

# Discover Bisbee: A Mining Town That Became a Tourist Treasure

Located 90 miles southeast of Tucson and nestled among the Mule Mountains, Bisbee is the picturesque county seat of historic Cochise County.

The community was founded in 1880 and quickly became a thriving urban center, driven by a booming mining industry that thrived on the area's rich reserves of copper and precious metals.

In 1877, a reconnaissance detail of army scouts and cavalrymen was sent to the Mule Mountains to search the area for renegade Apaches. What civilian tracker Jack Dunn found instead were signs of mineralization, indicating the presence of lead, copper and possibly silver. The first mining claim was staked in what would later become the City of Bisbee. The filing of this claim, and many others filed by George Warren, sent prospectors and speculators scurrying to the Mule Mountains in hopes of striking it rich. Numerous rich ore bodies were located, and Bisbee soon became known as the "Queen of the Copper Camps" Bisbee

continued to grow and prosper.

With prosperity came an increased population and the need for sanitation, clean water, medical care, building codes and fire protection. On January 9, 1902, a city charter was approved, and the City of Bisbee was incorporated. A temporary city council was formed and went to work on these sorely needed civic improvements. In 1910, the city was considered the largest in the territory, with over 25,000 people. The Cochise County seat was relocated from Tombstone to Bisbee in 1929.

## DEPLETED RESERVES

During almost a century of mining, eight billion pounds of copper, 102 million ounces of silver and 2.8 million ounces of gold, along with millions of pounds of zinc, lead and manganese, were produced. By 1974, ore reserves had been depleted, and December brought the announcement of the impending closure of mining operations in Bisbee. Phelps Dodge curtailed open pit operations that year and



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ceased underground operations in 1975. It appeared as though the queen was about to be laid to rest.

## REAL ESTATE COLLAPSE

With the departure of its industrial base, the real estate market in Bisbee collapsed

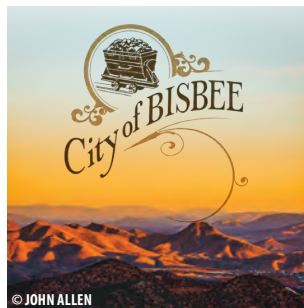
as hundreds of homes went up for sale. The availability of cheap real estate drew retirees, "hippies," and eventually, a new group of speculators. These new residents purchased property and slowly began contributing to the city's renovation.

## BISBEE OF TODAY

The Bisbee of today is a well-known artist's community whose architectural and historic heritage has been preserved. Located at the center of the natural and historic beauty of Cochise County, the city has transformed itself into the ideal spot for tourism. These benefits, combined with "the most perfect year-round climate," make it an attractive place to visit and a great place to call home.

Today, Bisbee's extraordinarily well-preserved early-twentieth-century downtown draws visitors from around the world who appreciate its historic architecture, welcoming, creative spirit and cool climate. Bisbee also serves as an ideal overnight home base for visitors – birders, hikers, wine-tasters, music appreciators, and others who wish to explore our geologically, biologically and culturally rich "Sky Islands" region.

Bisbee has a rich history and a bright future. Book your trip at [discoverbisbee.com](http://discoverbisbee.com)



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