

## ANNUAL EVENTS

The Tucson community celebrates its heritage through many annual events which honor its cultures, traditions, and natural resources. Several cultural festivals, such as Tucson's Birthday Celebration and Tucson Meet Yourself, emphasize the diverse cultures of this place.

Native American heritage is showcased during several powwows and arts-and-crafts fairs; the Yaqui Easter Ceremonies linking Tucson's Yaqui community to the traditions of their Mexican homeland; and the Waila Music Festival and Ha:san Bak Saguaro Harvest Festival celebrating the traditions of the Tohono O'odham native people of the Sonoran Desert.

Spanish heritage is recognized during the La Fiesta de San Agustín and the Tucson Spanish and Flamenco Festival. There are many festivals celebrating traditional Mexican and Mexican-American holidays, musical and dancing styles, foods, and arts. Unique to Tucson are the Día de San Juan Festival, which includes a procession, Mexican rodeo, and folk dancing; the All Souls Procession honoring Día de los Muertos; the world-famous International Mariachi Conference and related Fiesta de Garibaldi; the Fiesta Grande street fair featuring folklorico dancing and bands playing the Norteño and Cumbia popular music styles; the Tucson Cine Mexico film festival; and El Nacimiento traditional Christmas nativity scene.

Ranching and cowboy heritage is celebrated during the Rillito Park Horse Races—the birthplace of Quarter Horse racing; the Fiesta de Los Vaqueros Rodeo and Parade; the "Empire 100" Western Art Show and Sale; and as one of the music styles showcased at the Tucson Folk Festival.

Nature-themed yearly events celebrate everything from bird migrations, to cactus fruit harvests, to the arrival of the summer "monsoon" rainy season. The onset of summer rainstorms is marked by the Día de San Juan Festival, a fiesta dating to the Spanish colonial era which celebrates preparations to plant traditional crops dependent on summer rains. The native Tohono O'odham people's intimate knowledge of the saguaro cactus is demonstrated for the public during the Ha:san Bak Saguaro Harvest Festival. Participants of Bat Night witness 45,000 bats emerging from beneath a bridge at dusk, while visitors to the Desert Museum Butterfly Festival walk among a spectacular variety of the colorfully winged insects. Several annual bird counts are held by the Tucson Audubon Society with the help of residents and visitors.

The following listings include annual events related to one or more themes of the Santa Cruz Valley Heritage Area.

### JANUARY

#### **American Indian Exposition**

Flamingo Hotel Ballroom  
1300 N. Stone Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85705  
(520) 622-4900  
[www.usaindianinfo.org](http://www.usaindianinfo.org)

Description: American Indian Nations present artists, music, trade, crafts and native culture as an official event of the Tucson Gem Show.

Admission: Free

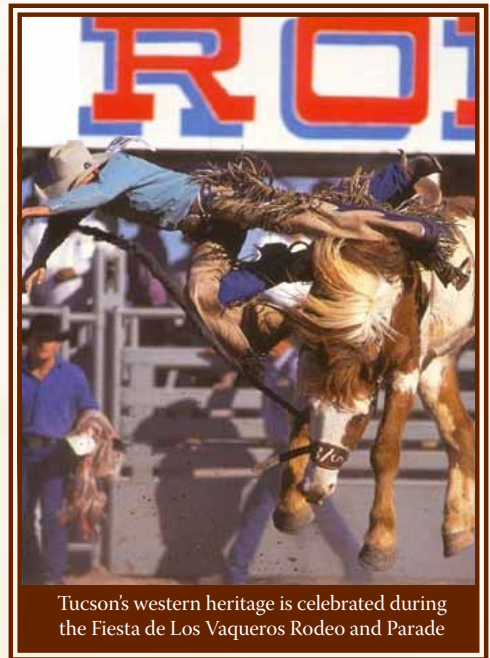
#### **Dillinger Days 1934 Street Festival**

Hotel Congress  
311 E. Congress St.  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 622-8848

[www.hotelcongress.com/hotel-congress/dillinger-days/](http://www.hotelcongress.com/hotel-congress/dillinger-days/)

Description: Historically accurate re-enactments relive the Dillinger gang's last bank robbery in Chicago prior to their arrival in Tucson, as well as the series of events leading to the gang's capture in and around Downtown Tucson, including the fire that destroyed the third floor of Hotel Congress.

Admission: Free



Tucson's western heritage is celebrated during the Fiesta de Los Vaqueros Rodeo and Parade

Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau.



Racing started in 1943 at Rillito Downs racetrack, the birthplace of Quarter Horse racing and the photo finish. The straightaway chute is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### Empire 100 Western Art Show and Sale

Northern Trust

3540 East Sunrise Drive

Tucson, AZ

(888) 364-2829

[www.empireranchfoundation.org/ArtShow/artsale.htm](http://www.empireranchfoundation.org/ArtShow/artsale.htm)

Description: A juried art exhibition promoting western art and heritage, and raising funds for the preservation of the historic Empire Ranch House.

Admission: Free

## FEBRUARY

### La Fiesta de Los Vaqueros: Tucson Rodeo

Tucson Rodeo Grounds

4823 S. 6th Ave

Tucson, AZ 85714

(520) 741-2233

[www.tucsonrodeo.com](http://www.tucsonrodeo.com)

Description: Rodeo events include bull riding, bareback and saddle bronc riding, steer wrestling, tie-down roping, team roping and women's barrel racing.

Admission: \$16-\$26

### La Fiesta de Los Vaqueros: Tucson Rodeo Parade

Tucson Rodeo Grounds

4823 S. 6th Ave

Tucson, AZ 85714

(520) 294-1280

[www.tucsonrodeoparade.com](http://www.tucsonrodeoparade.com)

Description: One of the largest non-motorized parades in US, the parade includes western-themed floats and buggies, historic horse-drawn coaches, festive Mexican folk dancers, marching bands and outfitted riders.

Admission: Free



The Tucson Rodeo Parade is one of the largest non-motorized parades in U.S.

### Rillito Park Horse Races

Rillito Park Racetrack

4502 N. First Ave.

Tucson, AZ 85718

(520) 293-5011

[www.pimacountyattractions.com/Attractions/Rillito.html](http://www.pimacountyattractions.com/Attractions/Rillito.html)

Description: Rillito Park Race Track is the historical birthplace of Quarter Horse Racing. Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse Racing normally begins in mid-January and runs for consecutive weekends through early March.

Admission: Free Saturdays, \$3 Sundays

### Thunder in the Desert 2012

Rillito Raceway Park

4502 N. First Ave

Tucson, AZ 85718

(520) 622-4900

[www.usaindianinfo.org](http://www.usaindianinfo.org)

Description: The New Millennium First People World Fair & Pow Wow is an 11 day Thunder in the Desert event held in Tucson, Arizona every four years, featuring parades, fashion shows, birds of prey, equestrian events, pow-wows, concerts, and a midnight friendship dance.

Admission: Free

### La Reunion del Fuerte

Fort Lowell Neighborhood

5230 E. Fort Lowell Road

Tucson, AZ 85712

(520) 318-0219

[www.oflra.org](http://www.oflra.org)

Description: La Reunion includes cavalry drills, music, and self-guided tours in historic sites not normally open to the public.

Admission: Free

### Southwest Indian Art Fair

Arizona State Museum

1013 E. University Blvd

Tucson, AZ 85721

(520) 626-5886

[www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/events/swiaf/](http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/events/swiaf/)

Description: The art fair includes artist demonstrations, Native food, music and dance performances.

Admission: \$8



Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau.



The world-renowned Tucson Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Showcase.  
Photo by: Gill Kenny © Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau.

### Tucson Gem, Mineral, and Fossil Showcase

Various locations downtown, Tucson Convention Center

260 S. Church Ave

Tucson, AZ 85701

(520) 322-5773

[www.tgms.org](http://www.tgms.org)

Description: Showcase at 40+ locations selling gems, minerals and fossils.

Admission: Mostly free

## MARCH

### Arizona Archaeology and Heritage Awareness Month

Arizona State Museum

1013 E. University Blvd

Tucson, AZ 85721

(520) 626-8381

[www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/arch/archmo/index.shtml](http://www.statemuseum.arizona.edu/arch/archmo/index.shtml)

Description: A variety of presentations and discussions about Arizona's archaeology and history.

Admission: Free to \$25

### Davis-Monthan Air Show

Davis-Monthan Air Force Base

(Swan/Golf Links Rd)

Tucson, AZ 85708

(520) 228-3378

[www.dm.af.mil/library/aerospace&azdays.asp](http://www.dm.af.mil/library/aerospace&azdays.asp)

Description: The air show offers the public an up-close look at military and civilian aerial demonstrations and static-display aircraft from across the U.S.

Admission: Free

### Fiesta de Saguaro

Saguaro National Park

3693 S. Old Spanish Trail

Tucson, AZ 85730

(520) 733-5153

[www.nps.gov/sagu/planyourvisit/things2do.htm](http://www.nps.gov/sagu/planyourvisit/things2do.htm)

Description: Celebrates the Hispanic heritage of this area through song, dance, crafts, and food.

Admission: Free

### Fourth Avenue Spring Street Fair

4th Avenue

4th Ave between 9th St. and University Blvd

Tucson, AZ 85705

(520) 624-5004

[www.fourthavenue.org](http://www.fourthavenue.org)

Description: 400+ arts and crafts booths, 35+ food vendors, 2 stages, street musicians, food, jugglers, street performers.

Admission: Free

### Spring Artisans Market

Tucson Museum of Art

140 N. Main Ave

Tucson, AZ 85701

(520) 624-2333

[www.tucsonmuseumofart.org](http://www.tucsonmuseumofart.org)

Description: More than 120 of the Southwest's best artisans feature one-of-a-kind gifts, jewelry, yard art, paintings, photography, mixed media, and more.

Admission: Free

### Tucson Cine Mexico

Harkins Theatres Tucson Spectrum 18

5455 S. Calle Santa Cruz

Tucson, AZ 85706

(520) 626-9825

[clas.arizona.edu/cinemexico](http://clas.arizona.edu/cinemexico)

Description: Premiere festival in the United States that exclusively presents Mexican filmmakers.

Admission: Free

### Wa:k Powwow

San Xavier Mission

1950 W San Xavier Rd

Tucson, AZ 85746

(520) 294-5727

Description: Features Tohono O'odham Nation dancers, artisans, food, arts and crafts.

Admission: \$9



Basket dancers from the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham.

## APRIL

### Audubon Birdathon

(520) 629-0510

[www.tucsonaudubon.com](http://www.tucsonaudubon.com)

Description: An annual fundraiser, Birdathon is a fun and educational way to help protect birds and preserve their habitat in southern Arizona.

Admission: Free

### Fiesta de Garibaldi

Location varies

(520) 838-3908

[www.tucsonmariachi.org](http://www.tucsonmariachi.org)

Description: Mariachi and baile folklorico, Mexican food, arts and crafts.

Admission: \$8

### Fiesta Grande Street Fair

Grande Ave. between Speedway and St. Mary's, Tucson, AZ

Description: A street fair featuring Mexican-American food, music, and dance.

Admission: Free

### Historic Miracle Mile Open House & Tour

1601 N. Oracle Road

Tucson, AZ 85705

(520) 762-6900

[www.celebratehistorictucson.com](http://www.celebratehistorictucson.com)

Description: Experience the historic-era motorcourts and motorhotels along Oracle Rd., the Arizona's original "Miracle Mile", through an open house, guided tours, car shows, music, food, and vendors.

Admission: Free

### Tucson Bird Count

[www.tucsonbirds.org](http://www.tucsonbirds.org)

Description: Volunteers collect data on the abundances and distributions of bird species.

Admission: Free

## MAY

### Cinco de Mayo

Kennedy Park Fiesta Arena

3700 S. Mission Rd.

Tucson, AZ 85713

(520) 292-9326

Description: Food, music, games, and dancing celebrating Mexican heritage.

Admission: Free



Mariachi bands can be heard at many Mexican restaurants, private parties, and annual festivals in Tucson.

### Tucson International Mariachi Conference Spectacular Concert

Tucson Convention Center Arena

260 S. Church Ave., Tucson, AZ 85701

(520) 838-3908

[www.tucsonmariachi.org](http://www.tucsonmariachi.org)

Description: A Mariachi and folklorico concert.

Admission: \$48

### Wild West Days

Old Tucson Studios

201 S. Kinney Rd., Tucson, AZ 85735

(520) 883-0100

[www.oldtucson.com](http://www.oldtucson.com)

Description: A four day tribute to western heritage with gunfights, stunt shows, and saloon musicals.

Admission: \$16.95 (Regular Admission Price)

### Yaqui Easter Ceremonies and Deer Dances

Pascua Cultural Plaza

785 W. Sahuaro St., Tucson, AZ 85705

(520) 791-4609

[www.pascuayaqui-nsn.gov](http://www.pascuayaqui-nsn.gov)

Description: Easter ceremonies featuring the Yaqui interpretation of Catholic liturgy.

Admission: Free

### Cowboy Music Festival

Old Tucson Studios

201 S. Kinney Rd.

Tucson, AZ 85735

(520) 883-0100

[www.oldtucson.com](http://www.oldtucson.com)

Description: The Cowboy Music Festival pays homage to the musical heritage of the American West from traditional trail songs, through the era of the movie cowboy, to contemporary western songwriting.

Admission: \$16.95 (Regular Admission Price)

**Tucson Folk Festival**

El Presidio Park  
160 W. Alameda St.  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 623- 6024  
www.tucsonfolkfest.org  
Description: Live folk, blues, Celtic, bluegrass, folk-rock, world, country, gospel and Cajun music, workshops, songwriting contest, food and crafts.  
Admission: \$5 suggested donation

**JUNE****El Dia de San Juan Fiesta**

Santa Cruz River Park, West Congress Street at Santa Cruz River  
Tucson, AZ 85702  
(520) 791-4040  
www.el-diadesanjuan.com  
Description: Celebration of the beginning of monsoon season, procession and blessing of the altar, Mexican rodeo and dancing.  
Admission: Free

**AUGUST****La Fiesta de San Agustín**

St. Augustine Cathedral  
192 S. Stone Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 623-6351  
Description: Celebration of St. Augustine, Tucson's patron saint, with a mass and festival.  
Admission: Free

**Tucson's Birthday Celebration**

Various locations all over Tucson  
(520) 791-4873  
www.tucsonsbirthday.org  
Description: Various events throughout town celebrating Tucson's birthday in 1776.  
Admission: Varies

**SEPTEMBER****Bat Night**

Rillito Riverbed  
East of Campbell Ave Bridge near Limberlost  
Tucson, AZ 85718  
www.rillitoriverproject.org  
Description: 45,000 bats flying out from under the Campbell Ave Bridge.  
Admission: Free

**Waila Festival**

Bear Down Field, University of Arizona  
1401 E. University Blvd.  
Tucson, AZ 85721  
(520) 628-5774  
Description: Tohono O'odham bands perform the social dance of the "Desert People" and feature traditional foods.  
Admission: Free

**JULY****Ha:san Bak: Saguaro Harvest Celebration**

Colossal Cave Mountain Park  
16721 E. Old Spanish Trail  
Vail, AZ 85641  
(520) 647-7275  
www.colossalcave.com  
Description: Harvest saguaro fruit and learn about Tohono O'odham heritage.  
Admission: \$5 vehicle entry



El baile folklórico is enjoyed at festivals and special events throughout Tucson.

**Desert Museum Butterfly Festival and Plant Sale**

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum  
2021 N. Kinney Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85743  
(520) 883-2702  
www.desertmuseum.org/visit/events\_butterflyfest.php  
Description: Live butterflies and caterpillars, a plant sale, children's activities, and gardening classes throughout the day.  
Admission: \$13 adults/\$4.25 kids

**Mexican Independence Day**

Kennedy Park  
3700 S. Mission Rd  
Tucson, AZ 85713  
(520) 292-9326

Description: This celebration of Mexico's independence from Spain includes folk music and dancing, children's activities, fireworks and food.

Admission: Free

**Roasted Chili Festival**

Rincon Valley Farmers and Artisans Market  
12500 E. Old Spanish Trail  
Tucson, AZ 85747  
(520) 591-2276

rinconinstitute.org

Description: Locally grown produce, baked goods, beer garden, live music.

Admission: Free

**OCTOBER****Butterfly Magic at the Gardens**

Tucson Botanical Gardens  
2150 N. Alvernon Way  
Tucson, AZ 85712  
(520) 326-9686

www.tucsonbotanical.org

Description: Experience hundreds of live beautiful, exotic, and rare butterflies in a tropical greenhouse.

Admission: Special fees

**Children's Social Pow-Wow**

Tucson Children's Museum  
200 S. 6th Ave.  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 792-9985

www.tucsonchildrensmuseum.org

Description: Singing, dancing, drumming for children.

Admission: Free

**Indian Feast and Fundraiser**

San Xavier Plaza  
1959 W San Xavier Rd  
Tucson, AZ 85746  
(520) 295-1350  
(520) 622-4900

www.usaindianinfo.org

Description: Silent auction, native foods dinner, dancing, music.

Admission: Advance - Individual \$50, Couple \$80

**Tucson Spanish and Flamenco Festival**

Casa Vicente Restaurante Espanol  
375 S. Stone Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 884-5253

www.tucsonspanishflamencofestival.com

Description: Music, dance and food of Spain.

Admission: \$15-\$25, under 10 free



Gill Kenny © Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau.

**Tucson Bluegrass Festival**

Ava Amphitheater  
5655 W. Valencia Rd  
Tucson, AZ 85757  
(520) 296-1231

www.desertbluegrass.org

Description: Bluegrass concerts, workshops on playing and singing bluegrass, jam sessions.

Admission: Friday free, \$20 Sat/Sun

**Tucson Culinary Festival**

Loews Ventana Canyon Resort  
7000 N. Resort Drive  
Tucson, AZ 85750  
(520) 954-8803

www.tucsonculinaryfestival.com

Description: A locally grown celebration of Tucson's vibrant culinary scene, margarita championship, wine tasting, barbecue competition.

Admission: \$25-100



Several parks throughout Tucson have special events featuring a diversity of butterflies.

**Tucson Film and Music Festival**

Rialto Theatre  
318 E. Congress St.  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(323) 461-5844  
[www.tucsonfilmandmusicfestival.com](http://www.tucsonfilmandmusicfestival.com)

Description: Integrates the work of filmmakers and musicians who use the Southwest as their subject matter or muse.

Admission: \$6

**Tucson Meet Yourself**

El Presidio Park  
160 W. Alameda St  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 370-0588  
[www.tucsonmeetyourself.org](http://www.tucsonmeetyourself.org)

Description: Celebrates diversity and richness of Tucson's traditions through music, dance, traditional arts, food courts, stories, occupational crafts, and cultural heritage.

Admission: Free

**NOVEMBER****American Indian Heritage Powwow and Craft Market**

Sheraton Hotel  
5151 E. Grant Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85712  
(520) 622-4900  
[www.usaindianinfo.org](http://www.usaindianinfo.org)

Description: Educating the public on American Indian culture, dancers, crafts, and food.

Admission: Free, by donation

**Jewish Food Festival**

Brandi Fenton Memorial Park  
3482 E. River Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85718  
(520) 512-8500  
[jewishfoodfestival.webs.com](http://jewishfoodfestival.webs.com)

Description: Jewish food, entertainment, and the world's largest matzo ball.

Admission: \$4

**El Dia de los Muertos Parade, a.k.a. All Souls Procession**

Begins at Epic Café  
745 N. 4th Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85705  
[www.allsoulsprocession.org](http://www.allsoulsprocession.org)

Description: Two-mile long human-powered procession ending in burning a large urn filled with the hopes, offerings, and wishes from the public to those loved ones who have passed. Inspired by Mexican Dia de los Muertos.

Admission: Free

**Thanksgiving Indian Arts & Crafts Market**

San Xavier Arts & Crafts Plaza  
1959 San Xavier Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85746  
(520) 573-4007

Description: Arts and crafts vendors, food vendors, and various entertainment all weekend.

Admission: Free

**Holiday Craft Market**

Tucson Museum of Art  
140 N. Main Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 624-2333  
[www.tucsonmuseumofart.org](http://www.tucsonmuseumofart.org)

Description: Find that unique gift from more than 120 of the Southwest's finest artisans.

Admission: Free

**Tucson Village Farm Harvest Festival**

Tucson Village Farm  
4210 N. Campbell Ave.  
Tucson, AZ 85719  
(520) 626-5161  
[www.tucsonvillagefarm.org](http://www.tucsonvillagefarm.org)

Description: Informational booths, farm tours, food booths, live animal demonstrations, food tastings, a petting zoo, fresh produce, games, a raffle, and workshops.

Admission: Free

**DECEMBER****A Southwest Nutcracker**

Tucson Music Hall  
260 S. Church Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 791-4101  
[www.tucsonregionalballet.org](http://www.tucsonregionalballet.org)

Description: The Nutcracker ballet set in Tucson in the 1880s with coyotes and the US Cavalry.

Admission: \$23-38

**El Nacimiento**

La Casa Cordova at the Tucson Museum of Art  
140 N. Main Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 624-2333  
[www.tucsonmuseumofart.org/exhibitions/el-nacimiento](http://www.tucsonmuseumofart.org/exhibitions/el-nacimiento)

Description: Traditional Mexican nativity scene, combining symbolism of Spanish Colonial Catholic Church and the simplicity of faith in rural Mexico.

Admission: Free

**Feria Navidena (Christmas Market)**

El Centro Cultural de las Americas  
40 W. Broadway Blvd  
Tucson, AZ 85701  
(520) 629-9536  
www.elcentroaz.org

Description: Hosts various holiday traditions, including the reenactment of the Christmas story, "El Nacimiento" nativity scene, and tamales, among other favorites.

Admission: Free

**Fourth Avenue Winter Street Fair**

4th Ave between 9th St. and University Blvd  
Tucson, AZ 85705  
(520) 624-5004  
www.fourthavenue.org

Description: 400+ arts and crafts booths, 35+ food vendors, 2 stages, street musicians, food, jugglers, and street performers.

Admission: Free

**Luminaria Nights**

Tucson Botanical Gardens  
2150 N. Alvernon Way  
Tucson, AZ 85712  
(520) 326-9686  
www.tucsonbotanical.org/events/luminaria-nights

Description: More than 2,000 luminarias along garden paths as well as hot cider, Christmas cookies, and live music. See the plants lit up by the unique light of luminarias.

Admission: \$9

**New Year's Competition Powwow**

Rillito Raceway Park  
4502 N. First Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85718  
(520) 622-4900  
www.usaindianinfo.org/newyears.htm

Description: Dancers from over 50 tribes, authentic handmade crafts, children's activity area, traditional Native American foods, birds of prey exhibit, dancing, singing, and drum contests.

Admission: \$9, under 8/military/Native Americans free

**Tucson Christmas Bird Count**

Tucson, AZ  
(520) 743-3520  
tucsonaudubon.org/what-we-do/birding/198-cbc.html  
Description: Amateur and professional ornithologists are invited to survey winter bird populations.

Admission: Free

**Tucson Tamal and Heritage Festival**

Casino del Sol  
5655 W. Valencia Rd.  
Tucson, AZ 85757  
(877) 840-0457  
www.solcasinos.com

Description: Tamale competition, farmers market, arts, crafts, music, and dance celebrating the tamal.

Admission: Free



During the winter months, festive luminarias decorate businesses and homes alike.