

## About Bisbee

Contributed by Administrator  
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### "Queen of the Copper Camps"

Bisbee lies about 100 miles southeast of Tucson. The city was founded in 1880 after the discovery of copper three years earlier by Lt. John Rucker. The town was named for Judge DeWitt Bisbee, an early financial backer of the Copper Queen Mine.

The Bisbee mining district proved to be one of the richest sites in the world. In its history, it produced 3 million ounces of gold and over 4 million tons of copper. As a by-product it also yielded huge quantities of silver, zinc, lead, and semi-precious stones of which Bisbee Blue turquoise is the most famous. At its peak around WWI, Bisbee was one of the largest cities in the intermountain west with a population of over 25,000. It boasted cutting edge technology, the latest in fashions, and was the cultural hub of the entire Southwest. It also featured the world famous Brewery Gulch known for fast money, hard liquor, easy women, and no limit gambling.

The copper played out and by mid 1970's the mine had closed leaving the town facing disaster. Over the next decade, it adapted and has become an artist and retirement community featuring stunning historic buildings, fine art, a variety of cultural events, and intense physical beauty.

Today, Bisbee is in fact three towns. Old Bisbee, perched on the steep walls of Tombstone Canyon, is the original mining camp. Warren, the "old-new town," was formed just before WWI. Built as a reaction against the excesses of the copper camp, it features wide streets, a series of outstanding mansions at the "top of Vista," and a number of superb examples of the American bungalow movement. San Jose is the "new-new town" started in the 1950's with large lots, wide views, and much of the town's commercial activity.

Bisbee is a special place for special people. You will feel the pull that Mother Bisbee exerts on you.

### Bisbee and Cochise County, A Brief Introduction

#### Attractions in Bisbee Queen Mine Tours

**City Bus Tour.** Narrated by former miners (who have had in Bisbee for ('150 years'), this tour by minibus or van, gives you a glimpse of areas of Bisbee with most of the time spent in Old Bisbee. 3 tours daily.

**Queen Mine Tour.** You'll ride into the mountain on an open cart, wearing a heavy yellow slicker and through one of the oldest copper mines in Bisbee. You'll learn of the tragedies and triumphs in the early history of mining. Your guide will explain turn-of-the-century mining procedures, techniques, and equipment. 4 tours daily. (Highly recommended) 520/432-2071

**Lavender Pit Tour.** Around the perimeter of the big open pit, past mine shafts, and on to the leaching plant. Leaching is a fascinating way to regain copper on of waste ore. One tour daily.

#### Museums and History

**Historic Walking Tour.** Three different routes guide you through the heart of Old Bisbee. Each route has variations and can be adapted to the walker's fitness level. An informative guide map for each route gives you the highlights, leaving enough room for your own explorations and adventures. Each of the tours starts at the Chamber of Commerce, where you can also pick up the guide map. Groups may coordinate to be accompanied by a narrator. Chamber of Commerce 520/432-5421.

**Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum.** Dedicated to preserve the history of mining, the City, and those who made it happen. Specialized displays, one a mini-mine shaft exhibit, are a favorite of adults. Children enjoy climbing on the ore carts in the front of the museum. The building was originally owned by Phelps Dodge and is now on the National Historic Register. Gift Shop. Open Mon-Sat, 10-3, Sunday 10-4. 520/432-7071.

**Bisbee Restoration Museum.** Three floors of Bisbee's past, dedicated to the pioneers who expected to make fortunes. Some of them did and lost it just as fast. A wonderful glimpse into our past. Open Man-Sat 10-3. Muheim Heritage House Registered National Historic Site. Muheim, originally from Switzerland, was one of Bisbee's merchants who put in much

effort to see their little city grow. An intimate glimpse at how this upper/middle class pioneer family lived from 1900 to 1925. Open Mon-Fri, hours 1-4. Special tours by appointment.

#### Other Things to do

Arizona Cactus and Succulent Research. This privately owned, small botanical garden specializes in high desert vegetation. Your hosts, David and Geneva, will be delighted to answer questions. Plants to adopt are generally available. Arizona Cactus is also the home of the newspaper column "On the Desert" and the Arizona Cactus Newsletter. The library has books on cactus and succulents in several languages. 520/432-7040

Galleries. A number of galleries and art projects invite you to browse. Art openings are frequent and well attended.

Dining. From burger to vegetarian, from elegant to rustic, you are bound to find a place that pleases you.

Lodging. A variety of lodging facilities (a total of over 300 rooms), including fourteen Bed & Breakfasts (former school house, miners' boarding houses, restored mansions), the old Grand and Copper Queen Hotels, the Hotel L'Amore and four motels.

Bisbee Senior Association invites you to come and visit the Senior Center in San Jose at 300 Collins Road. Open to the public Monday through Friday, 9 am to 4 pm. 520/432-2167.

Bisbee Municipal Airport. Modern terminal with three runways, the longest 5,990 ft. tie downs, maintenance, and fuel available 24 hours a day. 520/432-2023

#### Points of Interest in Cochise County

Cochise College. Two-year community college. Campuses in Sierra Vista and Douglas. Full curriculum, a variety of academic, vocational, and technical degrees, and certification programs.

Douglas. Historic border town. Easy access to shopping in Aqua Prieta for gifts or souvenirs of Mexico. Famous Gadsden Hotel with 6'x 42' Tiffany stained glass window. Slaughter Ranch a historic landmark. Chamber of Commerce 520/364-2477.

Chiricahua National Monument. Part of the Coronado National Forest. Spectacular mountain scenery. Famous Wonderland of Rocks (pinnacles and columns eroded in volcanic rock), hiking, camping, fishing, horse trails.

Rucker Lake. Trout in summer, campgrounds in a high mountain meadow.

Fort Bowie. Historic site, established in 1862 to protect travellers coming through Apache Pass. 520/847-2500,

Apache Pass. Mile high gap in Chiricahuas, part of Butterfield Trail, site of confrontations between Apaches and troops.

Willcox. Museum of the Southwest, Cochise Visitor Center. Home of singer Rex Allen, Willcox Cowboy Hall of Fame. Heritage Park, Indian Village, mining display, and nature trail. Willcox Dry Lake, a permanent mirage. Chamber of Commerce 520/384-2272.

Sulphur Spring Valley. The County's farming region: pistachios, pecans, apples, vegetables, cotton, chilies, cattle. Many incredible bird watching sites.

Texas Canyon. Picnic areas amid unusual rock formations.

Amerind Foundation. Museum of Indian culture, collection of artifacts, from prehistoric times to present. 520/586-3003

Cochise Stronghold. Granite fortress, used by Cochise and his men as hideout, now reputed burial place of the famous warrior. Hiking, camping, picnicing. 520/826-3593.

Benson. Gateway to Cochise County. Museums, Art Galleries. Chamber of Commerce 520/586-2842.

Tombstone. Historic landmark, Courthouse, State Historic Park, Boot Hill Cemetery, Ok Corral, world's largest rosebush, re-enactment of gunfights. Visitor information 520/467-3168.

Sierra Vista. Military retirement community, largest and fastest growing city in Cochise County. Golf. Shopping. Chamber of Commerce 520/458-4940.

Ft. Huachuca. Historic landmark, established in 1877, home of the Buffalo Soldiers. Museum, hiking. Active Army post. Information 520/533-5735.

Coronado National Memorial. Commemorates exploration of Coronado in 1540. Great views into Mexico from Montezuma Pass. Hiking, picnics. Miller Peak 9,445 ft. Information 520/366-5515.

San Pedro Riparian Area. 50,000 acres dedicated to preservation of desert riparian habitat, wildlife, prehistoric mammoth and Clovis Indian archeology sites. Day camping. Information 520/457-2265.

Naco, Arizona - Naco, Mexico. Small border town 10 miles south of Bisbee. Naco, Arizona is one of the few locations in America where foreign bombs have struck (during the Mexican revolution in 1929).

Ghost Towns. Cochise County has several ghost towns in varying stages of preservation. Please check with any Chamber of Commerce in the County.

Bird Watching. Cochise County is famous world-wide for the unique and diverse species available throughout the area. Please check with any Chamber of Commerce for watching guides and checklists.