

WILD WEST

Those hankering for a hearty dose of Western history can take in a bounty of experiences, from ghost towns that have stood the test of time to museums stacked with frontier relics.

By Patricia Kaowthumrong



Desert Caballeros Western Museum, Wickenburg

HISTORIC RESTAURANTS & WATERING HOLES

Drink up in the name of historical research at Bisbee's **Stock Exchange Saloon and Grill**. It was originally built as a saloon in 1905, but after Prohibition rescinded all liquor licenses, the building went on to house the Arizona headquarters for the New York Stock Exchange. Stop in for a burger and brew at **The Crystal Palace Saloon** in Tombstone, established in 1879 as one of the first bars in the notoriously wild boomtown. For fare that holds true to the state's cattle-ranching roots, look no further than **Stockyards Steakhouse** in Phoenix, a former gathering place for cattlemen, bankers and politicians that has been serving up perfectly prepared steaks since 1947.



Stockyards Steakhouse, Phoenix

WESTERN MUSEUMS

Find out how the early residents of a central Arizona town learned how to survive the challenges of the Sonoran Desert at the **Desert Caballeros Western Museum** in Wickenburg. Or delve into the history of northwest Arizona, including the Hopi and Navajo tribes who inhabited the area, at the **Old Trails Museum** in Winslow. Other institutions with noteworthy collections include the **Arizona Historical Society Pioneer Museum** in Flagstaff, which features an exhibit on the experiences of Hispanic settlers, and the **Pioneer Living History Museum** in Phoenix, a replica of an 1800s town spread across 90 acres with authentic buildings packed with fascinating period artifacts.

Arizona Milestones

About A.D. 1 to 1450

The Hohokam people build villages along the Gila River. See ruins of the villages at **Casa Grande Ruins National Monument** in Coolidge.



Casa Grande Ruins National Monument, Coolidge

1848

The Mexican-American War ends. The U.S. agrees to pay \$15 million for 525,000 square miles of Mexican territory, including most of present-day Arizona. Learn more about the territory's early days at Tucson's **Arizona History Museum**.



Queen Mine Tour, Bisbee

1752

The first permanent Spanish settlement is established in Tubac. Examine the remains of the settlement that would eventually become Arizona at **Tubac Presidio State Historic Park**.

1854

Copper is discovered in Arizona. Find out how mining transformed the Southwest at the **Bisbee Mining and Historical Museum**.



Tombstone



White Stallion Ranch
Tucson

Dude Ranches

Experience authentic cowboy living for yourself at Arizona's dude and guest ranches, where you can partake in quintessential Western activities, including horseback riding, skeet shooting and campfire dinners, while also enjoying amenities like luxury spas, gourmet food and wine programs. Book a stay at **Rancho de los Caballeros** in Wickenburg for access to a renowned 18-hole golf course and spacious casitas with Sonoran Desert views, or opt for the **White Stallion Ranch** in Tucson for an extensive menu of horseback-riding options and on-site rock climbing with a certified instructor.

GHOST TOWNS

At its height, **Tombstone** bustled with more than 100 saloons and a dozen gambling halls to serve its 14,000 resident gold seekers. Preserved structures include the O.K. Corral, the site of the legendary 1881 shootout between lawmen and outlaws. In **Goldfield**, a reconstructed bordello, saloon and other buildings give visitors an idea of what the town looked like before it was abandoned in 1898. And while a fire devoured most of the tiny mining camp of **Oatman**, you can still see rebuilt gems like the Oatman Hotel (listed on the National Register of Historic Places) and photograph the wild burros that roam Main Street. Or head to **Bisbee**, where the area's mineral-rich history lives on at an array of museums, and a thriving community of artists make this particular ghost town feel delightfully alive.

HISTORIC SITES

At **Yuma Territorial Prison State Historic Park**, tour the cells that held 3,069 of the Southwest's toughest criminals, including stagecoach robber Pearl Hart, from 1876 to 1909. Or tour the museum at **Jerome State Historic Park's Douglas Mansion** to gain insight into the city's extensive copper mining operations and the Douglas family, who profited from the bonanza. **Camp Verde State Historic Park** served as a military base established to protect some of the Arizona Territory's first settlers from conflicts with American Indian tribes. Stroll through three remaining houses containing exhibits focused on soldiers, settlers, doctors and American Indians who lived and served at the fort.



O.K. Corral, Tombstone

1881

The gunfight between Marshall Virgil Earp and his lawmen and outlaw Bill Claiborne and his gang takes place at **O.K. Corral**—considered the height of the rough-and-tumble Wild West. Visit the shootout site in Tombstone.

1912

Arizona is admitted to the Union as the 48th state. Uncover the state's evolution at **Arizona Capitol Museum** in Phoenix.

1863

The Arizona Territory is established. See the army post that served as the territory's first capitol at **Fort Whipple Museum** in Prescott.

1886

The Chiricahua Apache tribe's resistance ends after Geronimo, the last American Indian warrior to surrender to U.S. forces, concedes. In Fort Apache, learn about the Apache tribe's heritage at **White Mountain Apache Cultural Center**.



Arizona Capitol Museum,
Phoenix