



Prickly residents at the Desert Botanical Garden

AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 GIRLS: #78 BY TERESA K. TRAVERSE

Phoenix, Arizona

THIS DESERT DESTINATION IS FULL OF SUN-SOAKED SURPRISES

PHOENIX OFFERS A lot more than just sun and sprawl. This desert town is also home to some kick-ass bars, restaurants, and otherworldly landscapes—hike, sip craft beers at a local brewery, then head to a total dive for late-night Mexican food, all in a single day. Hey, if it's good enough for local resident and legendary former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor it's good enough for you. Use this guide to soak up what the Valley of the Sun—which includes Phoenix and surrounding cities like Scottsdale and Tempe—has to offer.

OUTDOORS

The Southwest is renowned for its magical desert setting. Head to **Camelback Mountain** (5700 North Echo Canyon Pkwy.) for a hike as strenuous as it is stunning. **A-Mountain** (100 S Mill Ave.) is a quick, but steep, jaunt featuring breathtaking city views that starts mere blocks from the center of Tempe. For a tranquil taste of the scenery, the 140-acre **Desert Botanical Garden** (1201 N Galvin Pkwy.) showcases desert plants on easy paved walking paths.



Chef Silvana Salcido Esparza of Barrio Café

EATS

Women run many of Phoenix's top restaurants, like **Barrio Café** (2814 N 16th St.), where you'll find some of the best authentic Mexican food in a city teeming with options. Chef Silvana Salcido Esparza creates dynamic dishes like guacamole sprinkled with pomegranate seeds and *cochinita pibil* (slow-roasted pork) tacos. ➡

Scottsdale's **FnB** (7125 E 5th Ave. #31) serves up inventive vegetable dishes like French-fried squash blossoms created by chef Charleen Badman. And pastry chef Eugenia Theodosopoulos' **Essence Bakery** (3830 E Indian School Rd.) churns out pretty-as-a-picture macarons.

Head downtown to **Pizzeria Bianco** (623 E Adams St.) for tasty wood-fired pies like the texture-rich Rosa topped with red onion, Parm, rosemary, and Arizona pistachios. **Crudo** (3603 E Indian School Rd.), serves up a mean brunch—try the bacon risotto with sunny-side-up eggs. In Tempe at **Postino** (615 S College Ave.), pair bruschetta with a glass of local wine.



First Friday fun

ARTS

The heart of Phoenix's art district is Roosevelt Row—a road featuring eclectic art galleries, shops, and colorful outdoor murals. Highlights include **Modified Arts** (407 E Roosevelt St.), a space dedicated to showcasing local artists, and the **Halt Gallery** (408 E Roosevelt St.), a shipping-container-turned gallery. Go on first or third Fridays when the city shuts down the surrounding streets and essentially throws an art party. Also on first Fridays, the **Phoenix Art Museum** (1625 N Central Ave.) offers gratis admission (as well as a shuttle to Roosevelt Row). Visit Frank Lloyd Wright's winter home, **Taliesin West** (12621 N Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd.), in Scottsdale, where his incorporation of the stark desert beauty is awe-inspiring.

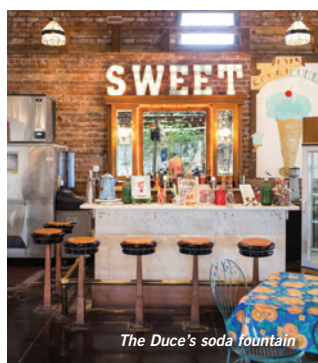


Sip some suds at Mother Bunch Brewing

DRINKS

For an impossibly cozy coffee shop serving up smooth espresso head to **Lux Central** (4402 N Central Ave.). Want an adult beverage? Work up your thirst perusing titles at hip bookstore **Changing Hands** (300 W Camelback Rd.) before grabbing a pint or a glass of wine at the attached **First Draft Book Bar**. Our craft beer scene is exploding and **Four Peaks Brewing Company** (1340 E 8th St. #104) is the most famous of the bunch. Try everything from pale ale to the ultra-hoppy Kilt Lifter (brewed in a traditional Scottish fashion) at this vast Tempe tasting room. Women were some of the first brewers, and **Moth-**

er Bunch Brewing (825 N 7th St.) honors that legacy—the name pays homage to a character in a book about 15th- and 16th-century alewives. The signature chocolate cherry porter is a must sip. (They also serve a killer brunch to pair your suds with.) Hard-to-find venue/underground watering hole **Valley Bar** (130 N Central Ave.) is Phoenix's coolest bar du jour. Order a specialty cocktail named after a local politician and chow down on a gourmet hot dog from local wiener slingers **Short Leash** in the main Rose Room—named for Arizona's first female governor Rose Mofford—before watching an indie band (think Of Montreal) take the stage.



The Duce's soda fountain



"Her Secret Is Patience" floating sculpture in Downtown Phoenix

SHOPPING

Located in a restored 1928 warehouse downtown, **The Duce** (525 S Central Ave.) is one big, fun retail/restaurant/venue hipster space; grab a boozy milkshake at the soda fountain, swing your hips with the hula hoops available for practice, or pick up some loungewear from local company **R&R Surplus**. **Bunky Boutique** (1437 N 1st St. Suite 103) stocks a variety of lightweight clothing, perfect for Arizona's arid climate; their signature T-shirt featuring an outline of Arizona with a heart marking Phoenix is an excellent souvenir. Spend a delightful desert weekend in the Valley of the Sun and you'll never think of this Southwest metropolis as fly-over territory again.