

Summer Escapes

One of the best perks of living in Arizona is the opportunity to pamper yourself at some of the best resorts in the world. During my very first visit to the Valley more than 20 years ago, I stayed at the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale Resort and Spa at Gainey Ranch. I somehow still have the sales flyers for homes in Gainey Ranch selling from the low \$100,000's. When I arrived at Sky Harbor Airport, I was shocked that this city had no major freeway system and we had to take side streets to the resort. After the taxi driver drove through Paradise Valley down Tatum Boulevard to Doubletree Ranch Road, we entered this amazing resort. The moment I walked into the lobby and down the stairs, the doors opened and a huge saguaro appeared. I had to sit there, order some drinks, stare at it and think that people actually get to live here in this weather and beauty all year long. I knew this was the place I wanted to come back to and live forever.

Since then, I have visited just about every luxury resort in the state. Tucson is my favorite getaway in the summer. It reminds me of my first visit to the Valley. I always love the short drive and, upon arrival, there are more saguaros and a city with no freeway system—and I like it. Loews Ventana Canyon was my first experience in Tucson. It seems every resort I visited, a new idea came to mind and new opportunities formed. I came here and contemplated whether to continue to work for KPHO-TV or start a company. Well, we know what happened.

When I needed new ideas for the magazine, it was common to check in the Camelback Inn, A JW Marriott Resort & Spa to relax. When my son turned one, I took him to the Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North, and he loved the private Jacuzzi. When I wanted to hang out with friends and have a fun time, we would check in the Hotel Valley Ho. There are so many great resorts in this state that have played a role in special moments in my life, including the Four Seasons where I got engaged in the courtyard with the sun setting, the fire pits blazing and while there was a wedding going on (my timing was perfect). Just last week, I went to Tucson for business and stayed at the new Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain in Marana. This is my new escape and a great place for adults or kids. The water slide is so fun, and the surroundings are so peaceful. The best part is that it's so close to Phoenix.

There is not enough room to mention every resort, but there are so many memories I have at each of them. I encourage you to make your own memories this year. We have this great opportunity to support the place we live.

And remember: sunscreen saves lives. Get checked out every year for skin cancer. I just did!
Have a great summer and get ready for the Face of Foothills Model Search 2012.

Michael S. Dee *President and Publisher*