



Lodging

Sonoran Redo

Popular Arizona resort gets a major face-lift

BY DON NICHOLS

WITH A YEARLONG, MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR renovation project now nearing completion, it's Old West meets the new at the **Boulders Resort & Spa** in Carefree, Ariz. The award-winning Rhode Island-based design firm of DiLeonardo has updated the 30-year-old property, which snakes around massive 12-million-year-old boulders, with an appealing new look lead designer June Chun calls "timeless modern." The look mixes contemporary design elements with the Native American culture indigenous to the region. Here, **three things you'll like** about the *new* Boulders (480-488-9009; theboulders.com).

COZY LIVING AREAS

In place of carpeting, flagstone flooring in the 160 casitas now brings the outdoors in to create a strong sense of place while wood-burning **adobe fireplaces** reflect the region's roots. So do the eye-catching floating headboards above beds; Native American art inspired their distinctive wood pattern. Contemporary leather furniture juxtaposes the past with the present.



SLEEK BATHROOMS

The resort's bathrooms, previously quite dated, now look dramatically different. A freestanding milled wooden vanity (topped with white quartz stone) and a wood-framed, illuminated electric mirror deliver a **welcome touch of modern**. An accent rug gives a nod to the area's culture while the pebbled shower and flagstone floor again bring the outdoors in.

AIRY LOBBY BAR

In the new Discovery Lounge, look out the large windows for **stunning views** of the property's signature boulders. They sandwich an oversize, mood-setting adobe fireplace appropriate to the desert setting. Large, cushy leather sofas and upholstered chairs in muted shades of persimmon, white, and navy (colors typically seen in Native American art) invite lounging and visiting with friends over cocktails.



New on the Culinary Front

As part of the renovation, the Boulders has converted its former signature restaurant, Latilla, into a ballroom and redesigned Palo Verde to be the new signature restaurant.

There, the resort's new executive chef, **Brian Archibald**,



serves up a contemporary Southwest menu featuring dishes he describes as "elegant but simple," such as Seared Domestic Lamb Loin. Archibald plans to change the menu every six to eight weeks, with the fare driven by what's available from a select group of local farmers and vendors.

In the Discovery Lounge, he offers **street-style dishes** for sharing, such as Pork Cubano With House Pickles. The personable chef also just introduced 45-minute **culinary classes** in the resort's organic garden to give him and his team more face time with guests. He plans to schedule classes at least once a month through June, then start up again in October after a three-month break. Upcoming topics include chocolate truffles and handmade pasta.

Testing Your Grit



Besides golf, the resort offers numerous on-site outdoor activities, from hiking to mountain biking. The newest? Rappelling 40 to 80 feet down the property's signature boulders — if you're game.