

Six Ways to Spend Independence Day

Written by By Lydia Martin

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The Fourth of July traditionally means fireworks and cookouts. This year's events in the Valley of the Sun offer you all that—and so much more! The hardest part will be deciding how to fit it all in.



What: Freedom Wireless Fabulous Phoenix Fourth

Where: Steele Indian School Park

When: Sunday, July 4, 6-10 p.m.

Why: July 4th is a celebration of America and of freedom. Pay tribute to these two major elements with a Classic Car exhibit and a patriotic military flyover at Fabulous Phoenix Fourth. If that doesn't sound compelling enough, listening to the Bad Cactus Brass Band and Shelby James & the Crying Shames is sure to win you over. The Phoenix Fire Department is even setting up a water spray zone to help cool down visitors. Don't miss the fireworks at 9:30 p.m.

Admission: Free

More Info: phoenix.gov/PARKS/jlymain.html

What: Scottsdale's July 4th Family Barbecue

Where: Scottsdale Stadium

When: Sunday, July 4, 4-6 p.m.

Why: This community picnic provides grills and free hot dogs so you can cook up your own barbecue. While the dogs are getting hot, participate in a tug-of-war match and potato-sack races, try your hand—or mouth—at a watermelon-eating contest, and make greeting cards to send to American troops overseas. There won't be fireworks here, but you can pick up maps of nearby firework displays.

Admission: Free

More Info: 480.312.2771



What: July 4 Fourth of Zoo-ly Starry Safari

Where: Phoenix Zoo

When: Sunday, July 4, 6-10 p.m.

Why: A great place for the kids to celebrate the Fourth! After exploring the zoo on a Safari Train tour, get your faces painted as your favorite zoo animals and go crazy in the inflatable bounce houses. Chow down on a catered barbecue before a 9 p.m. VIP viewing of the Tempe Town Lake Fireworks Show from inside the zoo. Beer, wine and cool treats will be on tap.

Admission: \$40; \$35 (ages 3-12); free (children under 2)

More Info: www.phoenixzoo.org

What: Tempe Town Lake Festival and 59th Annual Fireworks Spectacular

Where: Tempe Beach Park, Tempe Town Lake

When: Sunday, July 4, 4-11 p.m.

Why: Slated to appear are rock 'n roll cover band The Big Zephyr, country singer Casey Lee, an Honor Guard presentation of the colors and bugler, and one of the most fantastic fireworks displays you'll catch in the metro area, launched from Mill Avenue Bridge. Kids and parents alike will love the inflatable village, Splash Playground and variety of edible fare.

Admission: \$5 at certain Tempe outlets, \$6 online or \$8 at gate; free for children 12 and under and anyone with a military ID

More Info: 480.350.5189, www.tempe4th.com; order tickets at www.profixonline.com or purchase at any Fry's store

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What: A Star Spangled Shoot Out

Where: Rawhide Western Town

When: Sunday, July 4, 5:30-11 p.m.

Why: Looking to add some cowboys and gunfights to your Independence Day? Look no further—make Rawhide's attractions, food, shows, music and aerial fireworks display part of your July 4. If a horseback ride and steak are part of your holiday wishes, then be sure to check out the Ride 'n Dine special on Rawhide's Web site too.

Admission: \$10; free (kids 5 and under)

More Info: www.rawhide.com

What: Summer Holiday Package

Where: W Scottsdale Hotel

When: Friday, July 2-Monday, July 5

Why: All holiday weekend long, stay and play at W Scottsdale with the Summer Holiday Package. Inside the new indoor/outdoor VIP space The Bungalow, you'll enjoy frozen fruit treats and an assortment of sunscreens and magazines. The pool will call your name all weekend. On July 4, take in the Plain White T's concert and a rooftop view of an amazing Scottsdale fireworks display, all with a cocktail in-hand. Room reservations start at just \$179.

More Info: 480.970.2100, www.WHotels.com/Scottsdaleoffers