

# OLD TOWN: SCOTTSDALE'S ECLECTIC DOWNTOWN

Old Town Scottsdale is the beating heart of the city. Nestled within nine walkable and bikeable “districts,” visitors find an eclectic collection of shops, 100+ restaurants, numerous nightlife options, two art museums and more than 30 art galleries, as well as contemporary public art installations and historic sites dating back to the late 1880s. This effortless blend of chic urban amenities and Old West charm – all packed into just over one square mile – gives Old Town its one-of-a-kind flair and makes it a can't-miss stop on any Scottsdale itinerary. Get the lay of the land with these Old Town [Maps and Guides](#).

## THE NINE DISTRICTS

- **Arts District:** Fine art galleries, wine-tasting rooms, Scottsdale's Museum of the West, the Scottsdale Artists' School and the Thursday night ArtWalk all call this district home.
- **Brown & Stetson District:** This mixed-use district houses restaurants, bars and numerous locally owned businesses.
- **Civic Center Park:** The pedestrian-friendly park's 21 acres of lush lawns and public art house the [Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts](#), [Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art](#), and [Scottsdale Stadium](#), which plays host to the San Francisco Giants each year for spring training.
- **Entertainment District:** The laidback daytime energy of this district explodes after dark, with celebrity deejays, live bands and master mixologists showing off their talents at upscale nightclubs and bars.
- **Fifth Ave Shopping District:** This long-time local favorite boasts dozens of unique shops, award-winning restaurants and the famous Bob Parks Horse Fountain.
- **Historic Old Town:** This corner of Old Town is fun and funky, with a decidedly Old West flair. Western wear boutiques, Native American jewelry and historic sites are a few of the treasures to discover here. The district is also where Old Town Scottsdale Farmers' Market takes place every Saturday, featuring the area's best local growers and restaurants.
- **Scottsdale Fashion Square:** The largest shopping destination in the Southwest, Scottsdale Fashion Square mall is home to more than 200 premium retailers, a Harkins luxury cinema and multiple top-notch restaurants.
- **Scottsdale Waterfront & Southbridge Districts:** These districts on the banks of the Arizona Canal house some of the city's most popular restaurants and boutiques.

## HISTORIC SITES & SIGHTS

- The [Hashknife Pony Express](#) makes its 200-mile ride every January from Holbrook, Ariz. to Old Town to deliver 20,000 first-class letters by horseback. Led by the Navajo County Sheriff's Posse, the ride kicks off the annual Parada del Sol parade and is the oldest officially sanctioned Pony Express in the world.
- Since 1951, [Parada del Sol](#) – the World's Largest Horse Drawn Parade – has marched through Old Town each spring and signaled the start of the week-long Parada del Sol Rodeo. The parade was created by the Chamber of Commerce to showcase the city's “West Most Western Town” image. Find more rodeo history at [Scottsdale Rodeo Museum](#).
- [Rusty Spur Saloon](#) – Scottsdale's Last Real Cowboy Saloon – housed the Farmer's State Bank of Scottsdale from 1921 to 1933. The Saloon still has the original vault, which is now used to store liquor. Walk through the swinging doors to enjoy live music and boot scootin' fun seven days and nights per week.
- When the [Sugar Bowl](#), an iconic ice cream parlor in the heart of Old Town first opened in 1950, it was a general store and automotive services station (that also happened to serve ice cream).
- The [Little Red Schoolhouse](#) – a.k.a. Scottsdale Historical Museum – was built for only \$4,500 in 1909. Prior to its museum status, it served as a police station, school, and visitors center, among other uses.
- The [Old Adobe Mission](#), one of three remaining adobe structures downtown, was built by Mexican immigrant families in the 1930s. Today, the church hosts special events and weddings, and offers a historical gallery for visitors.
- For a taste of Scottsdale history unlike any other, stop by Cavalliere Blacksmith Shop, which, although established in the early 1900s, continues to serve as a working blacksmith shop.
- The Arizona Canal running through downtown supplies water to the city and creates what is called Scottsdale Waterfront. Created by the early Hohokam people 1,000+ years ago, it is operated today by the Salt River Project (SRP).

## WHERE TO STAY

### WITHIN OLD TOWN

- [Hotel Valley Ho](#) is a downtown icon. First opened in 1956, it was a hideaway for Hollywood celebs like Bing Crosby and Zsa Gabor in the 1950s and 1960s, and is one of the U.S.' best-preserved examples of midcentury modern architecture.
- Just down the street is [Bespoke Inn](#), Scottsdale's first and only bed and breakfast. With its eight customized guestrooms, infinity-edge pool, onsite restaurant [Virtù Honest Craft](#) and a bicycle shop, Bespoke Inn is full of charm.
- Contemporary luxury meets urban sophistication at [W Scottsdale](#), featuring two posh lounges and AWAY® Spa.
- [The Saguaro](#) is situated on the edge of Civic Center park and boasts the colorful, vibrant spirit of the Southwest in design and decor. In fact, each room exterior is accented by the color of a native desert flower.

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## JUST STEPS AWAY

- Stay close to the Old Town action at [Hotel Adeline](#), a contemporary urban retreat, with hip and lively common areas and its own speakeasy-style whiskey bar, Straight Up.
- Combining the colors and comforts of old Havana, the edge and flair of New Orleans, and the elegant geometry of Bauhaus, [The Scott Resort & Spa](#) is a lush oasis in the desert – complete with a sand-bottom swimming pool.
- Enjoy a spacious suite, play tennis, swim in one of two oversized pools and delight in complimentary cooked-to-order breakfast at [Embassy Suites by Hilton Scottsdale Resort](#), within walking distance of all that downtown has to offer.

## WHERE TO DINE

- At [FnB](#), Chef Charleen Badman, recipient of the James Beard Foundation's 2019 Best Chef: Southwest Award, is known for her locally sourced, elevated vegetable creations. Complimenting the food is co-owner Pavle Milic's carefully curated Arizona wine experience, showcasing the best wines in the state.
- [The Mission](#)'s modern Latin cuisine draws crowds every night of the week, with favorites such as tableside guacamole, duck confit empanadas with orange habanero glaze, and steaks cooked over pecan and mesquite wood.
- Quick and casual? Try a salt bagel at [New Wave Market](#) (made in-house daily!), a healthy protein bowl and fresh juice at [Farm & Craft](#), the Instagram-worthy Brussels Sprout Nachos at [Diego Pops](#) or the city's best pizza at [Craft 64](#).
- New takes on classic comfort food and original cocktails await at [Citizen Public House](#), whereas an island vacation beckons at [Hula's Modern Tiki](#), where the Polynesian flavors and tiny umbrella-topped drinks are hard to beat.
- A romantic evening calls at [Marcellino Ristorante](#) and [The House Brasserie](#), where the perfect ambiance and delicious, chef-driven fare collide.

## WHERE TO SIP WINE, BEER, COFFEE & SPIRITS

- Old Town offers six Arizona wine tasting rooms pouring wines produced in the Willcox, Verde Valley and Sonoita wine regions of the state. Discover award-winning local wines using the [Scottsdale Wine Trail map](#).
- Eight breweries and beer houses serving show-stopping Arizona suds make up the [Scottsdale Ale Trail](#).
- Sip locally made spirits at [Blue Clover Distillery](#), and cool cocktails at [Second Story Liquor Bar](#) and [The Drunk Monk](#).
- Finally, with nine coffee houses in the area, it's easy to get a caffeine fix along the [Scottsdale Coffee Trail](#).

## WHERE TO FIND ART

- Old Town has two art museums, [Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West](#), showcasing the American West's history and [Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art \(SMoCA\)](#), showing the best of contemporary art and design.
- Across the way from SMoCA, [Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts](#) provides a diverse season of dance, music, theater, comedy and film. More than 1,000 events are presented and hosted by the Center annually.
- [Wonderspaces](#) partners with artists around the world to bring engaging artwork to new audiences. Visitors can enjoy refreshments within the 80-minute experience, exploring topics such as power, religion, time and reality.
- Every Thursday night since 1975, the galleries along Main Street and Marshall Way are lit up by [Scottsdale ArtWalk](#).
- See 10 of the 40+ inspiring [Scottsdale Public Art](#) pieces found in Old Town on a [self-guided walking tour](#).

## WHERE TO SHOP

- In addition to entertainment and dining, [Scottsdale Fashion Square](#), the Southwest's largest shopping destination, offers more than 250 high-end retailers, including brands ranging from Apple and Nordstrom, to Prada and Cartier.
- [Bischoff's Shades of the West](#) is the go-to for Southwestern décor like Pendleton blankets and hand-woven Native American baskets. Meanwhile, authentic Indian concha belts and turquoise jewelry dazzle at Gilbert Ortega Museum & Galleries.
- [Vintage by Misty](#)'s carefully curated mix of classic designer duds are the result of the owner's jaunts through Europe, bringing back items like 1960s Emilio Pucci silk scarves and 1990s Chanel quilted shoulder bags. [Fashion by Robert Black](#) is all about vintage red carpet treasures from Oscar de la Renta, Nathan Strong, Alfred Shaheen and more.
- Find more of Arizona in [Old Town's many unique boutiques](#).

## WHERE TO HAVE A NIGHT OUT

- A walk through the pedestrian-friendly Entertainment District will land travelers amongst packed dance floors at [Maya Day + Nightclub](#), [The District](#), and [Riot House](#), along with see-and-be-seen spots like [The Mint Ultra Lounge](#) and [W Scottsdale's Wet Deck](#), a deejay's playground.
- For a different speed, [Dierks Bentley's Whiskey Row](#) is a 1920s-style saloon with a new country vibe, while [Bottled Blonde Pizzeria & Beer Garden](#) is a retro-inspired spot with an expansive beer selection.
- [Wasted Grain](#) is always buzzing, with live music and the Bubble Room, and [Casa Amigos](#) is an upbeat restaurant and tequila joint that sits beneath the bowling lanes and dance floor found at [Skylanes](#).

