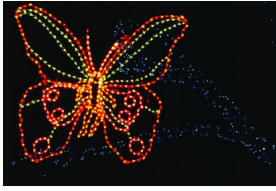


Budget-Friendly Winter Date Ideas

Written by Morgan Tanabe



Recently, I have come to the conclusion that while loading up on buttery popcorn and catching the latest flick at the local movie theater has appeal—the anticipated date night routine becomes more predictable than thrilling. Every couple has the tendency to unexpectedly succumb to a trap of complacency. Whether it is going your favorite dinner spot, renting the latest Redbox movie or just hanging out at home, the gratification of the first few months begins to fade. If you are stuck in the rut of the habitual outing or are anticipating asking someone out on a first date, here are some fun winter date ideas to do together.



Stroll through the zoo illuminated by lights

With the holiday season approaching fast, get into the winter spirit by attending ZooLights at the Phoenix Zoo. The zoo is only a quick drive from Arizona State University and a cheaper alternative to the mundane dinner and a movie. Plan to arrive early and spend the night exploring the zoo illuminated by millions of glimmering, and colorful lights. The festivities begin November 22 through January 6, 2013—there is no excuse to miss the six-week event. 455 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix, AZ, 85008, 602-273-1341. Hours: 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. phoenixzoo.org



Go ice skating in downtown Phoenix

Sometimes it's OK to be cliché—and why not indulge when ice skating in the desert occurs only once a year? For the third year, in the heart of downtown Phoenix, CityScape will be opening their annual ice skating rink. CityScape is the city's newest project and a favorite entertainment venue for Valley locals. Open to the public Monday through Friday, 5:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 3:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. ice skating downtown is the ideal date for grabbing a bite to eat and heading to the rink afterwards. Visitors do not have to fret about parking—the convenience of underground parking is provided. 1 East Washington Street, Phoenix AZ, 85004, 480-947-7772. www.cityscapephoenix.com

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Check out Tempe Festival of the Arts



Get out and explore one of the top 20 art festivals in the nation. With free admission and conveniently located in the Mill Avenue District, Arizona State University students won't have to venture far to get to the event. Tempe Festival of the Arts only happens twice a year and showcases some of the most fascinating artists in North America. From woodwork to photography, the festival offers unique, handmade items to appeal to everyone. The Mill Avenue district is closed to traffic, so visitors are free to roam the streets and browse the works of musicians, artists and food vendors. Do not forget to stop by the wine and beer garden on 7th Street just west of Mill Avenue. The award-winning festival begins November 30—December 2, 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., 310 South Mill Avenue, Tempe, AZ, 85281. www.tempefestivalofthearts.com