECTING THAT:** Some of the desert communities have creatively used cutting-edge design to form urban natural environments with walking trails. The Gilbert Riparian

Preserve even recycles household water into a network of water ponds that attract desert cottontail bunnies and migratory birds.

**HOT TRAVEL TIP:** There's so much to do in Phoenix itself, but the city makes a perfect home base for day trips to Sedona, the Grand Canyon or the Superstition Mountains.

## TUCSON AND SOUTHERN ARIZONA

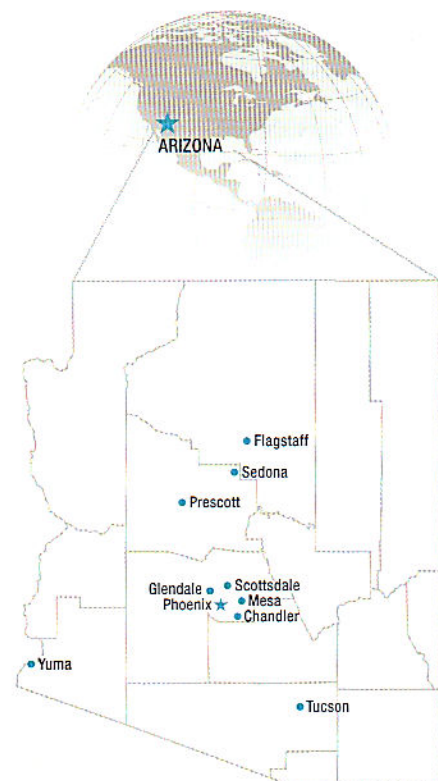
Southern Arizona is a place where travellers can truly explore the real southwest. It's touched by the magic of the Saguaro-studded Sonoran Desert and it's an intersection for several distinct cultures: First Nations, Hispanic and American settlers. Their influence is found everywhere, from food and architecture, to music and art.

Tucson serves up big city fare in a setting ringed by mountains and stunning desert. It's culture-rich with spots like the Pima Air & Space Museum, Tucson Museum of Art and the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, and there are plenty of festivals and artsy neighbourhoods to enjoy too. Foodies will have nothing to complain about while exploring local eateries along the city's 'Best 23 Miles of Mexican food', a culinary marathon of delectable Mexican restaurants.

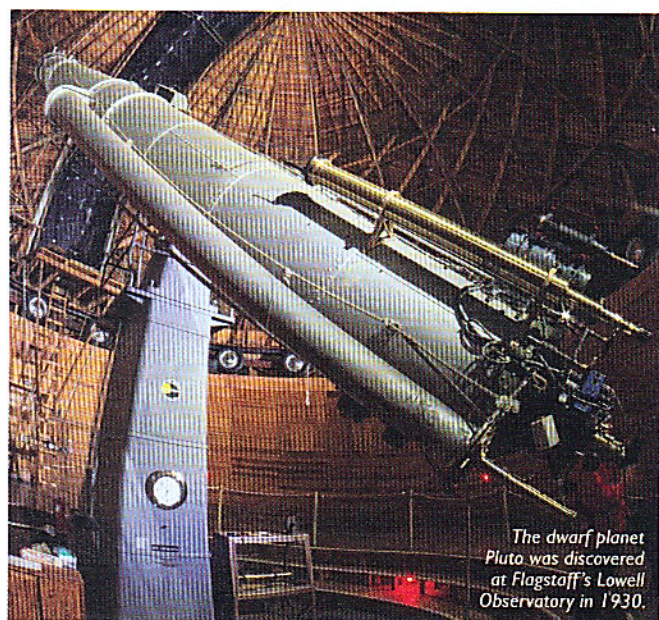
Art matters in this region. Smaller artisan communities like Tubac and Bisbee are gathering points for painters, sculptors and jewellers looking to set up shop outside the big city, while in

Tucson, many fine art and boutique galleries set art-lovers' hearts aflutter.

**HEAVEN FOR:** Anyone who wants to experience the very best Mother Nature has to offer—hiking, biking, horseback riding, caving, birding and star-gazing. There's also a lively music and art scene, luxurious spas and wellness retreats, and plenty of places to







play desert-style golf at a relaxed pace that is oh-so southwestern.

**WOW FACTOR:** Southern Arizona's inky skies and clean air create perfect star-gazing conditions. The region is nicknamed the 'Astronomy Capital of the World' and is home to some of the top observatories in the US.

**I WASN'T EXPECTING THAT:** Southern Arizona is located along the Pacific Flyway, making it a hot destination for birders. Birdwatchers should explore the Southeastern Arizona Birding Trail, where it's possible to see more than 500 species along the 50 trail stops.

**HOT TRAVEL TIP:** Take an excursion to Kitt Peak National Observatory. The route climbs the 2,097-metre-high mountain along a narrow roadway to the visitor centre, which hosts a star-gazing program. The view—over the mountains as well as the heavens—is breathtaking.

## NORTH CENTRAL ARIZONA

Small towns and spectacular scenery inspire a relaxed approach to life in

north central Arizona. Frontiersmen and settlers put down roots there in search of mining and ranching opportunities. Prescott, Arizona's first territorial capital, is home to Whiskey Row, which was once lined with raucous saloons and brothels. And the scenic Verde Canyon Railroad stays true to more than a century of rail travel history with its excursion trains for sightseers.

Sedona is renowned for its arts community, energy vortexes and panorama of beautiful red rock mesas, spires and pinnacles. The town is also known for its pristine golf courses, luxurious spas, vibrant art scene, hiking trails and outdoor recreation.

**HEAVEN FOR:** Arts-motivated road trips to communities like Sedona, Prescott, Globe and Jerome. Learning about First Nations history at cliff dwelling ruins and rock art sites.

**WOW FACTOR:** There are few stretches of road as scenic and dramatic as Highway 89A between Sedona and Flagstaff. The route begins in Sedona's red rock and desert landscape, then winds its way through

the lush greenery of Oak Creek Canyon before finally climbing to the tall pine forests of the Colorado Plateau.

**I WASN'T EXPECTING THAT:** The mountains and pine forests of the Mogollon Rim escarpment provide a cool escape during the summer months when the valley sizzles.

**HOT TRAVEL TIP:** Sedona's red sandstone rocks and mystical forces are a magnet for hikers, New Age devotees and spa-seekers.

## NORTHERN ARIZONA

Although the most remote part of the state, northern Arizona is immediately recognizable due to its dozens of appearances on the silver screen. This sculpted landscape of canyons, cliffs and red stone mesas have been the backdrop for dozens of films and commercials.

The high desert and San Francisco Peaks border the spiritual homeland for First Nations tribes, including the Navajo, Hopi and Zuni. Visit the Hopi Cultural Center on Second Mesa or the Navajo National Monument, or take the Walpi Village tour on First Mesa.

**HEAVEN FOR:** Adventurous travellers who appreciate remote settings, road trips, unspoiled scenery and authentic cultural and natural experiences.

**WOW FACTOR:** The beauty of this region is breathtaking, from the indescribable grace of the Grand Canyon to the dramatic high desert landscapes of Canyon de Chelly and Petrified Forest.

**I WASN'T EXPECTING THAT:** A natural canvas millions of years in the making, the Painted Desert is a region of rocky badlands that features rocks in every hue, from deep lavenders and rich grays to reds, oranges and

pinks.

**HOT TRAVEL TIP:** World-class shopping opportunities can be found in the most remote corners of this region. Suggest the Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site, Cameron Trading Post or the traditional Hopi Shop of Tsakurshovi on Second Mesa for high-quality, authentic First Nations crafts and artworks.

## ARIZONA'S WEST COAST

The mighty Colorado River traces the Arizona border with Nevada and California, creating the state's 'West Coast', an aquatic desert playground of lakes and reservoirs with plenty of opportunities to boat, fish and swim. The vibrant communities of Lake Havasu, Parker and Yuma are a magnet for water babies, gaming-enthusiasts and history buffs.

Expect the unexpected: There you'll find everything from the reconstructed London Bridge to the engineering marvel that is the Hoover Dam.

**HEAVEN FOR:** Anglers and boaters, birders, photographers, Wild West and Route 66 fans.

**WOW FACTOR:** It's easy to be wowed by the Hoover Dam: simply drive over it! Construction began in 1931 and the last piece was poured in 1935, two years ahead of schedule. In 1994, the American Society of Civil Engineers named the dam one of America's 'Seven Modern Civil Engineering Wonders', and it's also a National Historic Landmark.

**I DIDN'T EXPECT THAT:** London Bridge, which originally spanned England's River Thames, is now a permanent fixture at Lake Havasu.

**HOT TRAVEL TIP:** Yuma is said to be the sunniest city in the US, which is more than enough to attract winter-weary Canadians. \*