

Arizona *Highlights*

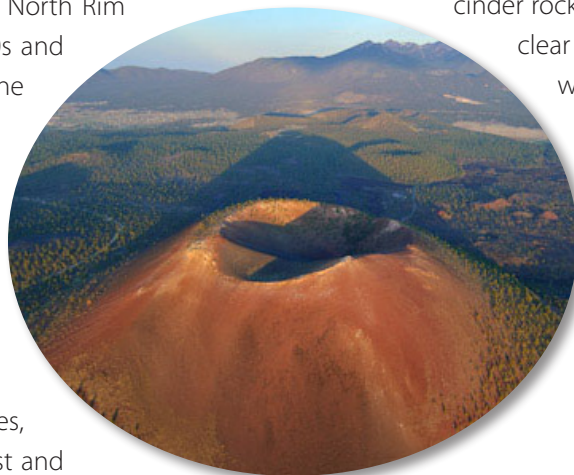


Northern Arizona - Grand Canyon

Few trip destinations will simply blow you away. Grand Canyon Arizona is one that will. It will transcend anything you'll ever experience. The Grand Canyon is sheer awe and breathtaking beauty that will provoke all that inspires. It is a treasured gift of nature that took millions of years to sculpt a lifetime of thrill and enjoyment for the world.

Over 5 million visitors annually travel to the Grand Canyon to experience all it has to offer as one of the designated Seven Natural Wonders of the World. Although the summer months is the peak season, spring and fall are probably the best times to plan your trip, particularly if you plan to hike down into the canyon. Both the South Rim and North Rim offer summer temperatures in the 70s and 80s, but the temperature down in the canyon can reach 110-115 degrees. From November to March, the Grand Canyon is often dusted with snow accenting its panoramic views. All four seasons offer amazing scenes of its vast expanse, incredible depth and varying perspectives.

If you're into mild family style hikes, consider the spectacularly scenic West and



South Rim trails which begin at the South Rim Visitor Center. For a more adventurous hike down into the Grand Canyon, the most popular is the Bright Angel Trail which offers water stations, shade rest areas and rest rooms. The Hermit Trail overlooks the Hermit Rapids at the Colorado River with majestic views of nature's most pristine panorama.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument

Life in the desert for the ancient Sinagua Indian farmers was undoubtedly a challenge. They grew their corn along the rugged terrain of the San Francisco Peaks. They grazed their animals in the occasional open meadow. They had to contend with both drought and torrential rain. Still they flourished and were content to live in their pithouses, dugouts partially buried in the earth in order to keep cool. All that changed, however, when nearly 1,000 years ago the ground shook and the earth rumbled, erupting into a fiery volcano that destroyed the landscape and the tiny

settlements that called the area home. In its wake was left entirely new mountains where once only meadows stood, including the Sunset Crater with its large cinder-lined cone, a timeless reminder of how dramatically life and landscape can change.

The Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument is located in the northern central part of Arizona, less than 15 miles north of Flagstaff, protecting over 3,000 acres of lava fields, cinder deposits and archaeological ruins. As the youngest of the Colorado Plateau volcanoes, Sunset Crater gives everyone from geologists to amateur sleuths insight into what the earth was like in the last millennium. The lava flows and cinder rocks are frozen in time, appearing red and clear as if they had cooled down just last week instead of hundreds of years ago.

Amidst the hardened lava wildflowers and trees spout up, providing a gentle, colorful contrast to the powerful strength of the volcano. Even though the early settlers



moved on to nearby Wupatki and Walnut Canyon following the eruption, fragments of the pithouses and early villages remain. Visitors can examine the volcanic landscape, stand in the very spots where hot, molten lava once flowed, and even follow in the footsteps of the astronauts, who trained for the first lunar landings at Sunset Crater National Monument in the early 1960's.

The Lava Flow Trail

While hiking is prohibited to the top of Sunset Crater to protect it from continued erosion, visitors can still experience the massive power of the volcano by walking the Lava Flow Trail. A gentle, one mile loop trail at the base of Sunset Crater Volcano, the Lava Flow Trail is a self-guided walk that takes visitors back in time to the early 11th and 12th centuries, before the volcano forever changed this impressive landscape. Views of the snow-capped San Francisco Peaks are visible from the Lava Flow Trail, further highlighting the dramatic differences between life before and after the eruption. This thirty minute walk is rated as easy to moderate, with a full ¼ mile section of the trail paved for full accessibility. Photographers will especially enjoy the vibrant color display put on by the wildflowers against their stark, volcanic backdrop and children will marvel at the "moon rocks" formed by the cinder deposits along the way.

Meteor Crater

Arizona, arguably, boasts the most interesting geology in the country. Along with the Grand Canyon and red rocks of Sedona, Meteor Crater, known by scientists as Barringer Crater, is a testament to this statement. Located under forty miles east of Flagstaff, the location is a 50,000 year old crash site formed when a meteorite hit the earth. Travelers visiting this region of the state will want to plan a special trip to view this bit of cosmic history.

Meteorite Crash Landing

Scientists believe the meteorite's impact was far stronger

than the bombs that blasted the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II; in fact, they say it was 150 times stronger than those explosions. The ancient blast displaced 175,000,000 tons of rock. This was a considerable feat considering that much of the meteorite vaporized during its journey through the planet's atmosphere. Many scientists concur that the size of the meteorite, at impact, weighed about 300,000 tons and sported a diameter of 150 feet. While the impact on the earth can still be seen in the land, the blast had a serious impact on the flora and fauna of the locale when it hit. Scientists believe that all life forms would have been instantaneously vaporized within a few miles of the blast. Even at seven miles out, life forms would have met with serious burns. However, scientists do not think that the crash played much havoc with the weather or atmosphere to seriously impact a larger area than the immediate locale. Within a century, geologists believe that the flora and fauna would have recovered and reclaimed the area, which was then, an area characterized by both grasslands and woodlands-wetter and colder than it is presently today.

The Crater Today

Not surprisingly, Meteor Crater hosts many visitors today. During the sixties, the site was used by NASA astronauts during training sessions. Travelers anxiously clamor into the visitor center to man telescopes and stand at the observation points to enjoy the fine views of the crater. Scientists continue to work in the crater as well, conducting various experiments from time to time. The site continues to be a popular tourist destination.

Sedona

Sedona, Arizona, also referred to as Red Rock Country, is a fabulous Southwest destination rich in history, nature, geology, archaeology, and art. Surrounded by national forest in Northern Arizona, its main attraction is its striking red rock landscape, characterized by magnificent red sandstone formations. At sunset, the "Red Rocks of Sedona" appear to shimmer with glowing red-orange hues. Famous red rock formations include Coffeepot Rock, Bell Rock, Chimney Rock, Thunder Mountain and Snoopy Rock. The most popular site for photography in Sedona is Cathedral Rock at Red Rock Crossing.

Adjacent to Sedona is Oak Creek Canyon, a 16-mile stretch along Oak Creek through towering, red canyon walls. The beauty, greenery and coolness of the creek attracts thousands of visitors each year, with Slide Rock State Park, a natural waterslide, the biggest summer attraction. There are some top hiking trails here, such as West Fork, and visitors



enjoy the great trout fishing and camping too. In fact, Highway 89A along Oak Creek Canyon offers visitors one of the most scenic drives in the country.

Slide Rock State Park

If you love picnicking and water recreation in astoundingly beautiful landscape, this is a natural attraction you don't want to miss. Slide Rock State Park is located about 7 miles north of Sedona along Highway 89A in Oak Creek Canyon which has been named by Rand McNally as one of America's Most Scenic Drives. Get ready for a blast for the whole family. When summer arrives, lucky folks flock to this paradise.

"Slide Rock" is named after a natural water slide that gradually descends down Oak Creek. Rocks and boulders that have been worn smooth over millions of years by flowing water line the bottom of the creek forming a slippery natural water chute. The fun and excitement never ends as swimmers briskly slide down the chute until it levels out and then they trek back to the starting point and do it again and again and again.

Southern Arizona - Kartchner Caverns State Park

Quietly nestled beneath the Sonoran Desert, it took nature millions of years to sculpt these majestic cave formations. Accidentally discovered in 1974 and recently opened to the public in 1999, Kartchner Caverns is rated one of the World's Top 10 Caves by experts for its vast and incredibly unique mineral formations. It's the only one of the ten open for public viewing in the United States.

Deep below the extreme desert surface in southeastern Arizona, a cave system - a geological void of gigantic proportions -- hides its riches from the eye of Phoebus. Existing in its own delicate micro-climate for over 200,000 years, the caverns clutch in their dominion a wide variety of priceless calcite decorations called speleothems. Until recently, travelers passing among the saguaros and creosote were unaware of the vast space, cool damp and quiet, lying secretly beneath them.

This underground labyrinth, boasting 13,000 feet of passages and rooms the length of football fields, was a magnitudinous discovery for two amateur cavers who, in 1974, first entered its embrace. During a



day of exploration, Randy Tufts and Gary Tenen, both from Tucson, wriggled through a small sink hole twelve miles south of Benson.

They spent hours making slow passage through a narrow tunnel and breaking through a small barrier of bedrock before finding themselves inside a long corridor; one that eventually opened into several enormous chambers. During subsequent clandestine visits, the spelunkers carefully investigated the

interior, their lambent headlamps revealing pristine subterranean habitat and a myriad of unusual multi-colored formations.

Knowing they had unearthed a valuable landmark and afraid that exposing such a significant find without thoughtful preparation would lead to the caverns being exploited and damaged, the men kept their discovery a secret for fourteen years. In 1988, after protective measures were in place to control access and oversee preservation, the location was officially announced to the public as Kartchner Caverns, named after the rancher who owned the land.

Interest about the new attraction quickly swelled to excitement, but would-be tourists had to wait over a decade to be invited in. Conservationists studied the environment to determine the best ways to minimize impact. An educational facility was designed and constructed nearby. Entrances were established and the caverns were mapped into distinct rooms, passages and points of interest: The Big Room, Throne Room, Echo Passage, Rotunda Room, Mud Flats, Strawberry Room and Subway Tunnel. Then, on November 12, 1999, after 28 million dollars had been spent in development, the site opened as Kartchner Caverns State Park and visitors from



around the globe began their pilgrimage to see the caves' world-class formations.

Inside the caverns, darkness and humidity prevail. The echo of dripping water resounding off the cave's ancient limestone walls hints at its immense size, and the still moist air enjoys undisturbed slumber except for the occasional rapid wing beats of a myotis bat. Completely closed to the outside except for small fissures, with an average temperature of 68 degrees and relative humidity at a stifling 99%, visitors face mixed emotions upon entering this earthen basement. Initially awed by the spaciousness, later challenged by the encapsulation, most spectators become acutely fascinated by the majestic features that beckon their eye with peculiar shapes and vivid color.

Stalactites hang like colossal icicles, mirrored by Stalagmites projecting up from the floor. Some of them meet to form columns. One stalactite and stalagmite in the Throne Room have joined together in 58-feet of organic matrimony, producing the tallest column in Arizona. This extraordinary travertine sculpture is called Kubla Khan, perhaps for its meaning: a poetic fragment. The Throne Room also displays the longest recorded calcite soda straw in the world, reaching a stunning 21 feet, 2 inches.

The shape of any given speleothem is determined by the way water flows, drips and pools inside the caverns. It takes approximately 100 years to form a single square inch of fragile calcite as mineral-rich moisture from the surface seeps in and leaves its deposits. Formations, like bacon draperies, quartz



boxwork, brushite moonmilk, shields, totems and cascades of flowstone are marvels of nature rarely seen by human eyes. Alive and still growing in Kartchner Caverns, they draw 200,000 annual visitors seeking a glimpse of their astounding beauty.

But touring the caves is only part of the Kartchner Caverns State Park experience. The 23,000-square-foot

Discovery Center hosts several prestigious exhibits, a replica of the caverns, educational information, a gift shop and visitor services.

Tombstone Arizona

Visit Tombstone Arizona and you'll step back into the rough and tough days of western history. In the 1880s, Tombstone was a booming mining town that brought a rush of those looking to strike it rich. Gold and silver was the lure that also became a magnet to thieves, card-sharks, murderers, rustlers and an abundance of unsavory bad guys. The streets came alive with hundreds of saloons, gambling halls and bawdy houses.

Surviving a day in Tombstone was a victory as its famous Boot Hill Cemetery overflowed with those shot during poker games, killed in drunken-induced gunfights and even hung for simply becoming a public nuisance. Undertaking was no doubt a lucrative profession.

Tombstone Arizona is perhaps most famous for its Gunfight at OK Corral when the Earp brothers, Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan, along with friend Doc Holliday shot it out with the Clanton and McLaury Gang. There is much controversy surrounding

this historical Tombstone Arizona event over why it happened, who was at fault and even what date it actually occurred. Most agree the gunfight took place on October 26, 1881. Each side seemed to have a great deal of Tombstone area community support. In fact two different newspapers, one with allegiance to the Clantons and the other to the Earps gave differing accounts that led to the killings.

Today, Tombstone is a tourist destination where about 1500 residents welcome vacationers and visitors into western history. Original buildings still exist with old bullet holes still visible from its rough and tough times. The aura and environment are still reminiscent of days past where visitors can



walk the same paths of the bad boys from the 1880s.

Bisbee Arizona

Bisbee, 90 miles southeast of Tucson and nestled amongst the Mule Mountains, is the picturesque county seat of historic Cochise County. The community was founded in 1880 and named after Judge DeWitt Bisbee, a financial backer of the Copper Queen Mine.

Once known as “the Queen of the Copper Camps”, this Old West mining camp proved to be one of the richest mineral sites in the world, producing nearly three million ounces of gold and more than eight billion pounds of copper, not to mention the silver, lead and zinc that came from these rich Mule Mountains. By the early 1900s, the Bisbee community was the largest city between St. Louis and San Francisco.

Bisbee, with a population of over 20,000 people in the early 1900’s, had become one of the most cultured cities in the Southwest. Despite its culture, however, the rough edges of the mining camps could be found in notorious Brewery Gulch, with its saloons and shady ladies. Brewery Gulch, which in its heyday boasted upwards of 47 saloons and was considered the “liveliest spot between El Paso and San Francisco”. Bisbee offered other recreational pursuits in that it was home to the state’s first community library, a popular opera house, the state’s oldest ball fields and the state’s first golf course.

In 1908, a fire ravaged most of Bisbee’s commercial district along Main Street, leaving nothing but a pile of ashes, but the residents of Bisbee quickly began reconstruction and by 1910, most of the district had been rebuilt and remains completely intact today.

The Queen Mine Tour

Bisbee - a name to stir the interest of mining men everywhere - has been one of the greatest copper camps



the world has ever known. In almost 100 years of continuous production before the Bisbee mines closed in 1975, the local mines produced metals valued at \$6.1 billion (at 1975 price) one of the largest production valuations of all the mining districts in the world. This staggering amount of wealth came from the estimated production of 8,032,352,000 lbs of copper, 2,871,786 ounces of gold, 77,162,986 ounces of silver, 304,627,600 lbs of lead and 371,945,900 lbs of zinc!

Today’s Queen Mine Tour takes visitors deep into the old workings of the famous Queen Mine where great tonnages of extremely rich copper ore was mined in the early days, catching the attention of the mining industry around the world as one of the greatest treasure troves of copper ever discovered.

Outfitted in hard hat, miner’s headlamp and a yellow slicker, thousands of Bisbee visitors descend into the Queen Mine Tour each year—heading underground and back in time.

Tour guides, retired Phelps Dodge employees, lead the group 1,500 feet into the mine and recount mining days, techniques, dangers and drama. Adding a personal touch, the miner-turned-tour guides help visitors experience what it was like to work underground.

