

Tucson Day Trips

Written by Written by Amy Strand

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Want to get away for a day or two without the hassle of planning an elaborate vacation? Luckily, Tucson is just a mere drive away from some of the region's most interesting and historical towns. Instead of the same old weekend errand circuit, do something different for a day—pack the car full of kids, snacks and sunscreen and head off to one of southern Arizona's most fascinating areas.



Bisbee

Located 90 miles southeast of Tucson, the historical mining town of Bisbee is a charming day trip with endless options to keep even the pickiest of travelers entertained. By the early 1900's this rich mining community was the largest southwest city between St. Louis and San Francisco. Now, tourists find their way to the restored neighborhoods of Victorian and European-style homes and wander the walkways filled with book stores, coffee shops, restaurants, art galleries and antique shops. If you arrive before noon be sure to check out the popular Bisbee Farmer's Market. www.discoverbisbee.com.



Tombstone

For all you diehard cowboys and cowgirls out there, Tombstone is the place to be for a slice of the Old West. Approximately 70 miles southeast of Tucson, Tombstone—otherwise known as “the town too tough to die”—still resembles the old mining town where Wyatt Earp famously fought the Clantons in 1881. Today, you'll be just as impressed to see the old Western buildings of the 1800's still in tact. Peruse the Tombstone museums for a taste of Arizona history or visit the numerous specialty shops and saloons. Before you leave, don't miss out on unique activities like gunfight shows, stagecoach and wagon tours. www.tombstonechamber.com.



Tubac is a great day trip for anyone interesting in shopping, sightseeing or exploring the great outdoors. Just a 40-minute drive south of Tucson, Tubac has a rich, 250-year-old Spanish history after being founded in 1792. Located in the Santa Cruz River Valley, Tubac is a flourishing artist town, featuring over 80 galleries and shops—many offering up unique, hand-crafted goods. If you want to soak in the sun and enjoy nature, explore the many hiking, mountain biking, birding, fishing and golf opportunities offered throughout Tubac. One favorite landmark you won't want to miss while there: the historic Tumaccacori Mission, founded in 1691 and constructed in 1800. www.tubacarizona.com.



While pulling into Sonoita/Elgin after making the one-hour drive from Tucson, you may notice a familiar terrain—that's because the area was the backdrop for numerous movies such as “Oklahoma,” “Tin Cup” and “The Young Guns.” With its plentiful grasslands, surrounding mountains and abundant wildlife, it's no surprise why movie directors would choose the gorgeous setting for their films. Sonoita/Elgin's two famous ranches host numerous events to keep families busy throughout the year including horseshows, wine tastings (the wineries here have received international awards) and rodeos. Another nearby area you'll want to check out while here is Patagonia, just 12 miles southwest of Sonoita. www.patagoniaaz.com.

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Summerhaven

The little village of Summerhaven is situated on top of the Catalina Mountains and just under the Mt. Lemmon summit—only 25 minutes north of Tucson. This town is chock-full of charming log-cabin lodging and tourist destinations in which to pick up a souvenir or even a slice of home-made fudge. But what really brings visitors back again and again is the cool mountain breeze and endless activity options (skiing in the winter and hiking, fishing and camping in the summer). **520.576.9614**.