

Tucson Weekend Visitors' Guide

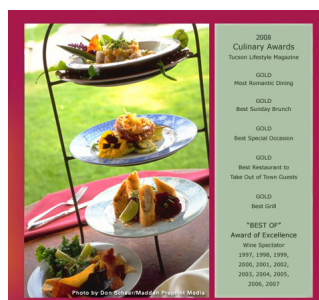
Written by Written by Amy Strand

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Whether you're taking a break from the big-city feel of life in Phoenix, or you've found yourself with a slew of out-of-town guests, leave the weekend plans up to us. Here, we give you the best of the best in Tucson activities and destinations—these picks will impress even the pickiest of travelers.

Dining: The Grill at Hacienda del Sol



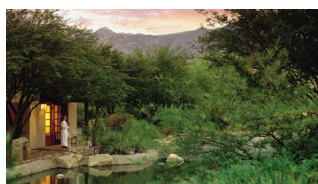
This highly rated, award-winning resort restaurant remains a local and visitor favorite year after year for its extensive wine list, historical venue and fresh ingredients—fruits, vegetables and herbs are picked daily from Hacienda's gardens and used in The Grill's kitchen. Awarded with the Wine Spectator "Award of Excellence" for numerous years and various others like the "Best Restaurant to take Out of Town Guests," and Most Romantic Dining," The Grill offers an impressive dinner and Sunday brunch menu. Be sure to check out the historic property while letting your meal digest; exploring is half the fun. www.haciendadelsol.com/grill.

Golf: Ritz-Carlton Golf Club at Dove Mountain



As the brand-new venue for the Accenture Match Play Championship, the recently unveiled Ritz-Carlton Golf Club at Dove Mountain is any golfer's paradise. As the first Tucson-located Jack Nicklaus designed golf course in 25 years, the Ritz boasts 27 prestigious holes that wind around the desert terrain and Saguaro cacti underneath the Tortolita Mountains. Don't forget to spend some time in the gorgeous clubhouse as well—all 50,000 square feet of it. But hurry up and make a tee time, because while the Ritz is currently open to the public on a preview basis, it will eventually only be available to Ritz-Carlton residents and resort guests. www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/DoveMountain.

Spa: Miraval



Although the world-class Miraval spa typically hosts visitors staying several nights at a time, this destination spa now offers a "Day of Inspiration" package for those within driving distance. A well-known favorite of Oprah, Miraval is located at the base of the Catalina Mountains

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and includes 400 acres of luxe guest rooms, spa centers, a Body Mindfulness Center, an on-site Challenge Course, swimming pools, yoga and Pilates centers and more. Miraval's Day of Inspiration offers short-term guests a Miraval Relaxation Massage or Miraval Custom Facial, use of all spa facilities, a spa lunch at the Cactus Flower restaurant and access to the Body Mindfulness Center and its classes. Now that's what we call a day of true spa serenity. Offer lasts through December, 2009. www.miravalresort.com.

Grab a drink at: Flying V Bar & Grill



As premier Tucson resort Loews Ventana Canyon's signature bar and grill, the Flying V offers up a multitude of drink and appetizer options. A great place to watch the sunset and take in the mountain views, Flying V's specialty drink menu features tempting options like the Guava Lemon Drop Martini and the Sonoran Sangria, while also offering a large selection of wine, spirits, beer and tequila. Order up the tableside guacamole or the cowboy caviar to share among guests. You'll want to pass on securing dinner reservations—just a glance at the delicious dinner menu may have you staying through the main course. www.flyingvbarandgrill.com.

Shopping: La Encantada and St. Philip's Plaza



While both La Encantada and St. Philip's Plaza are two very distinct shopping centers, both compliment each other for a full or half-day of outdoor, boutique-style shopping. The charming gardens and courtyards of St. Philip's Plaza provide a peaceful background for some of Tucson's top clothing boutiques like W Boutique, Butz Jeans, Piece by Piece Wear and Stems shoe boutique, as well as top-notch restaurants like Acacia and Vivace. Stay for the Sunday morning farmer's market or make your way up to La Encantada where you'll find two levels of retail and dining favorites such as Tiffany & Co., BCBG, Louis Vuitton, RA and Bluefin. www.stphilipsplaza.com; www.laencantadashoppingcenter.com.