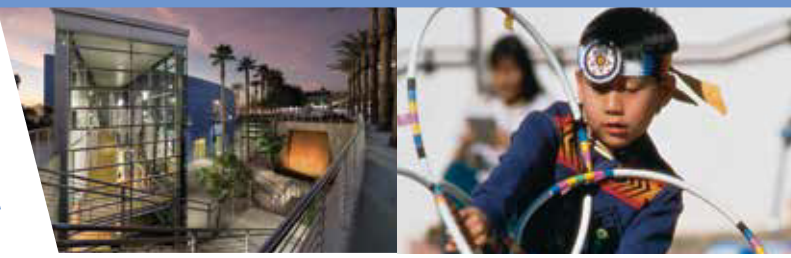


CULTURE SEEKER



Few Southwest cities have the breadth of arts and cultural experiences as Mesa, Arizona. In fact, when visitors stroll our unique, tucked-away districts that make up the city's downtown they soon realize the dedication to the arts when they see the numerous cultural offerings including the award-winning Mesa Arts Center. From public art, larger-than-life murals and interactive installations, engaging in the art scene is part of the fun!

Day 1 - Experience Arts & Culture in the Southwest

MESA ARTS CENTER CAMPUS TOUR - 1 hour

Mesa Arts Center is the largest performing arts, visual arts, and arts education facility in the Southwestern United States. The seven-acre campus is an inviting oasis by day and a luminous beacon by night. Serving as a central gathering place for visitors and residents, Mesa Arts Center architecture is inspired by the unique character of the Sonoran Desert – a rich desert, mountain and canyon environment. The Shadow Walk, a shaded outdoor plaza, hosts free concerts throughout the year. Be sure to visit the Mesa Contemporary Arts five visual arts galleries offering complimentary admission.

MESA MUSICAL SHADOWS - 30 minutes

This interactive exhibit features four original musical scores which change throughout the day. As music plays, visitors are encouraged to walk across sensors in the exhibit which trigger different melodic and percussive sounds from speakers embedded in the plaza. The sensors can be activated by just one person or a group of people. The designers encourage groups of people to walk through the sensors, which will create a distinct, more complex composition.

DOWNTOWN MESA SCULPTURE & MURAL WALK - 1 1/2 hours

Walking around Downtown Mesa you will find Mesa's Permanent Sculpture Collection. Around every bend and strewn along Main Street are nearly 40 different pieces that make up the city's public art collection. It doesn't matter which direction you are looking - they are everywhere! Guided tours available.

FRIDAY NIGHT SKIES AT MESA PLANETARIUM - Available first Friday, Monthly

Visitors can view the night sky and explore the universe and solar system in the Mesa Planetarium featuring a rooftop observation deck at Mesa Community College. Group tours offered special discount pricing.

BARLEEN'S ARIZONA OPRY - 2 hours

The West is alive at the Opry. Guests can enjoy a family-style, home-cooked meal while enjoying a show at Barleen's Arizona Opry Theater. This Main Stage performance features side-splitting comedy and beautiful musical harmonies and wholesome family fun.

Day 2 - Arizona History & Native American Heritage

ARIZONA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY - 2 hours

The Southwest Gallery presents information on the ancient cultures of Central Arizona including the Hohokam, Anasazi and Mogollon cultures. Enjoy intricate displays with dwellings and artifacts including jewelry manufacture, pottery making, and hunting activities. Other galleries feature dinosaurs, Arizona's cosmic night skies, and geology.

WESTERN FILM STARS TAKE CENTER STAGE AT SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN MUSEUM - 1 hour

Arizona has been the backdrop to hundreds of Hollywood Western movies and television shows. Visitors can tour the original buildings for Apacheland Movie Ranch including the Elvis Presley chapel in the movie El Charro. While visiting, be sure to view the collection of Lost Dutchman Mine maps dating back more than 100 years.

NATIVE AMERICAN DISCOVERY AT MESA GRANDE RUINS - 1 hour

This ancient Hohokam mound features an interpretive trail. The archaeological staff of the Arizona Museum of Natural History have helped preserve and develop the site, which is estimated to date to A.D 1100-1450. Guided tours and archaeological digs available upon request.

DID YOU KNOW?

The first known settlement in the Mesa area was about 2,000 years ago. An Indian civilization now called the Hohokam (meaning those who are gone), built an empire that lasted 1,500 years. The agriculturally-oriented Hohokam engineered hundreds of miles of irrigation canals, cultivating thousands of acres of land. Many of those same canal routes are used today throughout metropolitan Phoenix.

HUHUGAM NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER - 1 hour, by appointment only

This unique gathering place is located on the Gila River Indian reservation and is one of the nation's finest tribal facilities for the preservation and display of important cultural artifacts and art.

NATIVE AMERICAN JEWELRY - 1 hour

At All Tribes Trading Post visitors can order custom-designed Native American jewelry. This wholesale to public store offers some of the market's highest quality Native American Indian Turquoise and Silver jewelry and Native American art. All Tribes represents artists from reservations across the U.S. and their jewelry workshop features in-house Native American silversmiths and artists working to create new designs, custom orders and repairs.

FAST FACT:

Mesa, Arizona, is only four hours from the Grand Canyon. Multiple tour operators will pick up from Mesa area hotels and offer guided day and overnight trips to Grand Canyon National Park.

FORT MCDOWELL YAVAPAI NATION - 2+ hours

Visit this 950-member Native American tribe within Maricopa County. The 40-square mile reservation is a small part of the ancestral territory of the once nomadic Yavapai people. Visitors can enjoy a number of experiences here including off-road adventure tours and guided horseback riding, special events and more.

