

Best things to do in Phoenix during spring training: Hikes, road trips and top restaurants

By Meredith G. White, Arizona Republic

It's feeling like spring throughout metro Phoenix, and while some associate the season with the start of the outdoor hobby season, for others it's all about baseball.

That's right: MLB Cactus League spring training is upon us, and visitors coming to Arizona to watch their favorite teams get ready are probably wondering about all the ways to fill the time between ballgames.

From Glendale to Phoenix to Scottsdale to Mesa, there are activities galore, whether you're looking for dining and nightlife or you want to fill your days exploring the beautiful Sonoran Desert landscape.

From hiking trails to museums to the best bars and restaurants, here are some of the best things to do in Phoenix during spring training 2024.

Best Phoenix restaurants and bars to try this spring

The Arizona Republic's list of the 100 essential restaurants of 2024 in the Valley of the Sun came out recently and it's the best place to start if you're looking for restaurant recommendations. It includes restaurants with national reputations, such as Bacanora and Glai Baan, plus a wealth of local insider favorites at every price point.

If you want to know where Phoenix-area chefs dine out in their rare off time, we've got 10 restaurants local chefs love.

And if you're into restaurants that are among the best in the country, then consider the two that USA Today recently listed. And also the five we thought should be added to that list.

Best things to do during spring training in Arizona

Museums and art galleries

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Phoenix and its surrounding cities have some pretty amazing local artists, which means there's plenty of fun in mural hunting and gallery hopping. Here are some suggestions:

- The Phoenix Art Museum is presenting "Barbie: A Cultural Icon," which recounts the iconic doll's 65-year history,

and there's a bonus exhibition called "The Power of Pink."

- Check out Roosevelt Row, the downtown Phoenix arts district that's filled with galleries, street art, restaurants and bars.

- Visit renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright's winter home Taliesin West and learn all about him, his creations and the home that now is ASU's School of Architecture.

- Visit Old Town Scottsdale and browse the many fine-art galleries and boutiques. It's a great place to pick up amazing souvenirs.

- Head to Chandler where you can play spot the ostrich and learn why ostriches were central to the city's development at the Chandler Museum. Historic downtown Chandler has lots of places to shop, eat and drink.

- Learn about American Indian culture and the natural history of our valley at the Arizona Museum of Natural History in Mesa.

Best springtime hikes, scenic drives and Arizona road trips

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While you're out and about in the nice-for-now weather, you should definitely check out the amazing nature views Arizona has to offer.

- Devil's Bridge in Sedona is one of the most iconic hiking trails in Arizona, and for good reason. Here's how to give it a try.

- The views couldn't be more breathtaking everywhere in Sedona. Here's our guide to all the best hikes, shopping and things to do there.

- If you're hanging around the Phoenix area, you need to see the amazing art and desert foliage at the Desert Botanical Garden.

- In Scottsdale you can check out the amazing McDowell Sonoran Preserve with hikes and terrific desert scenery.

- See all there is to do on the iconic Route 66 as it approaches its 100th birthday.

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