

Phoenix Tower Overview of Visitor Experience

Overview

Rising up four hundred and twenty feet from behind the Arizona Science Center, the Phoenix Tower is the most easily seen and identifiable landmark in the downtown Phoenix area. During the day, its unique shape is reminiscent of a massive golf ball on a long slender tee. At night, the tower is bathed in changing colors from powerful LED lighting that is built into its design. With a diameter of 175 feet, the ball-shaped, layered structure that makes up the top of the tower has over 70,000 square feet of usable space for visitors distributed over a series of evenly spaced layers. These layers are in turn connected by a series of descending ramps and stairs.

At the base of the Tower's stem, a below grade facility called "The Base" holds the ticketing and administrative functions for the attraction, a large retail shop for tower patrons and the elevator staging area for the lifts that take visitors to the structure overhead. High above downtown Phoenix, the tower portion holds a large observation area, indoor exhibits, a comfortable lounge area, a first-class restaurant and banquet facilities. Also in the spherical structure is support space for these functions consisting of restrooms, kitchens, food storage areas, a small office area for kitchen management and employee services such as break rooms.

Parking and the Attractions Surroundings

The Phoenix Tower is planned to sit at the Southwest corner of Heritage Square in Downtown Phoenix where N 6th Street and E Adams Street meet. These thoroughfares service pedestrian traffic to the shops, restaurants and museums that make up the Heritage Square development behind the Arizona Science Museum and are typically closed to thru traffic. Visitors traveling to the Phoenix Tower will have the choice of parking in either the parking structure normally used by Arizona Science Museum and the Phoenix Museum of History, or a larger structure located on the southern side of Washington Street directly across from the Arizona Science Center. The Arizona Science Center parking structure is located at the Northwest quarter of the square block formed by Monroe Street, 7th Street, Washington Street and 5th Street and will be the preferred parking location for Tower Visitors because of its close adjacency to the ticketing and elevator functions of the attraction.

The Base

Sitting twenty feet below grade and occupying approximately 10,000 square feet of space, “The Base” services as the gateway to the restaurant and observation tower above it. Visitors enter The Base through a long circular seven foot wide ramp that curves downward from a large concrete plaza area at ground level. At the bottom landing of the ramp is an entrance into The Base’s main lobby. Here, visitors can purchase tickets to travel up to the Tower’s observation levels and exhibit areas or make reservations for a table at the Tower’s restaurant. This is also the entrance portal for visitors wishing to make their way to the bar lounge within the Tower structure or to attend a wedding reception, birthday party, corporate event or other affair being held in the Tower’s banquet facilities.

Current planning estimates indicate that there is the need for three general ticket windows, with one of these windows being developed to have the ability to service disabled guests. In addition to the ticket windows, two additional windows will be available for such services as school group check-in, group ticket sales and pickup, will-call services and other guest relations functions.

The Base’s lobby will also host the main retail function for the Tower Attraction. Between 3,500 and 4,000 square feet in size, this shop will feature unique Phoenix Tower branded merchandise in addition to souvenirs and goods relating to Downtown Phoenix, Phoenix sports teams and the State of Arizona. Other potential retail operations found in the shop may include a photo pickup counter where visitors who have had photographs of themselves taken by professional Tower staff at the top of the observation deck can choose an image to have professionally printed and mounted or digitally transferred to a USB drive or compact data disk.

After purchasing their admission ticket for the observation deck, visitors will have the option of using a set of public restrooms before proceeding from the entrance lobby to the attraction entrance and elevator area. After presenting their ticket to the Tower lobby host, visitors will be grouped in units of eighteen visitors and gathered in a waiting area in front of one of the Tower’s three glass walled elevators. During normal operations, two of the elevators will be dedicated to visitors wishing to visit the observation area of the Tower, while the third elevator will at times be reserved for visitors traveling to the lounge, banquet, or restaurant levels. During peak attendance periods, the third elevator may also make some trips to the observation decks and increase the vertical circulation capacity of the observation elevators.

While waiting for their elevator to arrive, visitors will be treated to a multimedia presentation, or “Pre-Show,” that will prepare them for their visit to the top of the Phoenix Tower. This short video will briefly discuss the history of the tower and some interesting facts and figures relating to its construction in a humorous and entertaining fashion. After watching the Pre-Show presentation, visitors will board their elevator and be transported up to the Tower’s observation area.

The Phoenix Tower – Observation Area and Exhibits

The glass-walled elevators deposit visitors at the base of the observation area of the Phoenix Tower. Occupying the upper third of the Tower’s spherical structure, the observation area features stunning views of the City of Phoenix from a singular perspective. Guests will have the option to travel up a wide spiral walk-way to the pinnacle of the tower - a twenty-five foot in diameter observation deck that offers unsurpassed three-hundred-and-sixty degree views of the City’s skyline. Here, visitors will have the option of having their picture taken by Tower staff as they pose in front of this one-of-a-kind backdrop. Along the edge of the observation area’s decks and pedestrian ramps will be a number of coin operated viewing stations that will allow visitors to get more detailed views of the surrounding City. Information displays will be located in strategic locations to inform visitors of interesting facts correlating with views that can be seen from observation area near each display.

Other visitor amenities in the Observation area will include restroom facilities and a snack kiosk where visitors can purchase cold beverages to sip and tasty snacks to eat while looking out over the city.

At the base of the observation area will be an enclosed exhibit area featuring entertaining and educational displays and artifacts relating to the Southwest and Arizona region of the United States. Potential themes for the exhibits are Native American history and culture, animal and plant species unique to the Arizona area or props and costumes of feature films and television recorded in the Phoenix area. The final exhibit mix and makeup will be developed with the aid of a professional design firm specializing in the creation of such exhibits.

Finally, after touring the observation area, visitors will have the option of taking the elevators back to The Base, or entering the lounge or restaurant located in the tower for a refreshing beverage or fine dining experience.

The Phoenix Tower - Lounge and Restaurant

The Phoenix Tower will feature both a one-hundred seat bar lounge and a two-hundred seat first-class restaurant. These features, and their accompanying kitchen, storage and support areas, will be occupying two levels of the Tower structure. The lounge will be available to visitors who want to enjoy either a light meal and alcoholic beverage in a unique setting, who have finished touring the observation area and want to relax before finishing their visit of the tower, or guests planning to dine in the Tower's restaurant who want a place to wait for their table to be prepared while enjoying a beverage. The lounge has the potential to host light entertainment, such as a piano player or a small jazz or blues band.

The Tower restaurant is envisioned as being a Steak and Seafood establishment that features a southwest "feel" to both its food and its themed surroundings. The Tower may contract with a popular celebrity chef to aid in the development of its menu, presentation and also carry their name. Current planning anticipates that the average dinner check will be in the \$60 per guest range which places it on a similar level as the Seattle Space Needle's Sky City and other unique dining experiences.

Elevator landings at the Banquet, Restaurant and Lounge areas, in addition to attractive stairways connecting these sections, will allow smooth vertical visitor flow in these functions of the Tower. Based on the layout of the restaurant and the kitchens, there may be a need for a dumbwaiter transport system between the service functions of these areas to aid in the movement of food and other necessary supplies during operations.

The Phoenix Tower - Banquet Area

The Phoenix Tower can expect a heavy demand of patrons wishing to host various events within the Tower. The final full-size level will be dedicated to just this purpose with a large banquet hall that features 350 seats. This hall can be easily divided in half to form two smaller 175 seating areas. The banquet facilities will be ideal for weddings, Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvahs, corporate events and fundraisers.

Potential Special Events

In addition to its normal tour and restaurant operations, the Phoenix Tower is in a singular position of being able to host large ticketed events that occupy the entire tower facility such as New Year's Eve parties and other special events. The Lounge can feature summer nightclub evenings that combine both the lounge and the observation deck into a single festive entertainment experience. The potential secondary uses for the Tower's visitor amenities are virtually limitless and are sure to provide additional revenue opportunities through enhanced visitor experiences far into the future.