

Where to Find Gold in the Valley

Written by Written by Melissa Larsen

Tuesday, 30 October 2012 00:00 - Last Updated Thursday, 01 November 2012 18:02

Gold is even more glorious when it is unexpected—perhaps when brimming a martini glass or decking the ceiling of your favorite hotel. From spas to restaurants to even the zoo, AFM scoured the Valley for all that glitters. Here's what we uncovered.



Fancy Flick

While most movie theaters are about the silver screen, this one is about its Gold Membership. Scottsdale Quarter's iPic Theater is not only the most plush spot to catch a flick in the Valley—think super-cushy seats, reserved online seating, valet parking, complimentary popcorn, and food and beverage service during the film—guests can also earn rewards via the free Gold Membership Program. After signing up online or at the theater, iPic's Gold Membership offers movie-goers special discounts, members-only events and screenings, and the chance to earn points toward gift card dollars. www.ipictheaters.com.



Music to Our Ears

On Nov. 21, Phoenix's Musical Instrument Museum (MIM) is set to debut a brand new exhibit in the Target Gallery: "Portraits from the Golden Age of Jazz: Photographs by William Gottlieb." Through April 6, nearly 75 photographs with matching instruments from MIM's collection will be on display to celebrate the golden age of jazz when the likes of Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra and Louis Armstrong reigned supreme. www.themim.org.

Golden Years

This month, the Phoenix Zoo dons its party hat as it marks its Golden Anniversary. During the weekend of Nov. 17, the zoo commemorates five decades in the Valley during its 50th Anniversary Celebration, and Sky Harbor Airport is even showing its love for the local attraction by displaying reminders of the Phoenix Zoo's conservation efforts and animal-inspired art in Terminal 4. For more information on the 50th Anniversary Celebration, visit www.phoenixzoo.org.



Up, Up and Away

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Between its lobby and its illustrious Gold Room, Phoenix's Arizona Biltmore has more than 17,000 square feet of gold-ceiling surface area. In fact, when the resort opened its doors in 1929, the lobby's gold-leaf ceiling was the second largest in the world. (The Taj Mahal boasted the biggest.) For the intricate process of restoring the gilded ceiling, Arizona Biltmore turned to Tucson-based Restoration Conservation Design, Inc. The company most recently restored the surface in 2008. www.arizonabiltmore.com.



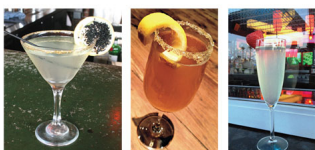
Gilded Garden

For more than 70 years, Desert Botanical Garden has been showing off the majesty of Arizona's natural beauty to endless Valley dwellers and visitors. For a \$700 donation, those with a fondness for fauna are invited to join the Garden's Golden Barrel Club for one year. With this exclusive club, members are gifted with plenty of perks, including: annual admission for two adults and guests; discounts for classes and concerts; advance ticket offers and discounts to Las Noches de las Luminarias; free flashlights tours and much more. www.dbg.org.



Sweet and Shiny

Whether you dig into Julia Baker Confections' Dark Chocolate Ganache Hand-Cut Truffle or Raspberry Hand-Cut Truffle, you'll be taking a bite out of luxury. Each chocolaty treat is topped with a touch of 23-karat edible gold. Bonus: This month, Julia Baker Confections will open a storefront at Biltmore Fashion Park. www.julia-bakerconfections.com.



Sparkling Sips

The Gold Standard: At \$200, this gold-hued cocktail from T. Cook's at Royal Palms Resort and Spa might not please the wallet but its ultra-premium spirits and liqueurs will surely make the palate happy. www.royalpalmshotel.com.

Bling Bling Martini: This popular offering from Los Sombreros is crowned with a gold rim. www.lossombreros.com.

Gold Digger: St. Germain, Beefeater Gin, Champagne, lemon and strawberry come together in this sweet concoction from The Mint. www.themintaz.com.

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About Face

The Gold Facial Package: For centuries, gold has been regarded as the secret to the most youthful, gorgeous skin. This offering from The Spa at Gainey Village uses 24-karat gold, along with collagen and silk protein, to create head-turning results. 90 minutes for \$190 (members) or \$220 (non-members). www.villageclubs.com/spas.

24-Karat Gold Facial Treatment: Rejuvenated, renewed skin and improved blood flow are achievable with this standout treatment from Suddenly Slimmer Wellness Center & Day Spa. Gold is said to be a great antioxidant, which is easily absorbed into the skin, and is very high in minerals. 50 minutes for \$150. www.suddenlyslimmer.com.

Lap of Luxury

Guests at Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain are invited to go for the gold—with a little help from Olympic swimmer Misty Hyman. The gold medalist (she took home top honors at the 2000 games in Sydney) guides guests through the swimming portion of the resort's Three-Day Triathlon Prep Program. In addition to three-night accommodations at the Scottsdale resort, a power breakfast each morning and a soothing spa treatment to end each day, guests train with on-site pros to meet their fitness goals. On Day One, Hyman offers swimming strategies for endurance and speed in Sanctuary's 25-yard outdoor lap pool. During the next day, guests enjoy a guided desert bike ride, and, on their third day of training, guests hit the road on a tandem run with a fitness instructor. Rates start at \$1,797, and the program is offered through Dec. 24. www.sanctuaryaz.com.