



Contact: Marjorie Magnusson
602.364.3695
mmagnusson@azot.gov

Arizona: A State for All Seasons

From the Grand Canyon in the north to the saguaro forests of the south, with the red rocks of Sedona in between, Arizona's spectacular landscapes defy the imagination. When's the best time to see for yourself? The state is so large and varied – and visitor preferences so personal – that every season has its advantages.

The Lay of the Landscapes

Arizona divides, roughly, into three geological zones: the deserts of the south and west, the mountainous central highlands, and the northern Colorado Plateau, named for the river that carved a magnificent canyon through it. Diversity within those divisions – 10,000-foot-high mountains in the south, and volcano-created plains in the central highlands – make it a generalization to say that southern Arizona is hot in summer, northern Arizona cold in winter, but that's still a useful travel rule of thumb.

Arizona's two major metropolises, Greater Phoenix and Metropolitan Tucson, lie in the state's southern sector, swathed by the Sonoran Desert, lush with saguaros and other cacti, and punctuated by several mountain ranges. The desert is fairly flat to the west, but in the east, as cacti give way to scrubby trees and to the tumbling rocks of the Chiricahua Mountains, the region takes on a rugged beauty. One of the area's top natural lures, Kartchner Caverns, lies underground.

Northern Arizona stands out for its astonishing chasms, not only the Grand Canyon but also Canyon de Chelly and the slot canyons near Page. The series of flooded canyons that became Lake Powell is awe-inspiring, too. The region's other distinctive features include the pastel palette of the Painted Desert and the striking buttes and spires of Monument Valley.

The scenery stars of north central Arizona are the startlingly red sandstone cliffs and mesas of Sedona. Equally as magnificent are granite boulders near Prescott, and the Mogollon Rim, the southern edge of the Colorado Plateau, affording wonderful views of the Verde Valley. The rim stretches east to the White Mountains, the most famous of the series of the peaks in this beautiful forested region. The Colorado River defines the landscape to the west, not by carving out chasms but by providing lovely riparian areas as well as splashy playscapes.

-more-

www.arizonaguide.com

1110 W. Washington, Suite 155 Phoenix, AZ 85007 [P] 602.364.3700 [F] 602.364.3701
Janice K. Brewer, Governor ♦ Sherry Henry, Director



The Regions by Season

Song of the South: If unparalleled desert scenery and escape from colder climes appeal, winter is ideal for visiting the major cities: The warm, sunny weather is perfect for sightseeing, and events from outdoor concerts to rodeos are going strong. In spring, the mercury hasn't peaked, but room prices have, offering an ideal climate and moderate prices. The desert often blooms with wildflowers, too. For those who love bargains, summer is great for getting resort rooms, green fees, and restaurant meals at terrific rates, while late July and August's thunderstorms put on spectacular lightning shows. In the cooling-off fall season, room prices are still fairly low, and the return of students to the cities' universities means many activities come back on track.

Northern Exposure: In the north's high season, summer delivers warm, sunshine-filled days, as well as plenty of tours and activities, including a full roster of water sports at Lake Powell. In fall, the crowds go back to school and to work, but the weather is still sunny, crisp, and clear. This part of the state has deciduous trees, so there's even a proper autumn here, replete with gorgeous colored leaves. Picture snow against the Grand Canyon and on the ski runs of Flagstaff, and then consider that that room rates and crowds are at a minimum; all in all, winter comes out a winner. In spring, the sun and moderate temperature returns, but the crowds remain at bay.

Eastside, Westside, and All around the State: Sedona sits at about 4,400 feet, Prescott at nearly a mile, which makes for very temperate weather year-round. Winter is the least busy season, while late spring and summer generally offer the sunniest sightseeing. In summer, southern Arizonans head to the White Mountains to cool off and go fishing, but skiers prefer Arizona's highest slopes when it snows. Western Arizona has two peak seasons: winter, when visitors come down from the north to get warm, and summer, when school's out and everyone hits the cool water of the Colorado River.

For additional Arizona travel information and deals, visit www.arizonaguide.com.

For media information only, visit www.arizonaguide.com/press-room

###