

2010 Best of Tucson

Written by Written by Caley Goldblatt and Cassandra Weinman
Friday, 20 August 2010 01:00

Whether you're looking for top-notch eats or family-friendly fun in Tucson, here is our first-ever Best of Tucson list of winners (voted on by you!).



Arts & Entertainment

Best Annual Charity Event

Heart Ball of Tucson

As one of Tucson's oldest philanthropic events, this annual charity gala is literally all heart. A yearly event that raises funds to combat heart disease and promote stroke research, the Heart Ball is a tradition enjoyed not only for its grandeur but also for a dedication to end heart-related illnesses that has lasted more than half a century. **520.795.1403**, www.americanheart.org.

Best Annual Event

El Tour de Tucson

Held annually the Saturday before Thanksgiving, El Tour de Tucson is known coast-to-coast as one of the country's best cycling races. Stretching nearly 109 miles, this race attracts cyclists and spectators from across the U.S. and invites visitors of all ages to come along for the ride. **520.745.2033**, www.pbaa.com.



Best Art Gallery

Elements Home Accessories & Gifts

Toting gifts and art, this store is anything but an average gallery. Contemporary art and affordable prices make this Tucson shop a great place for first-time homebuyers looking to decorate a new home or seasoned designers looking for some inspiration. Whatever your need, Elements Home Accessories & Gifts is a store you can't leave empty-handed. **520.733.3399**, www.elementsoftucson.com.

Best News Station

KOLD News 13

Tucson's premier source for news, KOLD News 13 keeps viewers hooked with dedicated news professionals and original stories. In a world where media runs rampant, this news station continually provides quality information in a way that is fun and informative for everyone. **520.744.1313**, www.kold.com.

Best Radio Station

KVOI 103 AM

As the "voice of Tucson's news and information", KVOI 103 AM, formally known as KVOI 690, takes on the responsibility of providing listeners with news and information that is both accurate and enjoyable during the grueling rush hour. Thanks to their dedication to quality news reporting, KVOI delivers every time. **520.790.2400**, www.kvoi.com.

Best Special Event/Wedding Venue

Loews Ventana Canyon

Loews Ventana Canyon is a dream for any bride looking to celebrate her wedding in style. Onsite wedding planners and a dedicated staff help make every detail of the big day sheer perfection. From intimate affairs to elaborate family celebrations, every wedding spent at Loews is truly magical.

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Home & Design

Best Architect

Ibarra Rosano Design Architects, Inc.

As far as Tucson architecture goes, Ibarra Rosano Design Architects is the crème de la crème of the field. By utilizing the city's history and landscape to create spaces that are both aesthetically pleasing and functional, Ibarra Rosano Design remains as relevant and popular as ever. **520.795.5477**, www.ibarrarosano.com.



Best Furniture/Home Store

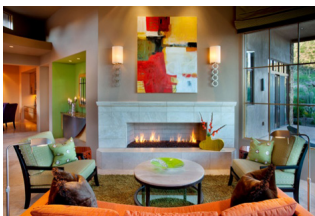
Copenhagen Furniture

Open since 1970, Copenhagen provides shoppers with furniture that is dually contemporary and comfortable. Various design influences from around the world keep this delightful furniture shop on the edge of trends, offering pieces that permit a taste of exotic destinations for any room in the house. **520.795.0316**, www.copenhagenliving.com.

Best Interior Designer

Liz Ryan Interior Design

As the go-to-girl for interior design, Liz Ryan's creations easily exceed the competitions'. With her design firm's ability to keep people guessing, a space crafted by Liz Ryan Interior Design promised to be fresh, elegant and entirely unique. With her extensive experience in all facets of design, Ryan can make even the most arduous renovations easy. **520.299.2123**, www.lizryandesign.com.



Best Master Planned Community

Stone Canyon

Nestled between the Catalina and Tortolita Mountain Rangers, Stone Canyon is home to some of Tucson's most luxe real estate. This master-planned community is known for its stunning landscape, lush golf courses and relaxing atmosphere. Those looking to start a family or simply make a change will not be disappointed by Stone Canyon's devotion to clients and quality. **520.219.9000**, www.stonecanyon.com.

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People of the City

Best Couple

Julie and Jim Penny

Married for more than 15 years, Julie and Jim Penny continue to delight Tucson residents with their marital bliss. As prominent figures in the community—Jim is a lawyer while Julie owns several local boutiques—the couple regularly participated in various charitable organizations including the Boys & Girls Club where they both sit on the board.

Best Dressed

Camerone Parker

As Tucson's very own Carrie Bradshaw, Camerone Parker is by every definition a true fashionista. Her aptly titled radio show "Fashionista Report", which can be heard every Wednesday on the Mountain 92.9, delivers fashion advice along with Parker's trademark wit. Her dedication to style is rivaled only by her active involvement in many of Tucson's philanthropic societies.

Best High School Principal

Marcia Volpe

As principal of Canyon del Oro High School, Marcia Volpe is always in demand. Whether it be mingling with students or working with staff on improvements, her love of education provides Canyon del Oro with a fresh perspective on learning. Loved by parents, teachers and students alike, Volpe's enthusiasm and commitment continue to impress.

Most Influential Man

Dave Sitton

As the voice of Wildcat Basketball, Dave Sitton's extensive experience with UA athletics is unrivaled by most. This rugby aficionado's achievements even include coaching the University's own rugby team at 22. A team player on and off the field, Sitton helps groups like Steele Memorial Children's Research Foundation and the Tucson Pops Orchestra.

Shopping & Fashion

Best Boutique

Piece by Piece

Boasting high-end European clothing collections including Cosabella, Ella Moss and Isabel de Pedro, Piece by Piece provides clients with a taste of foreign fashions without ever leaving Tucson. This store's unique wares will undoubtedly delight even the most seasoned fashion maven, while still appealing to a younger crowd. **520.577.6392**.

Best Denim

Butz Jean Company

Tucson's first premium designer jean boutique, Butz promises to make the best of everyone's assets. This store's unrivaled selection and dedication to the best fits, styles and brands in contemporary denim, including Dylan George, Rebel Yell and Current/Elliott, will delight shoppers; no ifs, ands or Butz about it. **520.299.4220**, www.butzjeans.com.

Best Jeweler

Tiffany & Co.

Known for their decades of unparalleled glamour and quality, Tiffany & Co. has amassed a cult following throughout the world. At the sight of their infamous Tiffany Blue Box is enough to send hearts aflutter. Whether browsing or buying, residents of Tucson can find baubles for every budget at their local store. **520.577.7772**, www.tiffany.com.



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Best Place for Evening Wear

Pour Moi

Tucson's answer to haute fashion, Pour Moi's extensive collection of designers from D&G to Nicole Miller is the perfect place to find an ensemble for a night on the town. The contemporary designs of this Foothill's boutique continue to make it one of the premier destinations for Arizona's fashionistas. **520.577.6351**, www.pourmoi.net.

Best Shoe Shopping

Runner-Up: Dillard's

After almost two decades as an Arizona staple, Dillard's department store exceed shopping expectations by providing quality wares to a diverse audience. The shoe department boasts designs for any occasion and every price range. With multiple locations throughout Tucson, everyone can sample the hottest footwear available. www.dillards.com. (Winner, Stems A Shoe Boutique, is no longer in business.)



Travel & Leisure

Best B&B or Hotel

Omni Tucson National

A celebrated golf course and hotel, Omni Tucson National offers a little something for every traveler. Located just 30 minutes from Tucson International Airport, Omni is home to more than 650 acres of pure luxury. Breath-taking views, championship courses and exquisite accommodations will rejuvenate even the weariest travelers. **520.297. 2271**, www.omnihotels.com.

Best Country Club

Loews Ventana Canyon

This first-class hotel is ideal for not only a weekend getaway, but also a daytime escape. Offering spa services, dining and golf, visitors will enjoy a country club atmosphere without needing to rent a room. Situated against Tucson's beautiful desert landscape, Tucsonans and guests alike will be enthralled by this destination resort. **520.299.2020**, www.loewshotels.com.

Best Guest Ranch

Grapevine Canyon Ranch

Offering a taste of the Southwest in an intimate setting, Grapevine Canyon Ranch leaves every guest feeling a little closer to nature and infinitely more relaxed. Visitors are invited to partake in horseback riding, archery, and sightseeing at this beautiful ranch. Bonus: Grapevine's prime location offers one-of-a kind views of the Dragoon Mountains. **800.245.9202**, www.goranch.com.



Best Resort Pool

Hilton El Conquistador

No Arizona hotel is complete without a fabulous pool to keep guests cool during the scorching summer days, and the pool at the Hilton El Conquistador goes beyond average aquatic luxury. Complete with a 143-foot water slide and a relaxing hot springs, the pool and its amenities make combating the heat delightfully cool. www.hiltonelconquistador.com.

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Best Luxury Resort

Loews Ventana Canyon

With nearly 400 spacious rooms for rent, Loews Ventana Canyon capitalizes on Tucson's unique beauty with a fusion of rustic surroundings and modern design. Boasting an array of restaurants, green golf courses and an indulgent spa, the Loews experience will not be one soon forgotten. **520.299.2020**, www.loewshotels.com.



Kids and Family

Best Place to Be Indoors

The Tucson Children's Museum

Offering guided tours, birthday parties and a non-stop flow of events, the Tucson Children's Museum will brighten your child's day. The museum has tons of exhibits which cater to every possible interest of your child, all the while having a blast. You could stop by dinosaur world to visit the life-sized robotic dinos; take a trip to the art studio and create a masterpiece; or go to the ocean discovery center to learn about mysteries of the deep. **520.792.9985**, www.tucsonchildrensmuseum.org.



Best Place to be Outdoors

Breakers Water Park

Get ready to hang loose because the coolest place for your kids to be outdoors this summer is splashing around at Breakers Water Park. Home to Arizona's largest wavepool, Breakers offers plenty of water slides for the older kids and water playgrounds for the little tykes. **520.682.2304**, www.breakerswaterpark.com.



Best Place to Have a Birthday Party

My Gym

This place takes care of everything from the invitations to the cake and, of course, the super fun gym activities. The trained staff promises hours of fun while taking part in games, gymnastics, rides, songs and even space flight. Your kids will have a blast while you don't even have to clean up. **520.514.9192**, www.mygymtucson.com.

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Food & Wine

Best Asian Cuisine and Sushi

Ra Sushi Bar Restaurant

With it's unbelievable energy and modern décor, Ra has an intoxicatingly fun and exciting atmosphere. Choose from a delicious menu of specialty sushi or stick with the classic sashimi or nigiri. With a killer happy hour including half-off sushi, appetizers and amazing drink specials, this sushi spot reigns supreme. **520.615.3970**, www.rasushi.com.



Best Breakfast

The Good Egg

There is nothing more inviting on a Sunday morning than the Good Egg. The restaurant undoubtedly has whatever you're craving in the morn on their menu of frittatas, French toast, pancakes and more. **520.512.0208**, www.thegoodeggaz.com.

Best Burger

Bistro 44

Bistro 44 is serving up a supreme burger made of 100-percent certified Angus beef. This favorite is grilled to order, shimmied onto a fluffy potato roll and topped with lettuce, tomato, onion and garlic aioli. But that's not all; what makes this burger the best of Tucson is the ability to customize it with toppings like mushrooms, blue cheese, avocado or eggs. Yum! **520.298.2233**, www.bistro44.com?

Best Date Night and Best Resort Dining

Loews Ventana Canyon

This summer, Loews Ventana Canyon has date night covered. Every Friday, it is presenting a free movie in the cascade lounge, while Flying V Bar and Grill is cooking up a dinner to match with a date night special for only \$38. **520.299.2020**, www.loewshotels.com/ventanacanyon.

Best Dessert

Sundaze Frozen Yogurt

Sundaze Frozen Yogurt is a big favorite with Tucsonans, especially those who are afraid of melting away in the summer months. With non-fat flavors rotating daily and delicious smoothies available, this is the healthy way to satisfy your sweet tooth. **520.299.5403**.

Best Family Restaurant and Best Italian Food

Oregano's

This neighborhood pizza joint has a delicious menu filled with kid-friendly entrees as well as Italian classics. Wondering how to top of the perfect meal? Two words: Pizza cookie. This half-baked cookie smothered in vanilla ice cream is big enough for the whole family to share. **520.327.8955**, www.oreganos.com.

Best Greek Food

OPA! Greek Cuisine and Fun

Be transported into Greece with the restaurant's authentic menu offering all the favorites. Share some starters with your family (we like the hummus and tzatziki), and then make the difficult choice of what to order from their massive menu of gyros, stuffed pitas, vegetarian entrees and Greek burgers with feta. **520.327.2841**.

Best Lunch Spot

Paradise Bakery and Café

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Fresh sandwiches, crisp salads *and* every meal is served with an ooey-goey cookie? That delightful combination is found at Paradise Bakery and Café where casual dining meets a delicious bakery atmosphere. Its bakery features delish croissants, brownies, chippers (mini cookies!) and muffins galore. **520.882.5003**, www.paradisebakery.com.



Best Mexican Food

Zivaz Mexican Bistro

With chips and salsa on the house, Zivaz Mexican Bistro is a casual, inviting eatery using only the freshest Mexican ingredients. The menu consists of traditional Mexican cuisine like carne asada plates, pollo tacos and tortilla soup. It also serve up specialty drinks, a favorite being the hibiscus margarita. **520.325.1234**, www.zivaz.com.

Best Place to Watch the Game

Championship Dining

With a homey atmosphere that's perfect for game time, Championship Dining is a great locale to gather and cheer with friends. The eatery also feature amazing drink specials during happy hour, which runs from 9 p.m. to midnight. **520.747.5223**, www.championshipdining.com.

Best Steak

McMahon's Prime Steakhouse

Voted best steak for good reason, McMahon's Prime Steakhouse lets you top your steak off the way you like it with topping options like portobello mushrooms, garlic and aged Romano cheese, or a port wine demi glaze. With 2,600 bottles of wine to choose from, your steak will have the perfect accompaniment. **520.327.2333**, www.metrorestaurants.com.

Best Wine Bar

CORE Kitchen and Wine bar, The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain

The always classy Core Kitchen and Wine bar boasts 40 wines by the glass and more than 2,800 bottles of wine. The wine bar features a menu of appetizers including luxury cheeses and seafood with an impressive display of whites, reds and Core cocktails. **520.572.3000**, www.ritzcarlton.com.

Most Glamorous Place to Party

Zen Rock

Both sassy and classy, Zen Rock is the premiere location in the Tucson nightlife that you need to see to believe. It has an underground feel due to its urban décor and has two floors for dancing. To add to the glamour, Zen Rock offers a selection of VIP tables and services. **520.624.3800**.

Professional & Luxury Services

Best Bank

National Bank of Arizona

The National Bank of Arizona has come a long way in 25 years. Now with 75 offices in 55 communities, it has become one of the most trusted banks in Arizona. www.nbarizona.com.

Best Florist

Evergreen Flowers

Any occasion you can think of—birthdays, graduations, weddings--have a corresponding arrangement at Evergreen Flowers. Whether your message is "thank you" or "I love you," Evergreen makes it easy, convenient and beautiful to say. Plus, their personal guarantee takes the chance out of sending a bouquet or basket. **520.747.7886**, www.evergreenflowers.com.

Best Realtor

Madeline Friedman

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Madeline Friedman of Long Realty has been trailblazing the realty market since 1980. Using her 30 years of experience in the field, Friedman is always looking out for Tucson home hopefuls and charming them with her can-do attitude. www.tucsonazhomes.com.



Health & Self

Best Dentist

Howard M. Steinberg, DMD, MDS

As a prosthodontist or as we prefer, mouth magician, Dr. Steinberg will transform your smile to make it truly radiant. He offers a wide variety of treatments like whitening, veneers and crowns to get you the choppers you have always wanted. **520.886.3030**, www.tucsonsmile.com.

Best Gym

Prestige Fitness

Prestige Fitness is a modern, state-of-the-art gym, which offers you the support to reach all of your fitness dreams. With options to mix it up like outdoor classes, group hikes, personal trainers and fun fitness classes, it will leave endless walking on the treadmill in the dust. **520.300.4838**, www.prestigefitnessaz.com.

Best Hair Salon

Avalon

Catering to hair, skin and nails, Avalon is the one-stop beauty salon that will leave you feeling fabulous. Avalon is a great g- to whether it's up-dos for a wedding party, or it's simply a girls' day, filled with facials and manicures. **520.575.1777**, www.avalontucson.com.

Best Hospital or Medical Center

University Medical Center

Educating the next generation of health caregivers, this establishment provides research and care to the people of Tucson. The excellent nurses and doctors at University Medical Center have shown that there is an attention to detail and a level of compassion that can not be found elsewhere. **520.694.8888**, www.azumc.com.



Best Plastic Surgeon

Teresa Jackson, MD

Dr. Jackson, a Tucson native, is an all-star plastic surgeon in private practice, as well as an assistant professor of plastic surgery at University Medical Center. Beyond her amazing skills to build upon beauty, she specializes in reconstructive breast surgery and can make anyone truly feel beautiful. **520.751.1225**, www.teresajacksonmd.com.

Best Spa

The Spa at Loews Ventana Canyon

The Lakeside Spa offers plenty of services and features to catapult you into a state of extreme bliss. With 7,000 square feet, the spa is home to a beauty salon, relaxation rooms and an outdoor Jacuzzi. The majestic views and long list of services, The Lakeside Spa will definitely melt your troubles away. **520.299.2020**, www.loewshotels.com.

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Best Yoga Studio

Yoga Connection

As Tucson's only nonprofit yoga studio, Yoga Connection offers workshops, classes and one-on-one training all aimed at getting the individual in touch with themselves. Beyond simply the traditional yoga classes, they also offer kids yoga camp and meditation classes. **520.323,1222**, www.yogaconnection.org.

Best Hike (Tie)

Sabino Canyon and Seven Falls

Seven Falls is a challenging 4.5-mile hike but worth the trek, ending with relaxing pools to lounge in and cool off. Or explore the foothills of the Santa Catalina Mountains in Sabino Canyon. Because it is a flat easy hike, it's perfect for all ages, as well as biking and taking in the beautiful Sabino Creek. www.sabinocanyon.com.