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TRAVEL TALES

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE JEWISH TRAVELLER

By **ALEXANDRA COHEN**

SCOTTSDALE ARIZONA: The City of Scottsdale (<https://www.experience-scottsdale.com/>) is Arizona's premier destination for fine dining, shopping and luxury resorts, and I am fortunate to have just returned from my first visit to the region. Scottsdale has over 240,000 citizens, making it one of the fastest growing cities and housing markets in the United States, and it borders other well-known locations such as Phoenix, Paradise Valley, and Tempe, Arizona. Worried about the weather? There is no need, with Scottsdale boasting 330 days of sunshine per year and year-round swimming weather.

JEWISH SCOTTSDALE: This city features a young and growing Jewish community. The combined Phoenix-Scottsdale community boasts four Orthodox synagogues, five Orthodox schools, a large Eruvim, and 11 kosher restaurants (plus kosher grocery stores, bakeries and caterers). Arizona itself is home to more than an estimated 125,000 Jews. In 2025, the community will break ground on an \$18 million Holocaust Museum in Phoenix. It will house exhibits and educational content about the Holocaust and other related acts of oppression and persecution. For more up-to-date information about Judaism

in Arizona, The Arizona Jewish Post can be accessed at the following link: <https://azjewishpost.com/>

WHERE TO STAY: I chose the Scottsdale Plaza Resort & Villas (scottsdale-plaza.com), where I was fortunate enough to stay in a beautiful two-story villa. The hotel is incredibly well-located, where you are a 10 to 15-minute drive from all major shopping malls as well as Old Town Scottsdale and the many nearby golf courses. While some of the villas are a longer walk from the hotel lobby due to the large, sprawling property, hotel employees are always happy to drive you across the property on one of their

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TRAVEL TALES

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many golf carts, which can be found at the main entrance and appear at your door within minutes of your request.

One thing that I was looking forward to about my visit was the opportunity to lounge at the pool and enjoy the lovely weather. The Scottsdale Plaza offers visitors a total of five temperature-controlled pools to choose from, including an upper and lower deck main pool, a villa pool, courtyard pool, and casita pool (for those wishing for a quieter experience or those preferring to walk shorter distances from their more peripherally located rooms). For an elevated pool experience, you can rent one of the hotel's private shaded cabanas, which come equipped with sofa seating, two reserved lounge chairs, as well as an umbrella. Moving back in the direction of relaxation, I had the opportunity during my stay to visit the Scottsdale Plaza's Salon & Spa, located directly next to the main pool. While the spa offers a large menu of options, I chose the 50-minute Shea Butter Melt Massage, which I would absolutely do again on my next visit.

DINING OUT: Imperial Market & Deli is the largest kosher grocery store in Arizona. It offers a Glatt Kosher butcher shop, Fleishig (meat) takeout, Shabbat takeout, catering, gourmet Pareve cakes, Cholov Yisroel milk, candies, and Israeli chocolates and desserts, as well as some other exotic items from Israel and from all over the world.

While I did not have the chance to visit this restaurant, Kitchen 18 in Scottsdale prepares food according to Glatt Kosher standards. Their meats are 100 percent kosher, all-nat-

ural, and grass-fed. The kitchen is dairy-free. They use the season's freshest vegetables (organic when available), and their bread and pastries are prepared from scratch.

What can we recommend? The Lincoln Steakhouse & Bar is located at the JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn Resort & Spa. For reservations, call 1 480-948-1700. Marcellino Ristorante is another excellent choice. For Italian food it can't beat. It's located at 7114 E Stetson Dr.

At The House Brasserie, start off with an a mouse bouche (puff pastry topped with parmesan cheese) and the flavorful rose summer sangria. You can also try the escargots de Bourgogne, the branzino, filet mignon and the housemaid beignets made with smoked cinnamon, sugar, and a salted caramel foam for dipping.

THINGS TO DO: Looking to explore the city and its surrounding regions? Camelback Mountain is one of the most prominent outdoor destinations in Arizona. The Phoenix Zoo is another nearby option, with 140 animals spanning 125 acres of land. Butterfly Wonderland is the largest indoor butterfly sanctuary in America. For those who like to shop, there are plenty of neighborhoods and shopping centers to explore. Fashion Square Mall is the largest shopping center in the American Southwest. Kierland Commons is another beautiful, upscale outdoor lifestyle center with tons of stores and restaurants available. Finally, consider Old Town Scottsdale not only for dinner, but for boutique shopping, cozy restaurants, art galleries, and wine tastings.

ELECTION AFTERMATH

The Jewish Democratic Council admitted the morning after the election that "this week has been painful. Alongside so many of you, we poured our heart into this election and the results are devastating. But not all was lost. JDCA accomplished a remarkable amount—we ensured the Jewish vote did not sway to Trump or Republicans."

Not so fast says the Republican Jewish Council which touted its success in convincing Jewish voters to elect Donald Trump as the 47th president of the United States through microtargeted ads directed at key swing states. Speaking at a press conference on the morning after the vote, Matt Brooks, the group's CEO, described the \$15 million effort as "the largest campaign ever targeting the Jewish community in history." "We spent a lot of money because we knew who our voters were," Brooks said. He noted that the RJC was able to reach Jewish voters directly in their homes via their smart televisions or streaming platforms. Ari Fleischer, an RJC board member and former White House spokesman during the George W. Bush administration, argued that more Jewish voters chose Trump because of his support for Israel. "For those who care a lot about Israel, this has been a life-saving election," Fleischer said. "That's why a lot of people, who traditionally would have voted more on the basis of American domestic issues, voted for Trump, because they understand the stakes."

So what did the exit polls tell us.

The RJC pointed to the Fox News voter analysis, which had Trump winning 32% of the Jewish vote, as proof of a swing to Trump. If accurate, that would be the best showing for a Republican

presidential candidate since George H.W. Bush was elected in 1988, but it is also only a two percentage point improvement for Trump over 2020, though it is eight percent higher than 2016.

Other exit polls show Trump getting 43% of the Jewish vote in Florida, 37% in Arizona, 42% in Nevada and 45% in New York. In Orthodox heavy Rockland County, which has the largest Jewish population of any county in the nation, Trump appears to have won 56 per cent.

Pennsylvania likely requires more substantial data before a final conclusion can be drawn. While one exit poll suggested Trump did not do any better this year than he did four years ago, winning just 26% of the Jewish vote, a poll commissioned by the Orthodox Union found that the president-elect won 41% of the Jewish vote. A reliable pre-election poll published in the *Forward* put Jewish support for the Democratic ticket at just 62%, its lowest level since 1988. And for some pollsters Kamala Harris sunk her chances in the Keystone State when she rejected its moderate governor, Josh Shapiro, as her vice-presidential candidate. An exit poll reported that Pennsylvanian Jews voted 48 per cent for Harris and 42 per cent for Trump.

Meanwhile, squad member and virulent anti-Israel critic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez blamed the pro-Israel lobby group AIPAC for Democratic losses in Congress. The New York congresswoman posted on X that "if people want to talk about members of Congress being overly influenced by a special group pushing a wildly unpopular agenda that pushes voters away from Democrats, then they should be discussing AIPAC."