

• Let Yourself Create! •

SAVING YOU DO THING

PSRST STD
US POSTAGE PAID
CHAMBER
PUBLISHING CO.

WHEELING NORTH/
BC SOUTH ZONE

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

Since 1996

With Events From Wheeling, Buffalo Grove

ECRWSS
Residential Customer

TRAVEL

Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort – An Upscale Southwestern Experience

Resorts in Paradise Valley, Scottsdale, and north past Cave Creek arguably tend to draw most of the North Suburbanites looking for a warm winter Arizona vacation. However,



Jodie Jacobs

there is a unique resort south of the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport worth checking out for your next cold-weather escape. Sitting low into the sandy landscape of the Gila River Indian Reservation next to the South

Mountains is the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort.

You know you have arrived somewhere special when walking into the lobby you hear and see the words “S’keet thash,” Pima for “good day.” Then you spy a huge circle of American Indian murals covering the ceiling of a two-story lobby.

The U.S. atlas identifies the area as a reservation, but the people here explain that you are in the Gila River Indian Community of the Pima Tribe known for its basketry and the Maricopa Tribe known for its pottery.

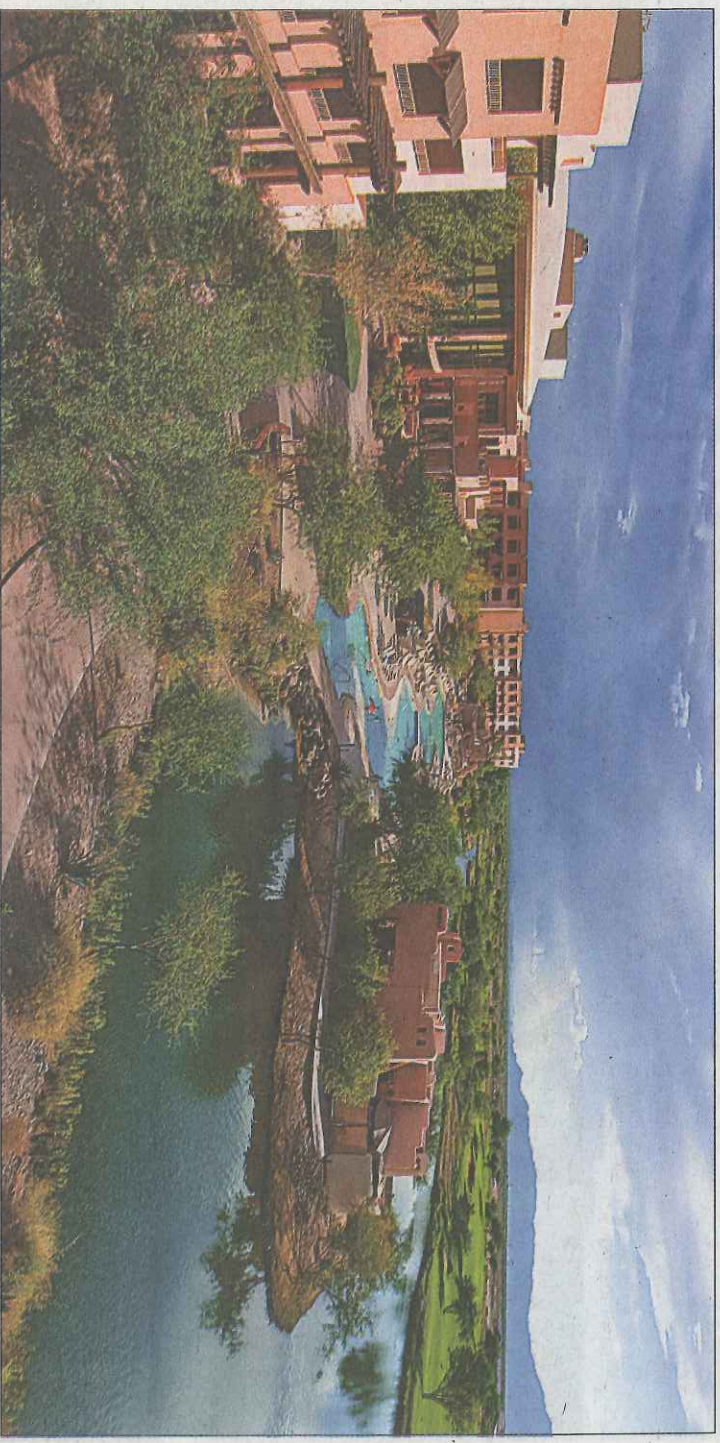
The Sheraton hotel chain built and operates the resort and its spa with guidance from the tribal elders. A portion of the profits goes to the tribes.

You see more murals behind the reception desk and then you walk over to some rocks in the lobby. They are etched with symbols copied from boulder drawings in the nearby mountains.

American Indian art, symbols, and cultural artifacts decorate walls and cases throughout the resort (window design and placement is deliberate). Make an appointment for a resort art and architecture tour with Ginger Sunbird Martin, Wild Horse Pass’s cultural concierge.

A stunning pool with an island refreshment oasis beckons outside, but you might want to book some reservations before settling into a deck chair.

The resort’s Whirlwind Golf Club features Devil’s Claw and Cattail, two courses developed by Gary Panks and managed by Troon Golf. The PGA Nationwide Insurance



Take a dip in the pool or hike the trails around the grounds of the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort.

SHERATON WILD HORSE PASS RESORT

Tour’s Gila River Golf Classic is held at Whirlwind every October. Tee times should be arranged in advance. The Golf Club also has the Bird Golf Academy for those who want to learn or improve their game.

Check trail ride times at Koli Equestrian Center on site to explore the area on horseback. By the way, there really are wild horses in the area.

Also, check at the reception desk for hours of Rawhide, a “Wild West” style park that also has American Indian memorabilia.

You can walk or take a complimentary (no reservations necessary) boat ride to Rawhide. Sign up for a treatment, salon service, or personal trainer at the resort’s Aji Spa. The spa also has its own café and relaxing pool.

Reserve a table at Kai (Pima for “seed”) the resort’s AAA Five Diamond and Forbes Five Star restaurant. Dress code is nice resort wear, not jeans or shorts. The resort’s casual Ko’Sin (Pima for “kitchen”) restaurant is excellent. However, dine at the multi-award

winning Kai at least once for an extraordinary experience that is Executive Chef Michael O’Dowd’s tribute to native cuisine and local ingredients. The presentations are so good you will want to photograph and tweet them.

Remember to watch the sunset over the South Mountains before dinner. You’ll want to capture and tweet that, too. Walk off dinner by exploring the resort’s trails next to the golf courses.

When you leave, you will want to say, “Move sape” (Pima for “thank you”).

Tip: don’t confuse the Sheraton property with Wild Horse Casino-Hotel property that you would pass on the way to the resort.

*Wild Horse Pass Resort and Spa,
5394 W. Wild Horse Pass Blvd.,
Chandler, Ariz.; 800-325-3535;
wildhorsepassresort.com.*

Jodie Jacobs is a travel writer, based on the North Shore, but in love with exploring the United States and the world. She is a long-time contributor to the Chicago Tribune and former North Shore Magazine. Her blog is travelsmartwithjodie.com. She can be reached at jodie_jacobs@sbcglobal.net.

*Email questions and comments to
editorial@whats happeningonline.com.*

