

The snow-cloaked San Francisco Peaks loom over a wintry landscape near Flagstaff. | TOM BROWNOLD

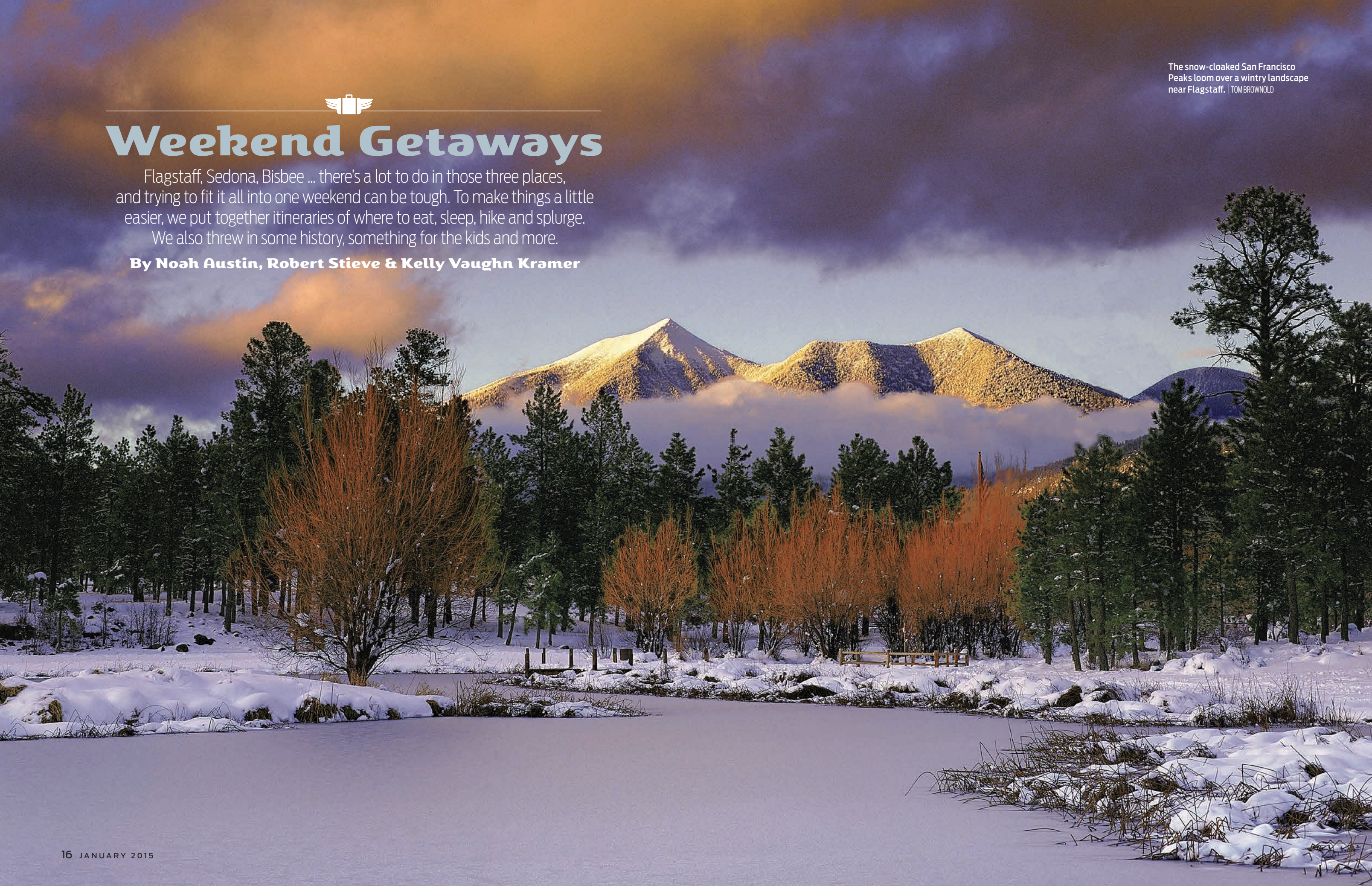


Weekend Getaways

Flagstaff, Sedona, Bisbee ... there's a lot to do in those three places, and trying to fit it all into one weekend can be tough. To make things a little easier, we put together itineraries of where to eat, sleep, hike and splurge.

We also threw in some history, something for the kids and more.

By Noah Austin, Robert Stieve & Kelly Vaughn Kramer



Flagstaff

EAT

Brix

"Our menu changes seasonally to ensure that we serve only the freshest ingredients from our local and regional network of friends." That's the philosophy at Brix, which is located in the historic Carriage House in downtown Flagstaff. Among others, its network includes Hayden Mills in Tempe, Ridgeview Farms in Paulden and Black Mesa Ranch in Snowflake. Through those sources, Brix is able to put together a dinner menu that features selections such as chile-roasted duck breast, a variety of artisan cheeses and a wine list that rivals the best restaurants in Scottsdale. || 413 N. San Francisco Street, 928-213-1021, www.brixflagstaff.com

HIKE

Weatherford Trail

This easy-to-follow route (14.8 miles round-trip) begins at Schultz Tank and climbs gradu-

ally through an open grove of ponderosas, past the Kachina Trail and into the Kachina Peaks Wilderness. Just past the wilderness boundary, it skirts the ridge of a shaded canyon. The trees are a kaleidoscope of greens in spring and summer. Moving on, the trail becomes a series of gradual switchbacks, and the vegetation changes from ponderosas and aspens to alpine species, including corkbark firs and Engelmann spruce. Eventually, it arrives at a point where the forest opens up and views of the peaks steal the show. From there, it's a quick hop to the top of Doyle Saddle, the turnaround point for this hike. || Flagstaff Ranger District, 928-526-0866, www.fs.usda.gov/coconino

DRIVE

Volcanoes & Ruins Loop

History, geology, archaeology ... that's just some of what you'll learn on this 73-mile (from Flagstaff) scenic loop, which gets especially scenic near Bonito Park Campground, in the shadow of Sunset Crater. Heading north from the prominent landmark, the road drops from a landscape of trees and lava to the desert grasslands of Wupatki National Monument, where you'll eventually arrive at the abandoned ruins of the Sinaloa people. From the ruins, the rest of the loop winds for about 10 miles back to U.S. Route 89, and then south back to Flagstaff. || Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument, 928-526-0502, www.nps.gov/sucr; Wupatki National Monument, 928-679-2365, www.nps.gov/wupa

ATTRACTION

Riordan Mansion

For a taste of local Flagstaff history, head to the Riordan Mansion. Pronounced "Rear-din" and located a mile or so from

downtown, the Riordan Mansion is actually two homes connected by a "rendezvous room." It was built in 1904 for Timothy and Michael Riordan, two brothers who owned the Arizona Lumber and Timber Co. They were partners in just about every way — they even married a set of sisters. Today, the 13,000-square-foot home is a state park, which gives a detailed look at the lives of the rich and famous in the early 1900s. Designed by Charles Whittlesey, who also engineered the Grand Canyon's El Tovar, the home combines a rustic exterior (gnarly logs and native stone) with a rich interior (Tiffany stained glass and a 1904 Steinway). || 409 W. Riordan Road, 928-779-4395, www.azstateparks.com

KIDS

Lowell Observatory

Of all the things Flagstaff is famous for, the brightest star might be the Lowell Observatory, from which Pluto was discovered. Established in 1894 by Percival Lowell, the observatory sits about 300 feet above the city. Lowell, who moved west from New England, was obsessed with the final frontier. More than anything, he wanted to prove there were little green men on Mars, and Northern Arizona, with its high altitude and cloudless skies, seemed like the place to do it — Flagstaff was designated the world's first International Dark Sky City. To walk in his footsteps, kid-friendly tours are offered daily. || 1400 W. Mars Hill Road, 928-774-3358, www.lowell.edu

HISTORY

Walnut Canyon National Monument

Cliff dwellings are scattered throughout the Southwest, but few are more accessible than those in Walnut Canyon National

Monument. The Island Trail, a 1-mile loop that starts at the visitors center, takes hikers past 25 of these prehistoric rooms. The trail is steep, dropping nearly 200 feet, and coming out requires a hike up 240 steps. Small by modern standards, the rooms average about 80 square feet — enough space to sleep and store valuables. Homes were simple and systematic. After visiting the ruins in the early 1900s, novelist Willa Cather wrote: "All the houses in the canyon were clean with the cleanness of sun-baked, wind-swept places, and they all smelled of the tough little cedars that twisted themselves into the very doorways." || 3 Walnut Canyon Road, 928-526-3367, www.nps.gov/waca

SPURGE

Cherry Pie at Miz Zip's

For this listing, we singled out cherry pie, but any of the pies at Miz Zip's — lemon, blackberry, coconut, blueberry, apple, rhubarb, pumpkin — qualify as comfort food. The delicate, flaky crust is a big part of that, but so is the ambience of the restaurant. Like all classic diners along Historic Route 66, this one comes with comfy booths and nostalgia of all sorts on the walls. The best part, though, is the green-marble, horseshoe-shaped counter. Not much has changed since Miz Zip's opened in 1952, and that's a good thing. Especially if you're willing to forget about calories for a few minutes and splurge on some-

thing delicious. || 2924 E. Historic Route 66, 928-526-0104

SLEEP

Weatherford Hotel

The Weatherford was a favorite of Western novelist Zane Grey — so much so that in 1997, hotel proprietors opened a ballroom in his honor. In one of his most famous novels, *Call of the Canyon*, Grey mentioned a hotel fireplace that hadn't been used or even seen in decades. Because of the book, it was rediscovered behind partitions in the hotel's restaurant. A pet project of John Weatherford, a developer who also oversaw the construction of the town's New Weatherford Opera House — now the Orpheum — the hotel opened in 1900. Today, it's a favorite stop

for travelers with a penchant for history and literature. || 23 N. Leroux Street, 928-779-1919, www.weatherfordhotel.com

BONUS

Buffalo Park

There are many great hikes in the mountains around Flagstaff, but they take time. For a quick dose of fresh air, head to Buffalo Park, which sits atop McMillan Mesa in the shadow of the San Francisco Peaks. The main attraction of the park is an easy 2-mile loop that circles a grassy meadow. The trail itself is wide and wheelchair accessible. Before it became a city park, the area was a private wild-life park. Thus the name. || 2400 N. Gemini Road, 800-379-0065, www.flagstaffarizona.org



PHOTO OP

San Francisco Peaks

The mountain range that looms over Flagstaff includes Humphreys Peak, the highest point in Arizona, and it's also home to the state's only tundra region. Depending on the season, your photo might include wildflowers, storm clouds or even a rainbow.

| SHANE McDERMOTT



Walnut Canyon is home to some of the Southwest's most accessible cliff dwellings. | TOM BEAN



Sedona

EAT

Elote Café

When it comes to Mexican food, chef Jeff Smedstad knows what's what. After traveling across Mexico, eating in local markets and culling authentic ingredients — and garnering *mucho* respect for his efforts at Los Sombreros in Scottsdale — he opened Elote Café in 2008. Since then, it's been Sedona's go-to place for tortillas, tamales and, of course, elote. The fire-roasted corn, inspired by the cobs peddled by Mexican street vendors, comes served with spicy mayo, lime and cotija cheese. And, it's a primo antecedent to a spate of other authentic menu items, from carne asada to lamb adobo. || 771 State Route 179, 928-203-0105, www.elotecafe.com

HIKE

Woods Canyon Trail

This easy-to-follow, 8-mile-round-trip trail begins just off State Route 179, but within minutes, it enters the Munds

Mountain Wilderness. There, the sounds of the city disappear and you'll catch your first glimpse of Sedona's famed red rocks. Unlike some of the more famous trails to the north, this one isn't dominated by the picturesque geology that epitomizes Sedona. Instead, its highlight is a beautiful riparian area and plenty of solitude. The trail is most spectacular where it meets the intersection of Rattlesnake and Woods canyons and drops into the boulder-strewn wash of Dry Beaver Creek. || Red Rock Ranger District, 928-282-4119, www.fs.usda.gov/coconino

DRIVE

Schnebly Hill Road

When Carl Schnebly arrived in Oak Creek in 1900, he used what was then known as Munds Road — a former wagon route — to transport lumber from Flagstaff. Then, he used the lumber to build a home, used the road once again to ferry produce to his general store, and petitioned for a post

office. That's how Sedona was born. Today, the 13-mile Schnebly Hill Road remains about as rugged as it originally was, and it climbs through red-rock canyons to its intersection with Interstate 17, traversing some of the area's most beautiful scenery. The main attraction of the drive is Schnebly Hill Vista. At an elevation of 6,000 feet, it overlooks Steamboat Rock, Oak Creek, Mingus Mountain, the Verde Valley and, of course, the town of Sedona, which has grown by leaps and bounds since Schnebly petitioned for that post office. || Red Rock Ranger District, 928-282-4119, www.fs.usda.gov/coconino

ATTRACTION

Chapel of the Holy Cross

The Chapel of the Holy Cross has been one of Sedona's most beloved landmarks since 1956. The concrete-and-glass structure is dominated by a 90-foot cross and was conceptualized by sculptor Marguerite Brunswig Staude, who, after years of land-purchasing and permit acquisitions, finally hired San Francisco architects Anshen & Allen to design the Catholic chapel. Today, people of all denominations and from around the globe visit the chapel, which is operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix. || 780 Chapel Road, 928-282-4069, www.chapeloftheholycross.com

KIDS

Rainbow Trout Farm

Kids and fishin' go together like mac and cheese, and at Sedona's Rainbow Trout Farm, little ones can hook a trout or 10. Tucked along Oak Creek and promising entertainment for the entire family, the farm also offers fishing equipment, bait, picnic tables and grill kits — lemon, butter, salt, pepper and utensils. There's no catch-and-release policy here.

Instead, you'll pay a \$1 admission fee, and you'll pay (by total length) for each trout you catch. The farm encourages you to pack in additional food to create a full-fledged meal. Mac and cheese optional. || 3500 State Route 89A, 928-282-5799, www.sedonarainbowtroutfarm.com

HISTORY

Palatki Heritage Site

In the Hopi language, *Palatki* translates to "Red House." And even though the Hopis have no specific ties to the ruins, Palatki and its sister site, Honanki, were the largest Sinaguan cliff dwellings in the area between A.D. 1100 and A.D. 1300. In other words, ages ago. Today, the ruins are accessible via three trails: one that takes you up to the dwellings, one that climbs to a view of the dwellings and another that leads to alcoves that shelter pictographs made by the native people who occupied the Verde Valley. Groups of up to 10 people are allowed access to the dwellings in 20-minute intervals, and reservations are recommended. Otherwise, you may have to wait ages for access. || Red Rock Ranger District, 928-282-3854 (reservations), www.fs.usda.gov/coconino

SPLURGE

Omelets at Coffee Pot Restaurant

There are 101 omelets on the menu at Coffee Pot Restaurant. One hundred. And one. Some of them might sound a little strange — take the jelly, peanut butter and banana option, for example — but if you're looking to pack in some protein before you dart around town, the Coffee Pot is your best bet. Since the 1950s, the family owned restaurant has been a favorite among locals, who've dubbed it "the best over-

all bargain in Sedona" and the "best breakfast in Sedona."

|| 2050 State Route 89A, 928-282-6626, www.coffeepotsedona.com

SLEEP

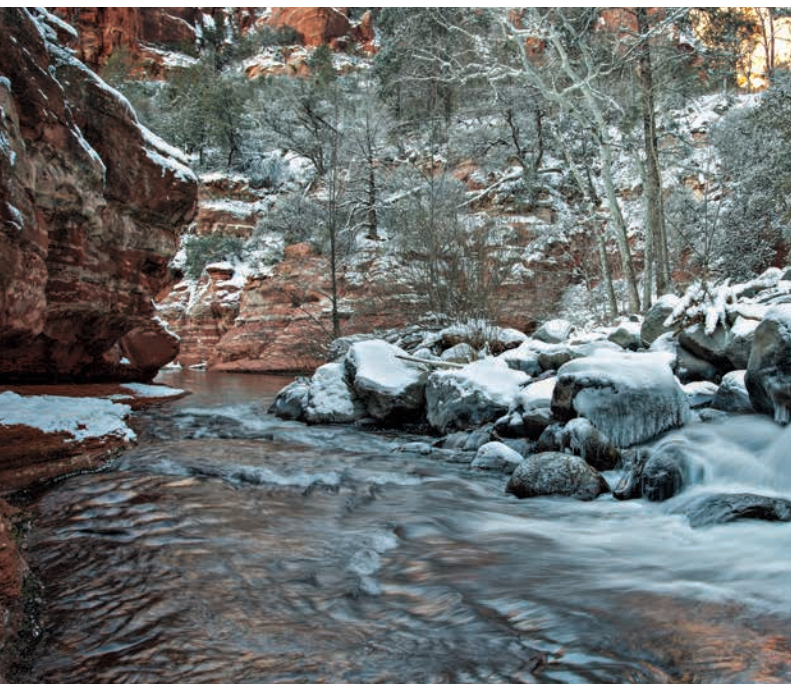
Garland's Oak Creek Lodge

With the possible exception of El Tovar, which has the unfair advantage of being perched on the edge of the world's Seventh Natural Wonder, Garland's Oak Creek Lodge is arguably the most scenic place to spend a night in Arizona. Lodge, hotel, B&B, campsite ... good luck finding accommodations with a better view. Located in the heart of Oak Creek Canyon, about 8 miles north of Sedona, Garland's is surrounded by millions of years of red-rock geology, towering pines and hearty oaks. Among other things, the large cabins at the lodge come with wood-burning fireplaces, and the small creekside cabins feature porches overlooking Oak Creek. Other than maybe a room perched on the edge of the Grand Canyon, it doesn't get any better than this. || 8067 State Route 89A, 928-282-3343, www.garlandslodge.com

BONUS

Sedona Bike & Bean

Weekend adventurers are known for their dine-and-dash mentality — not in the juvenile-thievery connotation of the phrase, but in the grab-a-bite-and-get-on-the-road sense of it. That's what makes Sedona Bike & Bean so great. There, you can rent a mountain bike for cruising Sedona's countless trails and grab a latte for the road at the store's nine-seat coffee counter. Many bike tours, including some that explore the trails near Bell Rock — just outside the Bike & Bean's windows — depart from the shop. || 75 Bell Rock Plaza, 928-284-0210, www.bike-bean.com



Snow blankets the landscape of Oak Creek, a popular hiking destination just north of Sedona. | MARK FRANK



PHOTO OP

Red Rock Country

Sedona's sandstone formations are among the most photographed rocks in the world, and they contrast nicely with the surrounding green foliage. For the best photos, have your camera ready around sunrise or sunset. | GUY SCHMICKLE

Bisbee

EAT

Café Roka

The historic Costello Building opened in 1907, and thanks to its pressure-fired bricks, it withstood a 1908 fire that leveled much of Bisbee. Since 1993, it's housed Café Roka, which serves up chef-owner Rod Kass' unique takes on modern American cuisine. Roka's menu changes often, but regulars' favorites include lamb meatballs, lobster ravioli and roasted duck. If you're looking for something really unique, try Kass' lasagna, which includes portobello mushrooms and artichokes. || 35 Main Street, 520-432-5153, www.caferoka.com

HIKE

San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area

Bird watchers flock to this 57,000-acre preserve, which features a

network of short, easy trails, including one that parallels the San Pedro River. It's been designated a Globally Important Bird Area, and the Bureau of Land Management has documented more than 370 avian species there, including green kingfishers, Lucy's warblers and yellow-billed cuckoos.

|| Friends of the San Pedro River, www.sanpedroriver.org; Bureau of Land Management, 520-439-6400, www.blm.gov/az

DRIVE

Geronimo Trail

Once a major migration corridor for Apache Indians and Spanish explorers, this route extends 80 miles from Douglas, Arizona, to Animas, New Mexico. Today, it offers scenery and solitude along the U.S.-Mexico border. History buffs will want to stop at the San Bernardino National Historic

Landmark, home to a ranch that dates to the 1840s. And if you're a fan of scenic landscapes, there are plenty along this route, including views of the Peloncillo Mountains. || Douglas Ranger District, 520-364-3468, www.fs.usda.gov/coronado

ATTRACTION

Mining & Historical Museum

Bisbee started out as a copper-mining town, and this Smithsonian-affiliated museum celebrates that heritage with *Digging In*, an award-winning exhibit that explores how copper-mining contributed to the electrification of America in the late 1800s. You'll also find a research library that includes 100 years of local newspapers on microfilm and 7,000 historical photographs. || 5 Copper Queen Plaza, 520-432-7071, www.bisbeemuseum.org

KIDS

Queen Mine Tour

There's no pickax experience necessary on this tour, which takes visitors on a train ride 1,500 feet into one of Bisbee's most famous copper mines. The mine shut down in the 1970s, but since then, more than a million people have taken the trip underground. The tour guides are retired miners who share their own stories about the dangers and drama of mining. And even in summer, you'll want to take a sweater: The temperature in the mine is a constant 47 degrees. || 478 N. Dart Road, 866-432-2071, www.queenminetour.com

HISTORY

Coronado National Memorial

Located along the U.S.-Mexico border, this memorial honors Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, who explored much of the Southwest in the 1540s while he searched for the mythical

Seven Cities of Cibola. Attractions include 600-foot-long Coronado Cave, which features numerous limestone formations, and a scenic overlook at Montezuma Pass. || Coronado National Memorial, 520-366-5515, www.nps.gov/coro

SPLURGE

Ice Cream at Bisbee Coffee Co.

You might be a little chilly if you just came out of the Queen Mine, but once you've warmed up with a triple latte at Bisbee Coffee Co., how about something sweet?

The coffee shop usually has eight ice-cream flavors (including non-dairy options) available, along with milkshakes, fudge and other sweet treats. || 2 Copper Queen Plaza, 520-432-7931, www.bisbeecoffee.com

SLEEP

Jonquil Motel

A jonquil is a type of flower, but the Jonquil got its name from its founder, John Quill. He built the motel in the 1930s, and he and his family ran it until Bisbee's copper mines shut down in the 1970s.

It later reopened, and today it rents out seven newly renovated rooms. In 2004, Bisbee artist Rose Johnson painted a mural on the side of the motel; it's based on a 1928 poem by Federico García Lorca. || 317 Tombstone Canyon Road, 866-432-7371, www.thejonquil.com

BONUS

Copper Queen Hotel

Bisbee is famous for its alleged ghostly residents, and three of them purportedly reside at the Copper Queen. The most famous

is a 30-something woman named Julia Lowell. The story goes that Lowell was a prostitute who used the hotel to rendezvous with clients. She fell in love with one of them, but when he didn't fall for her, she took her own life. Today, the Julia Lowell Room at the hotel is named in Lowell's honor, and male employees and guests have reported hearing a feminine whisper and seeing a woman dancing at the foot of the stairs. || 11 Howell Avenue, 520-432-2216, www.copperqueen.com **AH**

PHOTO OP

Chihuahua Hill

Known locally as "B" Mountain (for obvious reasons), this 5,900-foot peak overlooks Bisbee and offers great views of the town. A short, easy trail to the top begins at the end of OK Street in downtown Bisbee.

| JILL RICHARDS



Coronado National Memorial's Montezuma Pass offers a view south into Mexico. | GEORGE H.H. HUEY

