

A Day in Scottsdale With Kids — from The Rally House

14241 N 54th Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85254. Built around heat, naps, and short drives — everything below is within 25 minutes of the house, with the middle of the day spent back at the pool.

The one-day family itinerary

Out early, home by noon, pool through the hot hours, then an easy evening. The plan that actually survives a toddler.

7:15 A.M.	Slow breakfast at the house Pancakes on the island, cartoons in the great room. Kids wake early on Mountain time — use it instead of fighting it.
8:15 A.M.	Leave for the morning outing Everything worth doing outdoors in Scottsdale happens before 11 a.m. Load water bottles, hats, and sunscreen at the door.
8:45 A.M.	Pick one: zoo, museum, or desert walk Phoenix Zoo (25 min) for the stroller-friendly loop and giraffe feeding; Butterfly Wonderland and OdySea Aquarium (12 min) if it's already hot; McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park (10 min) for train rides and a carousel with toddlers; or the flat, shaded Gateway Loop trailhead at the McDowell Sonoran Preserve for a short hike with older kids.
11:00 A.M.	Snack and a splash stop The splash pad at Scottsdale Civic Center or the Kierland Commons lawn (7 min from the house) — free, shaded, and a good reset before the drive back.
12:00 P.M.	Lunch back at the house This is the whole reason to base in North Scottsdale. Sandwiches at the kitchen island beat a 40-minute wait with hungry kids.
1:00 P.M.	Pool, then quiet time Heated pool, shaded lounge chairs, and the bunk room for naps. Younger kids sleep, older ones swim.
3:00 P.M.	Backyard olympics Pickleball on the private court, ping pong, and the putting green. Run a family tournament — it buys you two hours.

5:00 P.M.

Ice cream or an early dinner run

Kierland and Scottsdale Quarter are 7 minutes out with patios, gelato, and fountains kids can circle while you finish a drink.

6:30 P.M.

Grill night at the house

Burgers on the grill, kids back in the pool, adults on the patio. No check, no shushing, no rush.

8:00 P.M.

S'mores at the firepit

The one thing every kid remembers about the trip. Roast, then bed — they'll go down without a fight after a day like this.

If it's too hot, swap in

- OdySea Aquarium and Butterfly Wonderland (12 min) — fully indoor, air-conditioned, easily two hours.
- i.d.e.a. Museum in Phoenix (25 min) — hands-on art and building for ages 2-10.
- Arizona Boardwalk complex — aquarium, butterflies, and a pirate-themed mini golf in one parking lot.
- Movie theater at Kierland or Scottsdale Quarter (7 min), then back for a late swim once the sun drops.

Bring these

- Reef-safe sunscreen and hats — the desert sun is stronger than the temperature suggests.
- Water bottles for everyone; hand them out before you leave the house, not at the trailhead.
- Pool floats and goggles are worth the suitcase space for a multi-day stay.
- Baby monitor if you're using the bunk room for naps while you're out back.
- Plan outdoor time before 11 a.m. and after 5 p.m. May through September.

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