

**STAFF PICK**

# Best of EAST VALLEY 2011

## Best Patio for Dining at Fresco



Tribune file

### House of Tricks

**Location:** 114 E. Seventh St., Tempe  
**Phone:** (480) 968-1114  
**Website:** [houseoftricks.com](http://houseoftricks.com)

**T**here's a reason this longtime Tempe restaurant is a regular on "best" lists around the Valley. Its outdoor space remains the standard we can't help but compare all others to.

An idyllic spot made lush with daisies, geraniums, ferns and grapevine-covered arbors, Tricks' spacious patio connects two historic bungalows that house the restaurant's kitchen and dining rooms.

Those eating al fresco will find fresh flowers or a candle on their table, as well as twinkly lights, a fountain, a fire

pit, a fish pond, heaters, misters and mature trees that provide so much shade you'll wonder if you've stepped through a portal and out of the lower Sonoran Desert.

A covered outdoor bar serves up a selection of wines twice granted Wine Spectator's "Award of Excellence."

The restaurant's acclaimed contemporary American fare changes with the seasons. Dinner prices make it a bit of a special occasion place, but lunch and the daily "hours of tranquility" — a laid-back take on happy hour with prices as relaxed as the cats occasionally spotted sunning themselves in the garden — are affordable entry points for first-timers and the lunch-break and after-work crowds.

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