

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO *Winter*

IN GILBERT, MESA & QUEEN CREEK

KASEY INGRAM | EQUITY SOLUTIONS REALTY

WINTER 2026–27

WELCOME

What winter looks like here

Every year someone asks me what winter even looks like here. Honestly, it's the reason a lot of us live here: sweater mornings, patio lunches and lights on the palm trees all December.

This is the list I send to friends, the traditions I never skip, the places I take people from out of town, and the things that make these months the best of the year. Steal all of it.

If we haven't met yet, I'm Kasey, and I've been showing people around the East Valley for 21 years.

WINTER HERE MEANS

- Lights on the palm trees
- Sweaters before noon
- Real ice in the desert



Make the most of *the season*

Every year the season goes the same way: Thanksgiving leftovers one week, tree lightings the next, and then suddenly it's spring training.

December

HAPPENING:
Tumbleweed Tree
Dec 5 | Chandler

WORTH EATING:
Campfire s'mores
Schnepf Farms | QC

GET OUTSIDE:
Riparian After Dark
Mid-Dec | Gilbert

January

HAPPENING:
MLK Parade
Jan 18 | Mesa

WORTH EATING:
Multicultural Fest
Jan 16 | Chandler

GET OUTSIDE:
Siphon Draw Trail
Lost Dutchman

February

HAPPENING:
Cubs Spring Training
From Feb 19 | Mesa

WORTH EATING:
Renaissance Festival
From Feb 6

GET OUTSIDE:
Saguaro Lake
Peak hiking weather







THE FEEL

Slow mornings

Cool mornings are the whole point of winter here. Sweater on, coffee first, then wherever the day goes.



COFFEE

Peixoto Coffee, Chandler

A warm pour-over on a chilly morning

BAKERY

Rise Up Bakery, Gilbert

Fresh bread for holiday tables

BREAKFAST

San Tan Cafe, Queen Creek

Pancakes that are bigger than the plate

QUIET SPOT

Riparian Preserve, Gilbert

Winter is peak bird-watching season

THE FEEL

Outside

This is the season Arizona was made for: sunshine, 60s and 70s, and trails you can hike at noon.



TRAIL OR WALK

Wind Cave Trail, Usery Park

Short, steep, best on a crisp morning

PARK

San Tan Mountain Park

Quiet desert trails, perfect in winter

LOOKOUT

Lost Dutchman State Park

Early winter sunsets over the Superstitions

BEST PATIO

Queen Creek Olive Mill

Lunch in the winter sun, under the olive trees

THE FEEL

With the kids

Winter break goes easier when you already know where you're going. These are the reliable ones.



HOLIDAY NIGHT OUT

Christmas at Schnepf Farms

Lights, rides, Santa + campfires

TREAT STOP

Cinnaholic, Gilbert

Build-your-own cinnamon rolls

ICE SKATING

Merry Main Street, Mesa

Real ice, $11 with skates, thru Jan 9

DOG FRIENDLY

Cosmo Dog Park, Gilbert

Off-leash fun, with a pond for swimmers

THE FEEL

After dark

Evenings are crisp, the lights are up and everyone's out. Here is where I'd spend one if I had it free.



DINNER

Downtown Chandler

Dinner on the square, then the Tumbleweed Tree

DRINKS

Garage East, Gilbert

Local wine in a barn at Agritopia

DESSERT

MallowHaus, Gilbert

Toasted s'mores desserts, made for cold nights

THE NUTCRACKER

Mesa Arts Center

Ballet Etudes, Dec 12–20, then a nightcap

THE FEEL

When people visit

Holiday guests and snowbirds are in town. This is the short list I actually hand them.



FIRST STOP

Gilbert Heritage District

The water tower lit for the holidays

THE ONE MEAL

Joe's Farm Grill, Gilbert

Farm-fresh burgers at Agritopia

THE VIEW

Saguaro Lake

Blue water + canyon walls, made for winter

ONLY HERE

Chandler's Tumbleweed Tree

A 30+ foot tree made of tumbleweeds

EVERY YEAR

Traditions

The things locals look forward to every winter.

Merry Main Street

Nov 27–Jan 9 · Mesa's tree + real ice rink

Mesa Temple Christmas Lights

Nov 27–Dec 30 · Free, nightly 5–10pm

A Christmas Carol at Hale

From Nov 27 · Downtown Gilbert

Water Tower Holiday Lighting

Early December · Gilbert Heritage District

Tumbleweed Tree + Parade of Lights

Dec 5 · Downtown Chandler, free

Gilbert Giving Machines

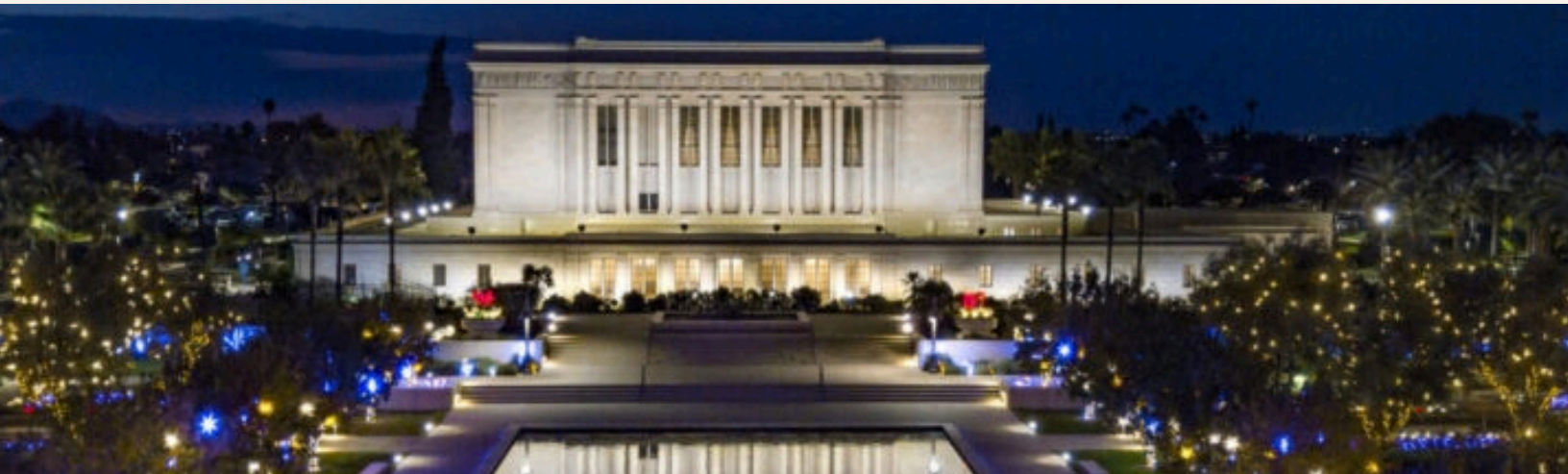
Nov 17–Dec 31 · Downtown Gilbert

Fantasy of Lights Boat Parade

Dec 12 · Tempe Town Lake + fireworks

Riparian After Dark

Mid-December · Gilbert, timed tickets



DON’T MISS THESE

The *Winter* bucket list

- [ ] First fire pit night of the year
- [ ] Drive through a neighborhood's lights
- [ ] A sweater farmers market
- [ ] Skate on real ice in downtown Mesa
- [ ] Give at the Gilbert Giving Machines
- [ ] Hot cocoa somewhere new on a weekday
- [ ] Watch a sunset over the Superstitions
- [ ] Take the long walk instead of the short one
- [ ] See the Tumbleweed Tree in person
- [ ] Eat outside with people you like
- [ ] Explore an East Valley town you never visit
- [ ] Buy a gift from a local maker
- [ ] Watch the boat parade on Tempe Town Lake
- [ ] A morning hike before the day starts
- [ ] Bring a neighbor holiday cookies
- [ ] One night with the phone in another room
- [ ] Catch a Cubs spring training game



YOUR WINTER HOME CHECKLIST

Ten Things, *One Weekend*

- [ ] Test the heat before a cold night
- [ ] Flush the water heater
- [ ] Fresh smoke + CO batteries
- [ ] Cover frost-tender plants
- [ ] Ceiling fans to clockwise
- [ ] Swap the HVAC filter
- [ ] Wrap the backflow + pipes
- [ ] Set irrigation to winter hours
- [ ] Check roof tiles before the rain
- [ ] Clean the fireplace or gas logs

WHO I'D CALL

The four numbers I give out most. Save them before you need them.

PAINTER

Jesus Alcevo
480-695-4396

LANDSCAPER

Vaquero Landscape
480-791-9760

CARPET

Arturo Ortega
480-221-8466

HVAC

Thors HVAC
480-800-8467



Need a different vendor referral or recommendation?
I've spent years building relationships with local businesses I'd genuinely recommend to family. Send me a message and I'll connect you.

WORTH THE DRIVE

Weekend trips

Flagstaff

DRIVE TIME	About 2.5 hours
KNOWN FOR	Real snow + a cozy downtown
WORTH THE STOP	Arizona Snowbowl

Sedona

DRIVE TIME	About 2 hours
KNOWN FOR	Red rocks, sometimes dusted with snow
WORTH THE STOP	Tlaquepaque at the holidays

Tucson

DRIVE TIME	About 1.5 hours
KNOWN FOR	Sonoran food + Mt. Lemmon snow
WORTH THE STOP	Winterhaven Festival of Lights



ABOUT ME



Hey there, I'm Kasey

EAST VALLEY LOCAL REAL ESTATE AGENT

I love sharing what makes the East Valley special. For more local recs, check out my Instagram or send me a message. I'd love to hear from you!

@GILBERTANDBEYOND
602.370.5904
KASEYINGRAM@ESREALTYAZ.COM

Let's talk

Thinking about a move in the new year? Start here.

SCHEDULE A CALL