

MODERN LUXURY

Scottsdale

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THE ARTS FORWARD

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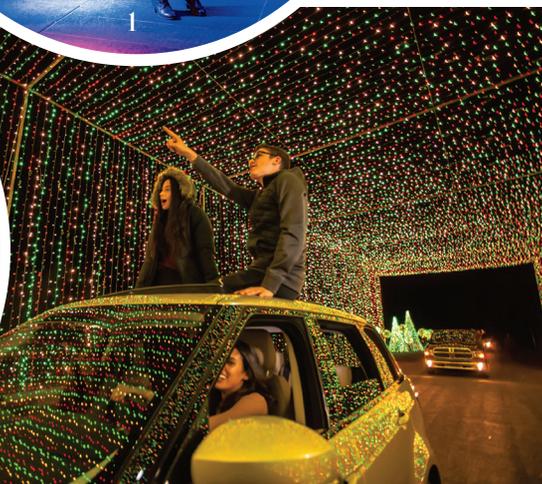
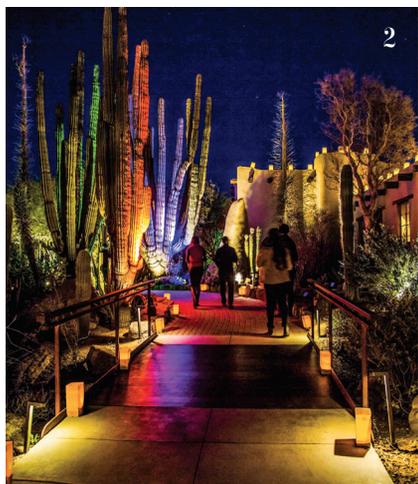
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SPECIAL
DOUBLE ISSUE:
WEDDINGS
SCOTTSDALE
IS BACK!

FAB 5

MERRY & BRIGHT

Think you can't feel holiday cheer in the desert? Think again. The snow may elude Scottsdale, but plenty of places are delivering holiday cheer. Scottsdale residents looking to get into the holiday spirit can enjoy everything from an ice skating rink in the heart of downtown Phoenix to one of the Valley's oldest and most celebrated holiday light displays at the Desert Botanical Garden. Don your sweaters; whip up some hot cocoa; and head out on the town to discover five of the most colorful, festive light displays throughout metro Phoenix. —Teresa K. Traverse



1. SCOTTSDAZZLE

Visitors can look forward to a tree decked out with 1 million customizable light combinations in the heart of Old Town Scottsdale. This year, visitors can enjoy two new exhibits: *Iceberg* and *Local Light*. In the former, 14 illuminated metal arches light up and make noise as spectators walk underneath. The former consists of multicolored rectangular light-based installations. Free, 7506 E. Indian School Road, scottsdazzle.com

2. LAS NOCHES DE LAS LUMINARIAS

Las Noches de las Luminarias at the Desert Botanical Garden is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year—making it one of the Valley's oldest holiday traditions. Guests strolling through the Garden in the evenings throughout December can look forward to luminaries lining walkways, musicians playing live tunes and a new exhibit: *Electric Desert* featuring stunning colorful projections displayed over the flora and fauna. From \$35, 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix, dbg.org/luminaria

3. FAIRMONT SCOTTSDALE PRINCESS

This luxury hotel goes all out for the holidays. Visitors can enjoy an ice skating rink, light displays throughout the grounds and a Christmas tree that boasts 70,000 LED lights that twinkle to 17 holiday songs. Guests can even book luxury rinkside fire-pit tables with s'mores and blankets. Rates vary based on availability, self parking \$55, valet \$85, walk-ins \$25 per wristband, 7575 E. Princess Drive, scottsdaleprincess.com

4. CITYSKATE

Lace up your skates and get ready to take a spin on ice in the heart of downtown Phoenix at CitySkate, Arizona's largest real outdoor ice rink. Located at CityScape, the rink's centerpiece is a 30-foot copper Unity Tree complete with programmable LED lights that light up the night's sky. \$15, private ice skating reservations \$500 per hour, 1 Washington St., Ste. 300, phxicerink.com

5. ILLUMINATION

Drive under nearly 2 million dazzling lights, including dancing candy canes and giant fluttering snowflakes synchronized to festive tunes on FM dials as part of Illumination: Symphony of Light, which returns to North Phoenix for the second year. Illumination also has debuted a new Tempe location at Diablo Stadium. This spot features a 500-foot-long drive-thru LED light tunnel—the longest in the country. From \$29 per vehicle, from \$59 per bus/limo, 2200 W. Alameda Drive, Tempe; 27701 N. Black Canyon, Phoenix; worldofillumination.com



MOVIE NIGHT

ICE, ICE BABY Tucked away at Harkins Camelview at Fashion Square lies **The Freezer**—an exclusive, private theater hidden behind an industrial freezer door. While its exterior door may not be so glamorous, The Freezer could not be more opposite. Here, you'll find plush seating and amenities worthy of the silver screen. Renting out The Freezer grants you access to dedicated event ambassadors and staff, a wall-to-wall screen with state-of-the-art digital production and sound, unlimited popcorn and nonalcoholic beverages, seating for up to 24 people, an en suite bathroom, catering and alcoholic beverage options (for an additional fee), and even blankets for a perfectly cozy movie screening. From \$900, 7014 E. Camelback Road, Scottsdale, harkins.com —Taylor Transtrum

PHOTO OF SCOTTSDAZZLE BY CHRISTINE JOHNSON; PHOTO OF THE FREEZER COURTESY OF HARKINS THEATERS

THE JEWEL OF JEROME

A historic and unique Jerome hotel-turned-luxurious private residence is on the market.

By Teresa K. Traverse

Many homes are marketed as one-of-a-kind, but few properties can live up to the description quite like The Little Daisy. A palatial estate located north of Scottsdale in Jerome—a destination for wine lovers and ghost hunters alike—The Little Daisy was originally a 40-room hotel. Constructed by mining executive James “Rawhide Jimmy” Douglas in 1919 as respite for his guests, and then miners, the hotel sat at the entrance of the Little Daisy Mine. But after Jerome’s copper mine economy collapsed in the mid-1950s, the hotel was stripped of everything except its outer shell. Lisa and Walter Acker bought the property in 1995 and decided to turn The Little Daisy into a private home. At that time, the home did not even have plumbing or electricity.

“We were drawn to the elegance of the architecture,” Lisa says. “It’s just compelling. It’s beautiful—even in its raw state.”

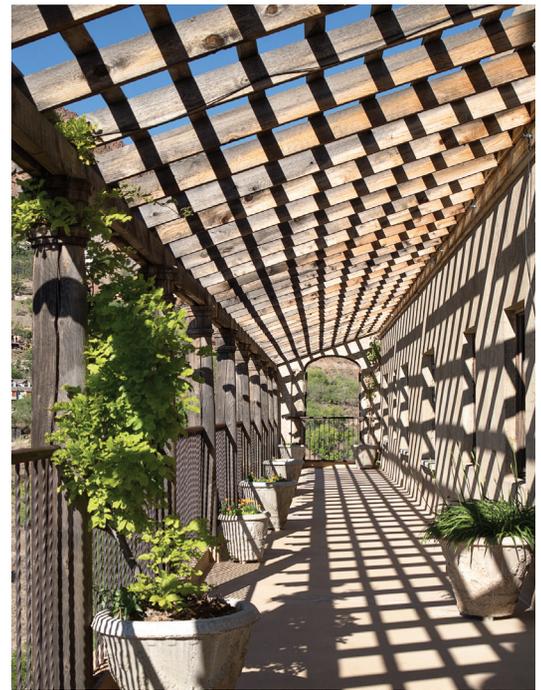
Living in an Airstream trailer on-property, Acker and her husband, Walter, spent nine years renovating the property. From the beginning, the couple intended to preserve the home’s historical roots and studied original blueprints. Visitors can literally feel historic touches throughout the home. The Little Daisy features original walls, chimneys, fireplaces and exterior tiles. A reception desk has been repurposed into a bar. Wood cabinets and windows were reproduced to appear like their vintage counterparts. Ceilings are plastered by hand.

But make no mistake: This is one luxurious property. The Little Daisy boasts a staggering 12,000 square feet of living space and a 9,000-square-foot rooftop garden. Outdoor spaces offer unparalleled and stunning views of the surrounding Verde Valley, Cleopatra Hill and Jerome. The property includes a total of 33 rooms, including eight bedrooms and seven bathrooms.

Acker says she sees the home as a versatile space that could be used as a primary or secondary residence, and to host gatherings. “The kitchen lends itself to fabulous parties. And the rooftop is party central,” says Acker.

The home once hosted a wedding of more than 100 people. The kitchen features stainless steel sinks, marble countertops and a 700-pound stove left on-property that Acker’s husband recreated as an island. The rooftop features a hot tub, outdoor shower, fish pond and fire pit.

Why let all this go? Acker’s husband passed away last year, and she says it’s time for her to move on. “I’ll miss the beauty of it,” says Acker. “It is very comfortable to live here.” Listed at \$6.2 million, Donna Chesler, Russ Lyon Sotheby’s International Realty, 928.301.3004, donna.chesler@russlyon.com, thelittledaisyjerome.com



From top: The Little Daisy has extensive patio space; the property sits on 3.45 acres of land in scenic Jerome, Ariz.



AERIAL PHOTO OF THE LITTLE DAISY BY RON CHILSTON; PHOTO OF PATIO BY IAN WHITEHEAD

THE thespian



TOBY YATSO

There's no business like show business for this Phoenix creative.

You would be hard-pressed to find a local actor with a better résumé than Toby Yatso. Since 2008, Yatso has served as the artist-in-residence at **Phoenix Theatre**. He also teaches musical theater performance at ASU's School of Music, and serves as a regular performer, narrator and collaborator for The Phoenix Symphony. Just how does he juggle so many roles? "I just love it more than anything else," says Yatso. "The No. 1 influencing factor is passion for what I'm doing and to always keep topping myself." Yatso—who has received 15 ariZoni nominations for acting, directing, choreographing and music directing—has played roles ranging from Buddy in *Elf: The Musical* to beloved characters in *Avenue Q* and *The Producers*. He started performing when he was just 3 years old with his mom and sister, singing show tunes like "Give My Regards to Broadway" at his home in rural Wisconsin. Growing up just outside of Green Bay, he was in middle and high school show choirs and musical productions before deciding to move cross-country to attend grad school at ASU—and loved it so much, he never left. Yatso credits Phoenix for being "such a young city" and providing artists with room to grow and find their niches as actors. He stands tall at 6-foot-6 and has been compared to Jim Carrey in terms of physicality. "When I perform, I want to affect people," says Yatso. "I want to give them a message of hope for whatever they might be struggling with." *Elf: The Musical*, Nov. 14-Dec. 30, tickets from \$36, Phoenix Theatre's Mainstage Theatre, 1825 N. Central Ave., phoenixtheatre.com —TKT

VANESSA VASQUEZ

This powerful voice returns home for her first act.

When Scottsdale-native Vanessa Vasquez takes the Symphony Hall stage Jan. 25 for Arizona Opera's production of Verdi's masterpiece *La Traviata*, her angelic voice will likely travel through the audience members' ears and straight into their hearts, especially since many of her family members, former vocal teachers, drama professors and choir directors will be in attendance. "A lot of them have never seen me in an operatic role," she explains. "I'm looking forward to making my teachers proud." The Colombian-American soprano starlet says her childhood home was always filled with music, but opera never entered the picture until a college professor suggested she learn about—and follow the path of—its legends. Vasquez still was not entirely convinced until just a few years ago, when she accidentally caused a glass door to shatter while singing in the shower. Since then she has completed a four-year residency at the prestigious Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia and won a number of awards, but Vasquez says nothing compares to performing as lovestruck courtesan Violetta: "This is the role of a lifetime. I can't think of a better homecoming." Tickets from \$30, azopera.org —RAY

THE
advocate



THE legend



GERI WRIGHT

Meet the woman opening up the local arts scene to underprivileged youth.

Geri Wright is president and CEO of Act One, which partners with more than 70 local arts organizations, in addition to corporate luxury partners like Neiman Marcus and Kendra Scott, to provide families and children with artistic experiences. There are two programs available: Public library card holders can check out a Culture Pass, which offers two complimentary tickets to local performing and visual arts events and attractions; or the organization arranges field trips to professional theaters, museums, and music and dance performances for students attending Title I schools. Between the two programs, more 500,000 people in Arizona have access to the arts who would otherwise not participate. Since Wright started at Act One in May 2015, the budget has doubled; the staff has tripled; and the field trip program has expanded to serve 45 percent more children annually. Wright—who herself is not an artist—previously worked for the Heard Museum and Arizona Theater Company, where she discovered the impact the arts can have in our community. —TKT

IB ANDERSEN

The Denmark-born dancer continues to bring his unique visionary take on ballet to the desert, pushing audiences to new perspectives.

From overseeing rehearsals on one show to choreographing movements for another, it's plain to see that Ib Andersen, **Ballet Arizona's** artistic director, likes to keep things, well, moving. This hurried clip pushed the choreographer from his Danish roots to New York City, before, in 2000, he grand jetéed his way to the desert, where he's injected touches of his European perspective and Balanchine-style technique. "Growing up in Denmark and being here for a long time has changed me," notes Andersen, who will debut *The Firebird*—an original take on a Russian fairy tale—this February. "I'm a product of my environment." *The Firebird* takes on a classic story arc of love and fantasy, and blends it with a dreamlike Space Age setting, spurred on by a score by Igor Stravinsky. Andersen is even hauling in a massive 120-foot-tall panoramic screen—think IMAX instead of Nijinsky—challenging the viewer to see ballet from a different perspective. "Hopefully, it's going to be something that is very visually striking," he says. "Why do something that you've already done before? It's not interesting. Not to me, at least." Tickets from \$38, 2835 E. Washington St., Phoenix, balletaz.org —NE

TO DINE FOR

South Tempe has been a surprising hotbed for eclectic new restaurants. From modern Southwest cuisine to a sleek hidden cocktail bar, these exciting new eateries are worth the trek.

By Teresa K. Traverse



Grilled trout with lemon beurre blanc, Sonoran wheat berries and shaved vegetable salad, \$29, at Ghost Ranch

Ghost Ranch

Celebrated chef and Arizona-native Aaron Chamberlin has rolled out another restaurant concept with Mexican artist Gennaro Garcia. Guests can look forward to traditional regional decor like iconic cow skulls, paintings featuring vibrant desert landscapes and handpainted tiles by Garcia. Formerly of elements at Sanctuary Camelback Mountain Resort & Spa, chef Rene Andrade helms the kitchen, which churns out modern Southwest cuisine. Diners can sink their teeth into juicy 14-ounce prime ribeye cowboy steaks (\$32), hearty mesquite grilled swordfish taco platters (\$23) and steamed chile relleno (\$15). 1006 E. Warner Road, Tempe, 480.474.4328, ghostranchaz.com

Rafter Room

Located above Social Hall, cocktail bar Rafter Room is a darker, duskier version of the restaurant that sits below. The distressed plaster walls, antique voting booth lights above the back bar, and a 30-foot black leather tufted banquette bench seat make for a sleek, vintage vibe in the bar and events space. Named after original rafters and beams from a barn built in 1970 that grace the 27-foot tall ceiling, Rafter Room's menu features 15 classic rum- and tequila-based cocktails, including Where's Zeus? (\$11), a blend of strawberry-infused mezcal, housemade ginger beer, lime and basil. Rafter Room guests can also order Social Hall's Latin-influenced cuisine, including pork belly street tacos (\$10). 715 S. McClintock Drive, Tempe, 480.747.3851, azsocialhall.com



The Rafter Room above Social Hall has modern rustic charm.

Cotton & Copper

Taking its name from two of Arizona's 5 Cs (cotton, copper, cattle, cotton, citrus and climate), Cotton & Copper is a modern take on a classic community public house, with a special focus on all things local. Local craft beers from independently owned breweries are all on tap. Longtime Valley bartender Sean Traynor mixes up handcrafted cocktails, like Bisbee (\$11), a mix of gin, pitaya puree, lime, coconut and orange. Formerly of Helio Basin Brewery, innovative chef Tamara Stanger serves modern desertcentric cuisine, with dishes like desert herb-roasted cauliflower (\$17) with carrot butter, white Sonora tabbouleh and roasted sunflower seed. 1006 E. Warner Road, Ste. 113, Tempe, 480.629.4270, cottonandcopperaz.com

The Cordes Ranch, \$11, with gin, Giffard Pamplemousse, basil, apple juice and lime at Cotton & Copper



PHOTO OF GHOST RANCH DISH BY SHELBY MOORE

SCENE

cottsdale weddings

HOLLY DIETRICH & JACOB BANKS

September 30, 2017

Ceremony & Reception: L'Auberge de Sedona

Photography by Mike Olbinksi



THE COUPLE The minute they were introduced by a mutual friend, Los Angeles-based couple Holly and Jacob Banks were inseparable. After five years of dating, film director Jacob popped the question to Holly, who works in fashion at the Koh Samui Four Seasons in Thailand. Holly summoned her best friend of 20 years, a wedding coordinator, to plan the entire wedding in less than 12 months.

THE PARTY Holly, who originally hails from Mesa, says she wanted an intimate wedding that reflected the couple's fun and adventurous spirit. The couple exchanged first looks and gifts outside at Sedona's L'Auberge de Sedona. Holly's

gift to Jacob? Blessings from monks hailing from Thailand. His gift to her? A brand-new Mercedes. After photos, the couple exchanged vows during a windy, sunset ceremony with Sedona's red rocks serving as a backdrop in front of 100 guests. The adults drank Champagne; kids downed sparkling cider. Following vows, Holly and Jacob ascended the aisle to a violin cover of R. Kelly's "Ignition" remix.

WHAT WE LEARNED Looking back, Holly says she is glad to share one of their favorite places with their friends and relatives. "My heart belongs to Arizona," she says. "We love Sedona. There's something magical in the mountains. I wanted it to feel a little different. We were surrounded by so much love."

THE HONEYMOON After their nuptials, the couple jetted off to the Seychelles, an archipelago of 115 islands off the coast of East Africa, for a 10-day honeymoon at the Four Seasons. Holly says it was wonderful, romantic and quite possibly her favorite place on the planet.

—Teresa K. Traverse



From top: The couple stands underneath a custom-made arch of white roses—Holly's favorite flower—designed to contrast against Sedona's red rocks; the custom floral table centerpieces featured roses, hydrangeas, gardenias, calla lilies, dusty millers and spray roses; a mock wedding invitation displayed at a suite at L'Auberge and hand-drawn by a calligrapher.



From left: The couple tapped Sedona Cake Couture to create their gorgeous geode-inspired confection; Cassie Minard—a friend of Holly's since fourth grade—chats with Heather Burgener.

THE LIST

Wedding Planner Vermilion Events, vermilionevents.com

Bride's Gown Ceremony: Calla Blanche, [Destiny's Bride, destiny'sbride.com](http://Destiny'sBride.com); Reception: By Essense of Australia, [Uptown Bridal, uptownbrides.com](http://UptownBridal.com)

Bride's Hair & Makeup Allison Pynn, makeupaz.com

Flowers Events by Show Stoppers, eventsbyshowstoppers.com

Cake Sedona Cake Couture, sedonacakes.com

Rentals Bright Event Rentals, bright.com; Retro Rentals, azretrorentals.com

Entertainment DJ: Desert House Productions, deserthouseproductions.com; Strings: Sweet Water Strings, sweetwaterstrings.com

Videographer Luke Hansen Media, lukehansenmedia.com

Invitations, Calligraphy, Place Cards & Signs They Call Me Spindles, theycallmespindles.com

Cigar Bar Fumar Cigars, fumarcigarsusa.com

