

Staycations Provide More Than Great Deals

Written by Kiva Couchon



Temperatures are soaring this time of year, and so are the local travel deals. Staycations are a great alternative for residents looking to save some money on their summer getaway.

But, what most don't know is a memorable vacation can also have a lasting effect on the state's economy. Residents are not only saving money by staying close to home, but they are also contributing to a \$19.3 billion industry that helps fund state programs such as education and public safety.

Arizona's tourism is also an important contributor to the local job market. Throughout the state, the tourism industry directly employs 161,300 residents, and combined with secondary employment, it impacts nearly 300,000 residents. Direct visitor spending generated \$2.6 billion local, state and federal tax revenue, representing a \$1,080 tax break per Arizona household.

Summertime offers a way for Arizonans to experience the state through the eyes of a tourist. Did you know more than 38 million visitors across the state in 2012 chose Arizona as a destination to experience the beautiful weather, picturesque landscape and rich culture? Why not play tourist for the weekend in your own backyard, knowing that you are also helping the state?

For those looking to staycation in Arizona but are not sure what to do, the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT) recently launched its Summer in AZ campaign, offering summer trip ideas to help kick start an adventure. No matter what your travel style is, you can find activities that suit your interests.

Those who are adventurous can hike through the beautiful forest terrain, kayak through crystal clear waters or off-road through the desert landscape by jeep, horse or bike. For individuals seeking a leisurely escape from hectic day-to-day schedules, unwind at one of Arizona's luxurious resort spas, championship golf courses or gourmet restaurants. And our state holds a rich Western history in Jerome, Prescott or Tombstone for those searching for an old-fashioned cultural experience.

So this summer, when you are deciding where to vacation, consider the Grand Canyon state, not only for the deals but also for the positive impact your dollars will bring to the local economy. For more Arizona travel and activity ideas, visit www.summerinaz.com.