

TUCSON: A LIVELY 235 YEARS OLD THIS SUMMER



PLAY FOR NEXT TO NOTHING. Tucson visitors can find a host of fun and educational activities related to everything from art and history to science and outdoor adventure at Tucson's website for budget-savvy consumers, TucsonontheCheap.com.

SUPER HOT SUMMER DEALS. This summer the deals in Tucson are hotter than the desert sun. Every week, Tucson CVB is posting "Tucson Will Surprise You Hot Deals" for accommodations, attractions and restaurants on the www.facebook.com/TucsonWill SurpriseYou



Facebook page. The deals last only one week, are tweeted 24 hours later, and can't be found anywhere else. The beautiful Loews Ventana Canyon Resort & Spa is offering Standby Staycations at \$79/night on their Facebook page www.facebook.com/LoewsVentanaCanyon. The \$79 rate is only good the day it is posted; keeping fans on their toes. Summer is warm, but these deals are HOT!

SACRED SAGUARO FRUIT HARVEST. Taste flavors of the Sonoran Desert at the Hasan Bak Saguaro Harvest Celebration at Colossal Cave Mountain Park in Tucson, July 10. Visitors can sample jams and syrups made from ruby-red saguaro fruit and discover the saguaro's value to the Tohono O'odham ("People of the Desert"). Dishes prepared with cactus products and other desert-harvested foods are served Monday-Friday at the Desert Rain Café in Sells, 60 miles west of Tucson. Visitors can explore the Tohono O'odham Cultural Center and Museum in Topawa, 68 miles southwest of Tucson. In Tucson, Etherton Gallery hosts an exhibition of saguaro photographs at the Tucson Botanical Gardens, June 4-August 29. Find other jour-

neys related to Southern Arizona's American Indian culture at www.visittucson.org.

INDOORS: FAMILY MUSEUMS. The fun and educational activities at these kid-approved museums are sure to keep kids interested until the school bell rings. Tucson Children's Museum helps kids learn about nature, science, and safety while having fun at 10 galleries of hands-on exhibits, including Dinosaur World and the Fire Station. The Mini-Time Machine Museum of Miniatures displays an array of antique and contem-



porary miniatures and enchanting artifacts; self-guided tours travel through diverse lands and times, both real and imagined. International Wildlife Museum displays dioramas depicting wild animals in their natural settings, videos, interactive computers, and hands-on exhibits that promote wildlife appreciation and conservation. Discover more at the websites of the Tucson Children's Museum, the Mini Time Machine Museum of Miniatures, and the International Wildlife Museum.

PICK YOUR OWN SUMMER PRODUCE. A summer treat is picking your own fresh produce at Apple Annie's orchard and farm in Willcox, east of Tucson. Apple Annie's opens in July for the summer harvest of sweet corn, melons, green beans, squash, tomatoes, chiles, peppers, and more. Produce is available already picked, or you can pick your own right from the vine. Upcoming special events include the Sweet Corn Extravaganza, July 10-11 and July 17-18; and the Peach Mania Festival on weekends between mid-July and mid-August. For more details, call the Crop Hotline at (520) 384-2084, or visit AppleAnnies.com. A list of u-

pick-it farms south of Tucson is available from the Willcox Chamber of Commerce.

BMX RIDERS HIT TUCSON ARENA. A sport created by kids for kids in the 1970s will be showcased in Tucson at the ABA-BMX Southwest Nationals, August 6-8. The American Bicycle Association (ABA) will bring an estimated 1,000 amateur bicycle motocross (BMX) riders to the Tucson Convention Center for an air-conditioned national competition. BMX riders will perform jumps, flips, and tricks on a massive, ABA regulation dirt track. Riders ages 5 to 60 will compete in pre-race events on Friday, Aug. 6; the National Race will occur on Saturday, Aug. 7; and the final race happens Sunday, Aug. 8. The entire ABA-BMX 2010 Southwest Nationals race event is free and open to spectators. More information is on ababmx.com.

CITYWIDE BIRTHDAY BASH: TUCSON TURNS 235 THIS SUMMER. A ceremony at the Presidio San Agustín del Tucson will feature the five flags that have flown over the city of Tucson since its founding in 1775. The ceremony will take place on the city's 235th birthday, August 20, 2010. Cake will be served throughout the city; public events will celebrate the contributions of Tucson's many cultures and interests as well as the environmental features and institutions that have made it a unique community. DeGrazia Gallery in the Sun, Fox Tucson Theatre, The Loft Cinema, and Arizona Historical Society are among the organizations planning free and family-friendly events. For more details on Tucson's birthday celebrations, call (520) 327-7544, or visit TucsonBirthday.org.

OLD TUCSON STUDIOS LANDS ON MONOPOLY. The new John Wayne Collector's Edition Monopoly set features a Tucson attraction once frequented by the famed Western movie star. Old Tucson Studios, also known as "Hollywood in the Desert," is an official property on the new version of the popular board game, which features locations and properties significant to Wayne's professional and personal life. John Wayne starred in four movies at Old Tucson Studios: Rio Bravo (1959); McLintock! (1963); El Dorado (1967); and Rio Lobo (1970).

RENOWNED ARTIST RETURNS HOME. Tucson artist Daniel Martin Diaz has shown his work, featuring mystical imagery and surreal religious themes, all over the world; he is represented by galleries in New York and London. Yet, the renowned artist has said the more he travels, "the more he loves Tucson." So Diaz and his wife opened Sacred Machine, a gallery-museum-curiosity shop in downtown Tucson. Here, not far from Etherton Gallery and Tucson Museum of Art where the artist's early pieces were first shown, Diaz displays his latest work along with an eclectic mix of art, t-shirts, posters, books, and painted skateboards and guitars. The gallery is open from noon to 9 pm, Wednesday through Saturday, and by appointment on Sunday. For info, visit SacredMachine.com or email paula@mysticuspublishing.com. ■