

DESTINATION TRAVEL & EVENTS



Outdoor activities in **Morro Bay, California**, about 100 miles north of Santa Barbara, include the brand new Morro Bay BMX Bike Park, kayaking and paddle boarding the bay to mingle with sea life, or renting a sloop or beach cruiser and cycling out to Morro Rock. Indoor activities include an interactive Museum of Natural History in Morro Bay State Park (right next to a cormorant and heron rookery), several educational museums and centers along the Embarcadero, the world's biggest skateboard at the Morro Bay Skateboard Museum, and aquariums with 3D images of the estuary at the Estuary Nature Center. The Morro Bay Family Adventure Pass helps you make the most of your time in this seaside town boasting over 30 hotels and motels. The Morro Bay Tourism Bureau and Yosemite/Mariposa County Tourism Bureau have partnered for a new Summit to Sea Adventure Passport featuring exclusive deals on activities in the region from the mountains of **Yosemite National Park** to Morro Bay on the coast. For information visit www.morrobay.org.

Hacienda Del Sol Guest Ranch Resort, a historic **Tucson** landmark frequented by locals and visitors from around the world, has completed a multi-million-dollar expansion with 32 new guest rooms, including two-bedroom suites, located on the north side of the property's 34 acres,

bringing the total room count to 59. There are also a new ballroom, enhanced outdoor dining and event space, and an additional negative edge pool. This boutique resort is also known for its award-winning restaurant The Grill. The new rooms, designed to reflect the iconic Santa Fe style construction of the existing historic structures, are called the Catalina rooms, for their stunning views of the Santa Catalina Mountains. Each building houses a different number of rooms and is adorned with hand-painted Mexican tile murals, one-of-a-kind metal sculptures and over 4,000 tons of recycled Coronado brown stone. For more information, call 520-299-1501 or visit the resort online at www.HaciendaDelSol.com.



Road trip! **Arizona** has some 25 National Parks, Monuments, Memorials, Historic Sites and Recreation Areas, and there are dozens more in our neighboring states. The **National Park Service** turns 100 on August 25, 2016, kicking off a second century of stewardship of America's most special places. In celebration, the NPS is launching a movement to engage communities through recreation, conservation and historic preservation programs, spreading the word about the amazing places they manage, the inspirational stories the National Parks tell, our country's natural resources and our diverse cultural heritage. They are working with Find Your Park, a group promoting education programs, community assistance projects and more. It's about state parks, local parks, trails, museums, historic sites, and the many ways that the American public can connect with history, culture and nature. Visit www.nps.gov and www.findyourpark.com.

Look deep into time and space at **Capitol Reef National Park, Utah**, a 100-mile pinch in the earth's crust in the geographical middle of nowhere, overloaded with geological, cultural and sensory consequence. The area is named for what it looks like—white rock domes like the US Capitol, rocky ridges like marine reefs. Waterpocket Fold is a jagged scar where they say the devil dragged his pitchfork on the way to Las Vegas (it's a

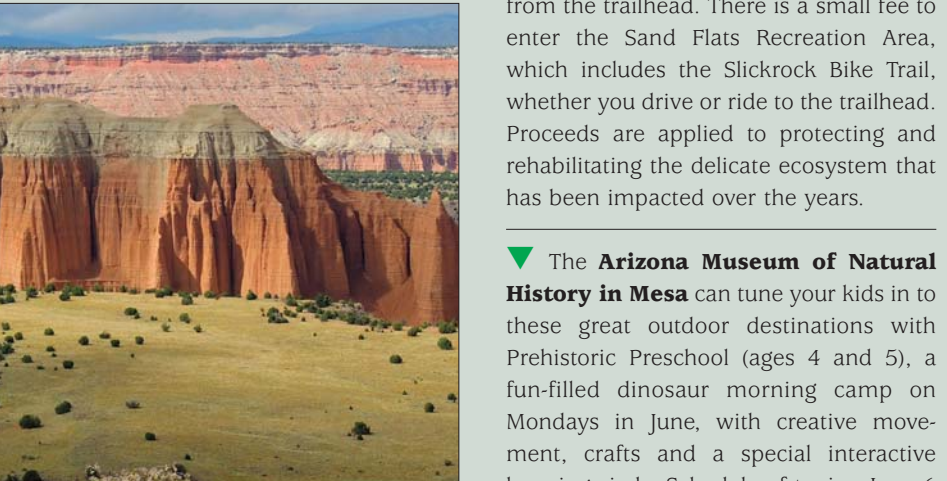
monocline, the seam left over when shifting plates lifted one side of a fault by 7,000 feet, which took 70 million years and two major geologic events to create). The Waterpocket fold horizontalizes lay-



ers of white Navajo Sandstone, red Wingate, shale and pinkish Entrada Sandstone like an entropic chunk of tipped cake. Depending where you stand, the stripes are half an inch or half a mile wide. Ruined civilizations both ancient and recent include Fremont Indian rock shelters a mile and a thousand years from Mormon settlers' cabins.

Activities in **Sedona and Northern Arizona** range from laid-back to adrenaline-pumping. At the daring end, Flagstaff Extreme Adventure Course, near Fort Tuthill County Park, offers youth and adult courses that test the physical skill of adventurers maneuvering through obstacles and Ponderosa pine trees in the great outdoors. Closer to Sedona, thrill-seekers can opt for an Arizona Offroad Tours guided ATV tour into the red rock landscape. One tour package even includes a "Bikes to Balloons" experience, delivering both bird's-eye views and down-in-the-dirt experiences in the area. The Out of Africa Wildlife Park outside Sedona has animal shows, behind-the-scenes tours and stunning wildlife exhibits. The Predator Zip Line lets family members of all ages take flight over giant predator enclosures. Whether during an intimate moment feeding a tiger, or letting the kids get up-close-and-personal with a friendly giraffe, the family won't soon forget this visit. Families can also trek to Montezuma Castle National Monument and Montezuma's Well, on the outskirts of Sedona.

One of the best-preserved examples of Native American architecture in the Southwest, this massive five-story dwelling is built in a natural recess in a limestone cliff, high above Beaver Creek. The



deep alcove provides protection from the elements and is no doubt responsible for the excellent condition of the structure, where you can explore original petroglyphs and take in the natural history of the era. For info: www.visitsedona.com.

The Slickrock Bike Trail, near **Moab, Utah**, is perhaps the most popular mountain bike trail in the world, boasting over 100,000 visitors per year. Only 12 miles long, it can prove infinitely challenging. Rarely do you leave your lowest gears and "spin" at an easy cadence. Bikers should allow 4 hours to ride the entire loop; more if side routes are explored. Carry more water than usual, because the warm, dry weather and physical exertion can cause dehydration quickly. First time "rockers"

might consider following the 2.3-mile Practice Loop before tackling the entire trail. Although no less difficult than the real thing, this loop allows you to get a feel for the trail without venturing too far from the trailhead. There is a small fee to enter the Sand Flats Recreation Area, which includes the Slickrock Bike Trail, whether you drive or ride to the trailhead. Proceeds are applied to protecting and rehabilitating the delicate ecosystem that has been impacted over the years.

The **Arizona Museum of Natural History in Mesa** can tune your kids in to these great outdoor destinations with Prehistoric Preschool (ages 4 and 5), a fun-filled dinosaur morning camp on Mondays in June, with creative movement, crafts and a special interactive learning circle. Schedule of topics: June 6 is Dino Super Heroes, June 13 is Dino Detectives, June 20 is Dino Pals and June 27 is Mighty Monsters. For kids 6-12 years old, the Museum has Dinosaur Days! Summer Camps, a series of programs exploring paleontology, including specialty tours, experiments, fossils, games, crafts and snacks. Programs in June and July include Walking with Dinosaurs, where budding scientists explore dinosaur anatomy and locomotion, Dino Discovery Camp where the dino detective method is used to discover hidden paleo clues, Mighty Mesozoic Monsters featuring a variety of scary creatures from the Mesozoic. Fees apply, with discounts for members. Call 480-644-3553, e-mail azmnhgroups@mesaaz.gov or visit arizonamuseumofnaturalhistory.org.

