



For immediate release

**WHAT'S NEW IN MESA, ARIZONA: SPRING 2009**  
**Updates on New Hotels & Development,**  
**Arts & Culture, Mesa CVB News, Dining and Entertainment, Noteworthy Events and More!**  
[www.VisitMesa.com](http://www.VisitMesa.com)

March 24, 2009 (MESA, Ariz.) – Much as the spring season brings renewal and rebirth from the winter chills, Mesa is unveiling new arrivals and renovations this season. Located in the Valley of the Sun, just minutes from Phoenix and Scottsdale, Mesa has long been revered as a warm haven offering premier accommodations, golf and an enviable location boasting a close proximity to Tonto National Forest and Arizona's vast Sonoran Desert. Read on for more news about upcoming attractions, new resort and restaurant announcements, exclusively Mesa events and more.

**Editor's Note:** Whenever possible, each entry below on a new tourism offering in Mesa will also have an active link to an online article, review or blog featuring that product so you can see what locals, out-of-towners and industry professionals are already saying about all that's new in Mesa this spring. Enjoy!

**TOURISM INDUSTRY UPDATES**

**MESA RIVERVIEW EXPANDS AND WELCOMES FIRST HYATT PROPERTY TO CITY**

**Mesa Riverview**, Mesa's newest large-scale retail and tourism development, will boast a four-story, 150-room **Hyatt Place** hotel this April. The property will compliment the 250-acre development conveniently located along the Rio Salado corridor with access to Tempe, Scottsdale and Phoenix. Hyatt Place properties feature guest rooms that are 25 percent larger than typical hotel rooms, walk-in showers, granite counters, wet bars, 42-inch high-definition televisions, sofa-sleepers and high-speed Internet access. Guests at Hyatt Place may purchase signature hot breakfast entrees along with Starbucks® specialty coffees or enjoy a free continental breakfast. Hyatt Place also offers a variety of freshly prepared, cafe quality items, including made-to-order entrees, sandwiches, soups, salads and pizza which guests can order 24 hours a day, seven days a week via a touch screen menu in the Guest Kitchen or from the Guest Host. This will be the first Hyatt property in Mesa and the only property in the Hyatt Place chain to have an on-site **putting green**. The property is planning several partnerships including transportation to and from Arizona's only **Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World**, the anchor retail store at Mesa Riverview. The entire complex boasts more than 1.3 million square feet of retail space with an eclectic selection of specialty shops located in the Theater District. *For more information, visit [phoenixmesa.place.hyatt.com](http://phoenixmesa.place.hyatt.com) or call 480-969-8200. For media information on Hyatt Place, contact Christine Anderson at [canderson@hyattmesa.com](mailto:canderson@hyattmesa.com).*

**What others have to say:**

<http://www.jaunted.com/story/2009/3/4/718/71983/travel/Hyatt+Place+Warms+Our+Heart+While+On+Business>

**DOWNTOWN'S HISTORIC DREW BUILDING BECOMES BRAND NEW LOFT HOTEL**

Built in the 1920s, Downtown Mesa's historic Drew building is entering a new era completely restored to become the city's only loft hotel. The **Lofts at the Drew** features nine exclusive studios and one-bedroom suites. Each loft is individually decorated with brand new furnishings and includes a full kitchen, 10-foot ceilings, plasma screen TV's and beautiful **original maple floors**. The lofts are all themed with décor to match from the Sonoma studio reminiscent of California's wine country and the

Manhattan Studio decked out like an Upper Eastside New York apartment, to the Americana featuring shades of red, white and blue and country-style furnishings. The Lofts at the Drew offer a complimentary business center and laundry room for guest use and visitors can utilize the space-saving storage closet for extended stays. Other amenities include wireless internet, free parking and all-day access to a recreation center on the main floor, which will feature a small gym, billiards table, couches and television. One of the best attributes is the proximity to popular downtown attractions including Mesa Arts Center, Arizona Museum of Natural History, numerous cafes and restaurants as well as boutiques along Main Street. *For more information, contact 480-969-1454 or visit [www.drewlofts.com](http://www.drewlofts.com). **What others have to say:** <http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/story/108473>.*

#### **HOLIDAY INN HOTEL & SUITES COMPLETES \$10 MILLION REMODEL**

The **Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites** just completed a \$10 million renovation. The transformation included the hotel's 10,000 square feet of meeting space, lobby, restaurant and lounge. Brand new carpeting, wallpaper and paint were added throughout the hotel as well as a complete replacement of furniture and fixtures. Renovations in the lobby included new flooring while the dining room underwent a complete remodel of the bar with flat screen televisions added throughout. The existing 246 guest rooms, 83 of which are mini-suites, have been refinished with new carpeting, wallpaper, beds, furniture, and air conditioning. The guest room bathrooms have also received a facelift including new fixtures and tiling. The hotel also added complimentary wireless throughout the entire property. *For reservations and general information, visit [www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hotel/phxme](http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hotel/phxme) or call 480-964-7000 or. For media information, contact Rick Voelzke, 480-964-7000. **What others have to say:** <http://fredriksmobileblog.blogspot.com/2009/01/from-one-side-to-other.html>.*

#### **CHESTER'S HARLEY DAVIDSON COMPLETES EXPANSION,**

**Chester's Harley Davidson** has doubled its size taking it from two to **seven acres**, making it the largest Harley-Davidson dealership in Arizona. Chester's new additions include a sales facility for pre-owned bikes, a "training range" for the Rider's Edge education program, additional parking, a multi-functional outdoor canopy, grilling area, customer lounge with amenities including pool table, and a doggie park. There is also a new administration and warehouse building which will house a classroom for the Rider's Edge programs and a meeting room for the East Valley H.O.G. chapter. Chester's additional outdoor facilities make it convenient for large meetings and events giving them access to a loading dock where a sound stage can be set up with plenty of spectator area for outdoor concerts and events. Chester's also welcomes the new line of **2009 Indian Chief Motorcycles**, which are designed and engineered to be powerful works of art. Chester's is the exclusive Indian dealer of Arizona. *For more information on Chester's Harley Davidson, visit [www.chestershd.com](http://www.chestershd.com). For media information, contact Sarah Clark, 480-894-0404. **What others have to say:** [http://gloryroad.typepad.com/weblog/arizona\\_bike\\_week/](http://gloryroad.typepad.com/weblog/arizona_bike_week/).*

#### **TWO CITY TRANSPORTATION ADDITIONS MAKE MESA TRAVEL EASIER**

With a much anticipated arrival, the **Metro Light Rail** made its debut in Phoenix along with Mesa's new "**Downtown Buzz**". The light rail begins in downtown Mesa and travels 20 miles to downtown Phoenix. With the addition of Mesa's complimentary "Buzz" shuttle, which circles downtown Mesa offering passengers access to the numerous shops, cafes, historical museums, and distinctive boutiques; these two driving alternatives offer visitors an economical substitute to getting around the city. Many popular destinations are within 3 miles of Sycamore Station including Mesa Riverview (1.8 miles), Downtown Mesa (2.1 miles), and Phoenix Marriott Mesa Hotel and Mesa Convention Center (2.1 miles) offering complimentary shuttle service. *For more information, visit [www.valleymetro.org](http://www.valleymetro.org). For media information on the Metro Light Rail, contact Erin Seibel, 602-495-8213. For media information on the Downtown Buzz, contact Jodi Sorrell, 480-644-5541.*

***What others have to say:** <http://www.lightrailblogger.com/posts/2009/03/light-rail-sees-weekday-ridership-increase-.html>.*

## **MESA'S DAYS INN HOTEL TAKES HOME THE CHAIRMAN'S AWARD FOR QUALITY**

Days Inn in Mesa was awarded the Days Inn Chairman's Award for Quality, one of the most elite awards within the Days Inn system, giving them status as one of the highest quality properties. In order to be eligible to receive the award, a property must consistently pass its quality assurance evaluations with outstanding marks in all categories, including both service and cleanliness. The annual award is only given out to a select number of properties within the United States and Canada. *For more information, visit [www.daysinn.com](http://www.daysinn.com). For media information, contact Marcia McDowell, call 480-844-8900 or email [mmcdowell@brutgerequities.com](mailto:mmcdowell@brutgerequities.com).*

*What others have to say: <http://ehotelier.com/hospitality-news/item.php?id=15601>.*

## **ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

### **TWO NEW FAMILY FUN CENTERS OPENING AT MESA RIVERVIEW**

Mesa Riverview is welcoming two new youth-oriented facilities this spring. Kids who are bouncing off the walls and full of energy will love **Jump & Shout Play Center**. Giant inflatables and climbing gyms fill this **10,000 square foot** facility. Kids can play for hours, while parents relax in the lounge complete with televisions and a café. **Howie's Game Shack** is bringing a new way for Xbox and PC gamers to play. The social gaming center is the nation's largest arena for gamers to come together interactively. Open everyday, the center includes sound chairs, state-of-the-art gaming PCs, high-definition LCD displays, world premier game releases and tournaments. Howie's lets families play together in a fun environment making for a more social gaming experience. The center also has pizza and snacks available to enjoy between games. *For more information about Jump & Shout, visit [www.JumpandShout.com](http://www.JumpandShout.com) or call 480-834-7529. For more information about Howie's Game Shack, visit [www.howies.com](http://www.howies.com) or call 480-248-2447.*

*What others have to say: <http://arizonaresortsgetaway.com/travel/2008/08/10/mesa-riverview-positive-expansion/>*

### **RANGER-GUIDED FULL MOON HIKES OFFERED AT AREA STATE PARKS NEAR MESA**

Visitors to Mesa can experience the natural beauty of **Usery Pass** and **Lost Dutchman State Park**. This season, the parks are offering ranger-guided full moon hikes where visitors can experience the sights and sounds of the Sonoran Desert under the light of the moon. The parks are also presenting stargazing nights where visitors can learn about the solar system from experts. Usery Pass, at the western end of the Goldfield Mountains, will feature a **"Stargazing for Everyone"** series in which experts will tell stories and teach park visitors about the moon, stars, planets and galaxies while viewing the sky through a telescope. Visitors are encouraged to bring chairs and snacks for their own comfort throughout the two-hour program. Lost Dutchman State Park, located along the Apache Trail at the base of the Superstition Mountains, is offering similar programs. During the week of the full moon, a ranger will lead guided hikes throughout the park taking visitors throughout the trails. On select Fridays each month, astronomer Bill Dellinges hosts astronomy sessions with state-of-the-art gear to teach visitors about Arizona's night sky. The hikes and information sessions are free with the purchase of park admission. *For more information on Usery Pass, visit [www.maricopa.gov/parks](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks); and for information on Lost Dutchman State Park, visit [www.azstateparks.com/index.html](http://www.azstateparks.com/index.html). For media information on Usery Pass, contact, 602-506-2930. For media information on Lost Dutchman State Park, contact Ellen Bilbrey, 602-542-1996.*

*What others have to say: <http://www.accessingarizona.com/2009/03/usery-park-merkle-trail.html>. <http://www.carlsavillo.com/2009/02/hiking-lost-dutchman.html>.*

### **MESA ASTRONOMY NIGHTS AT NEW MCC PLANETARIUM**

**Mesa Community College** is home to Arizona's newest **planetarium**. **Arizona is known the world over as offering some of the best night sky viewing and** boasting two observatories and earning kudos for the discovery of former planet Pluto. Though located on the city's community college campus, visitors can view the night sky and explore the universe and solar system for free in the new planetarium on the

rooftop observation deck. As part of the Astronomy Nights program (check calendar for dates), the planetarium runs shows that take place every half hour from 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. with telescope viewing from the observation deck beginning at 7:00 p.m. MCC's planetarium opened in September 2008, making it the city's first planetarium and the state's seventh. The planetarium is located inside the Physical Science Building on MCC's Southern and Dobson Campus. *For more event information, visit MCC's event calendar at [www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/MES/geventcal](http://www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/MES/geventcal). For media information, contact Kevin Healy, 480-461-7027.*

**What others have to say:** <http://iheartmesa.blogspot.com/2008/10/mcc-planetarium.html>.

### **FANS CELEBRATE BASEBALL HISTORY AT MESA'S INTERACTIVE EXHIBIT**

Mesa Historical Museum's *Play Ball: the Cactus League Experience*, which opened in January, kicked off the beginning of Arizona's spring training season. The interactive and educational exhibit celebrates the long and colorful history of professional baseball in Arizona treating visitors to stories of the players, teams and ballparks. Exhibit features include a "knothole" fence, sky mural, two-player Wii video baseball game, souvenir, concession and ticket booths as well as baseball trivia, all packed with history gathered from across the state and the country. Baseball fans and history buffs alike can set their sights on never-before-seen items gathered from private collections of Arizonans who knew the likes of Ted Williams, Sandy Koufax and Willie McCovey. A majority of the exhibit is displayed in a completely remodeled and redesigned museum space. Extensive research and collecting is on-going for the exhibit which involves members of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) and a committee of civic leaders. Mesa Historical Museum is located just up the street from Hohokam Stadium where the Chicago Cubs train each March. *For more information, visit [www.PlayBallExperience.com](http://www.PlayBallExperience.com). For media information, call 480-835-7358 or email [info@mesahistoricalmuseum.org](mailto:info@mesahistoricalmuseum.org).*

**What others have to say:** <http://www.suntimes.com/lifestyles/hoekstra/1465699,TRA-News-Detours08.article>.

### **NEW MESSAGE STUDIO BRINGS SOOTHING SERVICES**

For visitors to Mesa wanting a luxury spa experience without the luxury price tag, look no further than Massage Heights. Now offered in the Phoenix region, the national chain provides pampering massages at affordable prices. Located just west of upscale shopping village Dana Park, Massage Heights offers visitors a serene spa-like atmosphere and a chance for traveling guests to rest and relax. Massage services start at \$39 for a 50-minute massage treatment with optional add-ons. All types of massage are offered including therapeutic, sports, deep tissue, Swedish and maternity massage and all treatments include guest's choice of aromatherapy. Those guests traveling for a business trip or vacation, or even those staying for the winter, can opt to purchase a membership with discounts offered for multiple massage services each month. Exclusive to Massage Heights, guests can add an Elevation to their treatment which is a choice of hot stone massage, a soothing peppermint foot scrub or a cold stone/hot towel facial. Massage Heights therapists are highly trained with a majority of therapists having worked in the Arizona spa and resort community. In addition, Massage Heights will work directly with area hotels on providing mobile massage services for convention attendees or tour groups wanting to add a touch of spa to their busy itinerary. *For more information, visit [www.massageheights.com/wildflower](http://www.massageheights.com/wildflower). For media information, call 480-632-7529 or email [wildflowervillage@massageheights.com](mailto:wildflowervillage@massageheights.com).*

### **FARMERS MARKET BOASTS MORE THAN JUST PRODUCE, ARIZONA ORIGINALS ABOUND**

Visitors wanting to stock the hotel's mini-fridge with fresh goods or take home a one-of-a-kind Arizona original product will want to plan a stop at downtown Mesa's Community Farmers Market. Held each Friday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., guests can enjoy the benefits of locally grown, pesticide free and highly nutritious fruits and vegetables in addition to a plethora of handmade lotions and soaps, craft products, jewelry, pottery and clothing. Local purveyors also showcase culinary products that are must purchases from Arizona-grown oregano, rosemary and other spices to apple butter, desert honey, and baked goods.

Located on Center Street just in front of the Mesa Convention Center, Mesa's Farmers Market is free to enter and also provides free parking. Cash and credit cards are accepted. *For more information, call 623-848-1234 or visit [www.ArizonaFarmersMarkets.com](http://www.ArizonaFarmersMarkets.com).*

**What others have to say:** <http://www.examiner.com/x-4203-Phoenix-Farmers-Markets-Examiner>

## **DINING & ENTERTAINMENT**

### **COUNTRY STAR TOBY KEITH OPENS EATERY & BAR AT MESA RIVERVIEW**

Mesa Riverview, a 250-acre retail and tourism development, is eagerly awaiting the opening of Country music superstar **Toby Keith's** restaurant, **I Love This Bar & Grill**. The 650-seat restaurant will be the first to open in the state and only the fourth location to open nationwide. Expected to open in April, the restaurant will showcase an 80-foot guitar bar and feature live concerts, dancing, drinks and a full menu of American favorites. Signature features at the destination restaurant, situated east of Arizona's only Bass Pro Shops, include Toby Keith memorabilia including signed guitars, platinum records and clothing, **"Redneck Loveseats"**, and the Toby Keith shop featuring special BBQ rubs and sauces based on recipes from the singer himself. The restaurant will also have ample meeting space for small groups. The menu will emphasize home-style cooking from Toby's very own Chicken Fried Steak and Country Gravy recipe to a wide variety of menu items including rotisserie chicken, meatloaf, Cowboy Caviar (black eyed peas), 'freedom fries' and a variety of sandwiches. *For more information, visit [www.TobyKeithsBar.com](http://www.TobyKeithsBar.com). For media information on Toby Keith's, call 480-844-TOBY (8629).*

**What others have to say:** <http://www.oklahoma-city-life.com/toby-keiths-i-love-this-bar-and-grill.html>.

### **NATION'S GREENEST RESTAURANT OPENS IN MESA**

**Pizza Fusion**, recognized as the pioneer in environmentally-friendly restaurant service, opened its doors in December making it Mesa's first LEED and **organic certified restaurant**. Pizza Fusion's unique oval sized gourmet pizzas are not the only thing that sets them apart from your local pizzeria; it's the fact that everything they serve is 100% organic. Patrons have the option to build their own pizza or order a one of the specialty pies on the menu including the Seattle, topped with freshly chopped plum tomatoes, red onions, fresh basil, garlic, balsamic vinegar and olive oil accented with a light amount of mozzarella and parmesan cheeses; or the Shrimp & Pesto, topped with wild caught Key West shrimp, pesto sauce, parmesan, light mozzarella, and oregano. The menu also includes gluten-free pizza and vegan and vegetarian options. Pizza Fusion gained their LEED certification by designing, constructing and operating their restaurant in order to reduce their negative environmental impact and improve the health and well-being of their customers and the surrounding community. Some of the core practices Pizza Fusion upholds include using hybrid delivery cars, giving discounts to customers who return their used pizza boxes for recycling, serving food in containers made from 100% corn starch instead of plastic, using only spudware utensils made from potatoes that biodegrade in 50 days, using seat cushions made from soybean oil instead of petroleum based foam and using ceiling panels made from 74% recycled aluminum cans and 24% post industrial materials. Pizza Fusion also teaches kids about the importance of eating organic and recycling every third Thursday of the month. Currently, the restaurant has opened 16 franchises in 8 states since it first launched in 2006. *For more information, visit [www.pizzafusion.com](http://www.pizzafusion.com). For media information, contact Eric Haley, 954-449-7244.*

**What others have to say:** <http://organicarizona.blogspot.com/2009/01/healthier-organic-option-for-pizza.html>.

### **"URBAN MARKETPLACE" WITH A RICH HISTORY SERVES UP GREAT FOOD**

In neighboring Gilbert, visitors are clamoring to get a taste of **Liberty Market**, the newest downtown addition blending wholesome American and modern décor. Liberty Market, located in the Heritage District, reopened its doors in October after undergoing renovations to revamp the 1935 building. The menu features fresh salads, sandwiches and wood-fired pizzas. Popular dishes include the grilled bread pudding with espresso-maple syrup, homemade apricot scones and the many egg scrambles. Liberty's fresh produce comes straight from **Agritopia**, owner Joe Johnston's 12-acre urban farm located just

down the road. The signature **Liberty Bowl**, filled with roasted meatballs, marinara sauce and topped with Romano cheese, is a hearty dish sure to please comfort food lovers. The wood-fired pizzas are cooked to perfection in the Renato oven. Liberty Market is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner and features a retail marketplace and traditional espresso bar. Liberty is Johnston's third restaurant in Gilbert. *For more information, visit [www.libertymarket.com/](http://www.libertymarket.com/) or call 480-892-1900.*

**What others have to say:** <http://www.arizonafoothillsmagazine.com/taste/2009/02/05/liberty-market-restaurant/>.

#### **SALTY SENORITA'S MANICURE AND MARGARITA EVENTS POPULAR WITH VISITORS**

Make it a girl's night out at **Salty Seniorita** on Thursdays for **Margaritas and Manicures**. Stop in for some pampering from 5 p.m. until 9 p.m. and get a salon style manicure paired with your favorite margarita for only \$12. Choose from seven specialty margaritas including favorites like 'The Devil Wears Strawberry', The Cocoa Channel, or the Bubble Bath. Be sure to complement your margarita with one of the sizzling Mexican dishes sure to excite your palate. Favorites include sizzling street tacos, bubbling cheese enchiladas and tableside guacamole. Salty's, seven time winner of "**Best Margarita in Phoenix**" from Citysearch.com, gives visitors an urban take on the Mexican cantina. *For more information, contact 480-632-8226 or visit [www.saltysenorita.com/](http://www.saltysenorita.com/). What others have to say: <http://www.mesa-goodlife.com/Salty-Senorita.html>.*

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#### **About the Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau:**

The Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau is responsible for marketing Mesa, Arizona as a leading vacation, small meeting and sports travel destination to regional and national target audiences, including travel agents and group tour operators, meeting planners, leisure visitors and media.

**Editor's Note:** Readers can request a complimentary 2009 Official Mesa Arizona Visitors Guide at VisitMesa.com or by calling 800-283-6372.

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