

Tucson's Best 2011: Food & Restaurants

Written by By Christina Silvestri, Taylor Norman, Sarah Rice

From tasty classics to delectable ethnic cuisines, tempt your taste buds with only the best in Food & Restaurants of Tucson!



Best Asian Cuisine & Sushi

Om Modern Asian Kitchen

Craving sushi or Asian cuisine with a great atmosphere? Om Modern Asian Kitchen is the place to go! Enjoy the urban chic décor while dining on an exciting menu, with great pricing, and friendly staff. The Singapore salad and Thai Basil Chicken are a definite must. Half-off bottles of wine every Monday and Tuesday night? Who knew it could get any better! 520.299.7815, www.om-az.com.



Best Bakery

Beyond Bread

Beyond Bread opened its doors in 1998 and has stolen our heart ever since. All handmade and with the freshest quality of ingredients, you won't find a better bakery in town. Stop in for breakfast, lunch, or to stock up on freshly baked bread and goodies. We can't stop drooling over their fresh scones, butter croissants, death by chocolate cookies and crème brulee, which comes in a different flavor every week! www.beyondbread.com.



Best Breakfast

Cereal Boxx

Remember as a kid how much you looked forward to watching cartoons while eating endless bowls of cereal? Cereal Boxx has brought back all those great memories by offering over 30 types of cereal and 30 toppings to help you create crazy cereal concoctions. Enjoy Cereal Boxx every day of the week for breakfast, lunch or dinner. In the mood for another breakfast item instead? Cereal Boxx offers everything from oatmeal to loaded baked potatoes. 520.622.BOXX, www.thecerealboxx.com.

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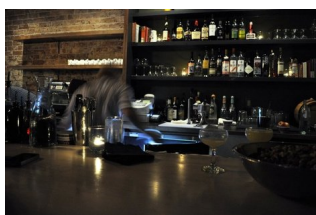
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Best Burger

Firebirds

There is nothing better than sinking your teeth into a nice juicy burger. Visit Firebirds for a burger that sent our voters' taste buds into overdrive. The Durango Burger: a chili-spiced piece of succulent beef grilled over an open flame, topped with pepper jack cheese, pickles, crispy fried onions, and finished with a delicious garlic ranch dressing. Order it with a side of the steakhouse fries for the perfect pairing and enjoy the western vibe Firebirds has to offer. 520.577.0747, www.firebirdsrestaurants.com.



Best Cocktails

Scott & Co.

You can taste how much love goes into these fabulous cocktails at this speakeasy style bar. With each infusion and syrup made in house, guests at Scott & Co. are guaranteed to get the yummiest cocktails in Tucson. Make sure to go in on Tiki Thursday's to try one of their five specialty exotic cocktails. With drinks names like My Man Friday and Foggy Notion who couldn't have a great time? 520.624.4747, www.scottandcotucson.com.



Best Culinary Event

Tucson Originals

A grouping of local independently operated restaurants form the Tucson Originals to bring only the freshest local ingredients and sustainable food practices to the table. The belief system of the group is to provide the soul and distinctive flavors of food that help define a sense of place original to Tucson and southern Arizona. www.tucsonoriginals.com.



Best Cup of Coffee

Raging Sage

Even though Raging Sage is a small Tucson micro-brewery, they definitely deliver up some big flavors in their coffee. Coffee beans are roasted in small batches to temperatures that bring out the best taste for each variety of coffee. Although known for their Raging Sage blend, these coffee connoisseurs offer up a diversity of flavors. Visit them in store or purchase coffee beans online for one seriously good cup of joe. 877.320.1691, www.ragingsage.com.

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Best Date Spot

Pastiche Eatery

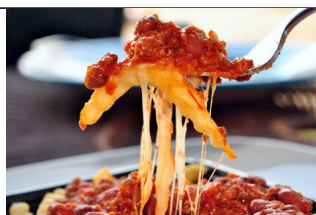
Looking for a special night out with your sweetie but don't know what you are in the mood for? Pastiche Modern Eatery is the perfect answer. Rightfully named best date spot in Tucson, this eclectic eatery offers an American-based menu with international influences. From eggplant parmesan to pan-seared scallops, this menu will work wonders on your taste buds that will make your honey swoon. 520.325.3333, www.pasticheme.com.



Best Dessert

Chocolate Love

We found a whole new excuse to go to the mall, and it's not for the clothes. The creators of Chocolate Love couldn't have come up with a better concept that skips the boring cheese fondue and plunges straight for the good stuff, an endless fountain of chocolate. With a simple yet delicious menu involving two of the world's perfect pairings - luscious chocolate and fresh fruit - diners get an exceptional chocolate experience. www.chocolateloveusa.com.



Best Fries

Eegee's

When it comes to fries, Eegee's knows its stuff. Crisp and golden to perfection, with just the right touch of salt, these fries won over our voters and their stomachs. Looking for a little more out of your fries? Choose one of their four types of specialty fries: ranch, pizza, chili cheese, and Fritos chilitos. Get a heaping scoop of their top-secret chili recipe over those golden beauties to experience what heaven really tastes like! 520.294.3333, www.eegees.com.

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Best Frozen Treat

Orange Leaf Self Serve Frozen Yogurt

Tasty frozen treats that are decadent and healthy is the goal at Orange Leaf Self Service Frozen Yogurt. Enjoy flavors reminiscent of childhood trips to the local dessert shop as well as fruit-based flavors that will satisfy the health orient. Become a master of your own yogurt cup, and choose from a variety of yummy toppings – from fresh fruit and nuts, to brownie bits and chocolate syrup, the possibilities are endless! 520.382.3113, www.orangeleafyogurt.com.



Best Greek Food

OPA! Greek Cuisine and Fun

Opa! to authentic and savory Greek cuisine. One certainly gets a feel for traditional Greece at OPA! Greek Cuisine and Fun; the tablecloths are the deep-blue color of the Aegean, while one wall sports a large photo of the Parthenon. Order some delicious mezedes (appetizers) and the flaming saganaki with a rousing shout of "OPA!" from everyone in the room. Top it all off with some sticky sweet baklava. 520.327.2841.



Best Grocery Store

Whole Foods Market

The Whole Foods Market at Oracle and Ina boasts the only full-service juice and java bar in northwest Tucson. Whole Foods Market in Tucson has over 20,000 organic products including fresh produce items, Fair Trade coffees, health and body care items, and natural meats and seafood. Since 1980, Whole Foods has brought health-conscious customers gourmet grocery essentials, fresh produce, body care items and dietary supplements to tailor a healthy, whole lifestyle. 520.297.5394, www.wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/oracle.



Best Happy Hour

RA Sushi

There's never a dull moment at hip Asian restaurant RA, an upbeat sushi eatery that offers fresh and creative sushi rolls, signature salads,

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Japanese entrees and signature cocktails along with terrific happy-hour specials. Enjoy a specialty cocktail and an outstanding Happy Hour of sushi delights, pineapple cheese wontons, squid salad and more on the upbeat, high-energy patio. 520.615.3970, www.rasushi.com/tucson.



Best Health Food

Lovin' Spoonfuls

Owner Peg Raisglid of Lovin' Spoonfuls aims to provide her customers with only the best foods, all made out of completely vegan ingredients. The charming, fast-casual eatery offers lunch and tasty home-style dinner entrées that satisfies both omnivores and natural veggies. 520.325.7766, www.lovinspoonfuls.com.



Best Italian Restaurant

Oregano's Pizza Bistro

Bring the whole family to this original Chicago-style pizza joint that serves award-winning thin crust, stuffed and pan pizzas to the sounds of Sinatra, Martin and big band music. The unique menu at Oregano's Pizza Bistro includes delicious and original pies, wings, pastas, salads, sandwiches and The Original Pizza Cookie, or "Pizookie." 520.327.8955, www.oreganos.com/tucson.html.



Best Lunch Spot

Delectables Restaurant & Catering Co.

Delectables Restaurant & Catering Co. has specialized in speedy lunches for the busy set since 1973. Call in your order ahead of time and your meal will be on the table when you walk through the door, or enjoy a sit-down meal on what used to be the showroom floor of Ingham's Harley Davidson motorcycle and bicycle shop in 1946. Enjoy the vegan and gluten-free special menu in addition to old favorites. 520.884.9289, www.delectables.com.

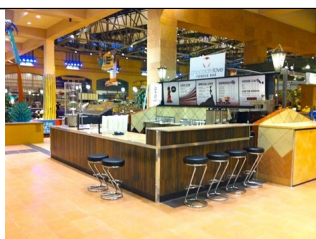
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Best Margarita & Best Mexican Restaurant **El Charro Café**

The nation's oldest Mexican restaurant is located right in the heart of Tucson. The family-run El Charro Café features a traditional Sonoran atmosphere, innovative Mexican food and the best margarita in Tucson. With a large array of products which feature a synergy of Sonoran ingredients, El Charro is Tucson's Culinary History. 520.229.1922, www.elcharrocafe.com.



Best New Restaurant **Chocolate Love**

Chocolate Love's grand opening gave the people of Tucson exactly what they were missing, - a 52-inch chocolate fountain. Hurry on over to Park Place Mall where you can find this adorable bar to dine on fabulous milk chocolate creations, fine organic coffee and enjoy a fun upbeat atmosphere. We love this year's best new restaurant and their slogan "where lovers meet, friends eat, and strangers greet"! www.chocolateloveusa.com.



Best Night Club or Lounge & Most Amazing Restaurant **Level Lounge**

Level Lounge is a sophisticated and elegant entertainment destination located in the foothills of Tucson offering signature cocktails as well as a full bottle service menu. Step up to the bar on Level's main floor and enjoy a cocktail crafted by professional mixologists, dance the night away on the dance floor or relax on the patio area accented with soft lighting and music. 520.615.3835, www.leveltucson.com.



Best Outdoor Seating **Old Pueblo Grill**

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You will find yourself in a sea of fountains and illuminated foliage while you enjoy your dining experience in the historic building of Old Pueblo Grille. The sound of live jazz music, and margaritas with the choice of 60 tequilas, all add to the fun atmosphere. Not to mention their newly remodeled "Hacienda" that adds new elegance and style to the southwestern dining experience. 520.326.6000.



Best Place to Watch the Game

Colt's Taste of Texas

With over 14 televisions, a projection screen, pool tables and incredible bar specials, Colt's Taste of Texas is the ideal place to hang out with friends and family or watch the game. The bar offers a full menu, Happy Hour drink specials, and an All-Star Menu to satisfy any craving! 520.572.5968. www.coltstasteoftexas.com.



Best Pub

The Shanty

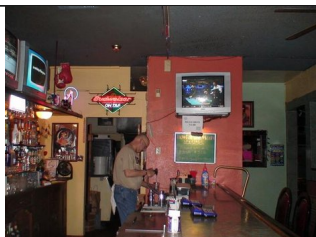
The patio's the place to be at this noted neighborhood bar and cafe at the southern tip of the Fourth Avenue area. Lush, leafy greenery, a trickling fountain, and low-light lanterns create an inviting ambiance of intimacy at The Shanty. Inside, join a game of pool at one of the many pool tables and enjoy one the area's largest selections of imported beers. 520.623.2664.



Best Slice

Eclectic Pizza

If you are looking for an environmentally friendly pizza delivery in Tucson or organic, gluten-free, vegan or vegetarian menu options, Eclectic Pizza Tucson has you covered. The pizza joint supports Tucson's local organic farming by incorporating organic ingredients in its pizza dough and sauce and by serving organic coffee, organic beer and wine in a full-service dining area. 520.886.0484, www.eclecticpizza.com.



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Best Specialty Bar (Gay Bar)

Coyote Moon Pub

The baying rainbow-colored coyotes on the sign clue you into a friendly hangout no matter what your orientation at the Coyote Moon Pub. The pub gives you plenty of reasons to howl; from poker—play for prizes, not cash—to country dance lessons, drag shows, karaoke and more, a great time is never a question. 520.293.7339.



Best Steak

Daisy Mae's Steakhouse

Daisy Mae's is not only known for Angus Beef Steaks and baby back ribs that fall off the bone, but also for simply selling great steak at an affordable price that can be enjoyed in a Southwestern setting. After years of excellence, Daisy Mae's has become a favorite of many MLB players and their families, actors and politicians. 520.792.8888, www.daisymaessteakhouse.com.



Best Sunday Brunch

Blues, Brews and Barbeque Brunch at Loews Ventana Canyon

At Blues, Brews and Barbeque Brunch at Loews Ventana Canyon, you can enjoy the best brunch in Tucson while enjoying a view of the Catalina Mountains from either the indoor dining area or outdoor terrace. The Vista Barista offers gourmet coffee, teas and delectable pastries made fresh by in-house pastry chefs. 520.615.5496, www.loewshotels.com.



Best Wine Bar

58 Degrees & Holding

The relaxing and upscale environment at 58 Degrees and Holding invites customers to enjoy some of the world's most interesting food and wine, with over 58 wine selections by the taste or glass. You will find a season-inspired food menu that takes advantage of Tucson's freshest ingredients. 520.747.5858, www.58degrees.com.

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