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send me to sedona

by Renee Werbin

Fall is prime time to visit Sedona, Arizona. Summer's intense heat gives way to cooler temperatures, offering travelgirls ample outdoor activities coupled with some spectacular scenery. Phoenix is the closest large airport and a mere two-hour drive from the majestic red rock region of Arizona's canyon country. Get your boots ready girls; we are headed for the hills.

Hotel choices are abundant and there is lodging to match all budgets. Starting at the top, consider the formidable **Enchantment Resort**. A member of the Leading Hotels of the World, the Enchantment is resplendent with adobe-style casitas, delectable restaurants, a full-service spa, stellar service and bountiful outdoor activities. This is a place to feel rich and famous. **L'Auberge de Sedona Resort** is another exclusive retreat offering superb accommodations, a tranquil spa and award-winning cuisine at the resort's **L'Auberge Restaurant** on Oak Creek.

You don't have to break the bank to feel pampered. **The Sedona Rouge Hotel and Spa** be vies up large, well-equipped rooms located right in the center of Sedona. Also housing a wonderful spa, the Sedona Rouge is an excellent choice for that special weekend away.

The serene **Amara Resort and Spa** is another notable choice to explore, with several restaurants and the blissful **Amara Spa**.

Sedona is an awe-inspiring place to unwind. An artist's palette rich in bright shades of red and orange, the area offers vivid hiking opportunities and the landscape is perfect for biking. There are more than 100 trails, with plenty of guides

available to show you the way. If you prefer to don your cowboy boots, no worries ladies, there are horses for rent, and what a way to view the red rocks! Sedona is hilly but golf is the game of choice for many who live and vacation here, and the area has several championship courses. This is also a great place to bird watch; sit and listen and you just might learn their calls.

Looking for a little adventure? There are more than a few jeep companies offering guided tours. **Pink Jeep Tours**, **Sedona Jeep Tours**, and **A Day in the West** all offer customized and group excursions. Your personable guide will pick you up at your hotel and take you on an exciting and scenic ride through the desert — remember your suntan lotion and your hat!

You can expect some exceptional food in Sedona. Live a little and try the Rattlesnake Tamales, Buffalo Skewers, Quail Kebobs and Cactus Fries at the famous **Cowboy Club Restaurant**. Yes, you are really dining on rattlesnake and cactus and the chef makes it a tasty treat! This is also a great place for a steak or perhaps an elk tenderloin. If you aren't a carnivore there are heaps of other options, including an array of delicately prepared fresh fish.

The Barking Frog Grille offers southwestern cuisine in a

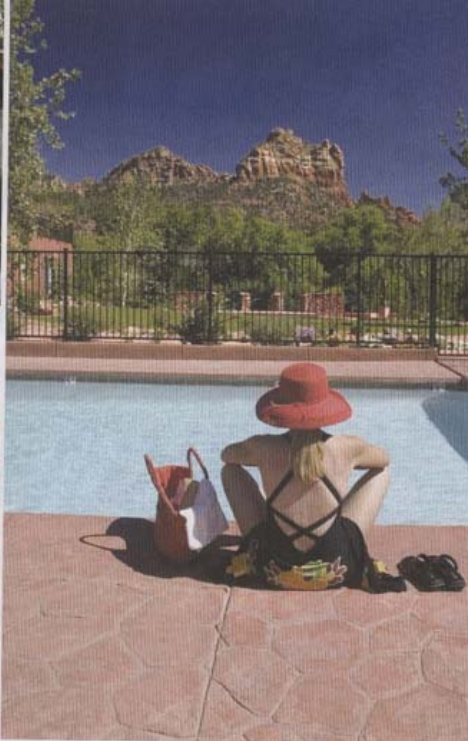


PHOTO COURTESY SEDONA ROUGE

casual, family style restaurant. The seasonal whole fish is delightful and if you have the kids aboard don't miss the special Barking Frog fried ice cream dessert. **Cucina Rústica** is a grand choice and quite a dining experience. Offering a bit of international, Mediterranean and Italian fare, this is the place for a romantic evening and an incredible glass of wine. Cucina Rústica has won several Wine Spectator awards; you can choose from an array of wines by the glass or perhaps have the sommelier help you choose a vintage bottle to celebrate a wonderful weekend away.

Renowned for being a spiritual setting, Sedona is believed by some to have a global power spot or vortex hailed to be beneficial for prayer and healing. Believers come from far and wide on a spiritual journey to absorb the positive energy from the vortexes in the area.

Sedona is one of Arizona's most scenic cities whether viewed from a hiking trail or high in the basket of a hot air balloon. This picturesque locale is the perfect backdrop for a girlfriend getaway, a family holiday or a romantic weekend away.



Opposite page: The Enchantment Resort combines modern luxury with ancient natural beauty. This page clockwise: Oak Creek, whose flow helped to carve out Sedona's rock formations; The view from the Amara Resort's outdoor heated salt water pool; The Rooftop Terrace at the Sedona Rouge, a perfect place to watch the sunset; Renee Werbin and her husband Sam discover firsthand why 4 million people visit Sedona every year.

sedona 411

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