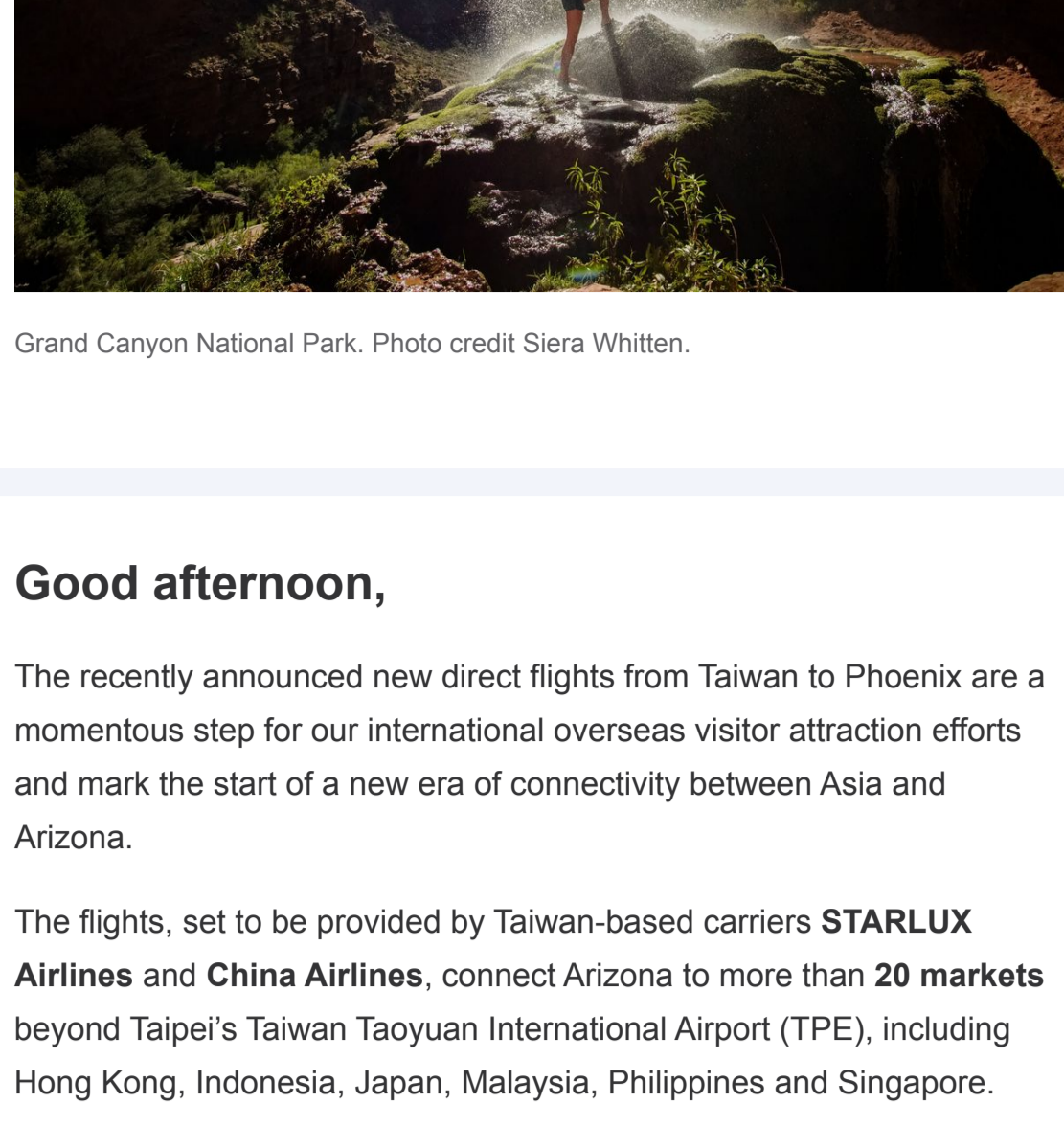


Tourism Tuesday

By Arizona Office of Tourism • Aug 05, 2025
Smart Brevity® count: 4.5 mins...1141 words



Grand Canyon National Park. Photo credit Siera Whitten.

Good afternoon,

The recently announced new direct flights from Taiwan to Phoenix are a momentous step for our international overseas visitor attraction efforts and mark the start of a new era of connectivity between Asia and Arizona.

The flights, set to be provided by Taiwan-based carriers **STARLUX Airlines** and **China Airlines**, connect Arizona to more than **20 markets** beyond Taipei's Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport (TPE), including Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore.

The timing of this significant expansion of access to the Asian travel market couldn't be better, as Asia is our fastest-growing international market, with visitation increasing by an incredible 42% year-over-year so far in 2025.

This trend is exemplified by Taiwan. While Taiwan ranks 14th in visitor volume to Arizona (15,000 visitors in 2024), this group also shows strong visitor spending behavior, with spending estimated in the tens of millions.

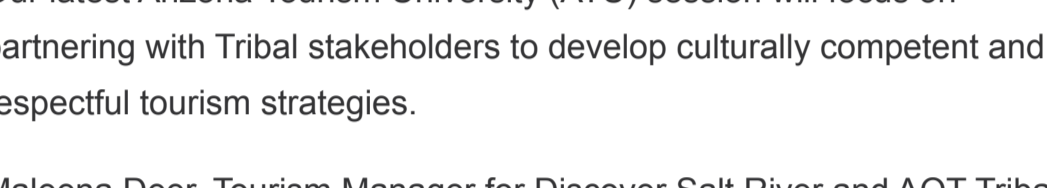
The addition of these direct flights makes Arizona more accessible to all travelers from Asia but also capitalizes on the strong economic ties we're building with Taiwanese semiconductor firms such as TSMC.

Recent 1-94 data confirms this growth isn't hypothetical; it's already happening. The presence of high-tech manufacturing and global headquarters is driving repeat visits, longer stays, and more localized spending.

With these direct flights, we are perfectly positioned to welcome even more high-value business and leisure travelers, strengthening our global relationships and showcasing all that Arizona has to offer.

Alix Skelpsa Ridgway, *Interim Director, Arizona Office of Tourism*

2025 GCOT Awards Celebrate Arizona Tourism Leaders



Leslie Ray from the Town of Clifton Visitor Center was recognized with the Tourism Spirit of Service Award

The 2025 Governor's Tourism Awards honored the remarkable people, partnerships and programs that drive Arizona's vibrant tourism industry. This year's recipients showcase the passion and commitment that keep Arizona shining as a premier destination on the global stage. Congratulations to all the outstanding honorees!

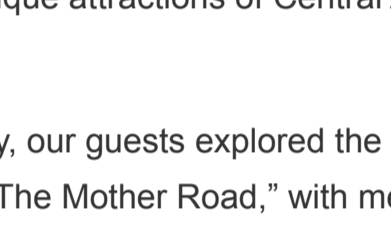
GCOT Award Winners

ATU Session 7 - Cultural Connections

Join us!
Arizona Tourism University

**Session 7:
Cultural Connections**

**Aug. 21, 2025
3:00 p.m.**



Our latest Arizona Tourism University (ATU) session will focus on partnering with Tribal stakeholders to develop culturally competent and respectful tourism strategies.

Maleena Deer, Tourism Manager for Discover Salt River and AOT Tribal Tourism Relations Manager Dawn Melvin will guide the discussion. Join us **Thursday, Aug. 21 at 3 p.m.** for this virtual session.

ATU is our free, all-digital one-stop program designed to support our tourism colleagues and organizations statewide through a curated series of webinars delivered by experts.

Register Here

International Reps Hit the Road on Post-GCOT FAM Trips

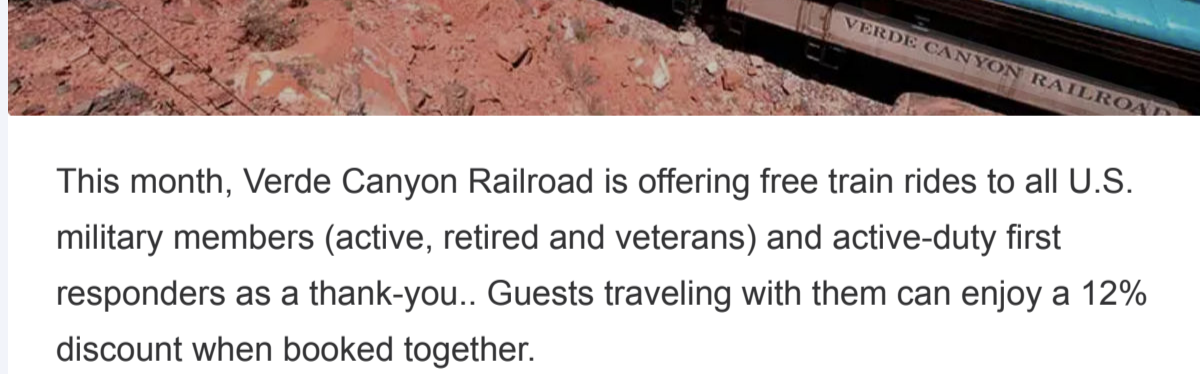


Following this year's Governor's Conference on Tourism (GCOT), AOT led several of our international representatives on two exciting FAM trips. Reps from the Mexico, Canada, U.K., Germany and France joined us for trips showcasing the unique attractions of Central Arizona and the iconic sights along Route 66.

On the Route 66 journey, our guests explored the nostalgic charm and historic significance of "The Mother Road," with memorable stops in Kingman, Williams, Flagstaff, Holbrook and Winslow. Stops on the Central AZ journey included Cottonwood, Clarkdale, Jerome, Prescott and Scottsdale.

A big thanks to all our partners and communities who generously hosted and welcomed the groups!

America250 AZ: Celebrate & Explore



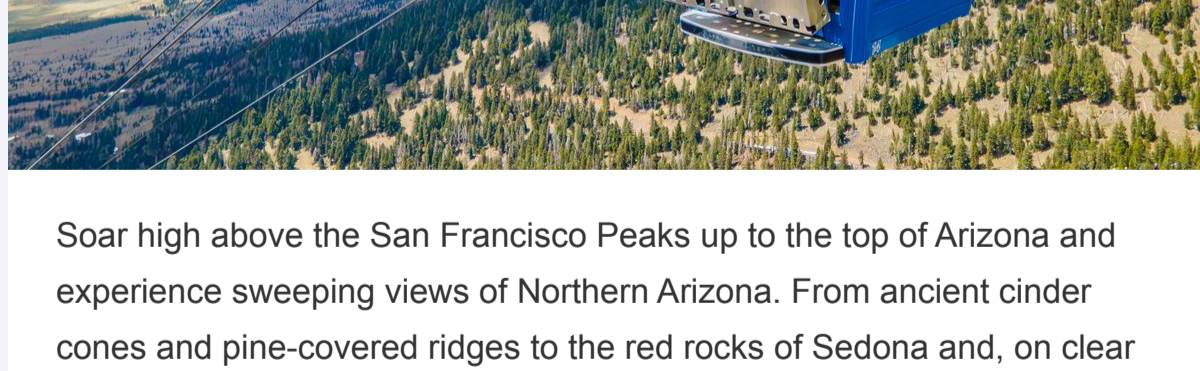
Arizona's America250 Commission and AOT recently launched the [America250 AZ: Celebrate & Explore Pass](#), a free digital passpost designed to help residents and visitors explore the state's rich heritage as part of the lead-up to America's 250th anniversary.

The pass launched with 25 Arizona locations, with more to be added regularly in themed categories such as Treasures250, Indigenous Travel250 and Dark Skies250.

Users can check in at places like Canyon de Chelly, Lowell Observatory and Sharlot Hall Museum to earn prizes, while also discovering hidden gems and community favorites. The pass is easy to access on your phone and offers a fun, engaging way to celebrate Arizona's past, present and future.

America250 AZ Pass

Volunteer Access at ESTO 2025 + Discount First-Timer's Registration



AOT and Visit Phoenix are teaming up with the U.S. Travel Association to host [ESTO 2025: Ideas that Travel](#) at the stunning JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa, August 17–19, 2025.

This is a major moment for Arizona, and we **need all hands on deck to make it shine!**

We're asking for you to **support the conference by volunteering** for up to 2 4-hour shifts, where you'll assist our guests from across the U.S. tourism industry in navigating throughout the hotel and conference.

In return, you'll receive a **commemorative t-shirt, comp parking and same-day conference access.**

Volunteer Perks and Information Include:

- For every 4-hour shift you volunteer, you're welcome to attend the conference sessions on the same day.
- Complimentary self-parking will be available, more details to come.
- Snacks and water will be provided.

Volunteer Opportunities

Attend ESTO 2025 with a First-Timer's Discount

The U.S. Travel Association is also making available a limited number of discount full conference registrations for Arizonans in the tourism industry who have never attended ESTO before.

To utilize this offer, head to the [ESTO registration page](#) and use the code **AZxESTO2025** when registering. This reduces the full conference registration fee to \$950 for Arizonans who are first-time attendees.

Register

Verde Canyon Railroad Offers Free Rides to Military & First Responders



This month, Verde Canyon Railroad is offering free train rides to all U.S. military members (active, retired and veterans) and active-duty first responders as a thank-you... Guests traveling with them can enjoy a 12% discount when booked together.

- This special offer is available August 1 through August 31, 2025, and is only valid for new reservations made and used within that timeframe.
- To receive this promotion, all bookings must be made by phone at 800-293-7245, and verification of service is required at the time of booking and again when picking up tickets.

Verde Canyon Railroad

Snowbowl Offers 50% Industry Discount Through October

Soar high above the San Francisco Peaks up to the top of Arizona and experience sweeping views of Northern Arizona. From ancient cinder cones and pine-covered ridges to the red rocks of Sedona and, on clear days, even the Grand Canyon!

Tourism industry professionals can enjoy **50% off Scenic Gondola Rides** at Arizona Snowbowl with code **VISITAZ25!** No blackout dates, valid for Scenic Gondola Rides. Not valid for Summer Activities or Sunset Gondola Rides. Offer valid through Oct. 19, 2025!

AZ Snowbowl

Attraction to go: Goulding's Lodge

Behind the scenes at Goulding's Lodge promo shoot

[Goulding's Lodge](#), located just outside the Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, recently shared a stunning new video offering a fresh look at the essence of this iconic destination.

The video highlights the breathtaking landscapes, rich cultural heritage and signature hospitality that define the guest experience. Featuring actual team members, the scenes range from sunrise vistas to guided tours and quiet moments at the lodge, each frame thoughtfully crafted to tell the authentic story of Goulding's.

Watch Video

That's a wrap! Thank you for reading today's Tourism Tuesday!

- Tourism Tuesday publishes **every other Tuesday**. The next edition is scheduled to be published next Tuesday, **Aug. 19**.
- Use the **subscribe** button below to stay up-to-date on the latest from the Arizona Office of Tourism and Arizona's amazing tourism industry

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