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Vacationing In Tucson Arizona – What You'll Need To Know

By Eric Scribener

Tucson Arizona has always enjoyed a great reputation as a vacation destination - and it is

becoming more popular every year. The primary reason for this reputation is the weather. Even in the winter months, average daytime temperatures remain in the 50° – 60° range. Rainfall is almost non-existent, though in the months of July and August it can reach just over 2" per month. Abundant sunshine, warm temperatures, and the absence of rain combine to create a vacation destination that is easy to pack for, and facilitates the maximum time out of doors - without fear of selected activities being ruined by a rainy day.

Another obvious reason that Tucson Arizona is such a highly regarded vacation destination is the geography - or 'terrain,' if you prefer. From anywhere in Tucson you can see several mountain ranges, but to get to them you must cross some desert. A twenty minute drive through the unique beauty of the Arizona desert puts you at the base of a mountain - the most celebrated of which is mount Lemmon. Twenty minutes more and the desert is gone. The exciting drive up the twisting Mt. Lemmon road offers travelers several visually compelling changes in geology, flora, and ecosystems. There are no bad views on this drive - it's non-stop eye candy the entire way up to the summit. And some strategically placed pullouts offer panoramic vistas of some of the most stunning landscape in North America.

When you decide to vacation in Tucson Arizona, there are a few things to know that will make your trip easier, more fun, and more enjoyable. Here are some tips and suggestions to ensure that you get the most out of your time in the 'Little Pueblo.'

SUNSCREEN No matter how conditioned your skin is to the sun, be sure to bring sunscreen. During the summer months, if you're going to be outdoors for more than thirty minutes, be sure to apply some to exposed areas of skin. During the summer, the UV Index in Tucson rarely drops mellow the maximum - and exposed skin will start to burn in 10-15 minutes! Select a protection level that suits your skin, and your planned activity. The longer you'll be outside, the more protection you'll need.

OUTERWEAR The desert gets cool at night. It's not so much that the temperatures drop as that due to the extreme daytime heat and intense sun, the evenings and night 'feel' quite chilly. Visitors who

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have decided to vacation in Tucson are more susceptible to this sensation as they are not used to the daily climate shift. A light jacket is usually quite sufficient to ward off these chills, which can be quite uncomfortable if you've gotten even a mild sunburn.

WATER Everyone who vacations in Tucson is understandably driven to go out and see the famous deserts - and all the amazing animals and plants that inhabit it. You already know to take along sunscreen, now you need to add water to your list. If not water, then some other liquids for you to drink. When you are in the desert, you need to drink. If you get thirsty, you're already starting to dehydrate - something that can a) happen quickly in the desert and b) be quite serious. Take water along on your desert treks, and drink it at regular intervals.

CAMERA This may sound too basic to be mentioned, but Tucson and the surrounding areas offer some of the most exhilarating scenery in the world - some of which can only be seen in the Tucson area. One of the most common comments from vacationers is that they did not bring enough film, or

adequate digital storage. Be prepared to pictures - more than you think you will. Who knows, you may just get a great shot of a Roadrunner, a Pygmy Owl – or perhaps even a Gila Monster (one of only two venomous lizards in the world).

DESERT WALKING FOOTWEAR If you plan to go out into the Sonora Deserts around Tucson, you'll want good footwear. Today, many people are wearing tennis shoes for pretty much everything, and they're okay in some areas. But if you want to really walk the deserts, be sure to have something more substantial. The biggest problem with tennis shoes is that they are relatively easily pierced by cactus tines. Make no mistake about it, a pancake cactus tine through your foot will definitely ruin your day - or your entire vacation.

KNOW THE ANIMALS Briefly, there are some dangerous animals in the deserts around Tucson - some more than others. There are also some plants that you should be cautious of. If you plan to trek into the desert, be sure to familiarize yourself with these plants and animals that include rattlesnakes, scorpions, spiders, Gila Monsters, and several types of cactus that can really ruin a vacation if touched - even lightly. Visit

http://www.dotcomtucson.com/tucson_arizona_fauna_flora_geology_topography.html

for an excellent

overview of these plants and animals. For information, or in time of need, you can contact the Arizona Poison Control and Drug Information Center by calling 1-800-362-0101 or 1-800-222-1222.

FEELING COOL IS A TRICK - DON'T FALL FOR IT!!! The Sonora Deserts surrounding Tucson Arizona are, by definition, "hot and dry." The body's cooling system is both simple, and effective. You get hot and you perspire. The water-based perspiration evaporates on your skin, dissipating the heat much more rapidly, and thereby cooling you. You don't feel this effect too much in humid areas, but in the desert it is quite noticeable. Unfortunately, people who are not accustomed to this biological wonder mistakenly think they are cool - when they are actually not cool at all. This cooling illusion is at

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the core of many of the worst sunburns experienced by vacationers in Tucson and the surrounding desert areas. The dry air cools the perspiring body so efficiently that even in the slightest breeze, many people will shiver in 100° weather. Keep an eye on this phenomenon - you don't want to spend the end of your vacation sitting in your hotel room with pain-relieving lotions slathered all over your glowing body.

SOME PLACES NOT TO MISS So many people come to Tucson Arizona for the world class golf, spas, and resorts that they miss some of the other most attractive, and most amazing things to do and see. You can spruce up your trip considerably by checking out some of the area's attractions that receive a little less press than the famous golf courses, spas and resorts. A partial list of these attractions and activities include:

Biodome II Kitt peak Flandrau Planetarium Old Tucson Movie Studio 4th Avenue Agua Caliente Park The Desert Museum Gate's Pass Tombstone Arizona is only an hour away

Now, all you have to do is make your plans for a great vacation with loads of activities for everyone in the family. Tucson Arizona awaits you!

Eric Scribener is a professional freelance writer with over 30-years of experience writing in numerous fields and currently promoting Tucson Arizona with a series of articles for

<http://www.dotcomtucson.com/>

Tucson Arizona – It Might Just Be Where You Want To Retire Or Relocate To...

By Eric Scribener

(1)Tucson Arizona is the state's second largest city. Its population, estimated at over 900,000, is not far behind the Arizona state capital, Phoenix Arizona which has roughly 1.4 million residents.

Surprisingly, (pleasantly so) Tucson does not emanate the typical air of a large city. Even with close to a million (2)Tucsonans, and a vibrant economic base, it somehow manages to 'feel' more like a mid-size town. Perhaps the perfect year around weather accounts for all the friendly folks, or it could be that the community is thriving and generally content. It could also be that such a prominent segment of the population is retired - lending great stability and sagacity to the (3)Old Pueblo. It's a very casual and relaxing place in the desert. Some of the nicest places in Tucson are 'come as you are.' Residents of this health-conscious city are frequently attired in hiking, biking, climbing, or exercise clothing - not to mention golf and tennis togs! It all adds up to a friendly desert oasis.

The weather is fantastic!

Tucson Arizona's annual rainfall is just a few inches, and the sun makes a daily appearance. It's the perfect climate for outdoor activities of any kind. When you plan a Saturday picnic with the family, or a

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round of golf with friends, you won't have to worry about cancelling. The heat is very dry, and along with the desert breezes, keeps you feeling much cooler than expected. Most visitors are shocked at how cool it feels when it's 90° in Tucson.

Great attractions and events!

Tucson Arizona has some amazing attractions and unique events - far too many to list here. But this partial list is provided just to get your mind working:

Flandrau Planetarium Kitt Peak Observatory (Tucson is a global hub for astronomers) Mount Lemmon (includes the ski resort) World Renowned Spas (Hollywood's favorite) The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show (world's largest) World Class Golf (all year around - real estate is available on some of the courses.) The Tucson Rodeo (schools let out for this one!) Posh Resorts (watch for the stars at these also) Consciousness Conference (from the blockbuster movie: What The Bleep do We Know?) The University of Arizona (Pac-10 Wildcats) The world's largest privately owned collection of aircraft Old Tucson Movie Studios Saguaro National Monument The Wildlife Museum Biodome II Tombstone and Patagonia are right down the street. The 4th Avenue Street Fair Nogales Mexico is an hour away (great shopping) Reid Park Zoo Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Tucson Sidewinders (AAA baseball team) Diamondbacks, Colorado Rockies, and White Sox Spring Training NASCAR Racing (at the Tucson's County fairgrounds) Fiesta de Los Vaqueros (at the Tucson Rodeo Grounds) Annual Mariachi Band Competition Opera, Ballet, and Symphony Concerts (Major stars all year long)

Tucson Arizona Data:

Elevation: 2,389 feet Population: 950,000± Geographical Size: 600 square miles Average high temperature: 81.7° F Average low temperature: 54.2° F Hottest Month: June (maximum 100.2° F) Coolest Month: January (minimum 38.9° F) Greatest Rainfall: August (2.3") 3rd fastest growing city in the United States Air Travel: Tucson International Airport is served by ten airlines

Tucson Arizona also offers some of the best medical facilities in the world including The University Medical Center; The Heart Center; and The Cancer Center. The city's thriving medical community is largely geared towards care for the elderly, sports care, and skin care. And if you prefer the naturopathic approach, Tucson is definitely the place to be.

(4)Tucson Arizona real estate remains a good investment. Real estate in Tucson has appreciated almost 30% compared to about 8% in the rest of the country. Obviously, Tucson has successfully remained relatively unaffected by recent real estate slumps in parts of the US. The Tucson real estate market is viable, and dynamic - and there are plenty of eager, experienced professional Tucson real estate agents to help you see your options, and guide your choice.

If I weren't out of space, I'd dwell on the sunsets. High country desert sunsets - there's nothing like them. And Tucson Arizona boasts some of the most spectacular. They draw international attention, and will take your breath away.

So whether you're seeking a great place to relocate to, raise a family and find a great home - or

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seeking the perfect retirement location - Tucson Arizona is the place for you. Oh, and by the way, it's one of the world's premier vacation destinations, but that's another story...

(1) Tucson is pronounced TOO-sähn. There is no emphasis mark as it is correct to place the emphasis on either syllable.

(2) While "Tucsonans" is preferred, "Tucsonians" is also entirely acceptable.

(3) Tucson is often called the "Old Pueblo," and sometimes (rarely) the "Little Pueblo." This moniker refers to the small presidio which once stood guard over the Tucson area, and its residents.

(4) The Tucson real estate market, at this writing (May, 2006) is nicely avoiding the national real estate slump. Real estate in Tucson's eastside is still selling high and very well; new housing starts are abundant; Northwest Tucson real estate, including Marana and Oro Valley are booming; new business sites and shopping areas are under construction; undeveloped real estate is available in very desirable areas of Tucson; the Rio Nuevo Project - the revitalization of downtown Tucson - is going strong. All the indicators indicate that Tucson real estate will almost surely continue to substantially out perform the national average.

Eric Scribener is a 30-year veteran freelance writer and photographer currently on assignment for

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