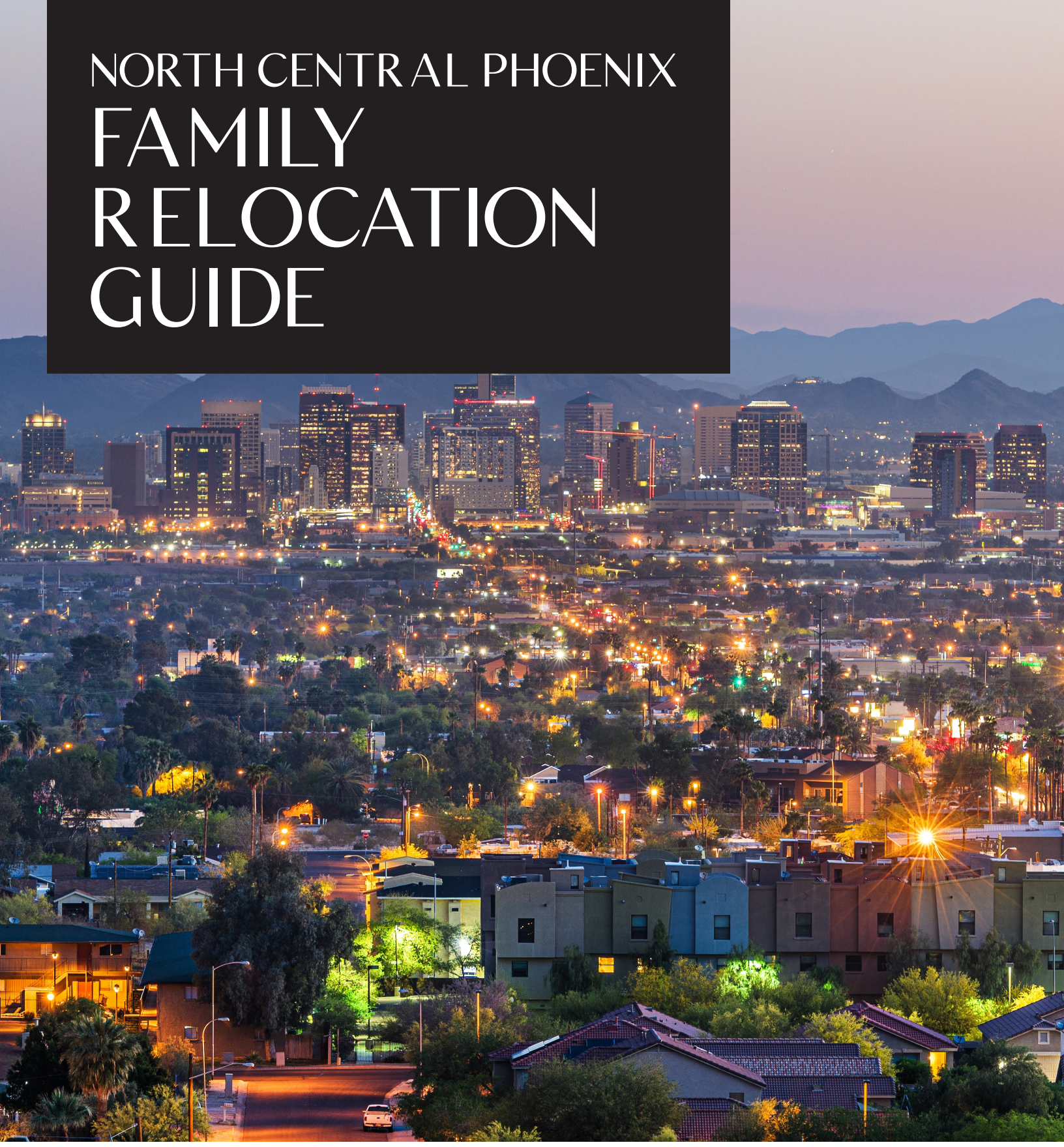
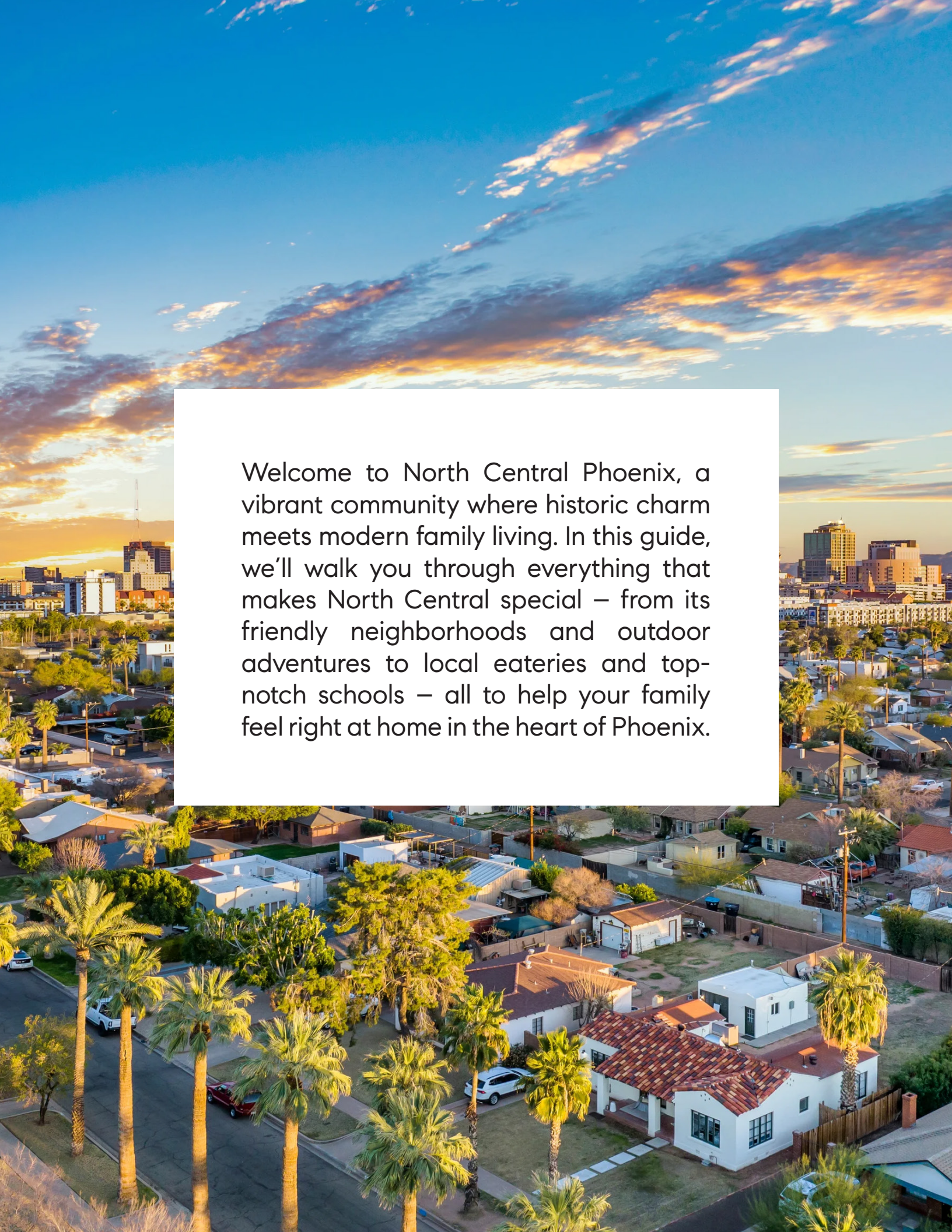
NORTH CENTRAL PHOENIX

FAMILY RELOCATION GUIDE



"Happiness doesn't have just one address."

– ANONYMOUS



Welcome to North Central Phoenix, a vibrant community where historic charm meets modern family living. In this guide, we'll walk you through everything that makes North Central special – from its friendly neighborhoods and outdoor adventures to local eateries and top-notch schools – all to help your family feel right at home in the heart of Phoenix.



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Meet Kari, Your North Central Guide

"If you're brave enough to say goodbye, life will reward you with a new hello." – Paulo Coelho Hello and welcome! I'm Kari, a third-generation Phoenician, local real estate agent, and proud North Central Phoenix expert. My roots here run deep: with family ties spanning 60+ years in the Valley, I have a genuine passion for this community's culture and lifestyle. I've spent over a decade helping families relocate, downsize, and find their perfect homes, and I'm especially skilled at guiding clients through big life transitions.

Why North Central?

Simply put, I love this area – from the tree-lined historic streets to the close-knit neighborhood vibe. I've served in local nonprofits for 18 years, which instilled in me a service-first approach. My goal is not just to find you a house, but to help you fall in love with Arizona and this wonderful community you'll soon call home. When I'm not working, you might find me exploring desert trails in my Jeep, camping under the stars, or walking my two dogs along Central's green spaces.

In the pages ahead, you'll get an insider's look at North Central Phoenix – the neighborhoods, the schools, the fun weekend activities, and the local spots that make this area unique. I'm excited to share my favorite insights and tips to help your family transition smoothly into life here. Let's dive in!



Windsor Square – Historic Gem with Heart

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."
– Coretta Scott King

Windsor Square is one of Phoenix's most treasured historic neighborhoods, often celebrated for its charm and community spirit. Tucked just north of downtown, this 260-home district was developed in 1929 and was even voted one of the nation's "Best Big-City Neighborhoods" by Money magazine. Walking its tree-lined streets, you'll find beautifully preserved homes (most built in the 1930s-1950s) in styles from Tudor Revivals to cozy bungalows, all lovingly maintained by proud residents. Neighbors here are famously friendly and active – from organizing annual home tours and block parties to volunteering in local events, Windsor Square's sense of community is truly special.

Unique Features: Windsor Square offers a rare blend of vintage charm and urban convenience. The neighborhood sits between Central Ave and 7th Street (Camelback to Missouri), placing you steps from dining, shopping, and the light rail station at Central/Camelback. Despite being so central, it feels like a peaceful oasis. Families love the proximity to top schools (it's in the Madison School District) and the ease of a quick commute downtown. A special planning district helps preserve Windsor Square's character and prevent over-development, so the historic atmosphere endures.

Home Prices: Windsor Square is highly sought-after, and home prices reflect its popularity. Most houses are midsize (2–4 bedrooms) on generous lots. Recent sale prices range roughly $500,000 up to $1.1 million, with a median around $900K as of 2025. You'll find everything from quaint cottages to expanded remodels; many homes have modern updates inside while retaining vintage curb appeal. Investing in Windsor Square isn't just buying a house – it's joining a warm, engaged neighborhood that truly feels like a small town in the big city.



Medlock Place – Orchard Roots & Eclectic Charm

"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much."
– Helen Keller

Medlock Place is a historic district that perfectly balances old-fashioned charm with modern livability. In the 1920s this area was dotted with fruit orchards and farmhouses, and that heritage lives on in the spacious lots, mature trees, and variety of architectural styles. From storybook 1930s Tudors and Spanish Colonials to mid-century ranch homes, Medlock Place is an eclectic mix – no cookie-cutter streets here! It's bounded roughly by Central Ave and 7th Ave, from Pasadena Ave up to Missouri Ave, placing it right in the heart of North Central.

Unique Characteristics: Medlock Place's larger lot sizes and lush landscaping give it a suburban feel in the city. Neighbors take pride in preserving the area's character – the neighborhood earned historic designation in 2003 to protect its "old Phoenix" feel. You'll often see residents walking dogs or chatting on front porches under the shade of citrus and olive trees. This area is also steps from modern conveniences: walk to Uptown Plaza shops, catch the light rail nearby, or enjoy local eateries along Central. The vibe is laid-back and family-friendly, with a touch of artsy flair.

Home Prices: Medlock Place offers a range of home sizes, from cozy 2-bedroom cottages to larger remodeled ranches. Recent listings span approximately $400K up to $1M+, depending on size and updates. The median home price is around the mid-$600Ks as of late 2025. Many homes retain charming historic details (arched doorways, original hardwoods) alongside modern renovations. It's a competitive market due to limited inventory – families often "wait in line" for a chance at a Medlock home, knowing they'll gain not just a house but a welcoming community.



Pierson Place – Urban Energy & Vintage Vibes

"We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us."
– Herman Melville

Pierson Place Historic District offers a funkier slice of Phoenix history with an urban twist. Developed from the 1920s through 1950s, Pierson Place grew up alongside the city's expansion – its first subdivision (aptly named Suburban Acres) was platted in 1924 just 10 minutes from the downtown of that era. Today, this neighborhood (nestled roughly between 7th Ave and Central, just south of Camelback Rd) is known for its mix of quaint historic homes and small mid-century apartment complexes, all hidden within a walkable area near the Central/Camelback light rail stop.

Unique Characteristics: What makes Pierson Place special is its diversity. About 85% of properties are single-family houses – charming brick bungalows, English cottages, and ranches – while the remaining 15% are unique duplexes, triplexes, and courtyard apartments that add character. This blend means the neighborhood attracts a variety of residents: young professionals, singles, retirees, and families all call Pierson Place home. There's an energetic, up-and-coming feel thanks to new restaurants, coffee shops, and the revitalized Uptown area just steps away. Yet the community cherishes its past; being a designated historic district, many homes proudly display historic plaques. Neighbors here are very engaged in block watch programs and neighborhood improvement committees – there's a real spirit of "looking out for each other," which contributes to Pierson Place's low crime and strong camaraderie.

Home Prices: Pierson Place tends to be a bit more affordable than some North Central enclaves, while still gaining value quickly. Cozier historic homes (2–3 bedrooms) might start in the mid/high $300Ks, and larger or fully updated homes can reach the $600–700K range. The median home price is around $536,000 as of recent analyses. The presence of condos and townhomes nearby means newcomers can sometimes find an entry-level option, but single-family homes here remain in high demand. For its central location and historic appeal, Pierson Place offers great value – plus the benefit of a truly urban neighborhood where you can stroll to dinner or hop on the train downtown.



Uptown Phoenix – Where Retro Meets Trendy

"Wherever you go, go with all your heart."
– Confucius

Welcome to Uptown Phoenix, the vibrant district where urban energy blends into relaxed suburban charm. "Uptown" isn't a single neighborhood but rather a broader area (roughly 4 miles north of Downtown) centered around the iconic Central Avenue and Camelback Road intersection. Here, historic mid-century buildings house modern restaurants and shops, creating a unique atmosphere locals affectionately call the "Central Corridor." Uptown is known for its vibrant food scene, weekly farmers' markets, and the feeling that you're at the city's heartbeat without the hustle of downtown.

Unique Characteristics: Uptown Phoenix boasts the restored Uptown Plaza, a 1955 shopping center turned hip dining hub – think retro architecture with today's favorite eateries and boutiques. Along North Central Avenue, towering palm trees and mid-century office towers mark the transition from city high-rises to residential historic homes. This area is a foodie's paradise: you'll find everything from trendy brunch spots to upscale dining (many highlighted in our Local Favorites section). Uptown is also highly walkable – it scores a Walk Score of ~75 ("Very Walkable"), meaning many errands and dining trips can be done on foot. The light rail serves Uptown with multiple stations (Central/Camelback and Campbell/Central), making it easy to zip downtown or to Midtown museums. Despite the buzz, Uptown's adjacent residential pockets (like Windsor Square and Pierson Place) ensure there are quiet spots to retreat. It's truly where "the city meets the suburbs".

Lifestyle and Community: Uptown residents enjoy an active lifestyle. You'll see people jogging or biking down Central's famed Murphy Bridle Path – a shaded gravel path under old ash trees that runs for miles along Central Avenue (a beloved route for morning walks and stroller jogs). There's a strong sense of local pride, too: community events like the Uptown Farmers Market (held year-round at a local church) draw families together for fresh produce, food trucks, and fun. With quick access to downtown's sports and arts and the convenience of neighborhood shops, Uptown Phoenix offers the best of both worlds. It's upscale yet unpretentious – a place where stylish new coffee shops sit beside decades-old boutiques, and neighbors greet each other at weekly yoga classes or school drop-off. If you crave an area that's both dynamic and family-friendly, Uptown delivers in spades.

Home Prices: Uptown spans several micro-neighborhoods, so prices vary. Along the Central Corridor, you'll find elegant ranch-style homes on large lots (often $800K–$1M+), classic red-brick homes in the $500–$700K range, as well as luxury high-rise condos with skyline views. Overall, North Central Corridor homes command premium prices due to location and desirability, but you'll also find townhomes and condos that provide more budget-friendly options for living in this area. Renting? Uptown's average rents range from about $1,300 for a one-bedroom to $1,700+ for a three-bedroom apartment – a good value given the central location



Historic Downtown Phoenix – Where the Past and Present Converge

"Arizona's history is as layered as its landscapes, every road a path to a piece of the past."
– David McCullough

Though you may be moving to North Central, the allure of Downtown Phoenix is just a few minutes away. Downtown is the historic heart of the city – the vibrant epicenter where Phoenix's rich past blends seamlessly with its modern urban development. Strolling downtown, you'll encounter a fascinating mix: gleaming office towers and condos share the skyline with beautifully restored buildings from the early 1900s. The atmosphere pulses with city energy, yet pockets of historic charm remain on every corner.

Why You'll Love It: Downtown Phoenix is a cultural and entertainment hub for the entire Valley. Love sports or live music? Footprint Center and Chase Field host NBA games, concerts, and MLB games. Prefer arts and history? Explore the Phoenix Art Museum and Heard Museum just north of downtown, or the Children's Museum and Science Center near Heritage Square. The downtown core itself boasts more than 200 restaurants, bars, galleries, and theaters. You can catch a Broadway show at the historic Orpheum Theatre, then grab dinner at a hip taco spot in a 1920s warehouse – all in one evening. Roosevelt Row, on downtown's north end, is a walkable arts district famed for its colorful murals and First Friday art walk events.

Historic Charm: Despite rapid growth, downtown honors its history through several historic districts nestled in or around the city center. Stroll down palm-lined streets in Willo or Roosevelt Historic District to see Craftsman bungalows and Tudor homes from Phoenix's early days. Visit Heritage Square, a preserved block of Victorian homes (now museums and restaurants) dating back to the 1800s. Even the new high-rises often incorporate design elements echoing the past. Downtown's charm lies in this juxtaposition – you might sip coffee in a modern glass tower lobby in the morning, and by afternoon find yourself in a 1930s red-brick building that's now a bookshop.

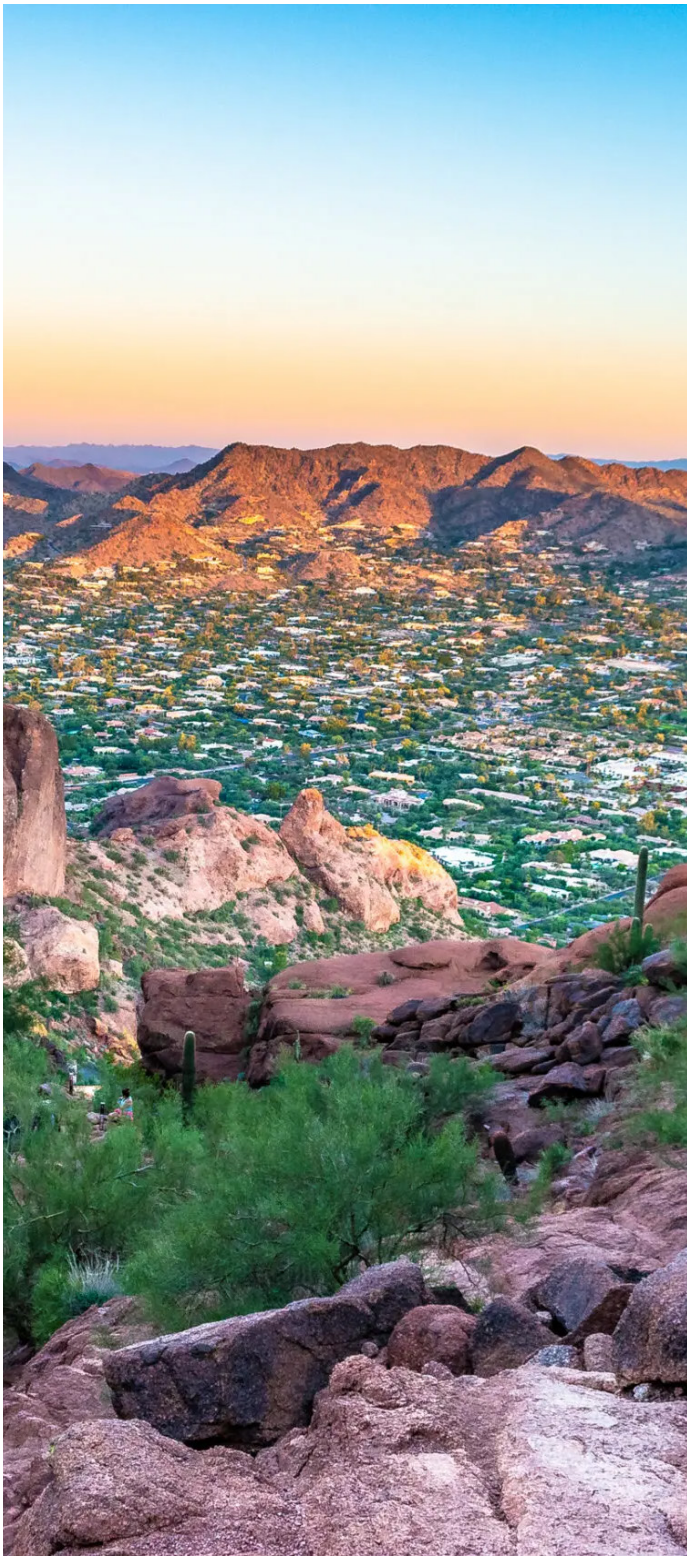
Family Fun & Dining: Downtown offers plenty for families on an outing. Kids love the Arizona Science Center and the Children's Museum of Phoenix, both located in downtown's east end. There's also the Arizona Diamondbacks baseball at Chase Field – always a hit for family night. Dining options are endless: local favorites range from Pizzeria Bianco (nationally acclaimed pizza in Heritage Square) to The Arrogant Butcher (classic American fare right by Talking Stick Arena). Don't miss the Phoenix Public Market on Saturday mornings – a bustling farmers' market with local produce, food trucks, and crafts, exemplifying the community spirit amid the high-rises.

In short, downtown is the perfect weekend adventure for North Central families: close by, packed with attractions, and a reminder that Phoenix's "big city" excitement and historic roots are both at your fingertips.

Top Things To Do: Outdoor Adventures & Active Living

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks."
– John Muir

North Central Phoenix is ideally situated for families who love to get out and explore. From hiking desert trails at sunrise to paddle-boarding on a serene lake, you'll find countless activities that make the most of our sunny weather and stunning landscapes. Here are some of the top outdoor things to do (with handy links!) that locals love:



1. Hit the Trails – Best Hiking Spots

Camelback Mountain (Echo Canyon & Cholla Trails) – Phoenix's most iconic hike. Camelback's summit soars 1,200 feet above the city, rewarding hikers with 360° views of Phoenix. The two main routes:

> **Echo Canyon Trail** – 2.5-mile round trip, extremely steep and challenging (best for experienced hikers). Features rocky scrambles and railings to assist near the top.
>
> **Cholla Trail** – 3+ mile round trip, also difficult but with a slightly gentler start. Tip: Start at sunrise to beat the heat and crowds.

Piestewa Peak (Summit Trail #300) – Formerly "Squaw Peak," this is the city's second-highest point and a local favorite for a workout. A 2.4-mile out-and-back trek that's steep in spots with built-in steps. You'll see everyone from energetic kids to active seniors making the ascent. The trailhead (in the Phoenix Mountains Preserve) has restrooms and water.

North Mountain & Shaw Butte – Right in North Central's backyard, the North Mountain Park offers family-friendly hikes. The North Mountain trail is a moderate 1.6-mile paved route to the summit (great for kids and leashed pups). Shaw Butte trail (4+ miles) loops around ruins of an old restaurant atop the hill – a fun history bonus. Both summits give lovely city views without the Camelback-level intensity.

Dreamy Draw Recreation Area – Aptly named, this area (off Northern Ave) has a network of easy desert trails winding through creosote bush and saguaro cacti. Perfect for evening strolls or beginner mountain biking. The Dreamy Draw Nature Trail is a flat 1.5-mile path that's stroller-friendly. .

Top Things To Do: Outdoor Adventures & Active Living



2. Make a Splash – Best Lakes Nearby

Believe it or not, water fun is within easy reach of Phoenix! Several beautiful lakes lie on the outskirts of the city, offering boating, swimming, and waterside relaxation – a perfect weekend escape especially in warm months. Locals particularly love:

Lake Pleasant – The largest lake near Phoenix (10,000 acres) and just 45 minutes northwest. Lake Pleasant is a water sports paradise: you'll find windsurfers, jet-skiers, sailors, and fishermen all enjoying the clear waters. Two marinas (Scorpion Bay and Pleasant Harbor) offer boat rentals – from pontoon party boats to kayaks. There are also shaded picnic areas, campgrounds, and even a floating waterslide in summer. Why we love it: Wide-open water and lots of coves to explore; it's always bustling with activity and has some of the best sunset views over the Bradshaw Mountains.

Saguaro Lake – A desert oasis east of the city, about 40 miles from North Central. As you drive into Tonto National Forest, suddenly you're greeted by towering canyon walls and sparkling blue water – that's Saguaro Lake. It's a bit smaller and more secluded than Pleasant. Rent a boat or bring a kayak to explore hidden coves (you might spot wild bighorn sheep on the cliffs!). Families love the Desert Belle sightseeing cruise that tours the lake. And yes, there are plenty of saguaro cacti dotting the shoreline, giving the lake its name. Whether you're into water-skiing or just floating and fishing, Saguaro Lake's dramatic scenery makes it special
visitphoenix.com

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Canyon Lake, Bartlett Lake, and More: Phoenix actually has a chain of lakes (formed by dammed rivers) – each with its own vibe. Canyon Lake is past Saguaro Lake, featuring steep canyons and a popular lakeside campground. Bartlett Lake lies to the northeast, known for calm waters and great bass fishing. For a bigger adventure, Roosevelt Lake (about 2 hours out) is the largest of them all with 110 miles of shoreline. No matter which you choose, a lake day is an Arizona family must-do: pack the sunscreen, beach towels, and maybe some inflatable tubes for a day of fun in the sun.

Top Things To Do: Outdoor Adventures & Active Living



3. Stay Fit & Active – Local Fitness Options

North Central Phoenix is an active community, and you'll find a plethora of options to keep your family moving and healthy. Whether you prefer organized classes or solo workouts, here are some favorites:

Murphy's Bridle Path – We mentioned it earlier, but it's worth highlighting as a fitness asset. This shady 2.5-mile path along Central Avenue's median is perfect for jogging, walking, or biking with the family. You'll join scores of locals on weekend mornings enjoying this beautiful tree-lined route.
It's stroller-friendly and dog-friendly (you'll meet many a friendly pup en route).

FLC Fitness Center (Family Life Center) – A fantastic family-oriented gym at North Phoenix Baptist Church (Central & Bethany Home). The FLC is like a community hub: it has a full gymnasium, weight room, indoor track, group fitness classes, and even an indoor skating rink for kids! Memberships are very affordable (around $50/month for a family of 3+) and no contracts, making it popular for families who want open gym time and kids' leagues (they offer youth basketball and flag football programs too!). The casual, welcoming atmosphere means you don't have to be a hardcore athlete – all ages and fitness levels are comfortable here.

Boutique Fitness Studios: If classes and trendy workouts are your thing, North Central has you covered. Orangetheory Fitness has a studio on Glendale Avenue offering high-energy interval classes. HOTWORX (Central Ave) provides 24-hour access to infrared-heated yoga, cycling, and more. Love yoga or Pilates? Try locally owned studios like Desert Song Yoga or Sweatshop on Central for yoga, or Club Pilates on 7th Street for reformer classes. CrossFit enthusiasts flock to Back Alley CrossFit on 16th Street – a gym proud to have been part of North Central's community since 2012, known for its supportive coaches. No matter your preference – spin, barre, Zumba, or bootcamp – you'll find a class at almost any time of day somewhere nearby (and likely a neighbor in it with you!).

Parks & Recreation: Don't forget local parks for free fitness fun. Los Olivos Park (near 28th St & Glendale) has sports fields and a walking track. Encanto Park (just a bit south in Midtown) offers a lovely setting for a run around the lake or a game of pickleball. And speaking of pickleball – it's huge in Phoenix now! There are public courts at Phoenix Tennis Center (Washington Park) where families play the easy-to-learn paddle sport together.

Staying active here is easy – our weather practically begs you to be outside, and the community makes fitness fun. From organized runs to family bike rides on the canal paths, North Central Phoenix truly embodies the idea that a family who plays together, stays together.

Favorite Local Spots – Eats & Treats You'll Love

"People who love to eat are always the best people."
– Julia Child

One of the best parts of settling into North Central Phoenix is discovering all the amazing local spots that will soon become your family's favorites. I'm excited to share some of Kari's go-to places – from morning coffee runs to family dinners and date-night cocktails. North Central has a delicious mix of trendy eateries, cozy cafés, and longstanding icons. Here are a few you won't want to miss (with links so you can peek at menus and hours):



Lux Coffee – Coffeehouse by day, hip lounge by night. Lux Central (on Central Ave near Camelback) is a North Central institution – I practically live here between showings! By morning, it's buzzing with folks grabbing expertly brewed lattes and scratch pastries (the cinnamon rolls are heavenly). By evening, it transforms with low lighting, cocktails, and DJs spinning vinyl. The vibe is eclectic and artsy with vintage furniture and local art on the walls It's a great spot to meet neighbors or unwind with a book.

Luci's at The Orchard – A café and market in a magical setting. Imagine sipping an iced coffee under orange trees while your kids splash in a little splash pad nearby – that's Luci's at the Orchard. Housed on a restored historic ranch property on 12th Street, Luci's is part cafe (serving wholesome breakfasts, salads, and sandwiches) and part gourmet market. Families love the outdoor patio and the adjacent Splurge ice cream shop in a cute red barn building. Brunch on weekends is popular – think avocado toast, breakfast burritos, and smoothies.

The Henry – "The greatest neighborhood restaurant." Branded as "The Greatest Neighborhood Restaurant," The Henry (at 44th St & Camelback, a short drive from North Central) offers an all-day upscale dining experience in a stylish setting. It's perfect for a celebratory family dinner or weekend brunch. The ambiance blends Gatsby-era elegance and modern industrial chic – very photogenic! Menu highlights: short rib potstickers, Korean prime skirt steak, and their famous salted caramel monkey bread for dessert. Don't miss the in-house coffee bar and bakery for a quick treat.

Favorite Local Spots – Eats & Treats You'll Love

Rokerij – Steakhouse meets speakeasy. Rokerij (meaning "smokehouse" in Dutch) is a beloved local gem on 16th St. It's actually tucked in a charming stone house – blink and you might miss the sign. Inside, dim lighting, a copper-topped bar, and a subterranean wine cellar dining room create an intimate atmosphere. They serve up superb New Mexican-inspired cuisine and steaks (try the green chile pork stew or a filet mignon cooked over pecan wood). It's a great date night spot for parents, but they also welcome families – early evening you'll see kids happily munching on quesadillas from the small plates menu.

(Plus Many More!) North Central is packed with wonderful spots – it's impossible to list them all. A few more community favorites to explore:

- **Postino Central** – A trendy wine café in a former post office, loved for bruschetta boards and weekend happy hours.
- **Windsor & Churn** – Sister establishments side-by-side: Windsor is a casual restaurant with killer burgers and craft cocktails, and Churn is an old-fashioned ice cream parlor (a must for dessert with the kids).
- **Uptown Farmers Market** – Not a "spot" per se, but this bi-weekly market (Wed and Sat at North Phoenix Baptist Church parking lot) is where you'll find food trucks, local bakeries, farm-fresh produce, and artisanal goodies. It's the Saturday morning hangout for many North Central families.
- **Butterfly Burger at The Orchard** – A gourmet burger joint by a local chef, right next to Luci's at the Orchard. You'll crave their truffle fries and inventive milkshakes.
- **Pizzeria Bianco (Town & Country**) – James Beard award-winning pizza in a relaxed setting at 20th St & Camelback. If you haven't had a Bianco pie yet, prepare to be amazed.

Wherever you go, you'll notice a theme: North Central loves its local businesses. Many are family-run or unique to Phoenix, and you'll often bump into neighbors dining at the same spot. So go ahead – find your "Cheers" hangout. You'll quickly feel connected to the community through its food and friendly faces.





Why North Central? – A Place to Begin Your Next Chapter

"Home is not a place... it's a feeling."
– Unknown

Relocating can be daunting, but North Central Phoenix has a way of wrapping new families in a warm embrace. There's a reason so many people who grew up here choose to stay or come back to raise their own kids. North Central offers an unmatched blend of practical benefits and heartfelt appeal that make it the ideal place to start your family's next chapter. Here's why:

Unbeatable Community Spirit: In North Central, you're not just buying a home, you're joining a community. Neighbors wave hello on evening strolls. Block parties, holiday parades, and charity drives are common, often led by long-time residents eager to include newcomers. It's the kind of place where parents look out for each other's kids and friendships are formed over morning chats at the cafe or sidelines of a Little League game. As one resident put it, "We're a small town in the middle of a big city." The supportive community energy makes transitions easier – you'll find playdate invitations and school meeting hellos come quickly here.

Family-Friendly Lifestyle: North Central was practically designed for family living. The quiet, leafy neighborhoods are filled with parks, playgrounds, and bike paths – giving kids room to roam and play safely. Many streets don't have through-traffic, so children still ride bikes until the streetlights come on. The area boasts everything a family might need within a short radius: from pediatricians and pharmacies to tutoring centers and libraries. Weekend fun is at your doorstep, whether it's a hike in the Phoenix Mountains Preserve or a trip to Uptown's toy store and ice cream shop. Simply put, it's easy to balance work and play here – a stress-reliever for busy parents.

Centrally Located Convenience: The "central" in North Central really counts. Living here, you are roughly 10-15 minutes from downtown Phoenix (without traffic), which means quick commutes to major employers and easy access to cultural events. Being in the middle of the metro also puts you about 15-20 minutes from Scottsdale to the east or Glendale to the west. The light rail line along Central Ave offers a convenient, family-friendly transit option (fun for kids to ride, too!). You get the perks of a suburban environment without the long suburban commute. As a bonus, Sky Harbor International Airport is only about 15-20 minutes away – super handy for family vacations or visiting relatives.



Top-Tier Safety and Security: North Central Phoenix is ranked the #1 safest neighborhood in Phoenix as of 2025. That's not just a statistic – it's a peace of mind you'll feel daily. The area's violent crime rate is impressively low (about 1.5 per 1,000 residents, far below city average). You'll notice Phoenix Police patrol cars regularly cruising the quiet streets as a friendly presence, and active neighborhood block watches keep everyone informed. Many residents chose North Central specifically for this sense of safety, which lets kids walk to a friend's house or play outside with confidence. Few things are more important when choosing a new hometown than knowing your family will be safe and secure.

Excellent Education Options: As you'll see in the next section, North Central offers some of the city's best schools – from stellar public K-8 schools to elite private high schools. Families here are deeply invested in education (you'll see school car magnets on many a SUV). This creates an environment where kids are supported to thrive academically and parents readily connect through school communities. Education is part of the fabric of North Central's identity, contributing to both property values and that intangible pride of place.

A Home that Holds Value: On the practical side, North Central's desirability means real estate here is a smart investment. Homes tend to appreciate well, thanks to high demand and limited supply in these historic neighborhoods. While no one can predict markets, the combination of location, school districts, and community appeal has historically helped North Central properties hold value better than many other Phoenix areas. It's the kind of place people plant roots for the long term – and that stability benefits everyone.

Finally, there's the emotional pull that's hard to quantify. It's the way neighbors line the streets with luminarias (glowing paper lanterns) each December, lighting up the night in unity. It's dads organizing a pick-up basketball game at the park, and moms forming impromptu support circles over coffee. It's teens from Brophy and Xavier volunteering together to tutor younger kids. North Central is a place that embraces tradition and welcomes progress, where families of all kinds find belonging. If you're looking for not just a new house, but a true home and community for your family – North Central Phoenix is ready to welcome you with open arms.

Quick Facts & Demographics – North Central at a Glance

"In Arizona, we salt margaritas, not sidewalks."
– Local saying

To give you a snapshot of practical information, here's a quick rundown of North Central Phoenix by the numbers. These friendly facts and stats illustrate what life is like around here:



Population: Approximately **35,000 residents** live in the North Central Corridor area. It's a diverse mix of families, young professionals, and retirees. You'll find multi-generational households (plenty of grandparents live nearby or even with family) and a growing number of transplants from out of state choosing Phoenix for its lifestyle.

Walkability: North Central is one of Phoenix's most walkable regions. It scores around **75/100 on Walk Score**, meaning "Very Walkable". Many residents stroll or bike to nearby restaurants, grocery stores, and parks – a rarity in a city known for sprawl. (For context, the Phoenix average Walk Score is much lower, so this is a big plus for our area!)

Commute & Transit: Downtown Phoenix is just **4–5 miles south,** roughly a 10-15 minute drive (Central Ave is your main artery). Prefer not to drive? The Valley Metro **Light Rail** has stations at Central/Camelback and Central/Campbell in North Central – it'll whisk you downtown, to the airport (via transfer), or even out to Mesa in the east. Local bus routes also serve the area, but most neighbors find the light rail and personal car or bike cover their needs. Major freeways like I-17 and SR-51 are within 10 minutes' reach, giving easy access across the Valley.

Climate: Get ready for sunshine! Phoenix boasts **~299 sunny days per year.** That means lots of blue skies and opportunities for outdoor fun. Yes, summers are hot (100°F+ in July), but North Central's greenery and irrigation create a tad more oasis-like feel. Winters are gorgeous – 60s and 70s°F daytime. We get very little rain (about 8 inches a year) and virtually no snow in the city. In short, you'll quickly understand why this is called the Valley of the Sun.



Safety: As mentioned, North Central ranks as the **#1 safest neighborhood in Phoenix** in recent analyses. The **violent crime rate is about 1.5 per 1,000 residents** (versus ~8 per 1,000 citywide), and property crime rates here are the lowest in the city at about 5.8 per 1,000. Translation: Crime is notably low, contributing to a relaxed, secure atmosphere. Neighbors keep an eye out for each other, and Phoenix PD's Central City Precinct is very responsive.

Demographics: North Central tends to be educated and family-oriented. The majority of adults have some college or higher (you'll meet many ASU and UArizona alums). The median household income in the immediate area is above the Phoenix median – the presence of professionals (doctors from nearby hospitals, attorneys, small business owners, etc.) contributes to that. The area is also quite international: you'll hear languages from Spanish to Hindi to Arabic spoken at the farmers market, and our local schools celebrate cultural diversity with international nights and language immersion programs.

Housing Mix: Most North Central residents live in single-family homes on quiet residential streets. However, the past decade has seen a few **upscale apartment and townhome communities** sprout up along Central and 7th Ave, bringing in younger renters who enjoy the urban vibe. This mix means the community has a nice balance of long-time homeowners and newer neighbors injecting fresh energy.
Parks & Recreation: Within a 3-mile radius, you have over a dozen parks and playgrounds.

Notable ones: **Phoenix Mountain Preserve** (for hiking/biking), **Royal Palm Park** (has a famous annual neighborhood 4th of July parade), **North Central's John C. Lincoln Park** (great playground and picnic area), and of course the Murphy Bridle Path for all things walking/running. If you enjoy golf, the historic **Phoenix Country Club** is just south of here, and the **Arizona Canal trail** (at the area's northern edge) offers miles of flat path for cycling or jogging.

Fun Fact: Phoenix is often cited as one of the **sunniest cities in America** – we get sunshine ~85% of our daylight hours! Don't forget the sunglasses and sunscreen for year-round use. On the flip side, when we do get rain (mostly in July/Aug monsoon storms or winter showers), everyone gets a little excited. Kids will literally run outside to play in it.

Keep in mind that North Central's stats reflect a community in high demand. Low crime, great schools, and central location – it's no wonder homes here don't stay on the market long. As you settle in, these numbers will fade into the background and what you'll really notice is the quality of life: sunny morning walks, short commutes, friendly waves from neighbors, and that comforting feeling that you're in a safe, happy place. Welcome to North Central Phoenix!



Schools & Education Excellence in North Central

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."
– Nelson Mandela

For families moving to a new area, schools are often the top priority – and North Central Phoenix truly shines in this department. Whether you plan to go public, private, or pursue specialty programs, there are excellent options that will give your children a strong start. Here's an overview of the top schools and educational highlights of North Central:

Stellar Private Schools

Xavier College Preparatory (Catholic, All-Girls, 9–12) – Commonly just "Xavier," this is one of the premier private high schools in Arizona for young women. Located right in North Central at 7th St & Camelback, Xavier has a rich history (founded 1943) of academic excellence. It's known for a rigorous college-prep curriculum (with dozens of AP courses), championship athletics (Go Gators!), and a strong emphasis on faith and service. Xavier girls often go on to attend top universities around the country. The campus is beautiful, and the school community is very welcoming to new families.

Brophy College Preparatory (Catholic, All-Boys, 9–12) – Directly across the street from Xavier is Brophy, the all-boys Jesuit partner school. (Fun fact: many activities like theater and some classes are coordinated so Brophy and Xavier students can collaborate, given their close ties). Brophy, founded in 1928, is renowned for forming "Men for Others" – its focus is on academics, leadership, and service grounded in Jesuit values. It offers excellent STEM programs (they have a noted robotics team and state-of-the-art innovation lab) alongside humanities and arts. Sports are big here too – Brophy's football, swimming, and baseball teams are often state contenders. The campus, anchored by a iconic red brick building and chapel, feels collegiate.

All Saints' Episcopal Day School (Private, Co-ed, PreK–8) – Located near Central & Maryland, All Saints' is a top-notch option for younger students. With small class sizes and an emphasis on whole-child education, it's known for strong academics plus robust art, music, and language programs. Many North Central families choose All Saints' for elementary, then matriculate to Xavier/Brophy or other high schools.

Other Notables: Phoenix Country Day School (PCDS) is a bit further east (Paradise Valley area) but is a leading private PreK–12 prep school some North Central families attend. St. Francis Xavier School (grades K–8) is a Catholic parish school that feeds well into Brophy/Xavier. And for special education needs, Gateway Academy (focus on students with Asperger's/autism, grades 6–12) in the area has an excellent reputation.



Outstanding Public & Charter Schools

North Central is served by the Madison Elementary School District, which is highly regarded and "A" rated by the state. Madison District runs K–8 schools, after which students typically go into the Phoenix Union High School District (or choose charters or privates).

Madison Simis Elementary (K–4) and **Madison Meadows Middle** (5–8) – These two are a common pathway (Simis feeds into Meadows) and both are located right in North Central (near 12th St & Northern). They offer the acclaimed International Baccalaureate (IB) program, bringing a global and inquiry-based learning approach. Simis/Meadows consistently rank among the top public elementary/middles in Arizona – they were part of the six Madison schools named "Best in Arizona" by U.S. News & World Report in 2024. Expect strong academics, active parent involvement (the PTA is fantastic), and lots of extracurriculars from coding club to choir. Link: [Madison Simis School] and [Madison Meadows School] (both have tours available for new parents).

Madison Traditional Academy (MTA, K–8) – A lottery-entry school in the district that takes a "back-to-basics" accelerated curriculum approach. MTA is a great option if you prefer a more formal academic setting – think Saxon Math, Spalding phonics, uniforms, and high expectations. It's extremely highly rated (an "A" school) and was also on the U.S. News "Best" list. Because it's K–8, kids get a nice continuity. It's located just a bit north of the core North Central area (off 16th St & Missouri). Note: Because it's popular, you may need to apply early for a kindergarten spot or see if space is available for other grades.

Madison #1 Middle School (5–8) – If you live in the southwest part of North Central, your zoned middle school might be Madison #1 (near 16th St & Missouri). It has a Visual and Performing Arts focus with elective offerings in drama, band, etc., and is also a solid school (rated "B+"). Many families in its zone still open-enroll to Meadows or MTA, but #1 is a good neighborhood option, especia
lly if your child loves the arts.



High Schools (Public): North Central is within **Phoenix Union High School District**. The local boundary school is Central High School (at Central & Camelback), which offers the IB Diploma Programme if coming from Meadows IB. **Central High** has a very diverse student body and some excellent programs (including a partnership that allows students to take some college courses). However, many North Central families also consider charter high schools or open-enroll in other Phoenix Union options:

- **Charters:** BASIS Phoenix (a top-ranked STEM-focused charter) isn't far away, and Great Hearts Academies like Veritas Prep offer a classical education option.
- **Open Enrollment:** Notably, SunnySlope High School (to the north) is an "A" rated high school that some families try to open-enroll into for its strong academics and athletics. Phoenix Union Bioscience High is a specialized small high school (downtown) for science/engineering-minded students.

Charter & Magnet Schools: Phoenix has a healthy charter school scene. Within a short drive, you have options like **Great Hearts Academies** (classical curriculum, e.g., Great Hearts Uptown opening nearby), **Basis Phoenix** (rigorous STEM-focused K–12), and **Arizona School for the Arts** (ASA) (grades 5–12, for performing arts enthusiasts, located Midtown). Also, Madison District partners with **Creighton District's Excelencia School** for a Spanish Dual-Language program if bilingual education is of interest.

No matter what you choose, education in North Central is a community endeavor. Expect to meet other parents at school fundraisers, see school pride bumper stickers around, and maybe join a neighborhood discussion group about kindergarten recommendations – it's a friendly bunch! Schools here benefit from strong parental support and involvement, as well as local business sponsorships. It truly is a place where "it takes a village" comes to life: the community is invested in giving all kids a great start.

For any specific school, I'd recommend scheduling a tour (many schools now offer virtual tours too). And I'm always happy to connect you with other parents in the area if you have questions – chances are, whatever school you're considering, I know someone with kids there.



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