

Valley of the Sun's Insiders' Guide

Written by Nichole Brophy, Abby Fotis, Melissa Larsen, Hayley Mitchell, Chanell Perry, Amy Strand

Monday, 01 June 2009 12:56 - Last Updated Wednesday, 03 June 2009 08:41

Take a look through our go-to guide and find a summer's worth of under-the-radar luxuries, people who count, stylish resources, tasty treats and artsy things to do. You'll be more in tune with your town, just for reading these pages.



Fine Design

Everybody knows about the new **Williams-Sonoma Home** store that opened in March at Scottsdale Quarter, but few people realize that at no charge a Williams-Sonoma interior designer will come to your home and create a design plan just for you, no matter how big or small your decorating needs are. No catches here (no minimum spending requirement); just a totally free and convenient service. www.wshome.com.

Coming Soon!

Brace yourself, Scottsdale. The highly anticipated arrival of **Barneys New York** is almost here. Scottsdale Fashion Square will welcome the luxurious department store in Fall 2009.



Designer and Humanitarian

When it comes to credentials, The Valley's own **Debra Davenport** blows most fashion designers out of the water. Not only did she receive national media coverage for designing Jordin Sparks's gown for the 2009 Grammy Awards, Davenport is pioneering the concept of combining couture with community service. Davenport recently founded Southwest Fashion District, a nonprofit initiative with which she plans to unite local fashion industry professionals and retailers and provide them with better access to local vendors, manufacturers, production materials and showrooms via a local fashion hub. www.debradavenport.com.

Shop 'til You Drop

Now you can shop like a star on **Westcor's Luxury Shopping Tour**, provided by Spree. This chauffeur-driven jaunt will whisk you and your personal shopping guide off to Scottsdale's most luxurious designer destinations. One to four people, including limousine services, is \$495 for about three hours. 480.661.1080, www.azshoppingspree.com.



Green is the New Blonde

In case you didn't know—green is now the new chic shade, according to **Green With Envy Hair Salon**. Green with Envy encourages healthy and natural hair care options by providing a nontoxic, clean-air environment. Green with Envy is the first salon in the Valley to use strictly organic products and nontoxic hair color. They've even found a way to recycle hair clippings. In addition to the earth-friendly perks, Green with Envy is conveniently located in Scottsdale's posh Optima Camelview Village near Scottsdale Fashion Square.

480.553.7235, www.greenwithenvyhair.com.

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Te-Te-Tequila

While the tequila of the famed Don Felipe is heralded all over the world, his grandson Carlos Camarena, also a master distiller, is proving agave artfulness runs in the family. **El Tesoro Paradiso Tequila**, a limited-edition private label crafted by Camarena, is an eight-year expression now being offered at The Phoenician Resort. The label is the signature spirit for the resort's acclaimed tequila program and is available in several of The Phoenician's cocktails, straight up and also for purchase by the bottle. \$175 per bottle. www.thephoenician.com.

Be Jeweled

Luxury and jewelry are synonymous, and at **Molina Fine Jewelers**, it is understood that for some women, playing with jewels is like racing cars—very exciting. **The Bridal Boutique** at Molina is the most glamorous spot to hold a bridal shower for up to 25 guests. Arranged through Molina's event specialist, these private parties are held during normal business hours, and all attendees get to adorn themselves and “play” with jewels from the vault while learning about what gem shapes and colors are en vogue. Now that sounds better than the usual shower games. After jewelry play time, guests adjourn to the private Molina Library, where the rest of the celebration can take place. The hostess can arrange through the event specialist for outside vendors to bring in all the flowers, catering and extras to make this a truly smashing shower. 602.955.2055, www.molinafinejewelers.com.



Precious Motors

The Stables is a super luxurious babysitting service for your prized vehicles. When you are gone for the summer or extended periods, The Stables will make sure your wheels stay in top shape. Use the at-your-home service or store your auto at the discreet, climate-controlled, security-guarded Scottsdale facility and know it will be safe and purring like a kitten when you return. www.thestablesaz.com.

Big Boy Toys

Enjoying the luxury of an exotic automobile is no longer for title holders only. **Status Toy Rentals**, located at the Scottsdale Waterfront, allows car aficionados to rent from its expansive fleet of superior-grade sports cars. From Lamborghinis and Bentleys to Maseratis or Ferraris, Status Toy Rentals are available on loan per day or per week. 1.877.557.8288, www.statustoyrentals.com.



Infinite Florals

Fresh flowers should be an everyday enjoyment for those with a truly luxurious lifestyle, so set your standing account at **Camelback Flower Shop** and every week (\$125 minimum budget), a fresh arrangement will be delivered to your home or office. You can specify your floral design needs or let it be a weekly surprise. www.camelbackflowershop.com.



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Yes, it's the food that makes a restaurant. However, an eatery will rack up some serious style points if it also has fabulous restrooms. Here are a few of the coolest local lavatories:

Geisha A Go Go Patrons not only visit this Old Town outpost for one-of-a-kind cocktails and private karaoke rooms; they go to experience Geisha's high-tech loos—complete with computerized control panels. 480.699.0055, www.geishaagogo.com.

Christopher's Restaurant & Crush Lounge Guests get a kick out of the communal, out-in-the-open waterfall sink at this Biltmore Fashion Park favorite. 602.522.2344, www.christophersaz.com.

Joe's Farm Grill and **Liberty Market** This duo of Gilbert eateries, both from restaurateur Joe Johnston, is home to quirky restrooms—from the stall walls plastered with recipes to a television playing obscure cartoons. www.joesfarmgrill.com; www.libertymarket.com.



Spill the Beans

Next time you need to refuel from a day of retail therapy at CityCenter of CityNorth, hit up **Press**. The coffee shop (which moonlights as a wine bar) serves up everything from a delish cup of joe to a triple-decker peanut butter and jelly sandwich. 480.419.6221, www.presscfw.com.

Rock the Kasbah

If hunger pangs strike you poolside at InterContinental Montelucia Resort & Spa, sample **Kasbah Pool Bar & Grill's** worldly French fries. There are a dozen rotating flavors (two selections are served daily)—including Japanese fries with teriyaki-wasabi sauce and Moroccan fries with cilantro baba ganoush. www.icmontelucia.com.



Chocolate's Leading Ladies

It's no secret that gals are fond of chocolate, but these two local women have made it their life's work. Lisa Reinhardt, C.E.O. and founder of Phoenix's **Wei of Chocolate**, and Scottsdale-based Julia Baker, C.E.O., founder and head chef of three-year-old **Julia Baker Confections**, dish up decidedly different but equally delicious treats to the Valley and beyond. Wei of Chocolate, founded more than 10 years ago, specializes in vegan, organic and Fair Trade chocolate infused with herbs, spices and Lotus Wei flower essences, while Julia Baker's signature confections include her decadent French caramel truffles and chocolate mousse. www.weiofchocolate.com; www.juliabakerconfections.com.



In 1970, the Cosanti Foundation, a nonprofit organization, began building an experimental town called the **Arcosanti Project**, 70 miles from Phoenix, designed around the principals of "arcology" (architecture and ecology). This month they will host two events: The Juneteenth Jazz Splash Festival, featuring food and retail vendors, arts and crafts exhibits, plenty of jazz music and more, will take place June 13 and 14, while the 90th birthday celebration for the organization's founder, Paolo Soleri, will be held from June 19 through 21. There will be music, entertainment, activities, art and more. 928.632.6225, www.arcosanti.org.

Look Forward To

Named a Phoenix Point of Pride by the Phoenix Pride Commission, **Mystery Castle** was built in 1930 by Boyce Luther Gulley, who built the castle for his daughter before he died. His daughter, Mary Lou Gulley, still lives in the obscure, one-of-a-kind historical home and provides tours for the public. The Thursday through Sunday tours are not available during the summer, but will start up again on Oct. 1, lasting through May 31.



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Free for All

Paying a visit to your local museum is a great way to infuse an exciting kick of education and culture into your life. Explore these Valley museums on their fabulous free days.

Children's Museum It's open to the public free of charge on the first Friday night of each month, from 6 to 10 p.m.

602.253.0501, www.childrensmuseumofphoenix.org.

Phoenix Art Museum At this centrally located arts haven, there are two days to explore the museum totally free: On the first Friday of each month from 6 to 10 p.m., and every Tuesday evening from 3 to 9 p.m. 602.257.1222, www.phxart.org.

Heard Museum Experience a free evening the third Friday of every month at the Heard Museum. While there, enjoy live music, dining, shopping, a cash bar and, of course, the fine artwork. 602.252.8848, www.heard.org.

Mesa Arts Center Free tours, which are great for kids on summer break, take place every Wednesday beginning at noon and last about 85 minutes. Reservations are required and should be made at least 24 hours in advance. 480.644.6626, www.mesaartscenter.com.

SMoCA The Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art is free of charge every Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. 480.874.4666, www.smoca.org.



Sip in Style

This summer, bring out your sophisticated side and host a tea party at the **Calvin Charles Gallery**. While you and your girlfriends sip your favorite teas, you will be surrounded by fabulous art to enhance your experience. 480.421.1818, www.calvincharles.com.



Morning Coffee

Each month, **Mayor Phil Gordon** makes himself accessible to the public by hosting Downtown Business Coffee Meetings at various locations throughout Downtown Phoenix. Stop in on your way to work for a cup of joe, lively discussion and updates on city plans and topics. 602.262.7111.

Green Gals

These local ladies prove that being eco-friendly is more than choosing paper over plastic—support a good cause and a greener world with the businesses of these Valley recycling wonder women:

Ann Siner: Helping women dress in designer duds for less, Ann Siner opened My Sister's Closet in 1991. Today, Siner's business, Eco-Chic Consignments, owns and operates 11 Valley-wide resale consignment stores under four brands: My Sister's Closet, My Sister's Attic, Well Suited and Small Change. An active community member, Siner donates any items not sold within 60 to 90 days (consigners can get a tax receipt) to one of Eco-Chic's charities of choice like Sojourner Center, Friends of Animal Care and Control and Arizona Animal Welfare League. 480.991.1860, www.mysisterscloset.com.

Elaine Birks-Mitchell: As founder of Bosom Buddy Bra Recycling, Elaine Birks-Mitchell and her business-partner husband gather and distribute bras to women in homeless shelters and transitional housing. Points of delivery have included agencies like Florence Crittenton, The Central Arizona Shelter Service and Fresh Start Women's Foundation. 480.998.2283, www.brarecycling.org.

Lizz Burnette: Previously the founder of an image consulting business, Lizz Burnette opened Scottsdale consignment shop, Regal Rags, in 1995 after realizing that her clients' discarded clothing would be a great fit for other women. Not just a popular resale clothing business, Burnette's shop features numerous events throughout the year, including dress-up tea parties for young girls. 480.970.5665, www.regalrags.com.



Never too Young

It's safe to say that **Annica Benning** is an accomplished 14-year-old. This high school freshman's passion for Native American culture and art inspired her to write the book, "Arizona: Nations and Art"—an educational tool that also features her own photography. Once funds are raised for

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a November printing, the youngster hopes to distribute her book to 145,000 Arizona fourth graders, encouraging schools to include Native American art and culture in history courses. Benning—along with the help of her parents—also created Preservation Press, a nonprofit organization focused on promoting cultural education in classrooms. www.annicabenning.com.



Talent Watch

Only 21 years old, Diamondback slugger **Justin Upton** was not only the second youngest player in Major League Baseball during the 2008 season, but the outfielder is turning heads with his hitting streaks and homeruns. We think this 2007 Minor League Player of the Year is one to keep your eye on in future innings.



Did you know?

Kate and Andy Spade, husband-and-wife founders of the famed accessories brand Kate Spade, met while attending Arizona State University. It wasn't until years later that the pair met again in New York City and began dating.

Did you know?

Born in Phoenix and a graduate of the University of Arizona, **Joan Ganz Cooney** created the hit children's TV show, Sesame Street, in 1969.