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Fun in Tucson



While our wedding events will keep you plenty busy, there are so many fun things to do in Tucson and nearby that you might just have to extend your stay.

In Tucson

[Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum](#)

No one has ever been disappointed by a visit to the Desert Museum, a combination Botanical Garden, Zoo, and museum. You can spend a couple hours or a whole day learning

about the wonders of the Sonoran Desert. Head west on Speedway through the Tucson Mountains and you'll get spectacular views in Gates pass.

[Tohono Chul Park](#)

If you want a taste of the desert experience with less driving than to the Desert Museum, you'll enjoy the desert gardens, exhibits, and tea room at Tohono Chul - a gem of preserved acreage in the city's Northwest corner.

[Downtown Walking Tour](#)

Take this self-guided tour of the Presidio, the oldest part of Tucson, past original adobe houses and 1890s Victorian mansions. Stop in at Old Town Artisans to browse the shops or galleries, and have lunch at [El Charro](#).

[Fourth Avenue](#)

Tucson's artsy, bohemian commercial strip features vintage clothing stores, interesting shops and galleries, coffee shops and good restaurants (Magpies Pizza and Maya Queztlal Guatemalan are favorites).

[The University of Arizona](#)

Kathryn's grad school alma mater is spread across a large campus. Interesting things to see are Old Main, the U's original building built in 1891, the creatively indoor/outdoor Student Union building, the [Arizona State Museum](#), and in the Fine Arts complex the [Art Museum](#) and the [Center for Creative Photography](#) (which houses the archives of Ansel Adams and other noted photographers).

[San Xavier Mission](#)

Built in 1783, San Xavier del Bac is a national historical landmark and a true gem of the Spanish colonial missions. San Xavier is about a 20-minute drive out of Tucson, and a good stop on your way to the border at

Nogales (see below).



[La Encantada](#)

A fancy outdoor mall tucked up against the stunning Catalina mountains, La Encantada has all the usual chain stores plus AJ's Market - a great place to get a coffee or lunch from the prepared foods counter and then sit outside watching the mountains and the beautiful people going by.

[DeGrazia Gallery in the Sun](#)

The former home and gallery of artist Ted DeGrazia, this free-admission museum and grounds are a uniquely Tucson place and a window into the quirky and contentious

personality of DeGrazia.

[Sabino Canyon Recreation Area](#)

The best place in Tucson for winter hiking, Sabino Canyon at the foot of the Catalina mountains offers trails of all lengths and levels, as well as a tram ride up the canyon for those less interested in walking.

[Mount Lemmon](#)

During a 45-minute drive up the Catalina Highway you'll ascend from the saguaro cactus of the valley floor into forests of pine and aspen above 8,000 ft. elevation. There are many great hiking trails (Butterfly Trail and the Aspen-Marshall Gulp Loop being two favorites), lots of pull-outs for vistas and picnicking, and the small town of Summerhaven with cabins, a country store, and the Cookie Cabin serving pizza and cookies. The top of the mountains will be 15-20 degrees cooler than Tucson, and there may even be pockets of snow.

[Pima Air & Space Museum](#)

The largest non-government funded aviation museum, the Pima Air & Space Museum is just around the corner from Davis-Monthan Air Force base. The museum holds more than 300 aircraft and spacecraft, and for an additional fee you can take a bus tour of the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center (AMARG), also known as the "Boneyard," at Davis-Monthan.

Day Trips

There are many fun things to do in Tucson within an hour or two's drive. They include:

[Wine Country](#) (1 hour)

The rolling grasslands of Sonoita-Elgin provide a gorgeous backdrop for Arizona's growing wine region. Take the [Sonoita Wine Trail](#), and make sure you stop at Kathryn's family's winery, [Canelo Hills](#). Some wineries, including Canelo Hills, are open Friday-Sunday only, and some are open 7 days, so check the hours before you head south.

[Bisbee](#) (2 hours)

Tucked into a canyon in the Mule Mountains, Bisbee was a copper mining town that in its heyday was the largest city between St. Louis and San Francisco. As mining died out in the 1970s Bisbee was revitalized by artists and hippies and is now full of art galleries, antique shops, cute cafes and coffee shops, historic buildings, and stairways up and down the canyon. Make it a full-day trip by taking AZ-90 and stopping in Tombstone on the way.

[Tombstone](#) (1.5 hours)

The Town Too Tough to Die has been restored into a fabulously touristy, uniquely Arizona place to visit. Wander up and down pedestrian Allen Street where actors dressed as sheriffs and outlaws beckon you into their OK Corral recreation shows, and browse the shops and saloons.

[Nogales](#) (1.5 hours)

Arizona's border town with Mexico has been spared the violence that's plagued other parts of the border, and during the day it's still a fun place to visit for shopping and eating (we can't speak for nighttime, when it becomes more of a party town for UA students). Park your car for \$4 in a guarded lot on the US side, walk across the border, and wander up and down the main drag, Avenida Obregon. Shopkeepers are eager to make a sale and you can bargain in most stores (you can use Dollars and get by just fine with English). **You will need your passport** to get back into the US, and plan some extra time because while the wait to cross back into the US is usually 10-30 minutes, it can be an hour or more during busy crossing times.