

APMP®

Perspective

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A Journey to the

Southwest

The Wild Horse Pass Experience and Beyond—A Travelogue

Proposal Lessons From

That Old
House

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The Wild Horse Pass Experience

A Travelogue by Betsy Blakney

The Gila River Indian Community is the third largest tribe in Arizona with more than 19,000 members and a land base spanning more than 600 square miles.

Located on ancient Tribal lands of the Gila River Community is Wild Horse Pass. Wild Horse Pass is a unique destination offering panoramic views of the sacred Estrella Mountains, the Gila River, breathtaking desert landscape, and the wild horses that freely roam the area.



Back in October 2008, I spent a relaxing weekend in the Phoenix area after attending the fall APMP Board of Directors' meeting.

The Board received positive feedback from members about the article I wrote back in 2007 highlighting the Savannah experience, so I was encouraged to avail myself of the myriad offerings in the Southwest. The resulting travelogue allowed me to relive some of the finer moments and share those memories with you.

Mustangs and Massage

To start my journey and “indulge the spirit,” I signed up for a Day Spa Package called “Mustangs and Massage.” This one-of-a-kind package began at 9:00 a.m. when I reported to the Aji Spa on the resort property. The Koli Equestrian Center manager, Chuck (tribal member #15,470), greeted me there on horseback for the beginning of our breathtaking 1.5 hour ride.

The Koli Equestrian Center provides trail rides throughout a portion of the 320,000 acre Gila River Indian Community, which includes a hospital, police and fire stations, schools, and a water treatment filtering facility. As promised, my private trail ride wove through the beautiful Sonoran Desert valley, crossing waterways, past pristine golf courses, and among the barrel cactus and mesquite trees.

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Travelogue (Continued)

Leading the way, Chuck introduced me to a band of wild horses that freely roam the ancient tribal lands. On the return trip to the spa, we spotted an elusive jackalope alongside one of the golf courses and made a rare sighting of a burrowing owl atop his hole.



I was glad to return to the spa for a saddle-soothing 50-minute full body massage for about 1.5 hours. Unique with all spa treatments is the inclusion of complimentary use of the fitness facilities for

the rest of the day: private indoor and outdoor whirlpools, steam rooms, saunas, spa pool (3'6" to 3'12" sidewinder snake with graduated ramp), and relaxation lounge.

Short on time, I quickly showered and changed to take in a 12:30 p.m. lunch poolside from the Aji Café (tranquility with flavor), which was included in the price of the package. The spa also offers a full-service salon and a boutique offering products to take with you. I purchased two Aji bracelets made by the Pima and Maricopa children of the Gila River Boys & Girls Club, continuing an ancient tradition passed down for generations. Monies from these bracelets go directly back to bettering the youth of the Gila River Indian Community.

Treat yourself to something special and book early for the "Mustangs and Massage" package.

What Else Can You Do on the Reservation or Nearby

Huhugam Heritage Center:

A short drive past the Firebird International Raceway and the Gila River Fire Department, you will happen upon a place honoring the history, culture, and language of the Gila River Indian Community people. The Center

ensures the cultures of the Akimel O'odham (Pima) and Pee Posh (Maricopa), and that of their ancestors, live on through interactive exhibits, classes/educational programs, and various archives and archeological collections.

While I was there, I saw the work of the basketweaver community; photography of Helga Tewes on loan from the Arizona State Museum; and a study of Gila Bend and its more than 50 miles of trails, some as old as 10,000 years. Hours: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; Admission: Native Americans: Free; Adults: \$5.00; Seniors: \$3.00; Students: \$3.00; and Children (12 and under) free.

Firebird International Raceway

Challenge yourself and take in a day or half day of racing by signing up for a course at the Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving. Here is a unique way to do some team building exercises. If you do not want to devote a half-day to the Fundamentals Course, you might want to try 2 hours of Hot Laps over a 1.6-mile, 15-turn road course. Speeds can reach more than 100 mph! Perhaps you would rather engage in two specialty exercises like timed autocross, accident avoidance, or skid control in specially designed vehicles. Whether its real-world skills that have real-world applications or if you just want to satisfy the racing enthusiast in you, this activity is worth considering if you are a thrill-seeker and can part with at least \$500 for a 2-hour ride. <http://www.bondurant.com>

Rawhide Western Town

Saddle up and head out to the western frontier town situated in the Gila River Indian community. Discover specialty shops offering authentic western wear and Native American jewelry at the Gila River Trading Post to memorabilia and souvenirs at the Rawhide General Store. There is something for everyone: Old Time Photos, a toy store, livery, and sweets shop. Experience some local color by taking advantage of the Arrest-a-Guest ordinance, whereby your friends and family members can be put in jail by a sheriff's deputy, and in return for a small donation to the sheriff's retirement fund, you get a picture of your arrest. If you are lucky, you might get measured for a coffin like Board member Kirste Webb did. Be sure to bring



your own camera since on my second visit, I got chased by a headless-horseman and had nothing to show for it.
<http://www.rawhide.com>

Whirlwind Golf Club:

Boasting two 18-hole golf courses managed by Troon Golf, you can reach the clubhouse by boat. A driving range is available. Enjoy breakfast from 6:30 to 11:00 a.m. or lunch 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Sivlik Grill, which is open 7 days a week. <http://www.whirlwindgolf.com/>

Wild Horse Pass Casino

The resort boasts a smoke-free environment, but the casino, which is accessible by either car or boat, is the exception. It was way above my tolerance for smoke and noise, and I did not last inside for more than 15 minutes.
<http://www.wingulariver.com>

Lone Butte Casino

The new kid on the block and owned and operated by the Gila Indian River Community, too. If you ventured over to the Wild Horse Pass Casino last time you were

here for conference, then try this one instead.
<http://www.wingulariver.com>

Best Aspect of the Resort:

Check out time is 12:00 p.m. This is a late checkout to me!

Greatest Disappointment at the Resort:

No free Internet connection.

Lodging Alternatives

Knowing that we have sold out the conference facilities in the past and keeping our members restricted budgets in mind, we identified an “overflow” hotel for lodging. I chose to stay at the **Radisson Hotel Phoenix-Chandler** for a couple of nights to provide you with a review of the facility, the service, and its amenities. Website: www.radisson.com/chandleraz

First, you have to have a rental car. The Radisson is about 10-15 miles south from the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, which is about a 15-20 minute drive. While the Sheraton and the Radisson are in

continued on next page

Travelogue (Continued)

Chandler, the Radisson is about 3.7 miles north of the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort and Spa. Driving from one to the other will take you about 7-10 minutes. A shuttle service is not provided; however, self-parking at both properties is complimentary.

The Radisson is right off Interstate 10, the main highway, and is near other hotels, restaurants, and gas stations along Chandler Boulevard. For instance, if you choose not to eat breakfast or dinner in the hotel's Southgate Grill, you can walk to the Marie Callender's adjacent to the hotel property.

Recently renovated, the large guest room with a SleepNumber® Bed was very comfortable. My room overlooked the outdoor swimming pool and whirlpool, and was nearby the exit stairwell and elevator. I liked the layout of the room with an L-shaped desk and bureau combination, with a TV on top of the bureau, serving as a natural room divider. The room had a small refrigerator, which allowed me to keep cold beverages on hand. [My welcome kit included chips, salsa, and a 16 oz. bottle of ...you guessed it—Arizona Iced Tea.] The bottled water in the room was free—no surcharge—and, more importantly, so was the high-speed Internet connection, wireless and hardwired. There is free WIFI—a must for the business traveler, especially if you pay your own expenses. While the bathroom was not as spacious as the one in my room at the Wild Horse Pass, it was a clean, standard bath/shower combo with all the amenities. I especially appreciated the Nice 'n Clean towelettes in the hot weather.

Sitting in the lobby lounge, my hostess, the Director of Sales Chris Grabel, helped me map out a strategy for seeing the sites, locating shopping and other attractions, and finding restaurants offering a wide range of culinary choices. As she pointed out, this hotel has a really convenient location to help you make the most of your business and leisure time.

With a list of 16 places to go and 12 eateries to pick from, I spent the next 2 days sampling the delicious fare and traveling to as many destinations as I could fit in my schedule.

Activities in and Around Phoenix-Chandler

If you are in the Desert Southwest a day or two before or after the conference, you might want to partake in some of the area's cultural offerings. One of the best ways to gain access to 13 top attractions is with the ShowUp NOW pass (\$50 for adults, \$26 for children). Each pass allows you one admission to each venue, and each person is required to have his/her own pass. The pass is good for nine consecutive days after you first use it and will expire on the ninth day. You can purchase the pass online and print your own tickets. Website: www.showup.com/nowpass

What follows is a description of three stops available through the pass. Tip: If you skip the ShowUp NOW pass and pay for a ticket at the Desert Botanical Garden, just hang on to the stub for a \$1 off at Heard Museum. The deal also works the other way around.

Desert Botanical Garden: Located in Papago Park (Phoenix), the Garden is a privately funded non-profit organization committed to the advancement of excellence in education, research, exhibition, and conservation of desert plants of the world and specifically of the Southwestern United States. Hours: May - September/7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Only the main trail is open after sunset. Admission: Adults: \$15.00; Seniors: \$13.50 (60 years and older); Students (13-18 and college with ID): \$7.50; Children (3-12): \$5.00; and Children under 3 are admitted free. Amenities: Outdoor Patio Cafe and vending machines. ATM on site. Website: www.dbg.org

Heard Museum: Experience the authentic Southwest and take in some American Indian art and culture. The Heard is considered one of the nation's premier centers to discover the mastery of Native American artists and cultures. Location: In the heart of Phoenix's historic downtown. Admission Fee: Adults: \$10.00; Seniors: \$9.00; Students: \$5.00; Children under 6: Free. Parking: Free Website: www.heard.org

Note: *The Heard Museum has two other community locations: Heard Museum North Scottsdale and Heard Museum West in Surprise. Admission Fee: Half of the Central Phoenix prices. Ample free parking at these locations as well.*

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The Phoenix Zoo: Rated by *Child Magazine* as “One of the Top Five Best Zoos for Kids and Families,” it is centrally located in Papago Park (Phoenix). The Zoo is home to more than 1,300 animals from around the world, including more than 200 endangered or threatened species. Open rain or shine. Summer hours: 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. weekdays, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekends. Admission: Adults: \$16.00; Seniors (60+): \$11.00; Kids: \$7.00, and children under age 2: Free. Can purchase tickets online. Website: www.phoenixzoo.org

Shopping in Phoenix-Chandler Area

Arizona Mills; Tempe, AZ

With more than 175 stores, restaurants, and entertainment venues, you will pass this shopping mecca on the way to the resort from the airport. Be sure to pick up a free coupon book at Guest Services as an out-of-town guest. Arizona Mills is a smoke-free mall. Hours: Monday-Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., Sunday 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Website: www.arizonamillsmall.com

Casa Paloma Shopping Plaza; Chandler, AZ

AJ's Fine Foods and Grocery: This is a unique, upscale gourmet market with fine foods similar to Whole Foods and/or Wegmans, just not on as large a scale. There is a great bakery for breakfast foods or snacks and an excellent wine selection. I shopped here for breakfast items when I stayed off the resort at the Radisson. You can have chef-prepared items made in the Bistro, and enjoy eating them on AJ's Patio. AJ's is open 6:00 am to 9:00 pm every day with certain holiday exceptions.

Francesca's Collections: This is a nationwide boutique full of unusual apparel, jewelry, accessories, and gift items. There are lots of variety and well-informed sales personnel, and it is a great place to buy trinkets to take back home. A favorite of mine since there is no Francesca's in Virginia yet. Website: www.francescascollections.com

Chandler Fashion Center, Chandler, AZ: Website: www.chandlermall.com

Located at the intersection of Loop 101 and W. Chandler Boulevard, the Chandler Fashion Center is advertised as your one-stop shop for the greatest variety of restaurants and stores in Chandler. If you are by yourself or with a

large group of people looking for a night out with limited transportation options, this might be a good destination for you or your group. While I did not have time to go here this visit, I have dined and shopped here before and liked the selections. Anchored by Nordstroms, Dillards, Sears, and Macy's, it is reminiscent of the classic mall with an upper and lower level, and a multitude of boutiques and abundant dining options too numerous to mention throughout the rest of the mall. Hours: Monday-Saturday: 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Sunday: 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Recommended Restaurants:

BJ's Restaurant and Brewery

www.bjsrestaurants.com

Kona Grill

www.konagrill.com

My Big Fat Greek Restaurant

www.mybigfatgreekrestaurant.net/

The Cheesecake Factory

www.thecheesecakefactory.com

California Pizza Kitchen

www.cpk.com

P.F. Chang's

www.pfchangs.com/

Gift Shop at Sheraton Wild Horse Pass: Here you will find reasonably priced items, which is helpful if you forget to bring something, or do not have transportation off the property to purchase gifts, sundries, or souvenirs. Initially not knowing that I would be taking a trail ride or spending a lot of time outdoors, I had not brought a hat or visor, which is a big mistake in the desert hot sun. I now am the proud owner of a collapsible hat that I will bring with me to conference in June.

Tempe Marketplace: Located at the Loop 101 and Loop 202 freeway intersections, this outdoor mall is a combination of big box stores and smaller boutiques. Included are 16 movie theatres and several restaurants (reviews provided later in the article) with a southwestern flair. Website: <http://www.tempe marketplace.com>

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Dining at the Wild Horse Pass and in Surrounding Areas

Here are lots of choices from boot-scootin' beverages to tasty vittles from the Wild West, from off-the-beaten-path eateries to award-winning restaurants. Here are a few recommendations:

Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa

Aji Café: Located in the Aji Spa, you can indulge in the hand-picked jumbo lump crab meat and watermelon salad (seedless watermelon, jumbo lump crab meat, crisp lettuce leaves, accented with a Chipotle Citrus Vinaigrette) off a leather and copper menu. [Price: Moderate].

KAI (meaning “seed”): An exquisite dining experience from a precision team of servers, this is a AAA Five Diamond award-winning specialty restaurant full of culture. Each menu is an original work of art by a local Tribal artisan. Throughout the evening, your server uses traditional Pima language between courses starting with The Birth, moving to The Beginning, and ending with The Journey.

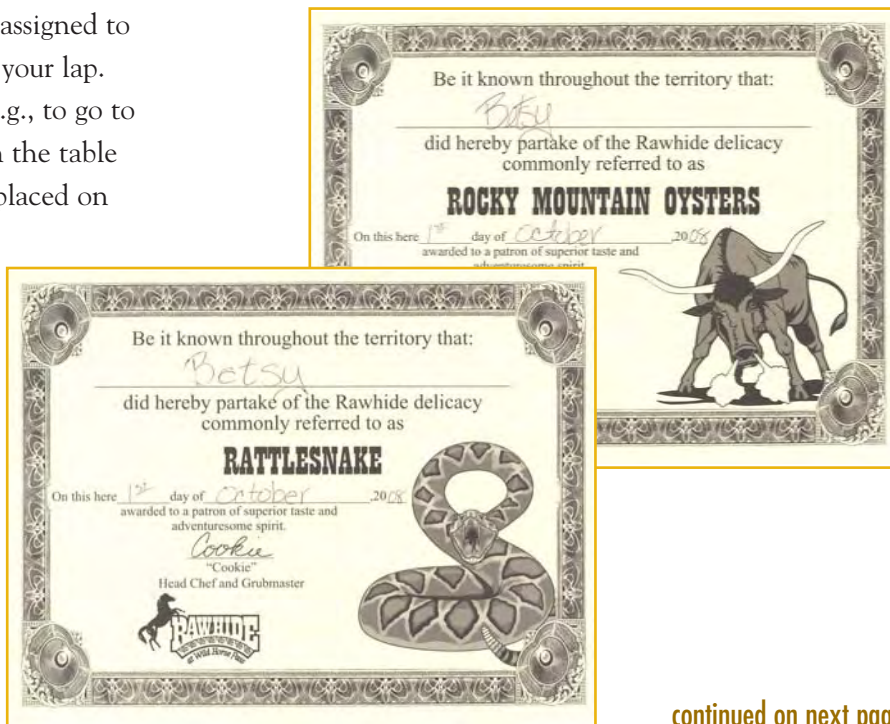
My tablemates for the evening, APMP Board members and Fellows Charlie Divine and Dana Spears, will attest to the unparalleled service. From the server assigned to you, a large white linen napkin is laid across your lap. Each time someone gets up from the table (e.g., to go to the restroom), a different napkin is laid upon the table (i.e., to note your absence), and a fresh one placed on your lap when you return. This synchronization is reinforced by each plate being brought by a different waiter to each diner in unison. From still vs. sparkling water (lemon, lime, English Cucumber, and Orange-flavored), to wavy copper plates, to new silverware with each course, we were mesmerized by the care taken to ensure our silverware was either chilled or heated depending on what we had ordered. Temperature-adjusted silverware was a first for me.

So you came for the food—you will not be disappointed. Our evening began with a bottle of Wild Horse Pinot Noir (2006)—why not! To our surprise, we were presented with the Chef's Amuse appetizer, three types of bread with olive oil and a selection of cured meats. Cleaning our palates and waking up our taste buds was a mojito sorbet: The Intermezzo. Between each course, the sorbet changed as did the silverware.

At The Birth, I had Lettuces Hand Picked by Local Farmers & Children of Gila River Crossing School. For The Beginning, I enjoyed more Cured Meats & Game Pate under Smoke, and for The Journey I settled on the Pan Seared Colorado Lamb Loin. Our meal ended with a eucalyptus-infused wash cloth. The menu is unique and well worth the financial outlay. This expense, however, is well over your per diem. [Price: Expensive]

KAI is open for dinner only Tuesday through Saturday. Reservations recommended.

Rawhide Steakhouse & Saloon: Be prepared to wet yer whistle and treat yourself to some delicacies from the Old West. Partake in some tantalizers (aka appetizers) like I did, and you will receive a commemorative certificate to document your cowboy spirit and bravery. Perfect for small-to-large groups, you will find everything



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from western-style BBQ favorites to mesquite-grilled steaks to a variety of sidekicks and ample-sized desserts. If you have not eaten too much, you can stay and dance the night away to the live band that is being featured. While the majority of Board members took to the streets to experience the Wild West, Charlie Divine and I danced the two-step to classic country songs by the Steve Barker Band.

Chandler

Casa Paloma Shopping Plaza

Website: <http://www.shopcasapaloma.com>

Tomaso's of Chandler: This is an upscale Italian restaurant whose motto is "One cannot think well, love well, live well, if one has not loved well." The food was tasty, the service attentive, and the atmosphere inviting. Here you will enjoy authentic Italian specialties, seafood, and Tuscan-style steak. Do not let the white tablecloths and Italian art and statues fool you; the staff is unpretentious and friendly. Perhaps the "misted" outdoor patio is a better option if you are just dropping by for a glass of wine and appetizers. [Price-moderate to expensive].

Z'Tejas Southwestern Grill: Along with my Chambord Rita, I should have stopped with the Texas Trio (fresh chips, hand-hacked guacamole, chile con queso, and salsa picante), but instead I ordered the Z Achiote Chicken Chopped Salad (diced avocados, Roma tomatoes, black beans, cotija cheese, roasted corn, pumpkin seeds and bacon-tossed table side with ranch vinaigrette) and wondered where I was going to put it all. This place is great! If you come in early to the conference, try not to miss Happy Hour Mondays: it is Happy Hour all night; 3 p.m. to Close. Special drink prices and half-priced appetizers are featured. The appetizers are ample and sufficient for those who order appetizers as the entrée. The menu includes soups and side salads; more entrée salads; burgers and sandwiches; seafood; and many, many house specialties. Next time, I will order Jack's Five-Cheese Macaroni & Achiote Chicken (made with bleu, Jack, cheddar, parmesan, and Romano cheeses, finished with toasted bacon gratin) and one of the house desserts—Acho Fudge Pie (Z's famous fudge pie with walnuts, pecans, and a pinch of ancho chile, which brings out the rich chocolate

flavor, served warm with whipped cream). [Price-Best bang for the buck!]

Other Recommended Restaurants in Chandler

Jilly's American Grill: www.jillyschandler.com Eat, drink, and take in the nightlife! For those of you looking for a group karaoke outing, this is the place on Wednesday nights. Very generous Happy Hour Monday-Friday, 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., with all drinks 2 for 1 (all brands, excludes shots). Reasonably priced.

Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar: The quality of food, service, and atmosphere is rated high, along with the price. Noted for its steaks, I think I would also remember a place that had 100 wines by the glass. What I really like about this restaurant is that it provides nutrition guidelines for its menus and will prepare gluten-free recipes, if requested. The convenience of making reservations online is a plus, especially for an out-of-towner.

Roy's Restaurant: Asian/Hawaiian Fusion. Here is another great place for groups. It does have an outdoor patio and plenty of parking. After scouring reviews, I learned three things: the prix fixe menu is reliable, the mojitos noteworthy, and the chocolate lava cake to die for. Sounds like it may be more fun and relaxing dining at the bar since the dining room can get quite noisy. Noted for its consistency in providing quality food and beverage service, not many complain about the price.

Tempe

Downtown Tempe (home of the Sun Devils):

<http://www.downtowntempe.com>

Mill's Ed Café & Creperie: Very reminiscent of a local coffee house, this restaurant has indoor and outdoor seating and a library area where they hold poetry readings. The menu consists of light and delicate crepes, grilled breakfast sandwiches, and bagels. They blend a variety of coffees, and serve juices and smoothies to round out the menu. I appreciated the flavored coffee, waited a little too long for my breakfast sandwich (short staffed), but enjoyed reading the morning paper in such an eclectic environment.

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Travelogue (Continued)

LaBocca Pizzeria and Wine Bar:

www.laboccapizzeria.com

An urban, hip, and casual restaurant serving artisan pizza, salads, and sandwiches for a more mature crowd than the ASU students. Wine lovers and beer lovers will find happiness here. The happy hour is from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., Monday-Friday and 11:00 p.m. to close Friday and Saturday, when wine bottles are half-off. Now, that is generous! The service is prompt, personable, and professional with the décor, menu, and pricing geared for other than the collegiate set. The outdoor seating area fills early, so dine inside in a contemporary and warm atmosphere. When I was here in October 2008, LaBocca was featuring a monthly Thursday dinner party, which paired food and wine from a different region each month, and offered live entertainment and movies—all for \$25 per person. You can make reservations, so I would call ahead to see if the unadvertised “secret of the house” is still active. [Price: Moderate]

Tempe Marketplace:

Cadillac Ranch – All American Bar & Grill

(American): This Western-themed bar and grill is where I landed for lunch. I relied on the bartender to help me make my selections. I went with a signature dish called Sante Fe Pasta with chicken. It was made of penne pasta, corn, black beans, and mushrooms in a chipotle cream sauce. I downed it with a ShockTop Belgian White—a Belgian style wheat ale. There were lots of things I would have liked to try on the menu. From appetizers to sandwiches and wraps, this restaurant offers everything from soups and salads to burgers and sliders to ribeye steaks and pork chops to ribs and chicken. Just do not eat too much if you plan on riding the mechanical bull!

Dave & Buster’s (American)

The one at Tempe Marketplace has a brand new roof-top patio for great food, fun, and tunes.

Starting in March 2009, karaoke is available every

Tuesday night from 8:00 p.m. to Midnight.

No Cover Charge! Table reservations available.

Maria-Maria La Cantina (Mexican)

www.mariamariarestaurants.com

Carlos Santana's cantina at Tempe Marketplace is a lighter take on authentic Mexican fare. The place was packed when I tried to get in, which is why I ended up at the Cadillac Ranch.

San Felipes Cantina (Mexican)

www.sanfelipescantina.com/

Another favorite with the locals, this restaurant offers a wide selection of Baja Mexican and Sonoran southwest fusion cuisine and drinks. The cantina is the brainchild of two high school buddies who turned their college spring break experiences into more than just fantasy. From the frozen concoctions to Felipes famous combos, you will find plenty of coastal Mexican food offered along with sumptuous salads and gringo grub. Like Maria-Maria, this restaurant drew the crowds, and every seat was taken by hungry and tired shoppers looking for a cool drink under a hot Arizona sun.

Sites of Interest Outside of Phoenix

A journey to the southwest offers lots of options for sight-seeing and relaxation. Given the opportunity of an extended vacation, I would opt for a day trip from Phoenix to Flagstaff through the hub of Northern Arizona, the Prescott valley. The eager and energetic can make it all the way to the Grand Canyon (in three hours) and back (another three hours) before day's end (I have done it), but you have got to hustle and not linger long in any one place. You will marvel in the wonderful scenery between Phoenix, Prescott, Jerome, and Sedona.

Jerome

This national historic landmark was originally a booming mining town of nearly 15,000 people. Now, there are about 500 residents who call it home. Nestled in the scenic Verde Valley, my memory of Jerome is of the trip to get there and back. Sky high, the drive is not for the faint at heart. Once you arrive, it will be at times hard to distinguish between the thriving stores and the dilapidated buildings that remain. The local artists and shop owners rely on tourism to keep their sleepy town alive. Famed for its first Saturday

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Travelogue (Continued)

of the month evening artwalk, more than 20 galleries, studios, and art shops welcome you to browse, shop, and

Date	Title	Event	City	Type
Thursday Jun. 4 - Thursday Jul. 30	Street Faire	Outdoor Village – Prescott Gateway Mall	Prescott	Street Faire
Saturday Jun. 6 - Sunday Jun. 7	Folk Arts Fair	Sharlot Hall Museum	Prescott	Arts and Crafts

engage in conversation with the practicing artists. You will find two kinds of spirits in Jerome —haunted and abundant.

Prescott

Advertised as the home to cowboys, ranchers, politicians, and prospectors, the Prescott area is just 90 minutes northwest of Phoenix and 90 minutes southwest of Flagstaff. With its moderate year-round climate, Prescott has become a popular retreat to escape the summer heat. One can easily take advantage of the wealth of indoor and outdoor activities. Enjoy everything from one-of-a-kind boutiques, to art galleries, to antique shops to an urban laboratory. Here is a sampling of cultural stops not to miss: The Phippen Museum of Western Art; the Sharlot Hall Museum of Living History (Indian Arts Market); the Smoki Museum (built like an Indian pueblo) of Native American Art and Culture; the Heritage Park Zoological Sanctuary; the Highlands Center for Natural History; and the Fort Whipple Museum, Bldg., 11, Veterans' Administration campus. Visit Arcosanti, where architecture and ecology meet in an experimental town in the high desert.

If you are the adventurous type, there are five lakes (Goldwater, Lynx, Watson, Willow Springs, or Granite Basin) around Prescott where you can go hiking, horse-back riding, kayaking, fishing, canoeing, and bird-watching. Lynx Lake is a popular recreation area, and you will find plenty to do in its 55-acre setting. Leave plenty of time to dine in at one of the many restaurants and micro-breweries in historic downtown Prescott. Afterwards, spend the evening saloon-hopping or boutique browsing

on famed Whiskey Row. Just remember beer and transportation do not mix.

Events scheduled around the time you will be visiting for the conference:

Sedona

Best known for its stunning red rocks and resort lodging, Sedona is just two hours north of Phoenix. There does not appear to be an

economic downturn here as shoppers continue to flock to the many boutiques and art galleries for jewelry, pottery, crafts, rugs, and gifts. Venture over to the internationally renowned Tlaquepaque Arts and Crafts Village to sample fine food and local beers. My fondest memory of Sedona is taking a Jeep tour on the back roads and through the red rocks. The vistas and scenery were spectacular.

Tips for Travel

Remember it is going to be HOT in June! Bring a hat or visor. Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing and polarized sunglasses.

If you venture into Tempe to dine, drink, or meander through the Arizona State University campus, you will need quarters for the parking meters downtown. There are also several underground parking garages for your use.

If you would rather take a road trip to Southern Arizona, I highly recommend a visit to the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum. Start with a driving tour of the Saguaro National Park West, which is 15 miles west of downtown Tucson. After that, you can grab lunch, a cold drink, and an educational program at the museum. It was here that I walked among the hummingbirds. You could get within inches of them and see varieties you would not see in any other part of the country.

For local news/weather of the Chandler, Tempe, Mesa, Gilbert, Queen Creek, and Scottsdale areas, go to: <http://www.eastvalleytribune.com> .

See you in Arizona!