

Arizona's Family Fun Adventures

Written by Arizona Office of Tourism

Summer is a time for fun, relaxation and family. So what better way to spend time together than exploring Arizona?



Photo: Tombstone, AZ

Editor's Note: The Arizona Office of Tourism is blogging throughout the summer to help Arizonans enjoy the state's local attractions and vacation experiences.

With a new school year inching closer, families still have time to embrace summer and squeeze in a last-minute road trip in Arizona. Whether the goal is adventure or unwinding, here are some ideas that are classic family fun:

Central Arizona

If staying in your own backyard is appealing, look no further than Wet 'n Wild, Arizona's largest waterpark, located in Glendale. With more than 30 invigorating water rides, Wet 'n Wild keeps the family entertained for the entire day. If relaxation and rejuvenation sounds more intriguing, head to one of the Valley's family-friendly hotels and resorts around town to splash in the pool or float down a lazy river.

Southern Arizona

The kids will love retracing the steps of infamous Wild West characters like Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday with daily reenactments of the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral in Tombstone. Within a close drive of Tombstone is the world's longest stalactite formation at Kartchner Caverns State Park – one of Arizona's most popular attractions and cool summer destinations. On your visit, take a guided tour of the Throne Room and Big Room for an intimate experience in an incredible underground world of long-hidden limestone caves. Be sure to get a look at the world's longest known "soda straw" stalactite.

Northern Arizona

Flagstaff Extreme is a thrilling tree-top adventure course that's sure to excite kids of all ages. Set up high, you get a bird's eye view from suspended bridges, swings, slides, nets, zip lines and an aerial surfboard. Afterward, Arizona Snowbowl's Summer Scenic Skyride is a great choice for families hoping to catch a glimpse of the state's native wildlife. Head even higher at the Lowell Observatory and you can view Pluto from the original telescope that discovered it in 1930.



Photo: White Mountains

Eastern Arizona

With an elevation of 8,500 feet, the White Mountains boasts pine-scented forests, mountain views and sparkling alpine lakes. It's the perfect location for hiking, mountain biking, camping, fishing, horseback riding and swimming. After a hard day of play, venture to Molly Butler Lodge –

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the oldest lodge in Arizona – for a wonderful dinner.

Western Arizona

Along Route 66 is the small town of Oatman, which has one unique quality – wild burros. They are

descendants of the burros brought by miners in the late 1800s and are the town's star attraction. Each morning, they come down from the hills to greet tourists in hopes of getting tasty treats, sold in local shops all around town. Families can also check out a thrilling gunfight, held in the streets throughout the day.

Whatever your family's travel style, the Arizona Office of Tourism's website, www.summerinaz.com, provides trip ideas and adventures of how to enjoy Arizona to the fullest. Summer is short. Start planning.