The cosmopolitan heart of the American Southwest

Arizona is one of America’s most beautiful states, and its urban soul resides in downtown Phoenix. Downtown Phoenix is indie restaurants, craft brewpubs and outdoor cafés. Downtown Phoenix is music halls, museums and sports arenas. Downtown Phoenix is art galleries and comedy clubs.

Downtown Phoenix is home to buzz-worthy neighborhoods like Roosevelt Row, historical districts like Heritage Square and avant-garde streets like Grand Avenue. Downtown Phoenix is the best it’s ever been, and it gets better every day. Billions of dollars of development—including a dining and entertainment district, two new hotels, a growing biomedical campus, and Arizona State University’s journalism and law schools—has lured hot chefs, young artists and independent retailers into downtown.

One other thing: Downtown Phoenix flies in the face of the city’s reputation for sprawl. Downtown is remarkably compact and walkable, and exploring nearby dining and entertainment options is made easy by bike share, light rail and pedal cabs.

Fun. Easy. Awash in sunshine. This is a recipe for a memorable meeting. This is downtown Phoenix.

WELCOME.

MARK LIPCZYNSKI

VISITPHOENIX.COM
Metro Light Rail

When a $1.4 billion light rail system debuted in downtown Phoenix in 2008, it ushered in a transportation revolution.

The slew of restaurants that have sprouted up along the light rail line gave rise to a popular blog—PHXrailfood.com—that chronicles more than 130 (and counting) dining options located within walking distance of the system’s 35 stations. Light rail makes it easy for meeting attendees to embark on a dine-around or pub crawl without ever hailing a ride or arranging private transportation.

The system’s quiet, air-conditioned trains operate 20 hours per day, seven days a week. They stop at attractions such as Phoenix Art Museum, Heard Museum, Chase Field, Talking Stick Resort Arena, CityScape and the Phoenix Convention Center.

Light rail also connects downtown Phoenix to Tempe’s popular Mill Avenue entertainment and shopping district and continues into Mesa.

A one-way fare on light rail is $2, and an all-day pass is $4. For many business travelers, that’s not even worth including on an expense report.

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport

Savvy convention attendees and exhibitors value three things in an airport: (1) flight selection, (2) price, and (3) convenience to downtown.

When it comes to those criteria, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport is incomparable. Sky Harbor is the 10th largest megahub in the world, and No. 5 among airports with flights from low-cost airlines. According to U.S. Bureau of Transportation statistics, Phoenix’s average domestic airfare has been lower than the national average in each of the past 15 years.

Sky Harbor is located only four miles from downtown Phoenix. Using the automated PHX Sky Train and Metro Light Rail, arriving visitors can travel from the airport to their downtown hotel for $2, without burning an ounce of gasoline. A typical taxi ride takes about 10 minutes and costs $15 to $20. Sky Harbor is also served by ride-hailing options such as Uber and Lyft.

Phoenix’s amazing airport also does all the little things to keep travelers happy: Wi-Fi is free in every terminal, purple-clad volunteers (called Navigators) are stationed in high-traffic areas to assist with any question, and dining options include outposts of some of the best local restaurants in the city.

Frequent-flying locals appreciate the fact that Sky Harbor is America’s Friendliest Airport™. One trip to Phoenix, and your attendees will, too.
Downtown dining: inspired, independent, accessible

From all-American diners, authentic rum bars and modern Asian-inspired eateries to ambitious, chef-driven restaurants where anything goes, Phoenix’s dining scene is blossoming as never before.

Throughout downtown and midtown, the vast array of options gives diners a variety to choose from, morning, noon and night. Most of these restaurants are within walking distance of downtown hotels, and even more are accessible via light rail or a 5-minute taxi or ride-hail trip.

[ ON FOOT ]

ARROGANT BUTCHER
Whether you’re catching a game, taking in a show, or power-lunching it with downtown execs, you’ll feel right at home at this Phoenix hotspot. Located at the bustling CityScape, Arrogant Butcher is all about American-style comfort food, from seafood and steaks to burgers and beers.

BLUE HOUND KITCHEN & COCKTAILS
Just like man’s best friend, this restaurant and bar located inside the Hotel Palomar at CityScape aims to please. Seasonal plates showcasing regional flavors paired with inventive cocktails, beers and wine make this a downtown favorite.

THE BREADFRUIT
The taste of the tropics can be had at this award-winning restaurant specializing in modern Jamaican cuisine. Enjoy authentic flavors, as well as ingredient-driven craft cocktails and fine rums.

BREAKFAST CLUB
Nothing jump-starts your day better than a hearty breakfast. Just ask the folks at this popular CityScape joint, where the first meal of the day never tasted so good. For late risers, lunch favorites are also offered.

MANCUSO’S
The Mancuso family has been serving fine Italian food in the Phoenix area for more than 35 years, but they didn’t bring their act downtown until 2016. Must-try dishes include cannelloni, vegetarian paella and osso bucco. The lounge is well suited for a business lunch or happy hour, and two private dining rooms are available for special events.

MATT’S BIG BREAKFAST
Fresh is the word of the day—all day, everyday—at this Phoenix favorite. Serving breakfast and lunch, this retro-inspired eatery uses cage-free eggs, grain-fed meats and local organic produce.

NOBUO AT TEETER HOUSE
Inside a turn-of-the-century bungalow at Heritage Square Park is one of Phoenix’s culinary gems. James Beard Award-winning chef Nobuo Fukuda brings elevated Japanese cuisine to the heart of downtown.

PHOENIX PUBLIC MARKET CAFÉ
This casual, urban eatery is more than just a restaurant. It’s a gathering place for downtowners looking for seasonal cuisine, fresh-brewed coffees, hand-crafted cocktails, and local beers and wines.

PIZZERIA BIANCO
Master pizza maker Chris Bianco serves up artisanal pizzas at his nationally acclaimed downtown restaurant in Heritage Square Park. The iconic menu features Bianco’s six signature pizzas, small plates, salads and just a few extras—proving that less is definitely more.

SHORT LEASH SIT...STAY
Imagine the humble hot dog elevated—then elevated some more. That’s what you’ll get at this hip joint where naan-wrapped hot dogs are front and center. Choose from a menu of signature and premium dogs, or build your own. Then sit, stay and relish the goodness.

SQUID INK
Step into this downtown restaurant and you’ll feel transported to a hip sushi bar in the heart of Tokyo. Modern décor highlighted by attention-grabbing artwork surrounds you as you dine on specialty rolls, nigiri and sashimi, as well as new-style takes on traditional Japanese cuisine.

[ VIA LIGHT RAIL ]

CLEVER KOI
What happens when four of Phoenix’s most adventurous foodies band together and open a restaurant? You get an Asian-inspired eatery where you can nibble on fluffy steamed buns, slurp up heaping bowls of ramen and sip on inventive cocktails with cheeky names.

DURANT’S
Phoenix’s most iconic restaurant still stands, 65 years after opening in the summer of 1950. Known for its steaks and chops, the steakhouse delivers on entrees, which include a 48-oz. porterhouse (those who finish it get their name inscribed on a plaque). Enter through the back door and get an insider’s view of the kitchen.

BAR FOOD GETS ELEVATED TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL AT BITTER & TWISTED COCKTAIL PARLOUR.
Dine on Mediterranean-style cuisine at this midtown spot situated along the light rail line. Enjoy lamb sliders, hummus plates, curries, kisras (flat herb-bread pizzas) and gyros, as well as salads, sandwiches and burgers.

**Hula's Modern Tiki**
Get a taste of a different era at this modern take on the tiki restaurants and bars of the '50s and '60s. Polynesian-inspired cuisine is showcased with such dishes as jerk chicken, lemongrass fish and coconut shrimp. Quench your thirst with a signature cocktail served, of course, in a traditional tiki glass.

**Postino WineCafé**
Housed in a former deli located in one of Phoenix's most historic neighborhoods, this wine bar and café is known for its bruschetta boards, paninis and a thoughtfully curated wine list of regional, national and international vintages.

**Southern Rail**
Southern hospitality is alive and well at this restaurant with easy access to the light rail. Touted as serving soulful "flavors from the American south," dishes range from Gulf Coast seafood to slow-smoked barbecue to Cajun and Creole cuisine.

**St. Francis**
Family ties run deep at this midtown gathering place. Brothers Aaron and David Chamberlin opened the restaurant with family in mind, offering American comfort food in a homely setting.

**The Larder + The Delta**
This Southern-inspired eatery located inside DeSoto Central Market serves food like Grandma used to make. The seasonal menu changes based on fresh ingredients, but look out for favorites with a twist, such as mac 'n cheese, deviled eggs, shrimp 'n grits and a fresh catch of the day.

**Windor/Churn**
Dining at this neighborhood restaurant feels like coming together at a backyard gathering. Hefty sandwiches, burgers and specialty entrées are sure to satisfy your hunger. But make sure to leave room for dessert at the ice cream shop next door, where sundaes, baked goods and nostalgic candy will make you feel like a kid again.

**Barrio Café**
For nearly 15 years, this neighborhood eatery has been serving authentic southern Mexican cuisine under the helm of celebrated chef Silvana Salcido Esparza. A stop here would not be complete without Chef Silvana's iconic Chiles en Nogada, a roasted poblano pepper filled with chicken and fruits, served with an almond cream sauce.

**Vovomeena**
Because breakfast is the most important meal of the day, this local joint makes sure it's done right. Thoughtfully composed plates satisfy morning cravings for eggs, pancakes, meats and, of course, coffee, which is made with a Japanese cold-brew method.
CityScape: A crossroads for downtown fun

CityScape is a two-block concentration of retail, entertainment and dining options in the heart of downtown Phoenix. The complex is home to a dozen restaurants and bars, six shopping retailers, two live-music venues, a comedy club, a bowling alley, and a day spa. CityScape is built around a fountain-filled courtyard (which doubles as an outdoor event space) and is bordered on three sides by light-rail stations.

Hungry meeting attendees can stop for a power lunch at the Arrogant Butcher, grab a super-food bowl and a fresh-fruit smoothie at Grabbagreen, nosh on sushi at Squid Ink, or enjoy waffles and omelets anytime at the Breakfast Club. These independent eateries are complemented by lively chain restaurants such as Chipotle, Five Guys Burgers and Tilted Kilt.

Nightlife pulses into the wee hours at CityScape. Copper Blues features live music (including live-band karaoke) and 60-plus beers on tap. Next door is Stand Up Live, a comedy theater and supper club that attracts the best acts in the country.

Meeting attendees can get in touch with their inner Jeff Lebowski at Lucky Strikes Lanes & Lounge or indulge their playful side at Gypsy Bar, which boasts 40 mega-sized arcade games and a dance floor complemented by confetti cannons.

The Hotel Palomar is home to a pair of popular watering holes: one at Blue Hound Kitchen & Cocktails and another, Lustre, that adjoins the rooftop pool and offers sunset views of the city.
Stepping out on a desert night

The desert is an intensely nocturnal place. When the sun gives way to stars and the air cools, visitors seem almost physiologically compelled to make the most of the night. Luckily for meeting attendees, downtown Phoenix affords plenty of options for evening fun. Here’s a sampling:

[COCKTAILS]

BITTER & TWISTED COCKTAIL PARLOUR
Tucked inside Phoenix’s historic Luhrs Building—which, ironically, was the former prohibition headquarters of Arizona—this sophisticated lounge has a friendly Scottish barman and a no-standing-at-the-bar policy (to encourage civility). Its cocktail list is 24 pages long.

HANNY’S
For nearly 50 years, Hanny’s Department Store catered to the fashion needs of the well-dressed Phoenix man. These days the former haberdashery serves James Bond-worthy martinis in a sophisticated architectural setting.

[CRAFT BEER]

ANGEL’S TRUMPET ALE HOUSE
Located in the Roosevelt Row District, across from downtown Phoenix’s only art-house cinema, this mid-century brick ale house features 30-plus craft beers on tap and serves a range of ale-friendly eats.

MOTHER BUNCH
This handsome yet unpretentious brewery offers more than 20 craft beers (including its own MB McBride Irish Red), which patrons can sip while sitting in recycled church pews or at a U-shaped bar.

[ LIVE MUSIC ]

CRESCENT BALLROOM
This red-brick warehouse, built in 1917, is three things: (1) a music venue that books the nation’s best independent acts; (2) a lounge with free live music every night; and (3) an eatery with a menu created by a pair of celebrated Phoenix chefs, Chris Bianco and Doug Robson.

VALLEY BAR
This lounge and live-music venue is the epitome of underground, literally and figuratively. Its subterranean location lends it a cool and dimly lit aesthetic, and its hyper-local clientele is the product of word-of-mouth testimony. Bar games abound, and the cocktail list is inspired by Arizona politicians.

Downtown Phoenix is the epicenter of Arizona’s live-music scene.
[ HIDDEN GEMS ]

THE PARK
This recently opened outdoor-turned-indoor concept offers a twist on the expected park elements: communal tables, green foliage, tree-canopied garden and a nightlife playground. Rotating food trucks (minus the wheels) and guest chefs serve their version of “street food” in the restaurant’s community kitchen. This live music venue also boasts a self-serve craft beer and wine wall.

RUM BAR AT THE BREADFRUIT
Dispelling the notion that Phoenix is all about tequila and cerveza, the Rum Bar boasts more than 100 rums, from the Caribbean to South America. The cool cocktails crafted here at this Roosevelt Row hangout are the perfect complement to the Jamaican cuisine served next door at The Breadfruit.

[ NO-FRILLS FUN ]

BIKINI LOUNGE
The vintage 1940s tiki decor is about the only frill at this cash-only, mixology-free downtown institution. The bar specializes in mini-pitchers of draft beer, and DJs spin eclectic tunes on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday.

THE VIG FILLMORE
This Roosevelt Row gathering place is named for a U.S. president, but its atmosphere is far from staid. The Vig is famous for its expansive patio, which features an outdoor bar and bocce-ball court.

WELCOME DINER
When you absolutely, positively have to have a chicken biscuit and boulevardier after midnight, this tiny hangout in the Garfield Neighborhood is the place to go. A favorite of artists and scenesters, the Welcome Diner serves Southern-inspired cuisine and classic cocktails inside a red-and-white diner that was constructed in 1945.
Hotels in the heart of the city

Since 2009, every major hotel in downtown Phoenix has undergone an extensive renovation, been reflagged, or is a completely new property. The biggest of downtown Phoenix’s hotels is the Sheraton Grand Phoenix. It boasts 1,000 guest rooms and a 28,000-square-foot ballroom. The Sheraton has a rooftop sundeck and lap pool, and its restaurant, District, specializes in classic American food and spirits.

The Hotel Palomar, at CityScape, is a boutique Kimpton property with 242 rooms and 10,000 square feet of meeting space. The hotel’s rooftop pool boasts an outdoor bar, Lustre, while Blue Hound Kitchen & Cocktails specializes in seasonal fare that eschews butter and heavy cream for lighter flavors.

The Westin Phoenix Downtown is designed to meet the needs of the upscale business traveler. It features 242 super-sized guest rooms, 15,000 square feet of meeting space, a rooftop pool, and a cosmopolitan restaurant, Province, with a courtyard-style patio.
The Renaissance Phoenix Downtown is in the midst of a $10 million renovation (scheduled for completion in March 2017) that will not only remake the hotel’s ground floor but transform the street and cityscape around it into a shade-filled, pedestrian-friendly promenade.

Across the street, the Hyatt Regency Phoenix boasts 693 guest rooms, 48,000 feet of function space, and the iconic rotating rooftop restaurant the Compass Arizona Grill.

The Hotel Monroe, originally built as Valley National Bank in 1932, reopened in December 2015 as the Hilton Garden Inn Phoenix Downtown following a painstaking renovation that preserved the Art Deco grand lobby and made room for Nook Kitchen, a fave among local foodies.

Downtown’s newest property, FOUND:RE, is a boutique hotel filled with art created by local Phoenix artists. This industrial, hip and creative destination offers 105 guest rooms and 3,000 square feet of unique meeting space as well as MATCH Cuisine, whose menu is inspired by global street food with a commitment to local sourcing.

In all, downtown Phoenix is home to more than 3,000 rooms within its walkable core. And more are on the way: The Luhrs City Center Marriott—which will feature dual brand Courtyard by Marriott and a Residence Inn by Marriott—is being built inside the 1920s-era Luhrs Tower. The grand opening is scheduled for spring 2017.
In some cities, a giant concrete box still passes for a convention center. Not in Phoenix.

The Phoenix Convention Center is an architectural marvel inspired by the turquoise waters and red-rock walls of the Grand Canyon. Towering walls of tinted glass flood its upper floors with natural light, and the structure’s subterranean level is brightened by sunlight that pours in from slotted “sky crystals” in the sidewalk above.

The convention center’s dramatic environs include three ballrooms, 99 meeting rooms, an Executive Conference Center, and an adjoining performance hall that seats 2,400. Thoughtful touches include air-conditioned loading bays, exhibit halls with pre-scored floors, and outdoor meeting areas that capitalize Phoenix’s sunny weather.

The award-winning catering staff at the Phoenix Convention Center can feed 560 people every eight minutes, and its bright and airy food court features five themed eateries.
Phoenix Biomedical Campus offers new frontier for meetings

Medical- and science-focused companies and organizations seeking a premier location to hold meetings and conventions need look no further than the budding Phoenix Biomedical Campus (PBC). One of the more strikingly high-profile developments to emerge in the renaissance of downtown Phoenix over the past few decades, the campus serves as a testament to visionary urban planning, with a distinct focus on science and medicine.

Beginning in 2004, with the inauguration of the Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen), the 30-acre facility has become a magnet for research scientists and professionals, providing them with unprecedented opportunities for growth and collaboration with complementary medical-research enterprises.

More than a dozen research facilities currently occupy the campus. In addition to TGen, other tenants include:

- International Genomics Consortium
- National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases
- University of Arizona College of Medicine
- University of Arizona Cancer Center
- The Arizona State University School of Nutrition and Health Promotion
- ASU College of Nursing and Health Innovation
- ASU Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy
- Barrow Neurological Institute

Two campus gems that offer specialized meeting facilities are the UA Center for Simulation and Innovation and the Arizona Telemedicine Center. The former features an operating room, a control room and briefing rooms. It also offers tours and customized simulation scenarios. The telemedicine center boasts an amphitheater with HD videoconferencing capabilities.

The campus also is home to the Arizona Biomedical Collaborative, an impressive, $31-million research facility shared by Arizona State and the University of Arizona. The biomedical campus serves as a natural extension of the learning environment provided by the nearby Phoenix Convention Center. The PBC’s numerous classrooms and laboratories—all aesthetically striking, technologically sophisticated and designed for environmental sustainability—offer smart options for off-site meetings and tours.

The PBC also offers medical meeting planners access to a roster of speakers who are experts in education, research technology and patient care. All of these resources are located in the heart of downtown, within walking distance of more than 3,000 hotel rooms.
Memorable events, just around the corner

Phoenix’s diversity of cultures, cuisines and landscapes makes it a hotbed for off-site meeting venues. The options range from the tried and true (cowboy cookout, anyone?) to the adventurous (a hot-air balloon offers intimate meeting space with a view). Here are a few off-site options within or near downtown:

[THE BIG LEAGUES]

CHASE FIELD
Located across the street from the convention center, the home of the Arizona Diamondbacks can accommodate a catered dinner and exhibition on its infield, with the retractable roof either open or closed. The stadium has a 136-by-46-feet LED video board and a rentable swimming pool behind the right-field wall.

TALKING STICK RESORT ARENA
Next door to Chase Field (and likewise served by light rail), this is the home of the NBA’s Phoenix Suns and the site of mega concert events. Rentable spaces include Casino Arizona Pavilion and the Coors Light Cold Zone, which features 50 feet of retractable glass walls and an indoor/outdoor bar.

[ICONIC SOUTHWEST]

CORONA RANCH
This distinct venue six miles from the convention center consistently wows groups with its Western Rodeo and Mexican Charreada demonstrations. Its indoor-outdoor facilities can accommodate (and feed) 30 to 3,000 people.

HEARD MUSEUM
This museum showcases the art and culture of Arizona’s 22 Native American tribes. Complementing the graceful Spanish Colonial architecture and fountain-filled courtyard are sophisticated meeting rooms and event spaces. The museum can arrange private tours or a hoop-dancing demonstration.

[ARTFULLY ELEGANT]

BENTLEY GALLERY
Originally a linen laundry built in 1918, this warehouse features original brickwork and soaring ceilings with exposed bow-truss beams. The gallery has 22,000 square feet of rentable space, and its interlocking rooms display contemporary art by international and local artists.

MONOROHO
This hybrid gallery, studio and workspace occupies a restored warehouse in Roosevelt Row. Every element—track lighting in the rafters, rolling gallery walls, custom photo cycloramas—is designed with customization in mind. Its “hanging conference table” is made of reclaimed concrete from the original 1937 structure.

[DEFINITELY DIFFERENT]

THE DUCE
Located in downtown’s Warehouse District, this prohibition-era structure is filled with eccentricities: a boxing ring, a bank of gymnasium bleachers, a soda fountain and a collection of backyard games. Event attendees can learn boxing basics or play table tennis, and enjoy meals served out of a vintage camper.

THE PRESSROOM
Built in the 1920s, this redbrick building in the warehouse district once housed the most modern printing press in Arizona. These days it’s a 14,000-square-foot concert and event venue that can accommodate upwards of 1,000 people. Premium features include mobile bars and rock-show-worthy sound system.

Memorable events, just around the corner
Heritage Square
This hidden gem in downtown Phoenix is home to two of the city’s most acclaimed restaurants: Pizzeria Bianco and Nobuo at Teeter House.

Musical Instrument Museum
This must-see museum showcases more than 15,000 instruments, including the last guitar Elvis played in concert.

Desert Botanical Garden
Stroll through a beautiful outdoor museum dedicated to desert plants—and not just those native to the Southwest.

Biltmore Fashion Park
Located near the famed Arizona Biltmore resort, this upscale shopping and dining destination is situated in a park-like setting.

Mill Avenue District
This is where students from Arizona State University unwind in lively restaurants and music-filled bars.

Heard Museum
The exhibits here tell the story of Arizona’s Native American tribes. (And the gift shop is a great place to buy a Southwestern souvenir.)

Camelback Mountain
Make the tough trek to the top of Phoenix’s most famous landmark...or just gawk at it from a restaurant patio.

Old Town Scottsdale
Art galleries and souvenir shops share a pedestrian-friendly streetscape with fine dining, fun bars and fashionable clubs.

Wrigley Mansion
This hilltop masterpiece, built by chewing-gum magnate William Wrigley Jr., shows just how good life in the desert could be in the early 1900s.

Taliesin West
The former winter home of Frank Lloyd Wright, America’s most famous architect, is open to the public for tours.

10 things to see and do in Phoenix

01. Desert Botanical Garden
02. Musical Instrument Museum
03. Heard Museum
04. Camelback Mountain
05. Wrigley Mansion
06. Biltmore Fashion Park
07. Heritage Square
08. Old Town Scottsdale
09. Mill Avenue District
10. Taliesin West
This is where you discovered you have more in common than you thought.

You wouldn't have guessed it. But you'll never forget it.