

Top Regional Attractions to Hit This Year in Tucson, Part Two

Written by Alyssa DeMember

Thursday, 05 January 2017 13:44 -



The wonderfully diverse, tight-knit community of Arizona's southern city, Tucson, has such a large variety of great places to see and activities with which to take part. Be sure to check out part one of this series as well, and set out to make 2017 a year of adventure and exploration in this eccentric city.

Hotel Congress

Hotel Congress, located on Congress Street in the heart of downtown Tucson, is a historic Tucson landmark. Built in 1919, it's known as the site where infamous and notorious bank robber John Dillinger was caught in 1934, and hails as something of a haunted hotel as well. Nowadays, people stay at Hotel Congress not so much for the typical reason of needing a place to crash, but for the experience of being in this iconic building, although it has been significantly renovated over the years.

Club Congress, which is part of the hotel, is a music venue, where big-name bands and local artists come to perform. And don't miss the vibrant bar scene at Hotel Congress with five in total: the Lobby bar, Tap Room, Club Congress bar, the patio bar outside, and one in the hotel's restaurant, Cup Café. The Tap Room is a particularly special place, with eccentric regulars and fascinating, outlandish art—a truly unique refuge for musicians, artists, newcomers and everyone in between.

hotelcongress.com

Tucson Village Farm

A strong sense of community and emphasis on local, sustainable food practices can be found throughout Tucson and the surrounding areas. While there are plenty of wonderful places to witness locally-sourced food and other products (try Native Seeds/SEARCH), the Tucson Village Farm (TVF) on Campbell Avenue is a great place to start. Tucson Village Farm is a program of the Pima County Cooperative Extension and the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. It's an urban farm built by UA students, Tucson youth and volunteers, encouraging people from all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds to take part in local, sustainable eating and growing practices.

A community-supported program, TVF relies on grants, fees and private donations to keep afloat and offers educational, hands-on workshops for kids of all ages as well as families throughout the year. Get your hands dirty planting and picking crops while learning about local food production. There's nothing quite like sinking your fingers into the soft, rich soil, letting the dirt fill the cracks in your hands and taking in the fresh scent of earth and air. During "U-Pick," open every Tuesday from 4 to 6 p.m., pick your own vegetables, or participate in "Volunteer Mondays" from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

tucsonvillagefarm.arizona.edu



Seven Falls at Bear Canyon

One of the great things about Tucson is the diversity in terrain. You can go from small town to urban cityscape to secluded desert and lush forest within 30 minutes to an hour's drive. Sabino Canyon is a prominent landmark in the Santa Catalina Mountains, a popular hiking destination in the northeastern part of the city. Take the Bear Canyon trail, located within the Sabino Canyon recreation area, to Seven Falls. An aquatic oasis especially after a heavy rain, Seven Falls has pools of crisp, cool water and seven trickling waterfalls where hikers can swim and slide down the rocks. Be sure to check if there's currently water before you go, as the pools can dry up during droughts. The distance from the parking lot to the trailhead is about two miles with a tram available to take you there for a small fee.

Once at the trailhead, the additional two and a half mile hike to Seven Falls is an adventure of crossing small streams, hopping over river rocks, traveling through canopies of trees and possibly glimpsing desert wildlife here or there (watch out for rattlesnakes). And always prepare for

Top Regional Attractions to Hit This Year in Tucson, Part Two

Written by Alyssa DeMember

Thursday, 05 January 2017 13:44 -

desert hikes with a traveling partner, plenty of water, sunscreen and proper attire.

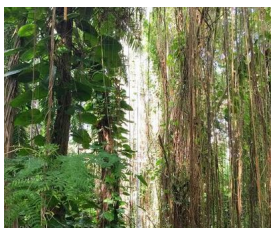
sabinocanyon.com

All Souls Procession

The All Souls Procession is one of the largest, most inclusive events in Tucson where people of all backgrounds and cultures come together to honor the dead. A massive two-mile march through the streets of downtown, the larger-than-life festivities memorialize those who have passed, bringing more than 150,000 people together every year.

The procession ends with the ceremonial burning of an urn filled with offerings and well wishes from the public for those who have passed away. Expect a vibrant and creative crowd, as many participants paint their faces and dress up. There are usually several locations in the area where you can have your face painted, which is a huge part of the fun. This year's All Souls Procession is on November 5 from 4 a.m. to 10 p.m.

allsoulsprocession.org



Biosphere2

"Biosphere1" being Earth itself, Biosphere2 is an earth-systems facility dedicated to controlled scientific studies. The gigantic, completely enclosed structure nearly perfectly mimics a number of different natural ecosystems on our planet, including a rainforest, desert, marsh, ocean, savanna and mangrove forest. Visitors can partake in a guided tour through these environments, an incredible experience that blurs the lines between what feels "indoor" and "outdoor." In the rainforest system especially, it's easy to lose yourself in the damp, dense air, towering trees and unruly, hanging vines. Bring a jacket with you, as the temperature and humidity change dramatically from system to system. Biosphere2 is located in the city of Oracle, north of Tucson.

The facility is run and supported by the University of Arizona, offering dozens of educational opportunities for students from kindergarteners all the way to graduate scholars.

biosphere2.org