

The Ultimate Summer Survival Guide for Arizona Families

#top

Jump to a Section:

- [Low-Key Summer Bucket List Libraries](#)
- [Libraries, Bookstores & Summer Reading Adventures](#)
- [Free & Cheap Summer Fun](#)
- [Kids Eat Free \(or Cheap!\) Around Arizona](#)
- [Indoor Play Areas](#)
- [Trampoline Parks, Adventure Parks & Active Indoor Fun](#)
- [Creative, Messy & Artistic Fun](#)
- [Bowling, Arcades & Family Entertainment](#)
- [Arcades & Family Entertainment Centers](#)
- [Roller Skating & Indoor Skating](#)
- [Escape Rooms & Puzzle Experiences](#)
- [Aquariums & Animal Encounters](#)
- [Arizona Boardwalk Attractions](#)
- [Movies & Summer Movie Programs](#)
- [Mall Play Areas & Shopping Center Fun](#)
- [Water Parks, Splash Pads & Community Pools](#)
- [Splash Pads Worth Visiting](#)
- [Resort Day Passes & Water Fun](#)
- [Animal Attractions with Water Play](#)
- [Summer Shopping Center Events](#)
- [Ice Cream & Cool Treats](#)
- [Metro Phoenix Museums & Science Centers](#)
- [Southern & Eastern Arizona Museums](#)
- [Northern Arizona Museums](#)
- [Performing Arts, Live Shows & Family Entertainment](#)
- [Catch a Game](#)
- [Staycations & Resort Escapes](#)
- [Road Trip-Worthy Arizona Adventures](#)
- [Volunteer, Serve & Get Involved](#)
- [Summer Camps](#)

Arizona summers are no joke. Triple-digit temperatures, endless requests for snacks, and the daily challenge of keeping kids entertained can leave even the most organized parents searching for new ideas.

That's why we've created the Ultimate Arizona Summer Survival Guide—a mom-tested collection of museums, splash pads, indoor play spaces, road trips, libraries, camps, ice cream shops, staycations, and family adventures across Arizona.

Whether you're exploring your own neighborhood or planning a weekend getaway, this guide is designed to help your family make the most of summer while staying cool, creating memories, and maybe even preserving a little parental sanity along the way.

Low-Key Summer Bucket List Libraries

Not every summer adventure has to be expensive, complicated, or Pinterest-worthy.

Sometimes the best memories come from simple moments:

- Watch a summer sunset.
- Eat popsicles outside.
- Visit a new playground.
- Read together at the library.
- Go on a family hike.
- Build a blanket fort.
- Have a movie night.
- Visit a splash pad.
- Try a new ice cream shop.
- Take a day trip somewhere you've never explored.

For even more simple ideas, check out our Low-Key Summer Bucket List:

<https://www.raisingarizonakids.com/2026/05/low-key-summer-bucket-list/>

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Bookstores & Summer Reading Adventures

Arizona libraries are one of the most underrated summer survival tools for families.

Most offer:

- Free summer reading programs
- Toddler and preschool storytimes
- Indoor play spaces and children's areas
- LEGO clubs and STEM activities
- Craft days and special events

- Teen programs
- Air conditioning and free Wi-Fi
- Free Culture Passes to museums and attractions

Many families can easily spend an entire morning at the library between storytime, playtime, browsing books, and participating in summer activities.

Libraries Worth Visiting

Burton Barr Central Library, 1221 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org>

One of Arizona's most impressive libraries featuring a large children's area, regular family programming, and plenty of space to explore.

Foothills Library, 19055 N 57th Ave, Glendale, AZ 85308
<https://www.mclcdaz.org>

Popular Northwest Valley library with storytimes, reading programs, and family activities.

Mesquite Library, 4525 E Paradise Village Pkwy N, Phoenix, AZ 85032
<https://www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org>

Family-friendly branch with children's programming and summer events.

Tempe Public Library, 3500 S Rural Rd, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.tempepubliclibrary.org>

Offers storytimes, crafts, reading programs, makerspace activities, and teen programming.

Scottsdale Civic Center Library, 3839 N Drinkwater Blvd, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://www.scottsdalelibrary.org>

Beautifully renovated library featuring children's spaces and family events.

Perry Branch Library, 1965 E Queen Creek Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85297
<https://www.mclcdaz.org>

One of the East Valley's most popular libraries for young families.

Miller-Golf Links Library, 9640 E Golf Links Rd, Tucson, AZ 85730
<https://www.library.pima.gov>

A Southern Arizona favorite offering storytimes, reading programs, and family activities.

Storytimes & Bookstore Events

Barnes & Noble Storytimes, Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com>

Many Barnes & Noble locations host free storytimes, themed activities, and seasonal children's programming.

Changing Hands Bookstore, 300 W Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85013 • 6428 S McClintock Dr, Tempe, AZ 85283
<https://www.changinghands.com>

Arizona's beloved independent bookstore offering storytimes, children's events, author visits, and summer reading activities.

Bookmans, Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.bookmans.com>

Bookmans' Summer Reading Program rewards kids for reading and often includes family events and activities.

Mostly Books, 6208 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85712
<https://www.mostlybooksaz.com>

Independent Tucson bookstore known for family events, storytimes, and children's programming.

Summer Reading Rewards

Arizona Library Summer Reading Programs. Most Arizona library systems launch summer reading challenges beginning around June 1. Kids can earn prizes, free books, certificates, and incentives simply by reading throughout the summer.

Bookmans Summer Reading Program. <https://www.bookmans.com>

Kids can earn Bookmans Bucks for reading throughout the summer.

Pizza Hut BOOK IT! <https://www.bookitprogram.com>

One of the most recognizable reading reward programs, helping kids earn free pizza while building reading habits.

Barnes & Noble Summer Reading Program. <https://www.barnesandnoble.com>

Children can earn a free book by completing the bookstore's summer reading challenge.

Bonus: Culture Passes. Many Arizona libraries participate in Culture Pass programs that allow families to check out free admission passes to museums, gardens, historical sites, and cultural attractions throughout the state.

This can save families hundreds of dollars over the course of a summer.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Free & Cheap Summer Fun

You don't need an expensive vacation or a packed schedule to make summer memorable. Some of Arizona's best family activities are completely free—or cost very little.

From building projects and storytimes to free bowling, library programs, nature centers, and hands-on workshops, these activities can help fill your summer calendar without emptying your wallet.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Free Kids Workshops

Home Depot Kids Workshops. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.homedepot.com/c/kids-workshop>

Held on the first Saturday of every month, these free workshops allow kids to build and decorate a hands-on project to take home. Children receive a workshop kit, apron, achievement pin, and certificate while learning basic building skills. Recommended for ages 5–12.

Lowe's Kids Club Workshops. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.lowes.com/diy-projects-and-ideas/workshops>

Free monthly workshops designed for kids ages 4–11. Families can build themed projects together while earning badges and rewards through the MyLowe's Rewards Kids Club program. Workshops are generally held monthly and require registration.

Michaels Kids Events & MakeBreak Workshops. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.michaels.com/events>

Offers seasonal MakeBreak events, family craft days, holiday projects, and kid-friendly creative activities throughout the year.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Free Summer Bowling

Kids Bowl Free. Participating Arizona Bowling Centers
<https://www.kidsbowlfree.com/0nugb5>

One of the best summer deals available. Registered children receive free bowling all summer long at participating locations. Family passes are also available for parents and siblings. Free Nature Centers & Educational Experiences

Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center, 3131 S Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85040
<https://riosalado.audubon.org>

Nature exhibits, walking trails, bird watching, and educational programs.

White Mountain Nature Center, 425 S Woodland Rd, Pinetop-Lakeside, AZ 85929
<https://www.whitemountainnaturecenter.org>

Interactive exhibits, nature trails, wildlife viewing, and educational programs.

Gilbert Riparian Preserve, 2757 E Guadalupe Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85234
<https://www.gilbertaz.gov>

Walking trails, bird watching, fishing lakes, and family nature exploration.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Free Family Fun at Retail Stores

Bass Pro Shops Mesa, 1133 N Dobson Rd, Mesa, AZ 85201
<https://www.basspro.com>

Fish tanks, wildlife displays, seasonal family events, holiday activities, and free attractions that can easily entertain kids for an hour or more.

Cabela's Glendale, 9380 W Glendale Ave, Glendale, AZ 85305
<https://www.cabelas.com>

Indoor wildlife exhibits, aquariums, seasonal events, and family-friendly displays.

Scheels, 8555 W Paradise Ln, Peoria, AZ 85382
<https://www.scheels.com>

More than a sporting goods store. Families can explore interactive displays, wildlife exhibits, games, and attractions while escaping the heat.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Mall Play

Many Arizona malls feature indoor play spaces, seasonal activities, storytimes, splash pads, and family events.

Arizona Mills, 5000 S Arizona Mills Cir, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.arizonamills.com>

Chandler Fashion Center, 3111 W Chandler Blvd, Chandler, AZ 85226
<https://www.shopchandlerfashioncenter.com>

Arrowhead Towne Center, 7700 W Arrowhead Towne Center, Glendale, AZ 85308
<https://www.arrowheadtownecenter.com>

Scottsdale Quarter, 15059 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85254
<https://www.scottsdalequarter.com>

Desert Ridge Marketplace, 21001 N Tatum Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85050
<https://www.shopdesertridge.com>

Many centers host free concerts, splash pad events, character appearances, movies, and family activities throughout the summer.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Kids Eat Free (or Cheap!) Around Arizona

Let's be honest: feeding kids all summer gets expensive. Between camps, splash pads, museum trips, and road trips, meal costs add up fast. Fortunately, many Arizona restaurants offer kids-eat-free nights, discounted meals, and family specials throughout the week. Just remember to call ahead and verify offers, as promotions can change.

For the most up-to-date statewide list, visit: Raising Arizona Kids Kids Eat Free Guide at <https://www.raisingarizonakids.com/kids-eat-free-arizona/>



Family Tip

Many restaurants also offer:

- Summer kids meal specials
- Family meal bundles
- Birthday freebies
- Rewards programs
- Free dessert nights
- Discounted kids menus

Before heading out, it's always worth checking your local restaurant's website or social media page to confirm current offers.

Pair a Kids Eat Free meal with a library visit, splash pad, free museum day, or Kids Bowl Free outing and you've got a budget-friendly summer adventure.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Budget-Saving Summer Tip

Combine several free activities into one adventure day:

- Storytime at the library
- Lunch picnic at a park
- Splash pad stop
- Free workshop
- Mall play area
- Ice cream reward

You can easily create a full day of family fun for less than the cost of a movie ticket.

Attraction Passes, Coupon Books & Family Savings Programs

Arizona families can save hundreds of dollars each year by taking advantage of attraction passes, coupon books, discount memberships, and statewide savings programs. If you're planning museum visits, road trips, staycations, or family outings this summer, these passes can often pay for themselves after just a few visits.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

GetOut Pass Arizona

<https://www.getoutpass.com>

Formerly known as POGO Pass, the GetOut Pass provides admission to dozens of attractions across Arizona for one annual price. Participating attractions may include museums, family entertainment centers, trampoline parks, water attractions, and more. Many families find the pass pays for itself after only a few visits.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Tucson Attractions Passport

<https://www.visittucson.org/things-to-do/attractions/attractions-passport/>

One of Southern Arizona's best-kept secrets. The Tucson Attractions Passport includes discounts and 2-for-1 admission offers at more than 80–100 attractions throughout Southern Arizona, including museums, caves, gardens, wildlife attractions, historic sites, and family destinations.

Featured attractions often include:

- Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
 - Biosphere 2
 - Colossal Cave
 - Mini Time Machine Museum
 - Flandrau Science Center
 - Old Tucson
 - Reid Park Zoo
- and dozens more.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Entertainment® Membership

<https://www.entertainment.com>

A longtime family favorite offering thousands of dollars in discounts on:

- Restaurants
- Attractions
- Travel
- Hotels
- Shopping
- Family activities

The program is now primarily digital and can be especially useful for families who dine out frequently or travel around Arizona.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Library Culture Passes

Available through many Arizona library systems.

Participating libraries offer free admission passes to museums, gardens, cultural sites, and attractions across the state. Availability varies and passes are often first-come, first-served.

Many families overlook this benefit, but it can save hundreds of dollars throughout the summer.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Visit Arizona Experience Passes

<https://www.visitarizona.com/experiences-passes>

Arizona offers several free digital passes and challenge programs including:

- AZ Parks Passport
- Arizona Wild Bunch Family Pass
- Rock the Route: Route 66 Challenge
- Arizona Dark Sky Expedition Pass
- Seasonal travel challenges and check-in rewards

These don't typically include admission but are a fun way to encourage exploration and family adventures throughout the state.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Family Tip

Before purchasing individual attraction tickets, check:

- 1 Your library's Culture Pass program
- 2 GetOut Pass
- 3 Tucson Attractions Passport (Southern Arizona)
- 4 Entertainment Membership
- 5 Annual memberships at your favorite museum or zoo

A single pass or membership can often cover multiple summer adventures and save enough money to pay for a staycation, road trip, or extra ice cream stops along the way.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Indoor Play Areas

Perfect for toddlers through elementary-aged kids when it's 112° by lunch.

Cloud House for Babies & Toddlers. Phoenix, AZ
<https://www.cloudhousekids.com>

A beautifully designed indoor play space specifically created for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Giggles. Phoenix, AZ
<https://www.gigglesplay.com>

Ideal for babies, toddlers, and younger children with imaginative play spaces and climbing structures.

Jordan's Corner. Mesa, AZ
<https://www.jordanscorneraz.com>

Indoor play, imaginative activities, and family-friendly fun for younger children.

Little Champs Indoor Playground. Surprise, AZ
<https://www.littlechampsplayground.com>

A toddler and preschool-focused indoor playground designed for younger adventurers.

Surprise & Shine. Surprise, AZ
<https://www.surpriseandshine.com>

Indoor play, classes, and activities designed for babies, toddlers, and young children.

Luv 2 Play, 3522 W Peoria Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85029
<https://www.luv2play.com>

Multi-level play structures, toddler zones, and family-friendly indoor fun.

Kids Empire. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.kidsempire.com>

Large indoor playgrounds with climbing structures, slides, and imaginative play.

Party Jungle, 8009 E Roosevelt St, Scottsdale, AZ 85257
<https://www.partyjungle.com>

Indoor rides, arcade games, and giant play structures.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Trampoline Parks, Adventure Parks & Active Indoor Funs

Great for burning energy during summer when outside playgrounds become lava.

Uptown Jungle Fun Park. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.uptownjungle.com>

Obstacle courses, climbing walls, ninja challenges, and active indoor fun.

Sky Zone. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.skyzone.com>

Wall-to-wall trampolines, dodgeball, climbing attractions, and freestyle fun.

Urban Air Adventure Park. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.urbanair.com>

Trampolines, ropes courses, climbing attractions, and indoor adventure experiences.

Rush Fun Park. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.rushfunpark.com>

Indoor active fun featuring trampolines, climbing attractions, and obstacle courses.

Altitude Trampoline Park. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.altitudetrampolinepark.com>

Trampolines, foam pits, dodgeball, and active play.

Big Air Trampoline Park. Chandler, AZ (Glendale coming soon!)

<https://www.bigairusa.com>

Trampolines, climbing attractions, obstacle courses, and adventure activities.

KTR. Multiple locations.

<https://www.ktr-centers.com>

A favorite among older kids, tweens, and teens with trampolines, parkour, and skate features.

Slick City. Multiple locations.

<https://www.slickcity.com>

Indoor slides, climbing attractions, and active fun that feels like a water park without the water.

Jumping Cholla. 4861 N Stone Ave, Tucson, AZ 85704

jumpcholla.com

[



[Back to Top](#)

Creative, Messy & Artistic Fun

Need a break from trampolines, splash pads, and screen time? These creative experiences let kids paint, build, create, explore, and make something uniquely their own.

Art Studios & Process Art

Rachel's Young At Art Studio, 7366 E Shea Blvd #112, Scottsdale, AZ 85260
<https://www.rachelsyoungatart.com>

Process-based art classes, camps, sensory experiences, open studio time, and creative play for children of all ages.

The Drawing Studio, 2760 N Tucson Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85716
<https://www.thedrawingstudio.org>

Community art studio offering classes, workshops, camps, and creative opportunities for artists of all ages.

Children's Museum Tucson Art Studio, 200 S 6th Ave, Tucson, AZ 85701
<https://www.childrensmuseumtucson.org>

Hands-on art, sensory play, and creative exhibits designed specifically for children.

Pottery Painting & Clay

As You Wish Pottery. Multiple Valley Locations
<https://www.asyouwishpottery.com>

Choose a pottery piece, paint it however you'd like, and return later to pick up your finished creation.

Color Me Mine Phoenix, 1743 E Camelback Rd, Suite A4, Phoenix, AZ 85016
<https://phoenix.colormemine.com>

Paint-your-own pottery studio featuring mugs, figurines, plates, keepsakes, and seasonal projects.

Color Me Mine Tucson, 5870 E Broadway Blvd #268, Tucson, AZ 85711
<https://tucson.colormemine.com>

Family-friendly pottery painting, camps, workshops, and special events.

Tucson Clay Co-op, 3322 N Dodge Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85716
<https://www.tucsonclaycoop.com>

Pottery classes, clay workshops, and creative experiences for beginners through experienced artists.

Sunshine Sunflower Studio, 700 W Campbell Ave #3, Phoenix, AZ 85013
<https://www.sunshinesunflower.com>

Pottery painting, clay experiences, camps, and family-friendly creative workshops.

DIY, Splatter & Creative Experiences

Spin Art Nation Phoenix, 2302 N Central Ave #3, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.spinartphoenix.com>

Create spin art, splatter paintings, fluid art projects, and colorful keepsakes in a unique interactive art experience.

Pinspiration Tucson, 7090 N Oracle Rd #194, Tucson, AZ 85704
<https://www.pinspiration.com/tucson>

DIY craft studio featuring splatter rooms, paint pouring, canvas projects, candle making, seasonal crafts, and family workshops.

Craft Nights, 3241 E Shea Blvd #9A, Phoenix, AZ 85028
<https://www.craftnights.com>

Paint pouring, splatter rooms, canvas painting, wood projects, and family-friendly craft experiences.

Arizona Glassblowing Studio, 7677 N 16th St, Phoenix, AZ 85020
<https://www.tryglassblowing.com>

Watch professional glass artists at work or create your own blown-glass art piece.

Painting with a Twist. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.paintingwithatwist.com>

Family paint sessions, guided canvas painting, themed events, and beginner-friendly art classes.

Pinot's Palette. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.pinotpalette.com>

Step-by-step painting experiences, family events, and creative workshops for all skill levels.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Bowling, Arcades & Family Entertainment

When it's too hot for the playground but everyone still has energy to burn, Arizona's bowling alleys, arcades, family entertainment centers, and indoor attractions offer hours of air-conditioned fun.

Bowling

Kids Bowl Free

<https://www.kidsbowlfree.com/0nugb5>

One of the best summer deals for families. Registered children receive free bowling all summer at participating locations. Many centers also offer discounted family passes for parents and siblings.

Bowlero. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.bowlero.com>

Modern bowling centers featuring arcades, laser tag, food, and family-friendly entertainment.

Main Event. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.mainevent.com>

Bowling, laser tag, arcade games, gravity ropes, billiards, and family dining.

Mavrix, 9139 E Talking Stick Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85250

<https://www.mavrix.com>

Upscale bowling, arcade games, laser tag, and family entertainment under one roof.

Fat Cats, 4321 E Baseline Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85234

<https://www.fatcatsfun.com>

Bowling, movies, arcade games, glow golf, and family attractions.

Tucson Bowl, 7020 E 21st St, Tucson, AZ 85710

<https://www.tucsonbowl.com>

Classic family bowling center offering leagues, open play, and summer specials.

Lucky Strike. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.luckystrikeent.com>

Bowling, arcade games, food, and entertainment for families and older kids.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Arcades & Family Entertainment Centers

Dave & Buster's. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.daveandbusters.com>

Arcade games, virtual reality experiences, food, and family fun.

Peter Piper Pizza. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.peterpiperpizza.com>

Pizza, arcade games, rides, and family entertainment.

Chuck E. Cheese. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.chuckecheese.com>

Classic family arcade fun featuring games, prizes, and entertainment.

Fat Cats, 4321 E Baseline Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85234
<https://www.fatcatsfun.com>

Movies, bowling, arcade games, glow golf, and indoor attractions.

Main Event. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.mainevent.com>

One-stop destination for bowling, laser tag, arcade games, and dining.

Mavrix, 9139 E Talking Stick Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85250
<https://www.mavrix.com>

A Scottsdale favorite for bowling, arcade games, laser tag, and family fun.

Jake's Unlimited, 1830 E Baseline Rd, Mesa, AZ 85204
<https://www.jakesunlimited.com>

Arcades, rides, laser tag, buffet dining, and indoor attractions.

Tilt Studio Arizona Mills, 5000 S Arizona Mills Cir, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.tiltstudio.com>

Massive indoor arcade featuring rides, mini golf, bumper cars, and games.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Roller Skating & Indoor Skating

Skateland Mesa, 7 E Southern Ave, Mesa, AZ 85210
<https://www.skateland.com>

Classic roller skating rink with family skate sessions and special events.

Great Skate, 10054 N 43rd Ave, Glendale, AZ 85302
<https://www.greatskate.com>

One of Arizona's most popular family skating centers. Roller skating, family events, and themed skate nights.

Skate Country, 7980 E 22nd St, Tucson, AZ 85710
<https://www.skatecountryaz.com>

Indoor roller skating fun for all ages.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Ice Skating

AZ Ice Arcadia, 3853 E Thomas Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85018
<https://www.azice.com>

Public skating, hockey, and learn-to-skate programs.

AZ Ice Gilbert, 2305 E Knox Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85296
<https://www.azice.com>

Year-round indoor ice skating and hockey.

AZ Ice Peoria, 15829 N 83rd Ave, Peoria, AZ 85382
<https://www.azice.com>

Public skating and family sessions and special events throughout the year.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Escape Rooms & Puzzle Experience

Perfect for older kids, tweens, teens, and families who enjoy solving mysteries together.

Escapology. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.escapology.com>

Family-friendly escape rooms with a variety of themes and difficulty levels.

The Nemesis Club, 2990 N Alma School Rd #3, Chandler, AZ 85224
<https://www.thenemesisclub.com>

Immersive adventure escape experiences with Hollywood-quality sets.

Eludesions Escape Rooms, 3300 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85716
<https://www.eludesions.com>

One of Tucson's most popular family-friendly escape room destinations.

Paragon Escape Games, 9220 E Vía de Ventura, Scottsdale, AZ 85258
<https://www.paragonescapegames.com>

Award-winning escape rooms designed for beginners and experienced players alike.

Fox in a Box, 5747 W Glendale Ave, Glendale, AZ 85301
<https://www.foxinabox.us>

High-tech escape room experiences for older children and teens.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Aquariums & Animal Encounters

OdySea Aquarium, 9500 E Vía de Ventura, Scottsdale, AZ 85256
<https://www.odyseaaquarium.com>

Arizona's largest aquarium featuring sharks, sea turtles, penguins, sea lions, touch pools, and interactive exhibits.

SEA LIFE Arizona Aquarium, 5000 S Arizona Mills Cir, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.visitsealife.com/arizona>

Walk through underwater tunnels, explore touch pools, and discover marine life from around the world.

Butterfly Wonderland, 9500 E Vía de Ventura, Scottsdale, AZ 85256
<https://www.butterflywonderland.com>

The largest butterfly conservatory in the country featuring thousands of butterflies and educational exhibits.

Phoenix Herpetological Society, Scottsdale, AZ
phoenixherp.com

Meet rescued reptiles, tortoises, crocodilians, and other fascinating creatures through guided tours, educational programs, and hands-on animal encounters

Deb's Dragons, Phoenix, AZ
debsdragons.com

Hands-on animal encounters featuring reptiles, mammals, birds, and exotic creatures that bring learning to life.

Ghost Ranch Exotics, 9027 Ghost Ranch Rd, Marana, AZ 85653
ghostranhexotics.com

Meet kangaroos, capybaras, sloths, lemurs, camels, and other exotic animals through interactive experiences and educational encounters.

Rooster Cogburn Ostrich Farm, 17599 E Peak Ln, Picacho, AZ 85141

roostercogburn.com

Feed ostriches, deer, stingrays, lorikeets, and more at one of Arizona's most unique family attractions.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Arizona Boardwalk Attractions

9500 E Via de Ventura, Scottsdale, AZ 85256

<https://www.azboardwalk.com>

Arizona Boardwalk is one of the best indoor summer destinations because several attractions are located in one place.

OdySea Aquarium

<https://www.odyseaaquarium.com>

Butterfly Wonderland

<https://www.butterflywonderland.com>

Museum of Illusions

<https://www.moiscottsdale.com>

Pangaea: Land of the Dinosaurs

<https://www.pangaealandofthedinosaurs.com>

Laser + Mirror Maze

<https://www.azboardwalk.com>

Ripley's Believe It or Not!

<https://www.ripleys.com>

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Movies & Summer Movie Programs

Movie theaters remain one of the best ways to escape Arizona's summer heat.

Harkins Theatres. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.harkins.com>

Harkins Summer Movie Fun offers discounted family movies throughout the summer.

AMC Theatres. Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.amctheatres.com>

AMC Summer Movie Camp provides affordable family-friendly movies all summer long.

RoadHouse Cinemas, 9090 E Indian Bend Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85250

<https://www.roadhousecinemas.com>

In-theater dining, family movies, and special events.

Fat Cats Movies, 4321 E Baseline Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85234

<https://www.fatcatsfun.com>

Affordable movies combined with bowling and arcade fun.

The Loft Cinema, 3233 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85716

<https://www.loftcinema.org>

Independent films, family programming, special events, and cult classics.

Century Theatres, Multiple Arizona Locations

<https://www.cinemark.com>

Popular theater chain offering summer family movie promotions.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Mall Play Areas & Shopping Center Fun

Many Arizona malls offer free indoor play areas, splash pads, storytimes, and seasonal family programming.

Scottsdale Quarter, 15059 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85254

<https://www.scottsdalequarter.com>

Summer Fridays, splash pad fun, family events, and seasonal programming.

Desert Ridge Marketplace, 21001 N Tatum Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85050
<https://www.shopdesertridge.com>

Family events, splash pads, concerts, movies, and seasonal activities.

SanTan Village, 2218 E Williams Field Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85295
<https://www.santanvillage.com>

Outdoor shopping with family-friendly events throughout the summer.

Arrowhead Towne Center, 7700 W Arrowhead Towne Center, Glendale, AZ 85308
<https://www.arrowheadtownecenter.com>

Indoor shopping, family events, and summer activities.

Chandler Fashion Center, 3111 W Chandler Blvd, Chandler, AZ 85226
<https://www.shopchandlerfashioncenter.com>

Indoor shopping, kid-friendly events, and family programming.

Arizona Mills, 5000 S Arizona Mills Cir, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.arizonamills.com>

Indoor mall featuring SEA LIFE Aquarium, LEGOLAND Discovery Center, Tilt Studio, movies, and shopping.

LEGOLAND Discovery Center Arizona, 5000 S Arizona Mills Cir, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.legolanddiscoverycenter.com/arizona>

Indoor rides, LEGO builds, 4D movies, and interactive play experiences.

Water Parks, Splash Pads & Community Pools

When Arizona temperatures climb into the triple digits, water becomes less of a luxury and more of a survival strategy. From massive water parks and resort day passes to neighborhood splash pads and community pools, there are plenty of ways to cool off all summer long.

Hurricane Harbor Phoenix, 4243 W Pinnacle Peak Rd, Glendale, AZ 85310
<https://www.sixflags.com/hurricaneharborphoenix>

Arizona's largest water park features wave pools, lazy rivers, thrilling slides, splash zones, and attractions for all ages.

Golfland Sunsplash, 155 W Hampton Ave, Mesa, AZ 85210
<https://www.golfland.com/mesa>

Water slides, wave pools, lazy rivers, mini golf, arcade games, and family attractions all in one location.

Great Wolf Lodge Arizona, 7333 N Pima Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85258
<https://www.greatwolf.com/arizona>

Indoor water park fun year-round plus family activities, themed suites, and entertainment.

Arizona Grand Resort Oasis Water Park, 8000 S Arizona Grand Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85044
<https://www.arizonagrandresort.com>

A resort-style water park featuring slides, wave pools, and a lazy river.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Community Pools

Many Arizona cities offer affordable daily admission, swim lessons, dive-in movies, and special summer events.

Check your local Parks & Recreation department for:

- Open swim times
- Swim lessons
- Dive-in movies
- Family swim nights
- Teen nights
- Splash events

Popular systems include:

City of Phoenix Pools

<https://www.phoenix.gov/parks>

City of Mesa Pools

<https://www.mesaparks.com>

Chandler Aquatics

<https://www.chandleraz.gov>

Gilbert Aquatics

<https://www.gilbertaz.gov>

Scottsdale Aquatics

<https://www.scottsdaleaz.gov>

Tucson Parks & Recreation

<https://www.tucsonaz.gov>

Marana Aquatic Center

13455 N Marana Main St, Marana, AZ 85653

<https://www.maranaaz.gov>

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Splash Pads Worth Visiting

Arizona families could spend an entire summer exploring splash pads.

For our complete statewide guide: <https://www.raisingarizonakids.com/splash-pads/>

Some favorites include:

Fountain Park Splash Pad, 12925 N Saguardo Blvd, Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

<https://www.fountainhillsaz.gov/696/Fountain-Park>

Desert Ridge Marketplace Splash Pad, 21001 N Tatum Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85050

<https://www.shopdesertridge.com>

Scottsdale Quarter Splash Fountain, 15059 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85254

<https://www.scottsdalequarter.com>

Eastmark Great Park Splash Pad, 5100 S Eastmark Pkwy, Mesa, AZ 85212

<https://www.eastmark.com>

Rivulon Splash Pad, 3750 S Rivulon Blvd, Gilbert, AZ 85297

<https://www.rivulon.com>

Surprise Community Park Splash Pad, 16089 N Bullard Ave, Surprise, AZ 85374
<https://www.surpriseaz.gov>

Goodyear Recreation Campus Splash Features, 420 S Estrella Pkwy, Goodyear, AZ 85338
<https://www.goodyearaz.gov>

Avondale Festival Fields Splash Area, 101 E Lower Buckeye Rd, Avondale, AZ 85323
<https://www.avondaleaz.gov>

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Resort Day Passes & Water Fun

Want the resort experience without booking a room? Many Arizona resorts offer day passes through ResortPass.

Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, 7575 E Princess Dr, Scottsdale, AZ 85255
<https://www.scottsdaleprincess.com>

Hilton Phoenix Tapatio Cliffs, 11111 N 7th St, Phoenix, AZ 85020
<https://www.hilton.com>

Arizona Grand Resort, 8000 S Arizona Grand Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85044
<https://www.arizonagrandresort.com>

The Westin Kierland Resort, 6902 E Greenway Pkwy, Scottsdale, AZ 85254
<https://www.marriott.com>

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Animal Attractions with Water Play

Phoenix Zoo, 455 N Galvin Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85008
<https://www.phoenixzoo.org>

Arizona's largest zoo also features Leapin' Lagoon, a popular splash area that's perfect for cooling off between animal encounters.

Reid Park Zoo, 3400 E Zoo Ct, Tucson, AZ 85716
<https://www.reidparkzoo.org>

A family-friendly zoo with shaded pathways, seasonal water features, and plenty of opportunities to cool off.



[Back to Top](#)]

Summer Shopping Center Events

Many Arizona shopping centers host free family events throughout the summer.

Scottsdale Quarter Summer Fridays, 15059 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85254
<https://www.scottsdalequarter.com>

Splash pad fun, family activities, music, and seasonal events.

Desert Ridge Marketplace Summer Events, 21001 N Tatum Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85050
<https://www.shopdesertridge.com>

Movies, concerts, splash pad activities, and family entertainment.

Westgate Entertainment District, 6751 N Sunset Blvd, Glendale, AZ 85305
<https://www.westgateaz.com>

Free concerts, special events, family nights, and seasonal entertainment.

SanTan Village Events, 2218 E Williams Field Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85295
<https://www.santanvillage.com>

Family programming, community events, and seasonal activities.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Ice Cream & Cool Treats

Arizona summers are hot enough to turn “let’s grab ice cream” into a full family survival strategy. Challenge your family to explore new sweet spots this summer—from old-fashioned ice cream parlors and artisan gelato shops to frozen yogurt, Italian ice, shaved ice, and local favorites worth the drive.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Metro Phoenix Favorites

Churn, 5223 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85012
<https://www.churnaz.com>

Novel Ice Cream, 1028 Grand Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85007
<https://www.novelitecream.com>

Sweet Republic, 6054 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85253
<https://www.sweetrepublic.com>

Sugar Bowl, 4005 N Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://www.sugarbowlscottsdale.com>

Salt & Straw. Multiple Valley Locations
<https://www.saltandstraw.com>

Mary Coyle Ice Cream, 2025 N 7th St, Phoenix, AZ 85006
<https://www.marycoyle.com>

Frost Gelato. Multiple Valley Locations
<https://www.frostgelato.com>

Allora Gelato, 7000 E Shea Blvd, Scottsdale, AZ 85254
<https://www.alloragelato.com>

Handel's Homemade Ice Cream. Multiple Valley Locations
<https://www.handelsicecream.com>

Soda Jerk Co. Milkshake Bar. Multiple Valley Locations
<https://www.sodajerkco.com>

Jeremiah's Italian Ice. Multiple Valley Locations
<https://www.jeremiahsice.com>

Bahama Buck's. Multiple Arizona Locations
<https://www.bahamabucks.com>

AZ Pops. Phoenix Area
<https://www.azpops.com>

Pop Stand. Phoenix Area
<https://www.thepopstand.com>

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Tucson Favorites

The Screamery. Various Tucson Locations
<https://www.thescreamery.com>

Hub Ice Cream Factory, 245 E Congress St, Tucson, AZ 85701
<https://www.hubrestaurant.com>

Frost Gelato, 2905 E Skyline Dr, Tucson, AZ 85718
<https://www.frostgelato.com>

Snoh Ice Shavery. Various Tucson Locations
<https://www.snohice.com>

Slice & Ice, 7117 N Oracle Rd, Tucson, AZ 85704
<https://www.sliceandicetucson.com>

Pin-Up Pastries Ice Cream & Treats, 8567 N Silverbell Rd, Tucson, AZ 85743
<https://www.pinuppastries.com/>

[



[Back to Top](#)]

White Mountains & Northern Arizona

Red Barn Creamery, 219 W White Mountain Blvd, Lakeside, AZ 85929
<https://www.thehouseshowlow.com/red-barn-creamery>

A White Mountains favorite known for homemade ice cream and classic summer treats.

Mountain Dreamery Creamery, 1477 W White Mountain Blvd, Lakeside, AZ 85929
Small-batch ice cream and family-friendly mountain town charm.

FroYo Bros, 560 W White Mountain Blvd, Pinetop-Lakeside, AZ 85935
Frozen yogurt with self-serve toppings and plenty of flavors.

Timberline Ice Cream, 1800 S Milton Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
Popular Flagstaff stop after a day of exploring.

Sweet Shoppe Candy & Ice Cream, 15 N Leroux St, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
Ice cream, candy, and nostalgic treats in downtown Flagstaff.

Grand Canyon Chocolate Company, 281 W Route 66, Williams, AZ 86046
<https://www.grandcanyonchocolatefactory.com>

Chocolate, fudge, ice cream, and Route 66 charm.

Slade's Ice Cream, 40 N White Mountain Rd, Show Low, AZ 85901

A local favorite for ice cream and summer treats.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Metro Phoenix Museums & Science Centers

Arizona is home to hundreds of museums, science centers, historical sites, planetariums, railroad museums, mining museums, Native American cultural centers, and hands-on learning experiences. Whether your child loves dinosaurs, trains, space, art, history, science, mining, aviation, or interactive exhibits, there's a museum worth exploring this summer.

Metro Phoenix Museums & Science Centers

Arizona Capitol Museum, 1700 W Washington St, Phoenix, AZ 85007
<https://azlibrary.gov/azcm>

Explore Arizona government, state history, and interactive exhibits inside the historic Capitol building.

Arizona Commemorative Air Force Museum, 2017 N Greenfield Rd, Mesa, AZ 85215
<https://www.azcaf.org>

Vintage aircraft, aviation history, and military exhibits.

Arizona Museum of Natural History, 53 N Macdonald, Mesa, AZ 85201
<https://www.azmnh.org>

Dinosaurs, archaeology, ancient cultures, and hands-on exhibits.

Arizona Railway Museum, 330 E Ryan Rd, Chandler, AZ 85286
<https://www.azrymuseum.org>

Historic rail cars, locomotives, and Arizona railroad history.

Arizona Science Center, 600 E Washington St, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.azscience.org>

Hands-on STEM exhibits, live demonstrations, giant-screen movies, and family science experiences.

Chandler Museum, 300 S Chandler Village Dr, Chandler, AZ 85226
<https://www.chandleraz.gov/explore/chandler-museum>

Local history exhibits and rotating family-friendly displays.

Children's Museum of Phoenix, 215 N 7th St, Phoenix, AZ 85034
<https://www.childrensmuseumofphoenix.org>

One of Arizona's best destinations for younger children, featuring interactive exhibits and imaginative play.

Cave Creek Museum, 6140 E Skyline Dr, Cave Creek, AZ 85331
<https://www.cavecreekmuseum.org>

Mining history, pioneer life, and local heritage exhibits.

Gallery of Scientific Exploration, 781 E Terrace Rd, Tempe, AZ 85281
<https://sese.asu.edu/k12-field-trip-program>

Interactive earth and space science exhibits hosted by Arizona State University.

Gilbert Historical Museum, 10 S Gilbert Rd, Gilbert, AZ 85296
<https://www.hdsouth.org>

Local history, community exhibits, and educational programs.

Hall of Flame Museum of Firefighting, 6101 E Van Buren St, Phoenix, AZ 85008
<https://www.hallofflame.org>

One of the world's largest firefighting museums featuring historic fire engines and equipment.

Heard Museum, 2301 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://heard.org>

Nationally recognized museum dedicated to Native American art, culture, and history.

Huhugam Ki Museum, 10005 E Osborn Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85256
<https://www.srpmic-nsn.gov>

Cultural and archaeological exhibits focused on the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

IDEA Museum, 150 W Pepper Pl, Mesa, AZ 85201
<https://www.ideamuseum.org>

Hands-on creativity, art, STEM activities, and exhibits designed for children.

Manistee Ranch, 5127 W Northern Ave, Glendale, AZ 85301
<https://www.glendalearizonahistoricalsociety.org>

Historic ranch house and preserved agricultural history.

Martin Auto Museum, 4320 W Thunderbird Rd, Glendale, AZ 85306
<https://www.martinautomuseum.com>

Classic cars, movie vehicles, race cars, and automotive history.

Museum of Illusions Scottsdale, 9500 E Via de Ventura, Scottsdale, AZ 85256
<https://www.moiscottsdale.com>

Optical illusions, interactive exhibits, and mind-bending photo opportunities.

Musical Instrument Museum (MIM), 4725 E Mayo Blvd, Phoenix, AZ 85050
<https://www.mim.org>

One of Arizona's most celebrated museums featuring instruments from around the world.

Peterson House Museum, 1414 W Southern Ave, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.tempe.gov>

Historic pioneer home showcasing early Tempe history.

Phoenix Art Museum, 1625 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.phxart.org>

Arizona's largest art museum featuring collections from around the world.

Phoenix Police Museum, 17 S 2nd Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85003
<https://www.phoenixpolitemuseum.org>

Explore the history of law enforcement in Phoenix.

River of Time Museum & Exploration Center, 12901 N La Montana Dr, Fountain Hills, AZ 85268
<https://www.riveroftime.center>

History, archaeology, geology, and exploration exhibits.

Rosson House Museum, 113 N 6th St, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.thesquarephx.org>

Guided tours through one of Phoenix's most iconic Victorian homes.

Scottsdale Historical Museum, 7333 E Scottsdale Mall, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://www.scottsdalehistory.org>

Preserving and sharing Scottsdale's unique history.

Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art (SMoCA), 7374 E 2nd St, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://www.scottsdalearts.org>

Modern and contemporary art exhibits and installations.

Shemer Art Center, 5005 E Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85018
<https://www.shemerartcenter.org>

Art exhibitions, classes, workshops, and gardens.

Sigler Western Museum, 21 N Frontier St, Wickenburg, AZ 85390
<https://www.westernmuseum.org>

Western heritage, ranching history, and cowboy culture.

Sunnyslope Historical Society Museum, 737 E Hatcher Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85020
<https://www.sunnyslopehistoricalsociety.org>

Neighborhood history and local preservation efforts.

Taliesin West, 12621 N Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd, Scottsdale, AZ 85259
<https://franklloydwright.org>

Frank Lloyd Wright's winter home and architectural masterpiece.

Tempe History Museum, 809 E Southern Ave, Tempe, AZ 85282
<https://www.tempe.gov>

Interactive exhibits exploring Tempe's history and growth.

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West, 3830 N Marshall Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://www.westernspirit.org>

Award-winning museum celebrating the art, history, and culture of the American West.

Wonderspaces Arizona, 7014 E Camelback Rd #584, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://arizona.wonderspaces.com>

Immersive art installations and interactive exhibits.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Southern & Eastern Arizona Museums

Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum, 115 N Church Ave, Tucson, AZ 85701
<https://home.geo.arizona.edu/gem-mineral-museum>

World-class gems, minerals, and geological exhibits.

Amerind Museum, 2100 N Amerind Rd, Dragoon, AZ 85609
<https://www.amerind.org>

Native American art, archaeology, and cultural history.

Arizona History Museum, 949 E 2nd St, Tucson, AZ 85719
<https://arizonahistoricalsociety.org>

Arizona territorial history and changing exhibits.

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, 2021 N Kinney Rd, Tucson, AZ 85743
<https://www.desertmuseum.org>

Part zoo, part botanical garden, part museum, and one of Arizona's most beloved family attractions.

ASARCO Mineral Discovery Center, 1421 W Pima Mine Rd, Sahuarita, AZ 85629
<https://www.asarcodiscoverycenter.com>

Learn how copper is mined and processed in Arizona.

Benson Museum, 180 S San Pedro St, Benson, AZ 85602
<https://www.cityofbenison.com>

Local history exhibits and railroad heritage.

Besh-Ba-Gowah Archaeological Park, 1324 S Jesse Hayes Rd, Globe, AZ 85501
<https://www.globeaz.gov>

Ancient Salado ruins and archaeology exhibits.

Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum, 5 Copper Queen Plaza, Bisbee, AZ 85603
<https://www.bisbeemuseum.org>

Mining history and stories from one of Arizona's most famous mining towns.

Copper Queen Mine Tours, 478 N Dart Rd, Bisbee, AZ 85603
<https://www.queenminetour.com>

Underground mine tours led by former miners.

Children's Museum Tucson, 200 S 6th Ave, Tucson, AZ 85701
<https://www.childrensmuseumtucson.org>

Hands-on exhibits and interactive learning for children.

Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium, 1601 E University Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85721
<https://www.flandrau.org>

Planetarium shows, science exhibits, and astronomy programs.

Fort Huachuca Museum, 41401 Grierson Ave, Sierra Vista, AZ 85613
<https://history.army.mil>

Military history and Buffalo Soldier exhibits.

Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures, 4455 E Camp Lowell Dr, Tucson, AZ 85712
<https://www.theminitimemachine.org>

Intricate miniature displays and imaginative exhibits.

Pima Air & Space Museum, 6000 E Valencia Rd, Tucson, AZ 85756
<https://www.pimaair.org>

One of the largest aviation museums in the world.

Presidio San Agustín del Tucson Museum, 196 N Court Ave, Tucson, AZ 85701
<https://www.tucsonpresidio.com>

Explore Tucson's earliest history and original settlement.

Southern Arizona Transportation Museum, 414 N Toole Ave, Tucson, AZ 85705
<https://www.southernarizonatrainmuseum.org>

Railroad history and transportation exhibits.

Titan Missile Museum, 1580 W Duval Mine Rd, Sahuarita, AZ 85629
<https://www.titanmissilemuseum.org>

Tour an actual Cold War missile silo.

Tucson Auto Museum, 4825 N Sabino Canyon Rd, Tucson, AZ 85750
<https://www.tucsonautomuseum.com>

Classic, rare, and historic automobiles.

Tucson Museum of Art, 140 N Main Ave, Tucson, AZ 85701

<https://www.tucsonmuseumofart.org>

Art collections spanning centuries and cultures.

Tucson Military Vehicle Museum, 6000 E Valencia Rd #26, Tucson, AZ 85756

<https://www.tucsonmilitaryvehicle.org>

Military vehicles, tanks, and historical displays.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Northern Arizona Museums

Apache County Historical Society Museum, 55 N 1st Pl W, St. Johns, AZ 85936

<https://www.apachecountyhistoricalsociety.com>

Regional history and pioneer exhibits.

Butterfly Lodge Museum, 4 County Rd 2114, Greer, AZ 85927

<https://www.butterflylodgemuseum.org>

Historic mountain lodge connected to author James Willard Schultz.

Casa Malpais Archaeological Park & Museum, 1 Mapache Dr, Springerville, AZ 85938

<https://www.casamalpais.org>

Ancient ruins and archaeological discoveries.

Fort Verde State Historic Park, 125 E Hollamon St, Camp Verde, AZ 86322

<https://azstateparks.com/fort-verde>

Historic military fort and Arizona frontier history.

Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site, 1 Hubbell Hill Rd, Ganado, AZ 86505

<https://www.nps.gov/hutr>

The oldest continuously operating trading post on the Navajo Nation.

Jerome State Historic Park (Jerome Mining Museum), 100 Douglas Rd, Jerome, AZ 86331

<https://azstateparks.com/jerome>

Mining history and spectacular Verde Valley views.

Meteor Crater & Barringer Space Museum, Meteor Crater Rd, Winslow, AZ 86047

<https://www.meteorcrater.com>

One of the world's best-preserved meteor impact sites.

Museum of Northern Arizona, 3101 N Fort Valley Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

<https://www.musnaz.org>

Natural history, Native cultures, and Northern Arizona exhibits.

Pioneer Museum, 2340 N Fort Valley Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

<https://www.musnaz.org>

Historic buildings and Arizona pioneer history.

Pinetop-Lakeside Historical Society Museum, 1635 W White Mountain Blvd, Lakeside, AZ 85929

<https://www.pinetoplakesidehistory.org>

White Mountains history and local heritage.

Powell Museum, 6 N Lake Powell Blvd, Page, AZ 86040

<https://www.powellmuseum.org>

Colorado River exploration and regional history.

Riordan Mansion State Historic Park, 409 W Riordan Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

<https://azstateparks.com/riordan-mansion>

Historic mansion and pioneer-era architecture.

Rim Country Museum, 700 S Green Valley Pkwy, Payson, AZ 85541

<https://www.rimcountrymuseum.org>

Payson history, pioneer life, and the Zane Grey Cabin.

Sedona Heritage Museum, 735 Jordan Rd, Sedona, AZ 86336

<https://www.sedonamuseum.org>

Local history and stories from early Sedona.

Sharlot Hall Museum, 415 W Gurley St, Prescott, AZ 86301

<https://www.sharlothallmuseum.org>

One of Arizona's premier history museums.

Show Low Historical Museum, 561 E Deuce of Clubs, Show Low, AZ 85901

<https://www.showlowmuseum.com>

Learn the famous story behind Show Low's unique name.

Smoki Museum of American Indian Art & Culture, 147 N Arizona Ave, Prescott, AZ 86301

<https://www.smokimuseum.org>

Native American art, culture, and history.

Springerville Heritage Center, 301 E Main St, Springerville, AZ 85938

<https://www.springervilleaz.gov>

Regional history and community heritage.

Strawberry Schoolhouse Museum, 9506 Fossil Creek Rd, Strawberry, AZ 85544

<https://www.pinehistoricalsociety.org>

Arizona's oldest standing schoolhouse.

Stinson Pioneer Museum, 421 E Main St, Snowflake, AZ 85937
<https://www.snowflakeaz.gov>

Pioneer artifacts and local history.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Performing Arts, Live Shows & Family Entertainment

Looking for a break from the heat and screens? Arizona's performing arts venues offer family-friendly plays, musicals, concerts, dance performances, children's theater productions, and special events throughout the summer.

Metro Phoenix

Arizona Broadway Theatre, 7701 W Paradise Ln, Peoria, AZ 85382
<https://www.azbroadway.org>

Dinner theater featuring Broadway-style productions, family shows, and special performances.

Childsplay Theatre, 900 S Mitchell Dr, Tempe, AZ 85281
<https://www.childsplayaz.org>

Nationally recognized children's theater company producing shows specifically for young audiences.

Herberger Theater Center, 222 E Monroe St, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.herbergertheater.org>

Home to theater productions, concerts, dance performances, and community arts programming.

Mesa Arts Center, 1 E Main St, Mesa, AZ 85201
<https://www.mesaartscenter.com>

Arizona's largest arts center featuring theater, concerts, art exhibits, and family programming.

Phoenix Theatre Company, 1825 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.phoenixtheatre.com>

One of the oldest arts organizations in the Southwest, producing musicals, plays, and family performances.

Tempe Center for the Arts, 700 W Rio Salado Pkwy, Tempe, AZ 85281
<https://www.tempecenterforthearts.com>

Concerts, family shows, theater productions, and special events along Tempe Town Lake.

Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, 7380 E 2nd St, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://www.scottsdaleperformingarts.org>

National touring acts, family performances, concerts, and cultural events.

Hale Centre Theatre, 50 W Page Ave, Gilbert, AZ 85233
<https://www.haletheatrearizona.com>

Family-friendly theater-in-the-round productions and Broadway favorites.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Tucson & Southern Arizona

Fox Tucson Theatre, 17 W Congress St, Tucson, AZ 85701
<https://www.foxtucson.com>

Historic downtown theater hosting concerts, family performances, movies, and special events.

Gaslight Theatre, 7010 E Broadway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85710
<https://www.thegaslighttheatre.com>

Comedy melodramas, family-friendly productions, and audience participation fun.

Centennial Hall, 1020 E University Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85721
<https://www.arizonaartslive.com>

Broadway tours, concerts, dance performances, and family shows.

The Rogue Theatre, 300 E University Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85705
<https://www.theroguetheatre.org>

Award-winning theatrical productions and educational programming.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Catch a Game

Summer is the perfect time to experience Arizona's sports scene. Whether you're cheering on professional athletes or introducing your kids to their first live game, these family-friendly experiences create lasting memories.

Phoenix Mercury

Footprint Center, 201 E Jefferson St, Phoenix, AZ 85004

<https://www.phoenixmercury.com>

Watch one of the WNBA's most successful franchises in action. Games are energetic, family-friendly, and often more affordable than other professional sports.

Arizona Diamondbacks

Chase Field, 401 E Jefferson St, Phoenix, AZ 85004
<https://www.mlb.com/dbacks>

Air-conditioned baseball makes summer games surprisingly comfortable. Family promotions, kids' activities, and special event nights are common throughout the season.

Arizona Rattlers

Desert Diamond Arena, 9400 W Maryland Ave, Glendale, AZ 85305
<https://www.azrattlers.com>

Fast-paced indoor football featuring high-scoring action and an exciting atmosphere for families.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Staycations & Resort Escapes

Sometimes the best summer vacation is only a short drive away. Arizona's resorts offer pools, lazy rivers, water slides, family activities, spas, golf, and beautiful scenery without the cost of airfare.

Many properties also offer:

- Arizona resident rates
- Summer specials
- Day passes
- ResortPass access
- Family packages
- Kids activities and camps

Scottsdale

Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, 7575 E Princess Dr, Scottsdale, AZ 85255
<https://www.scottsdaleprincess.com>

One of Arizona's most iconic family resorts featuring multiple pools, water slides, family activities, dining, and seasonal events.

Great Wolf Lodge Arizona, 7333 N Pima Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85258
<https://www.greatwolf.com/arizona>

Indoor water park, themed suites, arcade games, attractions, and family entertainment all under one roof.

The Phoenician, 6000 E Camelback Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
<https://www.thephoenician.com>

Luxury resort featuring pools, family activities, golf, and beautiful Camelback Mountain views.

JW Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort & Spa, 5350 E Marriott Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85054
<https://www.marriott.com>

Features AquaRidge WaterPark, a lazy river, waterslides, splash areas, and extensive family amenities.

The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa, 6902 E Greenway Pkwy, Scottsdale, AZ 85254
<https://www.marriott.com>

Lazy river, waterslide, golf, and family-friendly programming.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Phoenix & East Valley

Arizona Grand Resort & Spa, 8000 S Arizona Grand Pkwy, Phoenix, AZ 85044
<https://www.arizonagrandresort.com>

Home to the Oasis Water Park featuring wave pools, slides, a lazy river, and one of Arizona's most popular family staycation experiences.

Hilton Phoenix Tapatio Cliffs Resort, 11111 N 7th St, Phoenix, AZ 85020
<https://www.hilton.com>

Home to Falls Water Village, multiple pools, waterfalls, and family-friendly amenities.

Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort & Spa, 7500 E Doubletree Ranch Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85258
<https://www.hyatt.com>

Water playgrounds, pools, gondola rides, and family activities.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Tucson

Loews Ventana Canyon Resort, 7000 N Resort Dr, Tucson, AZ 85750
<https://www.loewshotels.com/ventana-canyon>

Mountain views, multiple pools, hiking access, and family-friendly amenities.

Hacienda del Sol Guest Ranch Resort, 5501 N Hacienda Del Sol Rd, Tucson, AZ 85718
<https://www.haciendadelsol.com>

Historic resort with beautiful grounds, pools, and stunning Catalina Mountain views.

Westward Look Wyndham Grand Resort & Spa, 245 E Ina Rd, Tucson, AZ 85704
<https://www.westwardlook.com>

Family-friendly resort featuring pools, tennis, horseback riding, and desert views.

Tanque Verde Ranch, 14301 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ 85748
<https://www.tanqueverderanch.com>

A true Arizona ranch experience with horseback riding, fishing, hiking, and family activities.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Sedona & Northern Arizona

Enchantment Resort, 525 Boynton Canyon Rd, Sedona, AZ 86336
<https://www.enchantmentresort.com>

Nestled among Sedona's red rocks, this resort offers family adventures, hiking, biking, tennis, and outdoor programming.

L'Auberge de Sedona, 301 L'Auberge Ln, Sedona, AZ 86336
<https://www.lauberge.com>

Luxury cottages along Oak Creek with beautiful natural surroundings.

Sky Ranch Lodge, 1105 Airport Rd, Sedona, AZ 86336
<https://www.skyranchlodge.com>

Affordable Sedona favorite with incredible red rock views.

Little America Hotel, 2515 E Butler Ave, Flagstaff, AZ 86004
<https://www.littleamerica.com>

A family favorite in Flagstaff featuring pine trees, trails, and cooler summer temperatures.

High Country Motor Lodge, 1000 W Route 66, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
<https://www.highcountrymotorlodge.com>

A modern mountain lodge experience perfect for Northern Arizona adventures.

Family Tip

Many Arizona resorts offer substantial summer discounts because summer is considered the off-season. If you've always wanted to try a luxury Arizona resort, June through August can often provide some of the best rates of the year.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Road Trip-Worthy Arizona Adventures

Sometimes the best way to survive an Arizona summer is to leave town for the day—or even the weekend. From cool mountain escapes and historic Route 66 stops to wildlife parks, scenic railroads, caves, state parks, and national monuments, these destinations are worth the drive.

Salt River Tubing, 9200 N Bush Hwy, Mesa, AZ 85215
<https://www.saltrivertubing.com>

One of Arizona's most iconic summer traditions. Float down the Lower Salt River through the Tonto National Forest while enjoying mountain views, desert scenery, and the chance to spot the famous Salt River wild horses. Tubing season typically runs from late spring through Labor Day, with float times ranging from about 2–4 hours depending on your route.

Family Tips:

- Wear water shoes.
- Bring plenty of water and sunscreen.
- Use a dry bag for phones and valuables.
- Go early to avoid crowds and afternoon heat.
- Remember: no glass containers are allowed.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Flagstaff Adventure Loop

Arizona Snowbowl, 9300 N Snow Bowl Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
<https://www.snowbowl.ski>

Scenic gondola rides, mountain biking, hiking, summer events, and some of Arizona's coolest temperatures.

Lowell Observatory, 1400 W Mars Hill Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
<https://www.lowell.edu>

Explore the observatory where Pluto was discovered, enjoy exhibits, and view the night sky through powerful telescopes.

Flagstaff Extreme Adventure Course, 2446 Fort Tuthill Loop, Flagstaff, AZ 86005
<https://www.flagstaffextreme.com>

Zip lines, ropes courses, suspended bridges, and aerial obstacles among the pine trees.

The Barefoot Trail, 17440 Forest Service Rd 146B, Bellemont, AZ 86015
<https://www.thebarefoottrail.org>

Take off your shoes and explore sensory trails featuring mud, sand, rocks, water, logs, and nature play.

Walnut Canyon National Monument, 3 Walnut Canyon Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86004
<https://www.nps.gov/waca>

Walk among ancient cliff dwellings built into the canyon walls.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, 6400 N US Hwy 89, Flagstaff, AZ 86004
<https://www.nps.gov/sucr>

Explore lava fields and learn about Arizona's volcanic history.

Wupatki National Monument, 25137 N Wupatki Ln, Flagstaff, AZ 86004
<https://www.nps.gov/wupa>

Ancient pueblos and fascinating Native American history.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Williams, Route 66 & Grand Canyon Country

Grand Canyon Railway, 233 N Grand Canyon Blvd, Williams, AZ 86046
<https://www.thetrain.com>

Ride a historic train from Williams to Grand Canyon National Park.

Bearizona Wildlife Park, 1500 E Historic Route 66, Williams, AZ 86046
<https://www.bearizona.com>

Drive through habitats featuring bears, wolves, bison, and other North American wildlife.

Grand Canyon Deer Farm, 6769 E Deer Farm Rd, Williams, AZ 86046
<https://www.deerfarm.com>

Feed deer, pet animals, and enjoy hands-on wildlife encounters.

Canyon Coaster Adventure Park, 700 W Cataract Lake Rd, Williams, AZ 86046
<https://www.canyoncoasteradventurepark.com>

Arizona's mountain coaster plus tubing hills and family attractions.

Grand Canyon National Park, Grand Canyon Village, AZ
<https://www.nps.gov/grca>

One of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World and a must-see for every Arizona family.

Grand Canyon Highlights

- Mather Point
- Yavapai Geology Museum
- Desert View Watchtower
- Bright Angel Trail
- Junior Ranger Program
- Grand Canyon Visitor Center

[



[Back to Top](#)

Caves, Caverns & Underground Adventures

Kartchner Caverns State Park, 2980 S Hwy 90, Benson, AZ 85602
<https://azstateparks.com/kartchner>

One of the world's finest living cave systems featuring spectacular formations and guided tours.

Colossal Cave Mountain Park, 16721 E Old Spanish Trail, Vail, AZ 85641
<https://www.colossalcave.com>

Underground tours, adventure experiences, horseback riding, and family activities.

Grand Canyon Caverns, Mile Marker 115 Route 66, Peach Springs, AZ 86434
<https://www.gccaverns.com>

One of the largest dry caverns in the United States and a fun Route 66 stop.

[



[Back to Top](#)

White Mountains Escape

Sunrise Park Resort, 200 Hwy 273, Greer, AZ 85927
<https://www.sunrise.ski>

Summer tubing, zip lines, mountain biking, chairlift rides, and alpine temperatures.

Fool Hollow Lake Recreation Area, 1500 N Fool Hollow Lake Rd, Show Low, AZ 85901
<https://azstateparks.com/fool-hollow>

Fishing, kayaking, camping, wildlife viewing, and lakeside fun.

Woodland Lake Park, 5401 W Woodland Lake Rd, Pinetop-Lakeside, AZ 85929
<https://www.pinetoplakesideaz.gov>

Walking trails, fishing, playgrounds, and mountain scenery.

Show Low Historical Museum, 561 E Deuce of Clubs, Show Low, AZ 85901
<https://www.showlowmuseum.com>

Learn how a famous card game gave Show Low its name.

Butterfly Lodge Museum, 4 County Rd 2114, Greer, AZ 85927
<https://www.butterflylodgemuseum.org>

Historic mountain lodge connected to Western author James Willard Schultz.

White Mountain Nature Center, 425 S Woodland Rd, Pinetop-Lakeside, AZ 85929
<https://www.whitemountainnaturecenter.org>

Nature trails, wildlife viewing, and educational exhibits.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Payson, Pine & Strawberry

Tonto Natural Bridge State Park, Pine, AZ 85544
<https://azstateparks.com/tonto-natural-bridge>

Home to one of the world's largest natural travertine bridges.

Rim Country Museum, 700 S Green Valley Pkwy, Payson, AZ 85541
<https://www.rimcountrymuseum.org>

Pioneer history and the famous Zane Grey Cabin.

Pine-Strawberry Museum, 3886 AZ-87, Pine, AZ 85544
<https://www.pinemuseum.com>

Explore the history of Pine and Strawberry.

Strawberry Schoolhouse Museum, 9506 Fossil Creek Rd, Strawberry, AZ 85544
<https://www.pinehistoricalsociety.org>

Arizona's oldest standing schoolhouse.

Water Wheel Falls

Houston Mesa Rd, Payson, AZ

A popular family hiking destination featuring water crossings and swimming holes.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

Verde Valley Adventures

Montezuma Castle National Monument, 2800 Montezuma Castle Rd, Camp Verde, AZ 86322
<https://www.nps.gov/moca>

One of the best-preserved cliff dwellings in North America.

Montezuma Well, 5525 Beaver Creek Rd, Rimrock, AZ 86335
<https://www.nps.gov/moca>

A fascinating natural limestone sinkhole and ecosystem.

Out of Africa Wildlife Park, 3505 W Camp Verde Bridgeport Hwy, Camp Verde, AZ 86322
<https://www.outofafricapark.com>

Safari-style tours, giraffe feedings, zip lines, and animal encounters.

Jerome State Historic Park, 100 Douglas Rd, Jerome, AZ 86331
<https://azstateparks.com/jerome>

Mining history and one of Arizona's most unique mountain towns.

Dead Horse Ranch State Park, 675 Dead Horse Ranch Rd, Cottonwood, AZ 86326
<https://azstateparks.com/dead-horse>

Fishing, kayaking, camping, and Verde River access.

[



[Back to Top](#)

Volunteer, Serve & Get Involved

Summer isn't just about keeping kids busy—it's also a great opportunity to teach service, leadership, and community involvement.

Join Your Local Elks Lodge. Find a Lodge Near You
<https://www.elks.org>

Elks Lodges are one of Arizona's best-kept secrets for families looking to connect with their community. Many lodges offer affordable family dining nights, special events, youth programs, scholarship opportunities, holiday celebrations, and volunteer projects throughout the year.

Many lodges support:

- Youth sports
- Scholarships
- Veterans programs
- Food drives
- Holiday giving
- Community grants
- Family events
- Service projects

St. Mary's Food Bank
<https://www.firstfoodbank.org>

Volunteer as a family sorting donations and helping fight hunger across Arizona.

Junior Hunger Heroes
<https://www.firstfoodbank.org/junior-hunger-heroes>

A great volunteer opportunity for teens looking to earn service hours and leadership experience.

Feed My Starving Children

<https://www.fmcs.org>

Families work together packing meals for children around the world.

Library Teen Volunteer Programs

Many Arizona libraries offer summer volunteer opportunities helping with reading programs, children's events, and community activities.

[



[Back to Top](#)]

Summer Camps

Arizona offers thousands of summer camp opportunities for every age, interest, and ability.

Instead of trying to list them all, we've organized them by category.

[STEM & Science Camps](#)

Coding, robotics, engineering, science experiments, technology, and innovation.

[Art Camps](#)

Drawing, painting, pottery, mixed media, crafts, and creativity.

[Performing Arts Camps](#)

Theater, music, dance, acting, and performance.

[Sports Camps](#)

Basketball, soccer, baseball, gymnastics, swimming, martial arts, and more.

[Animal & Nature Camps](#)

Zoo camps, wildlife experiences, horseback riding, and outdoor exploration.

[Academic Camps](#)

Reading, math, enrichment, leadership, and educational experiences.

[Leadership Camps](#)

Community service, public speaking, leadership development, and teen programs.

[Special Needs Camps](#)

Inclusive camps designed to support children with varying needs and abilities.

[Overnight Camps](#)

Traditional sleepaway camp experiences throughout Arizona.

[Mixed-Activity Camps](#)

A little bit of everything—sports, crafts, games, field trips, and fun.

[Theme Camps](#)

LEGO®, Pokémon, superheroes, science fiction, art, cooking, and more.

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

[2026 Virtual Camp Guide](#)

[



[Back to Top\]](#)

One Last Thing...

Summer doesn't have to be expensive, over-scheduled, or stressful.

Some of the best memories come from library storytimes, popsicles on the porch, spontaneous splash pad visits, family hikes, ice cream runs, movie nights, and discovering a new Arizona adventure together.

Whether you're staying close to home or exploring every corner of the state, we hope this guide helps your family create a summer filled with laughter, learning, adventure, and connection.

Happy Summer from Raising Arizona Kids!