

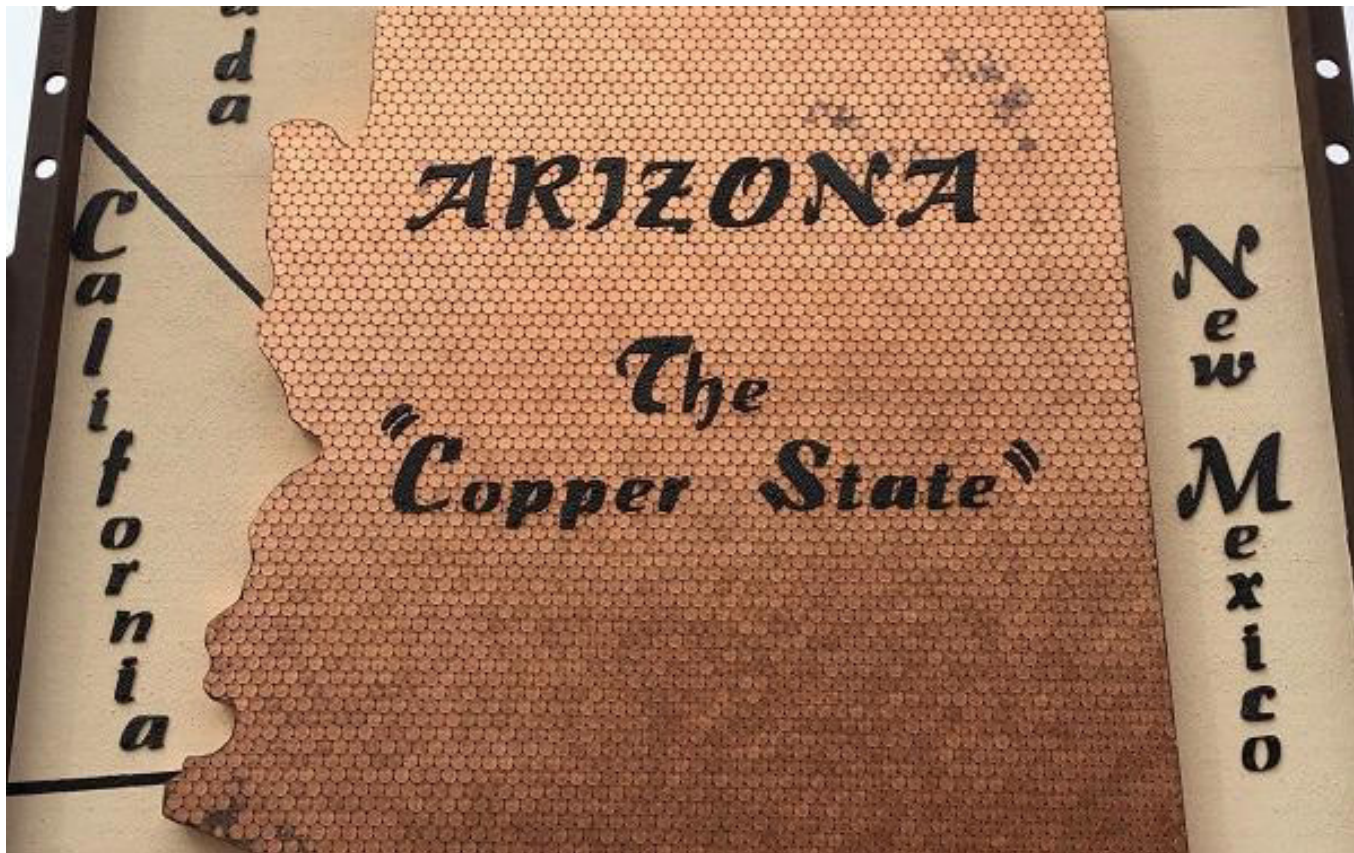


## Arizona's Marvellous Mining Towns

Tuesday, Jun 18, 2024  



Although known most famously as “The Grand Canyon State,” Arizona is also recognised for its rich mining heritage as the “Copper State.” The discovery and abundance of this vital mineral served as the driver for many towns that boomed across the state in the second half of the 1800s. Today, many of these small towns are flourishing once again thanks to current mining activities and education, revitalisation efforts and a focus on welcoming visitors. Here are a few memorable Arizona mining towns worthy of exploration.

### SOUTHERN ARIZONA

#### Clifton

Copper returns to [Clifton](#) every year thanks to the [Colours of Copper Art International Festival](#) held every November where artists from around the world display their art crafted from copper. Passionate photographers can capture social-media-worthy photos throughout their entire trip to Clifton, from driving down the scenic Coronado Trail to arriving in Clifton to meander around this photogenic town. Be sure to have a mini-photo shoot in front of the rustic Clifton Cliff Jail and the historic Copperhead Locomotive, part of the first mining railroad built in Arizona, to embody the mining spirit.

#### Ajo

An off-the-beaten-path city near the Mexico border, travellers once came to [Ajo](#) to go underground searching for cor. Now, however, they visit for the quintessential southwestern Arizona experience. Witness countless organ pipe cac. when hiking through [Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument](#), one of the few places in the US where this unusual cacti

naturally grows in large strands. Spot the New Cornelia Open Pit Mine while riding along the [Ajo Scenic Loop](#) or head to the mine's lookout point for a closer panoramic view of the pit. Stop by the [Historic Ajo Plaza](#) to see its beautiful Spanish-influenced architecture before appreciating street art on a self-guided tour or biking around the Sonoran Desert to see wildlife.

## NORTH CENTRAL ARIZONA

### Jerome

[Jerome](#), a small town perched on Cleopatra Hill, was once a thriving copper-mining town that has been resurrected into a supernatural playground with vintage charm while honouring its mining history. Brave visitors can uncover the stories of the town's rowdy miners and cowboys who now roam around as spirits on a [Jerome Ghost Tour](#) exploring haunted historic buildings. Enjoy strolling through eclectic shops, art galleries and wine-tasting rooms featuring locally grown wine. Stop at the [Jerome State Historic Park](#) to learn Jerome's mining history or try panning for gold at the [Gold King Mine and Ghost Town](#), a mini-town with a graveyard of rustic trucks and mining equipment visitors can explore.

### Clarkdale

Escape to the quaint town of [Clarkdale](#) to unwind on the [Verde Canyon Railroad](#) whose tracks no longer carry copper ore to the town's smelter, but now whisk visitors into the stunning Verde Canyon for a scenic train ride near the Verde River. Enjoy paddling down the Verde River in a kayak and going wine tasting across the [Verde Valley wine region](#) starting at the [Southwest Wine Center](#) at Yavapai College to try Arizona-grown wines. Discover the importance of copper in Arizona at the [Arizona Copper Art Museum](#) which displays more than 5,000 works of copper art.

## SOUTH CENTRAL ARIZONA

### Explore The Copper Corridor

Sign up for the new [Copper Corridor Crawl Adventure Passport](#) to explore a string of current and former mining towns, endearing small towns and scenic mountains in south-central Arizona. Along the corridor visitors can experience hiking, ziplining, stopping at an ASARCO viewpoint, looking to the past at an ancient village and looking to the future to better understand Earth at Biosphere 2. With activities abound, just looking at each community's tagline gives visitors a peek into the adventures, history and heritage and culture that they will find along the way: Adventure Elevated in [Superior](#); Explore the Wild in [Winkelman](#); Grit and Gratitude in [Hayden](#); Peaceful and Inviting [Kearny](#); Step Back in Time in Historic [Globe](#); Find the Adventure You Seek in [Oracle](#); Inspiration Lives Here in [Miami](#); Gateway to the Galiuros in [Mammoth](#); and Outdoor and Recreation in [San Manuel](#).

### Superior

[Superior's](#) evolution from a copper and silver mining community to a nature enthusiast's paradise is greatly due to mining pioneer William Boyce Thompson, who founded the [Boyce Thompson Arboretum](#) in 1924; the largest botanical garden in the state. Spot more than 10,000 desert plants at this world-renowned botanical garden celebrating its centennial anniversary in 2024. Embark on a hike through the Sonoran Desert on the 11-mile-long [Legends of Superior Trail \(LOST\)](#) to enjoy bird-watching or go rock-climbing at [Queen Creek Canyon](#). Visitors can embrace their inner miner at the town's annual [Apache Leap Mining Festival & Carnival](#), a three-day event where visitors compete in mining competitions such as spiking and drilling, before exploring Main Street's antique shops and sneaking a peek inside the [World's Smallest Museum](#).