

Haunted Phoenix — A Frightful Local Adventure

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As the temperatures begin to drop in Arizona, the thrills and chills of Halloween spookiness begin to creep in. One of the most fascinating, and entertaining, aspects of Arizona is the legendary prevalence of its ghost stories. As the heart of the Wild West, Arizona has had a history of violence, tragedy and mayhem from its earliest days on record. The result was hundreds of ghostly stories that surround certain, creepy spots throughout our state. Some of the ghostly spots are difficult to find and can be hard to reach, but here are a few of the reportedly haunted places in the Phoenix area you can easily visit and take a ghost tour this Halloween season.

Pioneer Village

If you've ever wanted to see an authentic Old West town from the days when Arizona was still just a territory, head north on the I-17 freeway to the Pioneer Living History Museum. The buildings and structures were all built between 1860 and 1912, and visitors can see everything from the Opera House where famed songbird Lilly Langtry performed, to an Old West Blacksmith shop. And, according to some of the staff at the museum, many of the original structures seem to have brought ghosts with them when they arrived on the museum grounds.

The caretaker of the museum reports hearing the disembodied voices of children singing in the old schoolhouse and watching a dark shadowy figure darting out of the Opera House. Windows opened on their own, temperatures remain downright icy even in the extreme heat of summer, and some visitors have reported being touched or having their hair and clothing tugged by unseen hands. The Pioneer Village is a fun way to experience Arizona history, and a spooky place to look for ghosts. (<https://pioneeraz.org>)

Wrigley Mansion

William Wrigley, Jr., built this 1930s-vintage mansion on a 100-foot bluff overlooking the mountainous area surrounding the historic Arizona Biltmore area of Phoenix. The mansion was a 50th wedding anniversary present for his wife, Ada, and was intended as a winter home for the Wrigley family to stay during their long trek to Catalina Island for Chicago Cubs spring training baseball. The 16,000 square foot home, with 24 rooms and 12 bathrooms, was interestingly the smallest of all the Wrigley homes.

Unfortunately, Wrigley died just a few months after finishing construction of the mansion and never got a chance to spend more than short time in his wife's Golden Anniversary gift. Employees at the mansion report having many ghost sightings over the years, with phones ringing and no one on the line and voices speaking to them in empty rooms, so perhaps Mr. Wrigley's spirit lives on in the home where he died.

(<https://wrigleymansion.com>)

Old Spaghetti Factory

The Old Spaghetti Factory in downtown Phoenix is an Italian restaurant with a great ghost story. The restaurant resides in an historic building that was once two homes built in the 1920s, the Cole Mansion and the Baker House. Unconfirmed legends tell of ruthless murders of different residents, but the staff members report many different hauntings, ranging from hearing a woman sobbing, to whispers and screams, to actual furniture moving, lights blinking on and off and floating apparitions. If you go, grab some good Italian food and ask a staff member for a great ghost story! (<https://www.osf.com>)

Hotel San Carlos

One of the most haunted places in Phoenix is the historic Hotel San Carlos in the heart of downtown. The hotel hosted many legendary Hollywood celebrities, like Marilyn Monroe, Mae West, and Clark Gable, but it is best known for its broken-hearted ghost, young Leone Jensen who leaped to her death from the rooftop in the late 1920s. The only historic boutique hotel in Phoenix, the 128-room Hotel San Carlos has been in operation since 1928. (<http://www.hotelsancarlos.com>)

Stockyards Steakhouse

Edward A. Tovrea, fondly known as the Cattle Baron by locals, opened a meat packing house in 1919 to support his growing beef operations. His establishment evolved into the Stockyard's Restaurant in 1947, a huge hit with cattlemen and local residents alike. Philip Tovrea took over operations from his father after his death and legend has it that Philip's late wife, Helen, known as the woman in red, now haunts the restaurant. She appears in the ladies room, turning lights off and on, shaking the chandelier and making noises as the staff closes up for the night. (<https://stockyardssteakhouse.com>)

Orpheum Theatre

Not only is the Orpheum Theater the only place in the Valley where you can watch a silent movie on the big screen, it is also reportedly the residence of a mysterious female spirit who wanders around inside the theater. One of the most notoriously haunted locations in downtown Phoenix, the historic Orpheum Theatre is the home of the Phoenix Opera, Ballet Arizona, and many off-Broadway musical performances. Take a Tuesday tour and find out more about the theater's very own ghost called Mattie. (<https://www.phoenixconventioncenter.com/orpheum-theatre>)

Casey Moore's Oyster House

This popular Tempe hot spot is known for its fresh oysters and seafood, socializing, and a house full of ghosts! Located in an historic home that formerly housed a boarding house (and rumored brothel), patrons and neighbors of Casey Moore's report seeing apparitions long after the restaurant has closed. Dancing figures on the stairs, pictures flying off of walls, moving furniture, and loud music when no one is around are all rumored to be the ghosts of three different souls who once called this haunted location home. (<https://caseymooresoysterhouse.godaddysites.com>)

Rosson House

If ever a house genuinely looked like a haunted mansion, it would be the Rosson House in downtown Phoenix. This beautiful late 19th century Victorian home was built by a prominent local doctor and politician and is now a popular historic museum in Heritage Square, near the Arizona Science Center. The house is believed to be haunted by a former caretaker who was shot some time in the 1980s. Visitors and employees report unusual and unexplained activities like footsteps on the staircase, doors locking on their own, and fireplaces giving off heat even though they are unlit. Schedule a guided tour and check out the hauntings for yourself! (<https://heritagesquarephx.org/rossonhouse>)

These are just a handful of the many spots in Phoenix rumored to be home to ghosts of both our Wild West and our Roaring 20s past. So if you are looking for the thrills and chills of a good ghost story this Halloween season and want a place that is easy to visit, take a quick trip across town to one of these famously haunted spots. And

be sure to check out Ladybug's Blog (<https://ladybugsblog.com>) to see more ideas for great places to get your family out of the house to enjoy historic and fun adventures throughout the state of Arizona.

