

Tucson is a university town of outdoor enthusiasts, academics and artists. Located in the southern Sonoran Desert beneath the Catalina Mountains, the city has a varied terrain, streets lined with palm trees, cacti, adobe buildings, and gorgeous vistas. It was also recently designated as the first *UNESCO City of Gastronomy* in the US, in recognition of its mix of Native American, Mexican, and European culinary heritage.

#### **Outdoor Activities:**

- [Tucson Bike Tours](#) \$50 for a guided city tour
- [Saguaro National Park](#) brackets the city on the East and West sides. You can get up-close and personal with saguaro cactus by hiking the 2-mile Mica View Loop, or by driving the 8-mile Cactus Forest Scenic Loop.
- [Tumamoc Hill](#) is an ecological reserve with a 1.5-mile trail with spectacular uphill views.
- [Tucson Mountain Park](#) offers a variety of activities.
- [Tucson Botanical Gardens](#) has been called the “Best Secret Garden in America.”
- [Mission Garden](#) is a nonprofit 4-acre walled urban garden project showcasing desert-adapted orchards and vegetable beds that represent 4000 years of agriculture.

#### **Arts and Culture:**

- [University of Arizona Museum of Art](#) has a nice collection of Renaissance paintings and modern representation by Marko Rothko and Jackson Pollock, among others.
- [The Center for Creative Photography](#) houses the archives of luminaries such as Ansel Adams and Harry Callahan.
- [Tucson Desert Art Museum](#) has a small but resplendent collection of local and regional artwork.
- [The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum](#) displays local natural history as its finest.
- [San Xavier del Bac Mission](#) is a restored adobe church built in the 1700s.

#### **Misc Places of Interest:**

- [The Flandrau Science Center & Planetarium](#) features virtual tours of the solar system, rock and roll light shows, and the U of AZ Mineral Museum with a plethora of desert gems, meteors and space debris.
- [The Gaslight Music Hall](#) offers a variety of concerts, comedy, music revues and other entertainment.
- [The Mini Time Machine](#) museum of miniatures is an expansive collection of more than 400 fully furnished antique and contemporary doll houses.
- The [Gadsden-Pacific Division Toy Train Operating Museum](#) is self-explanatory. Limited hours.

#### **Shopping:**

- [North 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue](#), between East 8<sup>th</sup> and East 4<sup>th</sup> Streets, is a cluster of independent boutiques and restaurants.
- [Old Town Artisans](#) is a one-block restored adobe building filled with arts & crafts.
- [Mercado San Agustin](#) is a modern center of local shop owners that looks like a colonial Spanish estate.

#### **Distillers and Brewers:**

- [Iron John's Brewing Co.](#) incorporates local flavors of mesquite and prickly pear into its brews
- [Pueblo Vida Brewing Co.](#) strives for “quality, uniqueness and repeatability” in their craft beers.
- [Borderlands Brewing Co.](#) is located in an historic produce warehouse near 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.

- [Dillinger Brewing Co.](#) is a new brewery serving a wide variety of beer styles, with food trucks parked outside.
- [The Independent Distillery](#) produces small batches of gin, vodka, whiskeys and bitters.
- [A Party Bike Pub Crawl](#) covers a lot of adult beverage territory in 2 hours as participants pedal around town.

**Downtown Restaurants:**

- [El Charro](#) bills itself as the oldest Mexican restaurant in the US.
- The [Welcome Diner](#) is a showcase of mid-century modern design with a farm-to-table sensibility.
- [Downtown Kitchen + Cocktails](#) features fare from award-winning chef Janos Wider.
- [Tucson Food Tours](#) is a foodie's dream. Why choose?
- [Taste of Tucson](#) is guided culinary tour of Downtown.