

VISIT PHOENIX

2010 Official Visitors Guide to Greater Phoenix

4 Perfect Restaurant Patios

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right in town!

Cultural Icons

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A Perfect

BY AMY ABRAMS

Relish the **ultimate pairing** of **great weather** and **great food** on metropolitan Phoenix's **restaurant patios**

FUSION

RESTAURANT PATIOS in Greater Phoenix offer so much more than just fresh-air venues for a meal. Even the most artfully plated entrees and perfect wine pairings have a tough time competing for your attention when you hear the breeze rustling the branches above, you smell the sweet scent of orange blossoms...and just look at that view!

Greater Phoenix offers incredible outdoor dining for foodies of all kinds. If you're keen on fresh-as-can-be organic ingredients and a creative celebration of American cuisine, don't miss **Quiessence**. This award-winning restaurant, nestled on a charming 10-acre historic farm, lies just eight miles outside downtown Phoenix, but you'd bet you were leisurely dining on a patio in the French countryside. Ivy-covered archways, hand-painted wood signs, and towering pecan trees and hollyhocks surround the restaurant and its patio. Each day, Executive Chef Gregory LaPrad hand-selects ingredients from the farm's sprawling organic garden and from local ranchers and artisans to create dishes that have earned this unpretentious spot notoriety as one of Greater Phoenix's top restaurants. Before or after your meal, stroll amid the colorful garden where seasonal wonders

COURTESY OF QUIESSENCE



The organic garden of Quiessence at the Farm at South Mountain

tortillas served piping hot with delectable spreads at **Old Town Tortilla Factory** in downtown Scottsdale. But leave room for such hearty regional favorites as bacon-wrapped meat loaf with savory garlic-mashed potatoes, green and red enchiladas, and the famed red-chile pork chop. Food this good deserves a setting to match, and here you have it. The flagstone patio features a central fire-and-water fountain with illuminated cascades and blue-tipped flames flickering toward the starlit sky. Surrounded by 100-year-old pecan trees adorned with twinkling lights, fragrant citrus and flowering ocotillo, tables accommodate intimate dinners for two or gatherings of up to 15. A 77-year-old historic adobe home, elegantly restored, houses guests who prefer a cozy, indoor dining experience. Don't head home without sipping a margarita from the gazebo bar, which offers more than 80 brands of premium tequila. (6910 E. Main St., Scottsdale, (480) 945-4567, www.oldtowntortillafactory.com)

Visitors come from all over the globe to visit Sanctuary, a chic boutique hotel nestled against the north side of Camelback Mountain in the heart of Paradise Valley. The resort's crowning jewel, **Elements** restaurant, wows guests with stunning panoramic views through floor-to-ceiling windows and unobstructed scenery on the adjacent patio. If you're seeking an ideal spot to view a spectacular sunset with the city lights winking below, come for cocktails on the deck of the resort's Edge bar, which overlooks the infinity pool, then stay for an



COURTESY OF QUIESSENCE

Quiessence restaurant at the Farm at South Mountain invites guests to dine in a quaint gardenlike setting.

grow—towering sunflowers, tomatoes on the vine, rows of fragrant basil and rosemary, and cascading grape vines. You also can browse the gift shop in one of the quaint, lovingly transformed historic homes on the property. (6106 S. 32nd St., Phoenix, (602) 276-0601, www.quiessencerestaurant.com)

No hum-drum chips and salsa here. If you're seeking exceptional authentic Southwestern fare, sit yourself down to the complimentary welcome of handmade

Left: Linger over dinner at Kai restaurant at Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa in Chandler. PHOTO BY KERRICK JAMES.



See more photos, reviews and tips for patio dining on our blog:

THEHOTSHEETBLOG.COM

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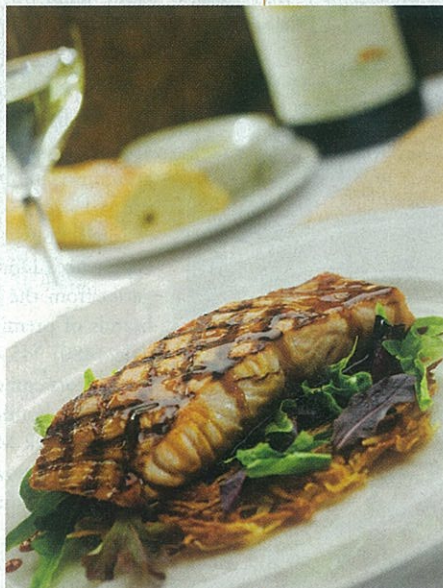
COURTESY OF SANCTUARY ON CAMELBACK MOUNTAIN

Elements and the Edge bar at Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain offer diners enticing city and mountain views.

FROM
THE
TRANQUIL
PATIO,
WATCH
THE
SETTING
SUN
SPLASH
THE SKY
WITH
VIVID
HUES.

unforgettable dining experience of Asian-influenced American cuisine from celebrated chef Beau MacMillan. The menu changes monthly to reflect seasonal harvests, with such specialties as tempura shrimp with sesame rice, avocado, mango and garlic-lemongrass sauce, and *udon* noodles with braised pork, *nori*, scallion and poached egg. (5700 E. McDonald Drive, Paradise Valley, (480) 607-2300, www.elementsrestaurant.com)

Located on the Gila River Indian Community at Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa, **Kai** offers guests an immersion in the culture, cuisine and legends of the Pima and Maricopa tribes. Reservations are encouraged at Arizona's only AAA Five Diamond/Mobil Five Star restaurant, recently named "Valley's Best Restaurant" in the 2009 *Zagat* guide. Sit on Kai's tranquil patio, between the Sierra Estrella and South mountains (just south of Phoenix), to watch the setting sun splash the sky with vivid hues. Sip a signature cocktail, such as the Greatfruit Martini (grapefruit and vanilla vodkas, passion fruit puree and lime), as you peruse the menu of delicacies crafted from ingredients grown in the surrounding community. Executive Chef Michael O'Dowd and consulting chef Janos Wilder—a James Beard Award winner—create unforgettable masterpieces such as grilled buffalo tenderloin with smoked corn puree, barbecued scarlet runner beans and saguaro blossom syrup. Top off the experience by watching the moonlight bathe the desert in cool blue as you savor one of the inventive selections from the dessert menu. (5594 W. Wild Horse Pass Blvd., Chandler, (602) 225-0100, www.wildhorsepassresort.com)



COURTESY OF TARSELL'S

Savor award-winning dishes at Tarbell's in Phoenix

As seen on TV

"And the winner is...Chef Tarbell!" With those words on *Iron Chef America*, Phoenix chef and restaurateur Mark Tarbell, of **Tarbell's** (3213 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix, (602) 955-8100, www.tarbells.com), was hoisted overhead to celebrate victory on the famed Food Network show. He defeated Iron Chef Cat Cora by whipping up dishes using the day's secret ingredient, apples. An increasing number of Phoenix-area chefs have recently received national TV coverage, spreading the buzz that residents have known all along: This town has terrific and innovative food.

Not a bad day when Oprah's Gayle King descends on your door, deeming your pizza joint one of the top in the nation. Locals love the unassuming **Pizzeria Bianco** (623 E. Adams St., Phoenix, (602) 258-8300, www.pizzeriabianco.com), where James Beard Award-winning chef Chris Bianco cooks up the best pizza you've ever had. Savor a slice of Rosa—red onion, Parmigiana-

Reggiano, rosemary and Arizona pistachios.

A little breakfast operation received big attention when the season premiere of the Food Network's *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* featured **Matt's Big Breakfast** (801 N. 1st St., Phoenix, (602) 254-1074, www.mattsbigbreakfast.com), where longtime fans savor fluffy pancakes, crisp waffles and perfect eggs. Business jumped that very day and hasn't quit. Ah, the power of the tube.



Let Chef Mark Tarbell take you on a video tour of his favorite things to do in Phoenix:
VISITPHOENIX.COM/DREAMDAY