

**RED ROCK AND ROLL:**  
Riding singletrack  
beneath Bell Rock

## Seeking Sedona

Amid the cinematic buttes and sandstone pinnacles, Old West and New Age are cosmically aligned in this Arizona haven **BY DAN OKO**

**S**edona's stunning red-rock formations first showcased their magnetism when Zane Grey's *The Call of the Canyon*—a breathless Western romance about a society woman who abandons New York City for Sedona—hit the silver screen in 1923. Pilgrims have followed ever since: in the eighties, mystics who believed that area crags contained spiritual vortexes (and who gradually established all manner of crystal shops along the main drag) and, today, mountain bikers, hikers, and climbers who flock to Sedona (pop. 10,500) for slickrock riding trails near Submarine and Bell Rocks, meandering hiking paths in Oak Creek Canyon, and nationally celebrated climbing routes on Cathedral Rock. With a veritable boom of new arrivals—mostly outdoors lovers and active retirees—there's growing concern about preserving the surrounding desert landscape. But the success of local open-space initiatives is ensured by the fact that 49 percent of the 19-square-mile city is on national forestland—this means that, no matter how many are entranced by Sedona, it'll always be easy to heed the canyon's call.

### SCOUTING TRIP

### Your Weekend in Sedona



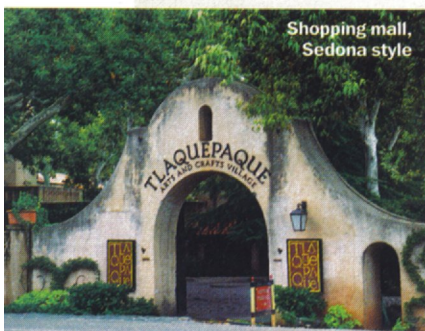
**WHERE TO PLAY:** The three-and-a-half-mile Bell Rock Pathway parallels Arizona State Route 179 and offers easy canyon access (\$5 Forest Service parking fee). For

front-suspension mountain bikes and advice on where to find the best slickrock, try Bike & Bean (\$30 for a half-day rental; [www.bike-bean.com](http://www.bike-bean.com)), in the Village of Oak Creek.

Marketplace (928-282-6311), a locally owned supermarket with a gourmet deli and organic produce.

SEDONA  
Arizona

Shopping mall,  
Sedona style

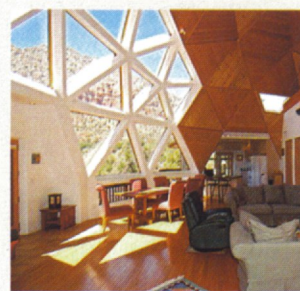


**WHERE TO EAT:** The red-rock mural at the Cowboy Club ([www.cowboyclub.com](http://www.cowboyclub.com)) may be tacky, but how many places feature rattlesnake soup and cactus fries on the menu? Gene Autry and John Wayne once frequented the bar. If you're planning to picnic at Red Rock State Park, stock up at New Frontiers Natural



**WHERE TO SLEEP:** Next to the historic Tlaquepaque shops, the upscale, hacienda-like El Portal (\$250; [www.inn-sedona.com](http://www.inn-sedona.com)) puts you near the heart of the action. A rustic alternative is the Forest Houses Resort (\$90; [www.foresthousesresort.com](http://www.foresthousesresort.com)), a cluster of cabins a few miles north of town on the banks of a trout stream in Oak Creek Canyon.

### WANT TO LIVE HERE?



**REAL ESTATE LOWDOWN:** The median single-family-home price is \$639,000—more than twice that in 2000. The neighboring Village of Oak Creek is more reasonable, but wherever you look, the area's red-rock views can fetch a million-plus.

**OUR PICK:** A 2,700-square-foot, two-bedroom, two-bath, geodesic superdome (above) perched high in the red rocks. Cost: \$679,000. ([www.cb-sedona.com](http://www.cb-sedona.com))

**LOCAL ECONOMY:** Tourism and service industries are the biggest players in town—if you're looking for a job that isn't in those fields, you should bring a transportable career with you. Sedona's average age is 50, and many residents are retirees.

### BY THE NUMBERS

**550,000**

Acreage of the Red Rock Ranger district of the Coconino National Forest, which immediately surrounds town

Sedona's rank in popularity as an Arizona destination: **2** (the Grand Canyon is first)

**25**

Cost, in dollars, of a 15-minute Gemstone Oracle Reading at Body Bliss Factory Direct

**4,500**

Altitude of Sedona, in feet

**“Just don't compare us to Moab, that really chaps my butt.”**

—Tony Fanelli, 35, mountain biker and manager of Bike & Bean