



# Flagstaff

AS *EXTREME AS YOU WANT TO BE*

Writer Suzanne Wright

## NO MATTER WHAT REVS YOUR MOTOR, WE'VE ROUNDED UP A SEASON'S WORTH OF THRILLS

"You're doing great. Now just let go!"

I'm about 25 feet above the ground and soaring through the air with the (almost) greatest of ease. The twenty-something, t-shirted blonde guide is grinning. He's shouting encouragement not only to me, but also to a handful of other people who are in the adjacent treetops.

I can tell he likes his job ... and why not? He spends his days in an alpine forest, coaching the adventurous into and out of trees.

I am laughing though my heart is racing. All around me as I inhale the pine-scented air, friends, family and even strangers are cheering me on. This is cool!

Flagstaff Extreme opened last year at Fort Tuthill in the cool Ponderosa pines of Coconino County, and business has been booming. The three-hour Tree Top Adventure is an elevated obstacle course. Suspended 15 to 60 feet off the ground, the experience consists of stations with suspended bridges, swings, slides, nets and hanging walls. There's even an aerial surfboard. Think ziplining with a measure of rock climbing thrown in.

Similar to ski runs, courses are color-coded by skill and elevation; a thorough demonstration and

training session ensures safe participation. There are adult and junior courses, so it's fun for the whole family. It's also a popular team-building exercise for groups and companies.

Memories of fearlessly scrambling up trees as a child flooded my mind as I tested my adult balance and faced my fear. Like any adrenaline sport, it was exhilarating and the sense of achievement added to the experience. To book your spot, visit [www.flagstaffextreme.com](http://www.flagstaffextreme.com).

### POP A WHEELIE

Cycling and beer enthusiasts rave about the Alpine Pedaler, which has been featured on the Arizona Highways television series. Part bicycle, part pub crawl, the 14-passenger, open-air contraption is a frequent and eye-catching sight on downtown streets. The lively tour rolls throughout the year from late morning to evening, and begins and ends at the award-winning Mother Road Brewing Company in the Southside neighborhood.

If you're especially fanatic about calorie-busting exercise, the Saturday morning Bike and Burn is a fun and challenging boot camp-style workout that guarantees you'll get a head start on carb annihilation. Learn more at [www.alpinepedaler.com](http://www.alpinepedaler.com).







For teetotalers or those who prefer not to drink and bike, a new outfitter called AZ Pedal Tours offers several tours to suit both first time and returning visitors. For prospective students, the Northern Arizona University guided ride gives a two-hour introduction to the campus. There's also a bike and hike option that weaves through town and up to the Coconino National Forest. Visit [www.azpedaltours.com](http://www.azpedaltours.com) for details.

#### ADVENTURES IN FOOD...

If your idea of stepping out of your comfort zone entails a knife and fork, you'll want to check out Coppa Cafe. The place is Manhattan-sized tiny and located in a nondescript shopping center, but it's got a quirky, unpretentious charm with shabby chic, mismatched décor.

The owners, Paola Fioravanti and Brian Konefal – she's Brazilian, he's from Connecticut – met in culinary school in Italy. Their cuisine hopscoches across continents, but has a definitive local bent.

The menu is tightly curated and presented in a small wooden picture frame, a hint at the artistry that awaits you. Everything I sampled was astonishingly good.

Don't skip the bread and butter, which is scented with Ponderosa pine as befits the location. The bresaola carpaccio salad consists of translucent slices of house-cured beef prosciutto, poached apricots and local baby greens. Don't count calories; order the rich, earthy pork agnolotti, a pillowy homemade pasta dish filled with mushrooms foraged from the Snowbowl. Or try the hearty braised lamb pot, which includes roasted potatoes, wild blue sage, spinach, ricotta and tomato, along with a bright splash of lemon confit.

Had there been leftovers, they would have been terrific the next morning with fried eggs. Had I saved any room, there would have been dessert. Plan your consumption accordingly. Start salivating at [www.coppacafe.net](http://www.coppacafe.net).

#### ...AND DRINK

Beer lovers will want to mark their calendars for the sixth annual Oktoberfest on October 4. Held downtown, the family-friendly event boasts live music and food trucks. There's even a Mug Root Beer garden for the kids. Learn more at [www.flagstaffoktoberfest.com](http://www.flagstaffoktoberfest.com).

#### LEAF PEEPING AND PUMPKIN HUNTING

Come autumn, blazing golds, reds and oranges beckon. The Flagstaff Leafometer helps you keep track of the changing landscape in four different areas of northern Arizona, from Snowbowl down through Oak Creek Canyon, so you can plan your trip north for peak foliage. Check for updates at [www.flagstaffarizona.org/fall](http://www.flagstaffarizona.org/fall). If you want a less strenuous but panoramic way to see the seasonal changes, try the Arizona Snowbowl Scenic Chairlift Ride, which is open on weekends and for a few sunset runs. Track the schedule at [www.arizonasnowbowl.com](http://www.arizonasnowbowl.com).

Remember Charlie Brown and friends in the pumpkin patch? You can relive that seasonal memory aboard the Grand Canyon Railway as the company transforms its historic rail car into the Pumpkin Patch Train to the delight of kids of all ages. Parents and children are invited to don a Halloween costume and take a fairytale ride through the countryside to a secret pumpkin patch, where you select your favorite and then decorate it back at the Williams Depot. Grab your seats online at [www.thetrain.com/special-events/the-pumpkin-patch](http://www.thetrain.com/special-events/the-pumpkin-patch).

#### STAY IN STYLE

Flagstaff has plenty of chain motel and hotel options to fit any budget, but my favorite place to stay is the Inn at 410. Owner Gordon Watkins has meticulously restored and maintained this special downtown bed and breakfast, which was built in 1894. Ask for the Canyon Memories room on the second floor, which has a view of the San Francisco Peaks from the bed, or the Santa Fe-style Southwest room with its two-person jettied tub on the private porch. The multi-course gourmet breakfasts will fuel you through morning activities. Reservations can be secured at [www.innat410.com](http://www.innat410.com).



# OLD WEST SPIRIT. NEW WEST TALENT.

BRYAN'S BLACK MOUNTAIN BARBECUE . WESTERN DELIGHTS  
WATSON'S HAT SHOP AND HABERDASHERY . SADDLE UP GALLERY



*Las Tiendas is known for gathering the finest. No doubt why we've been the "Center of Attention" lately. Drop by and experience the best of the American West, where quality still reigns, right here in small town Cave Creek, Arizona.*

**6130** East Cave Creek Road, Cave Creek, AZ  
Tuesday - Saturday **11** AM - **8** PM  
[www.lastiendascavecreek.com](http://www.lastiendascavecreek.com)