



VISIT  MESA

CITY LIMITLESS®

FIND YOUR WATER ADVENTURE RECREATION GUIDE

This pocket guide was especially designed with the Mesa, Arizona visitor in mind highlighting nearby opportunities for our guests to explore our water ways and learn more about our treasured Sonoran Desert. Our outfitters offer some of the most knowledgeable resources and experts on our desert environs and eco-system. For general information contact the Mesa Visitors Center at 480-827-4700 or visit us online, www.VisitMesa.com.

Our gratitude goes out to the numerous organizations who have shared resources and information for the production of this guide including:

ARIZONA
GRAND CANYON STATE

Arizona Office of Tourism
Arizona State Parks
Maricopa County Parks & Recreation
USDA Tonto National Forest Service

PUBLISHED BY:

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WATER RECREATION

Even though Mesa is in the heart of a desert, visitors can take advantage of the city's close proximity to a water recreation paradise. There are four lakes and two rivers that offer Mesa visitors easy access to desert boating, fishing, rafting, kayaking, water skiing, wake boarding and jet skiing. Or, partake in the ever-popular activity of "tubing", a leisurely float along the cool waters of the Salt River via inner-tube!



@WANDERING_COCONUT • LOWER SALT RIVER



USDA TONTO NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE

As the fifth largest forest in the United States, the Tonto National Forest is one of the most-visited "urban" forests in the U.S. The Tonto National Forest Service oversees all the Mesa-area lakes

listed on the following page and the lower Salt and Verde rivers as well as many streams in the area. A Tonto Pass, a daily (24-hour) recreation pass for visitors, is required for more than 50 recreation sites when in the Tonto National Forest. The Pass will be displayed on visitor's vehicle rear-view mirror. The passes sell for \$8 per vehicle plus a watercraft use fee of \$4 per watercraft*. Passes are available at 200 locations in the Mesa area including nearby convenience stores and also online and by mail, and can be purchased at kiosks at the recreation sites. Many of the lakes-area businesses operate under special permit from the Forest Service.

FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON VISITING THE TONTO NATIONAL FOREST CALL 480.610.3300 OR VISIT [FS.USDA.GOV/TONTO](https://fs.usda.gov/tonto)

**Fees subject to change.*

RECREATION SITES



APACHE LAKE | 17 miles long with secluded coves. Hotel lodging, camping, boat rental and storage available. Day use areas on-site. Fees apply. Fish species: Black Crappie, Channel Catfish, Flathead Catfish, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Walleye.

Apache Lake Marina • 928.467.2511 • apachelake.com

CANYON LAKE | 28 miles of shoreline, 950 surface acres of water and secluded coves. RV and tent camping, boat rental and storage available. Day use areas and ramada rental on-site. Fees apply. Depth: 141 feet. Fish species: Bluegill, Largemouth Bass, Rainbow Trout, Walleye, Yellow Bass.

Canyon Lake Marina • 480.288.9233 • canyonlakemarina.com

ROOSEVELT LAKE | 112 miles of shoreline and 22,000 acres of surface water. Hotel lodging and RV park, camping, boat rental and storage available. Fees apply. Depth: 300 feet (when full). Fish species: Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Catfish, Bluegill, Crappie.

Roosevelt Marina • 602.977.7170 • rlmaz.com

SAGUARO LAKE | 10 miles long and 22 miles of shoreline. Ranch-style lodging, day use areas and Butcher Jones Beach. Boat rental and storage available. Fees apply. Depth: 100+ feet. Fish species: Bluegill, Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Channel Catfish, Rainbow Trout, Crappie.

Saguaro Lake Marina • 480.986.5546
saguarolakemarina.com

SALT RIVER | The closest river to Mesa, most leisure recreation takes place in the lower and upper portions where outfitters operate guided water tours via kayak, raft and inner tube. The river winds through the Tonto National Forest and offers a convenient day trip for Mesa visitors. Fishing permit required. Day use areas throughout.

Tonto National Forest • 480.610.3300 • fs.usda.gov/tonto

VERDE RIVER | Crossing through the Fort McDowell Reservation, visitors can horseback ride through the river and kayak. The Verde River has many species of game fish and towering cliffs with a riparian area for viewing wildlife. Day use areas and camping.

Fort McDowell Reservation • 480.595.3300
fs.usda.gov/tonto

GRAB YOUR PADDLE

Paddle boarding is gaining popularity in Arizona. This recreational sport offers a great workout for people of all ages and is a great way to see the scenic Arizona Desert that juts up against the shoreline. In Mesa, the SUP season is every day, all day. Mesa boasts a treasured system of lakes and rivers that make up the Lower Salt River Recreation Area inside the Tonto National Forest. Visitors can rent their boards and enjoy all the pleasures of a beach-inspired retreat at Butcher Jones Beach at Saguaro Lake, or enter the calm lake waters from the riverbank. No matter where you choose to launch, the sandy shoreline offers convenient parking and walk-up access making it an ideal stop for SUP lovers. Kayakers, too, flood these waters to gain access to dramatic views of the majestic canyon walls that change color as the sun rays move across the sky. Mesa's closest lake, Saguaro, offers more than 22 miles of shoreline and ranch-style lodging and day use areas.



TOURS

LAKE TOURS

THE DESERT BELLE TOUR BOAT

480.984.2425 • desertbelle.com
14011 N. Bush Hwy • Mesa, AZ

DOLLY STEAMBOAT

480.827.9144 • dollysteamboat.com
Hwy 88/Canyon Lake • Apache Junction, AZ

WATER RECREATION TOURS

DESERT VOYAGERS GUIDED RIVER TOURS

480.998.7238 • desertvoyagers.com
16447 N. 91st St. #101 • Scottsdale, AZ

MILD TO WILD RAFTING TOURS

800.567.6745 • mild2wildrafting.com
4400 N. Scottsdale Rd. • Scottsdale, AZ

SALT RIVER TUBING & RECREATION, INC.

480.984.3305 • saltrivertubing.com
9200 N. Bush Highway • Mesa, AZ

RIVERBOUND SPORTS PADDLE CO.

480.463.6686 • riverboundsports.com
1425 E. University Dr. #B-102 • Tempe, AZ



WATERCRAFT RENTALS

DESERT PADDLEBOARDS

480.201.9520 • desertpaddleboards.com

DESERT VOYAGERS

480.998.7238 • cliffcreekoutfitters.com

NO SNOW STAND UP PADDLEBOARDS

480.807.6787 • nosnowsups.com

REDLINE RENTALS & SALES

480.548.8921 • evkayakrentals.com

RIVERBOUND SPORTS PADDLE COMPANY

480.463.6686 • riverboundsports.com

SAGUARO LAKE RANCH

480.984.2194 • saguarolakeranch.com

SALT RIVER RECREATION

480.984.3305 • saltrivertubing.com



CANYON LAKE



SALT RIVER

WILD HORSES

Before sunrise and after sunset, along the waters of the Tonto National Forest and into the adjacent Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Reservation, visitors have a pretty good chance at catching a glimpse of Arizona's wild horse population. There are as many as 500 of these magnificent animals roaming the water's edge on the lower Salt River and the shoreline around Saguaro Lake. Their enigmatic presence is a common sight when visitors are kayaking, paddle boarding, or

tubing down the river, as the horses emerge from the surrounding desert forest to cool off in the water and graze on the underwater foliage. According to historical records, the horses have been living on the Salt River reservation before the National Forest was created in the early 1900s. The wild horses are watched over by the tireless efforts of the Salt River Wild Horse Management Group. This non-profit is dedicated to the freedom of the wild horses, which has allowed them to live and wander peacefully over the years. If you are lucky enough to spot a horse or herd when you visit Mesa, remember to be respectful of their space and natural habitat.



LIMITLESS GEOTAGGING

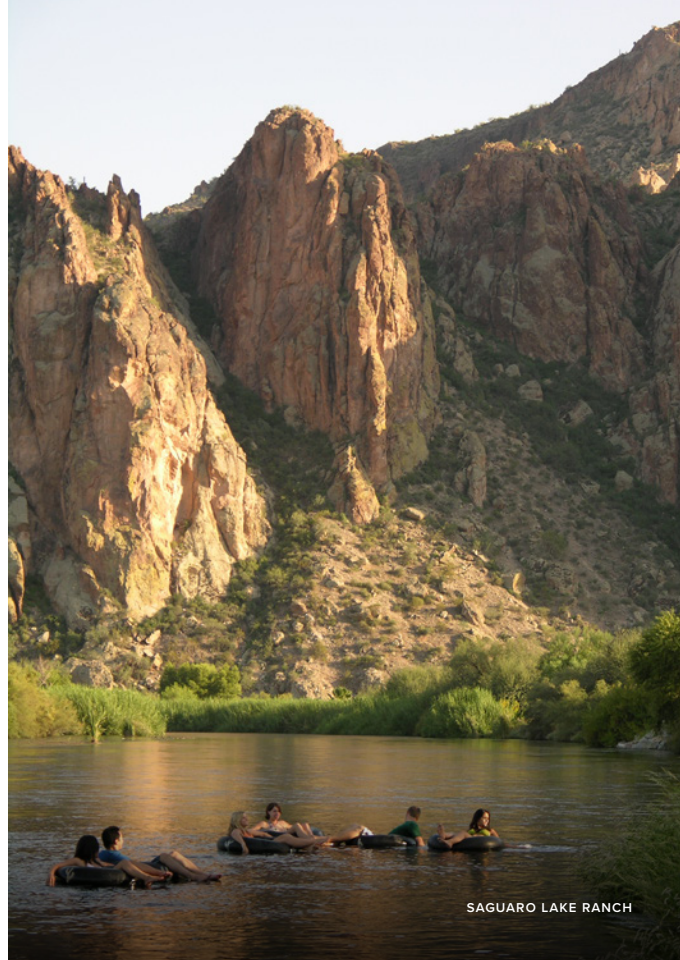
Visit Mesa knows there are endless ways to capture the magic and awe of our Sonoran Desert surroundings and we want to reward the adventurers, treasure seekers and wandering warriors that venture out into this incredible landscape.

Use the Adventure Explorer hashtags in your social media posted photos in exchange for a one-of-a-kind sticker celebrating that activity and location. You can pick up your physical sticker(s) at the Visit Mesa Visitor Center (120 N. Center) during your visit, or we will send a digital sticker to you honoring your quest when you text us at 797979*. Collect up to 5 different stickers during your visit.

Visitors can also download the Visit Mesa app on their mobile device to access the *Passport to Outdoor Adventure*. This interactive experience shares geo-locations of all the destinations and allows users to collect digital badges rewarding their journey.



APACHE TRAIL
SALT RIVER
SAGUARO LAKE
MOJAVE MOUNTAINS
WIND CAVE
MESA CITY LIMITLESS





LEGEND

- HIGHWAY OR PAVED ROAD
- UNPAVED ROAD
- FOREST SERVICE ROAD
- USDA FOREST SERVICE BOUNDARY
- HIKING TRAIL
- WILDERNESS BOUNDARY
- CAMPING
- HIKING TRAIL HEAD

FT MCDOWELL INDIAN RESERVATION

Fountain Hills

SHEA BLVD

SALT RIVER PIMA INDIAN RESERVATION

Fort McDowell Adventures

Granite Reef

Rio Salado Sportsman Club
Usery Mountain Reg. Park

Nature Center

McKELLIPS

McKELLIPS

PHOENIX (13 MILES)
SUPERSTITION FREEWAY

MESA

BROWN MAIN

BROWN MAIN

BASELINE

BASELINE

SEBASTIAN

SERVAL BUTTE

MERIDIAN

IRONWOOD

IMHO

TOMAHAWK

GOLDFIELD

APACHE JUNCTION

Apache Trail KOA

Superstition Mountain Museum

Goldfield Ghost Town

Lost Dutchman State Park

First Water Trailhead

Tonto National Forest

Saguaro Lake Marina
Desert Belle Paddle Boat
Lakeshore Restaurant
Stewart Mountain Dam
Saguaro Lake Ranch Rides

Mormon Flat Dam

Canyon Lake Marina
Lakeside Restaurant & Cantina

Dolly Steamboat

Horse Mesa Dam

Tortilla Flat Saloon & Settlement

Tortilla Ranch

Weavers Needle
Mule Trains

U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Peralta Trailhead

FLORENCE JUNCTION

Woodbury Trailhead

Boyce Thompson Arboretum State Park

Besh Ba Gowah

Reavis Trailhead

Apache Lake Marina
Apache Lake Ranch

Arizona Trail

Roosevelt Visitors Center

Tonto National Monument

THREE BAR WILDLIFE AREA

Roosevelt Dam

TO PAYSON

Lone Pine Saddle

FOUR PEAKS WILDERNESS

ARIZONA TRAIL

BUSH HIGHWAY

143

104

87

429

188

88

88

78

60

89

THE OLD WEST HIGHWAY

KINGS RANCH ROAD

PERALTA ROAD

172A

172

357



BEFORE YOU GO

Before heading out to explore the vast Sonoran Desert, take caution. While the desert offers breathtaking scenery, it can also be unfamiliar territory for out-of-town guests not acclimated to the varied temperatures and rugged terrain.

- Always pack water. Avoid dehydration by drinking water often throughout your activity. Even on the water, you can get dehydrated. A good rule of thumb is to pack one gallon of water for a full-day of desert fun.
- Dress appropriately. Desert temperatures can hit extreme highs and extreme lows in a 24-hour period. Wearing layers helps slow dehydration and limits your sun exposure. Always wear closed-toe shoes. Wearing a hat and sunglasses are also recommended.
- Apply sunscreen – often. No matter the time of year, Arizona’s direct sunlight can cause severe burns.
- Explore with a friend or in a group. If heading out on the river or waterways solo, let someone else know of your plans or alert the ranger where you plan to explore.

- Be alert! Even on the water, our desert is full of critters along the shoreline. Watch for rattlesnakes, Gila monsters and scorpions to name a few. If necessary, make noise so critters know of your presence. Be mindful of their surroundings and treat them with caution and respect.
- It is very common to pick up cactus needles in the desert even along the riverbanks and lake shoreline. Pack a fine-tooth plastic comb for removing the needles – never use your fingers!
- Pack out what you pack in. Deposit trash in receptacles and leave no garbage behind.
- In an emergency, call 9-1-1. Most recreation areas are equipped to alert services and promptly execute a water rescue.





SAGURO LAKE



