

The roadtripper's dream

PHOTOS: Pedro Berruecos A trip starts off wonderfully when you arrive at what is considered the friendliest airport in the United States: Phoenix Sky Harbor. The only thing left to do is to pick up the car that has been rented in advance and start practicing road tourism in one of the most suitable places in the United States. FROM SURPRISE TO AWAKENING Beyond proposing a specific route, the idea is to suggest some pretexts so that each traveler -at his own pace and under the guidance of a GPS- realizes that Arizona is much more than saguaros, coyotes and roadrunners. There will be those who begin their tour by wandering around Phoenix, a city that is big enough to have it all and small enough to remain hospitable.

Among the must-see attractions are: the Desert Botanical Garden, the Musical Instrument Museum, the Roosevelt Row mural area, as well as breweries, bars and restaurants. Some will choose to head for Scottsdale, home to the state's most luxurious spas, golf courses, resorts and malls, as well as a must for architecture lovers, as it is home to Taliesin West, Frank Lloyd Wright's home and studio. Others will be inclined to go to Tucson, a dynamic and fun university city that, in addition to an incredible cultural proposal in places like the Pima Air and Space Museum, the University of Arizona facilities, the Gem and Mineral Museum, among others, has been named the first Creative City in Gastronomy in the U.S. There, the worn-out concept of "local" is taken to another level; there are renowned restaurants, chefs and bakers. In addition, for many in Tucson it is possible to find the best Mexican food in the U.S., because it is not Tex-Mex, but an authentic mestizo cuisine that has caught the attention of gastrotourists. Sedona also demands to be on the itineraries. It is said that this destination is a center for recharging the Earth's energy. Wellness tourism lovers even go there to practice yoga and have a holistic treatment, as well as to seek peace while admiring the monumental reddish beauty of its rock formations and its starry nights. However, those who believe that the journey is on the road, yes or yes, must head to Flagstaff and travel part of the historic Route 66. Without a doubt, the scenery makes you feel like you're starring in a movie. In addition, Flagstaff is considered the first "Dark City" in the world, thanks to the policies of preservation and fight against light pollution; in fact, it is the headquarters of the Lowell Observatory, where Pluto was discovered. Likewise, no one can leave without eating at Atria or Pizzicleta or tasting the great local beers. For all of the above and a thousand more wonders that remain to be described... the traveler usually asks two questions: "why didn't I come here before?" and.... "In honor of the Earth Every April 22nd, World Mother Earth Day is celebrated to raise awareness about the problems of pollution, overpopulation, as well as the importance of conserving biodiversity. Arizona is a state that pays special attention to this issue and those who plan to visit the destination should include in their itinerary the observation of authentic jewels of nature such as: Grand Canyon National Park (left), Antelope Canyon (right) and Lake Powell, among others. More information at (www.visitarizona.com/espanol). PHOENIX Desert Botanical Garden Music Tourism Flagstaff TUCSON Roadrunner Culinary Fervor SCOTTSDALE Taliesin West Architectural Tourism SEDONA Wellness Astronomical Tourism Route 66

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