

THE GILA RIVER EXPERIENCE

This fall, Rawhide will be unveiling a brand new attraction just on the back doorsteps of Rawhide's Saloon Patio and outdoor eating area called "The Gila River Experience." The Gila River Experience is located on four acres, just north of the river, between the existing Wild Horse Pass Casino and Rawhide. The concept of the Gila River Experience is to showcase the traditions and history of the Pima and Maricopa people.

Part of this experience is the village. The village will include several traditional roundhouses (olas ki's), which are built with native vegetation such as willow, arrow weed, cottonwood, cactus ribs and mesquite. Several customary shade structures (vathos) are also being constructed. Traditional cooking stations are being built to replicate feast houses which exist throughout the Gila River Indian Community. Several fire-pit areas will be created for story telling and pottery and cooking classes. To pay homage to the Maricopa group, a traditional "sandwich" home will be constructed as well.

Various cultural classes will be held and taught for community members, guests, and groups to host events. Majority of these educational classes and demonstrations will be "hands on". Some of these activities will include grinding wheat, arrow-head making, flute making, basket weaving, gardening, and cooking.

Incorporated in the Gila River Experience will be a 2 - 3 acre organic garden. A portion of the garden will be irrigated traditionally. Produce from the garden will be used at the Steakhouse and Sheraton with any remaining produce to be sold at the new farmer's market.

The Gila River Farmer's Market at Wild Horse Pass is being currently being planned to be begin in October; this will provide a platform for community farmers (both large and small) to sell their produce along side with other farmers in the region.