

# Vino, Vistas and Adventure

## North Central Arizona

Sedona, Verde Valley, Prescott and Wickenburg

For thousands of years, people have shared this beautiful region of Arizona with wildlife - and for good reason. The lush rivers tributaries give life to hundreds of species of plants and wildlife, which is just one reason to visit this enchanting area. Breathtaking scenery, a wide-variety of wineries, and authentic cowboy culture also help to make North Central Arizona a premier tourism destination.

**DAY ONE** Begin your adventure with a Jeep tour of one of the scenic trails in and around Sedona. Several local companies provide guides with tremendous knowledge of the area's flora and history. Enjoy a picnic lunch at the beautiful Red Rock Crossing. Spend the afternoon visiting wineries near the banks of Oak Creek where you will taste wines that are grabbing the world's attention. From Page Springs and Javelina Leap to Echo Canyon and Oak Creek Vineyards, you'll be sure to find a new favorite. In the evening, dine at the Enchantment Resort. The cuisine is second only to the jaw-dropping views of Boynton Canyon. Overnight in Sedona.

**DAY TWO** In the morning, visit Montezuma Castle National Monument, (:30) one of the best preserved cliff dwellings in North America. The site tells an ancient story of ingenuity and survival of the Sinaguan people. Then drive to Clarkdale (:30). On your way, stop off at the Alcantara tasting room and try another area wine. When you arrive in Clarkdale, have lunch in the town's historic downtown prior to boarding the train. The Verde Canyon Railroad is a four-hour train ride that takes you past Native American ruins and historic sites. Keep your eyes open for bald eagles, herons and other wildlife along the way. After your train ride, head up the hill to Jerome (:20) for dinner. Jerome, once a thriving hill-side copper mining camp, is now a haven for artists, musicians, writers and photographers - and some ghostly types as well. For dinner, try The Asylum restaurant where the fare and the spirits are as tasty as they are "other-worldly" while the views of the Verde Valley are "to die for!" Opt to stay in town for music and dancing at one of the town's infamous watering holes. Overnight in Jerome or Cottonwood.

**DAY THREE** Grab your walking shoes and spend the morning browsing the boutiques and artist co-ops in Jerome to find that unique something. Jerome is also home to a winery so have a glass while you rest your feet and your wallet. Take a leisurely drive south on Historic Highway 89A over Mingus Mountain to Prescott Valley (:45), traversing a road that is visually and physically enclosed by the vegetation and canyon walls. Take a moment to stop at one of the many breathtaking overlooks. Arrive in Prescott, Arizona's first territorial capitol. Designated a 'Distinctive Destination' by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Prescott offers a historic view of the area. Walk the historic downtown area and down Mt. Vernon Street to see beautifully restored Victorian homes. In the evening, dine at the historic and elegant Hassayampa Inn or try any one of the many restaurants and microbreweries in Prescott's great historic

downtown. End the evening with a visit to one of the old saloons on Whiskey Row. Overnight in Prescott.

**DAY FOUR** Enjoy a little recreation in Prescott National Forest which boasts nearly 450 miles of scenic trails that are used for hiking, horseback riding, and/or mountain biking. The forest also contains one National Recreational Trail (Granite Mountain Trail) and one National Historic Study trail (General Crook Trail). For the more daring visitors, this National Forest offers opportunities for hang gliding and rock climbing. Five lakes in the area allow for kayaking, canoeing and some boating. After such an active day, unwind with a glass of vino. You may choose to visit yet another Arizona winery at Granite Creek Vineyards in Chino Valley, about 20 minutes north of Prescott. Another fine dinner awaits you in historic downtown. Overnight in Prescott.

**DAY FIVE** Today, the past is in your future as you explore the Old West. Located approximately one hour south of Prescott, Wickenburg offers you a taste of nature, history and the Wild West. First visit the Nature Conservancy's Hassayampa River Preserve. A literal oasis in the desert, this lush, streamside habitat is home to some of the Sonoran Desert's most spectacular and endangered wildlife, including 230 species of birds, such as the rare Willow Flycatcher and the Harris Hawk. Larger residents include mules, deer, wild peccaries, bobcats, ringtails, and even mountain lions. In the afternoon, visit the Desert Caballeros Western Museum, considered one of the finest museums in the country featuring western art and frontier history. Take a walking tour of downtown Wickenburg, which is proud to include ten buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. Once the sun sets, kick up your boots and take in the fresh air and wide open spaces at one of Wickenburg's dude ranches. Overnight in Wickenburg.