

## Southeastern Arizona Travels



### Southeastern Arizona overview

In southern Arizona, the mountains sit upon the surrounding desert like bubbles on a boiling cauldron. The Santa Catalina's, the Chiricahuas, the Santa Ritas. Arizona's human history is written in the valleys below.

### Southeastern Arizona attractions

Southeastern Arizona is a place where visitors can get a look back at the Old West — an area once dominated by cowboys and Indians, and the cavalry. It's also the legendary home of the Apache leader Geronimo.

- Itinerary ideas for Southeastern Arizona



### Exploring the rugged Chiricahuas

There are two things you should bring on a weekend trip to Chiricahua National Monument: a camera and a disposable camera, in case your regular camera goes kaput.

- Story: Trail traces Apache wars of late 1800s



### Driving Cochise County

Down in Cochise County, that storied land of cattle, copper and cavalry, there's a wonderful loop drive that touches on everything that makes this corner of southeastern Arizona such a great place to visit.



### Side trip: Bisbee, Arizona

Bisbee, about 95 miles southeast of Tucson, boasts a historic district, museum and mine tour that recall its heyday as "Queen of the Copper Camps" and its new life as an artist colony, retirement community and tourist center.



### Side trip: Tombstone, Arizona

Tombstone's place in the Old West is well-known from novels and movies — the discovery of silver and resulting boom, the gunfight at the O.K. Corral, larger-than-life characters like Wyatt Earp, and its rebirth as "The Town Too Tough to Die."



### Southeast region photos

Take a photo tour of Arizona's picturesque southeastern region.



### Three-day itinerary

The drive from Phoenix and a tour at Kartchner Caverns State Park will take a day, either at the beginning of your trip or the end. The cavern tours can sell out, particularly during the peak season from Thanksgiving through March, so reservations are recommended. A limited number of spots are available to early arrivals each morning if you haven't made reservations.

Arrive early for your Kartchner tour and spend an hour or two exploring the visitor center's exhibits to learn about the caverns' history and geology. The video narrated by the two spelunkers who discovered the cave gives an excellent preview of the sights you'll be seeing underground.

That leaves two days.

Spend one of them in Tombstone, walking the streets where Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday once walked and checking out the historic Birdcage Theatre and Crystal Palace Saloon. Visit the Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park for exhibits on the history of "The Town Too Tough To Die" and the gunfight at the O.K. Corral that made the town legendary. Stop at the Boothill Cemetery and read the clever epitaphs on the tombstones.

For the other one, head to Bisbee, "Queen of the Copper Camps." Tour the Queen Mine in a slicker, helmet and miner's headlamp and hear the stories told by the retired miners-turned-tour guides. Visit the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum for exhibits on Bisbee's rich and colorful past and a display with the ores that made it famous. Take a walking tour of Old Bisbee's Victorians, stopping in at the Copper Queen Hotel.

### Five-day itinerary

The drive from Phoenix and a tour at Kartchner Caverns State Park will take a day, either at the beginning of your trip or the end. The cavern tours can sell out, particularly during the peak season from Thanksgiving through March, so reservations are recommended. A limited number of spots are available to early arrivals each morning if you haven't made reservations.

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Spend a day in Tombstone, walking the streets where Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday once walked and checking out the historic Birdcage Theatre and Crystal Palace Saloon. Visit the Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park for exhibits on the history of "The Town Too Tough To Die" and the gunfight at the O.K. Corral that made the town legendary. Stop at the Boothill Cemetery and read the clever epitaphs on the tombstones.

For another day, head to Bisbee, "Queen of the Copper Camps." Tour the Queen Mine in a slicker, helmet and miner's headlamp and hear the stories told by the retired miners-turned-tour guides. Visit the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum for exhibits on Bisbee's rich and colorful past and a display with the ores that made it famous. Take a walking tour of Old Bisbee's Victorians, stopping in at the Copper Queen Hotel.

For another perspective on the region's history, head to Sierra Vista for the Fort Huachuca Historical Museum. Exhibits tell about the Indian Wars, including the surrender of Geronimo and the capture of Cochise, and the "Buffalo Soldiers," African-American units that fought against the Indians and joined General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing in the 1916 Mexican expedition against Pancho Villa.

For the final day, take a break from the history lessons and go hiking in Chiricahua National Monument. The Echo Canyon Loop will take you through spectacular spires and other rock formations to the wooded Echo Park. The hike is 3.3 miles long and is rated moderate (flat stretches in the bottom of the canyon) to difficult (steep stretches up and down from the rim parking lot). If you have the energy, pick some apples in one of the Willcox orchards before heading home.