

100 FUN AND FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT ARIZONA



1. Arizona has 3,928 mountain peaks and summits—more mountains than any one of the other Mountain States (Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming).
 2. All New England, plus the state of Pennsylvania would fit inside Arizona.
 3. Arizona became the 48th state and last of the contiguous states on February 14, 1912.
 4. Arizona’s disparate climate can yield both the highest temperature across the nation and the lowest temperature across the nation in the same day.
 5. There are more wilderness areas in Arizona than in the entire Midwest. Arizona alone has 90 wilderness areas, while the Midwest has 50.
 6. Arizona has 26 peaks that are more than 10,000 feet in elevation.
 7. Arizona has the largest contiguous stand of ponderosa pines in the world stretching from near Flagstaff along the Mogollon Rim to the White Mountains region.
 8. Yuma, Arizona is the country’s highest producer of winter vegetables, especially lettuce.
 9. Arizona is the 6th largest state in the nation, covering 113,909 square miles.
 10. Out of all the states in the U.S., Arizona has the largest percentage of its land designated as Indian lands.
 11. The “Five C’s” of Arizona’s economy are: Cattle, Copper, Citrus, Cotton, and Climate.
 12. More copper is mined in Arizona than all the other states combined, and the Morenci Mine is the largest copper producer in all of North America.
 13. Clark Gable and Carole Lombard, two of the most prominent movie stars of Hollywood’s Golden Age, were married on March 18, 1939, in Kingman, Arizona.
 14. Covering 18,608 sq. miles, Coconino County is the second largest county by land area in the 48 contiguous United States.
 15. The world’s largest solar telescope is located at Kitt Peak National Observatory in Sells, Arizona.
 16. Bisbee, Arizona is known as the Queen of the Copper Mines because during its mining heyday it produced nearly 25 percent of the world’s copper and was the largest city in the Southwest between Saint Louis and San Francisco.
 17. Billy the Kid killed his first man, Windy Cahill, in Bonita, Arizona.
 18. Pioneer filmmaker, Cecil B. DeMille originally traveled to Flagstaff to make his first film but he arrived there in the middle of a storm and decided to move operations further west, to Hollywood. His film, *The Squaw Man* (1914), went on to be wildly successful, launching the fledgling movie industry and establishing Hollywood as the movie capital of the world.
 19. Arizona grows enough cotton each year to make more than one pair of jeans for every person in the United States.
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20. Famous labor leader and activist Cesar Chavez was born in Yuma.
 21. In 1912, President William Howard Taft was ready to make Arizona a state on February 12, but it was Lincoln's birthday. The next day, the 13th, was considered bad luck so they waited until the following day. That's how Arizona became known as the "Valentine State."
 22. When England's famous London Bridge was replaced in the 1960s, the original was purchased, dismantled, shipped stone by stone and reconstructed in Lake Havasu City, Arizona, where it still stands today.
 23. Mount Lemmon, in the Santa Catalina Mountains, is the southernmost ski resort in the United States.
 24. Rooster Cogburn Ostrich Ranch in Picacho, Arizona is the largest privately-owned ostrich ranch in the world outside South Africa.
 25. If you cut down a protected species of cactus in Arizona, you could spend more than a year in prison.
 26. The world's largest to-scale collection of miniature airplane models is housed at the library at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona.
 27. The only place in the country where mail is delivered by mule is the village of Supai, located at the bottom of the Grand Canyon.
 28. Located on Arizona's western border, Parker Dam is the deepest dam in the world at 320 feet.
 29. South Mountain Park/Preserve in Phoenix is the largest municipal park in the country.
 30. Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, located about 55 miles west of Phoenix, generates more electricity than any other U.S. power plant.
 31. Montezuma never visited Montezuma National Monument—he was born 100 years after the prehistoric dwelling was abandoned. The monument was misnamed for the Aztec emperor when it was rediscovered in the 1860's.
 32. Oraibi, a Hopi village located in Navajo County, Arizona, dates back to before A.D. 1200 and is reputed to be the oldest continuously inhabited community in America.
 33. Built in by Del Webb in 1960, Sun City, Arizona was the first 55-plus active adult retirement community in the country.
 34. Petrified wood is the official state fossil. The Petrified Forest in northeastern Arizona contains America's largest deposits of petrified wood.
 35. Many of the founders of San Francisco in 1776 were Spanish colonists from Tubac, Arizona.
 36. Phoenix originated in 1866 as a hay camp to supply military post Camp McDowell.
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37. Chino Valley's Fort Whipple was a U.S. Army post that served as Arizona Territory's first capital prior to the founding of Prescott. The post was founded in January 1864, but was moved in May 1864 to Granite Creek near present-day Prescott.
 38. Prior to President Abraham Lincoln signing the Arizona Organic Act on February 24, 1863 to create Arizona Territory, Arizona was part of the territory of New Mexico.
 39. Rainfall averages for Arizona range from less than three inches in the deserts to more than 30 inches per year in the mountains.
 40. Rising to a height of 12,643 feet, Mount Humphreys north of Flagstaff is the state's highest mountain.
 41. Roadrunners are not just in cartoons! In Arizona, you'll see them running up to 17-mph away from their enemies.
 42. The Saguaro cactus is the largest cactus found in the U.S. It can grow as high as a five-story building and is native to the Sonoran Desert, which stretches across southern Arizona.
 43. Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, grew up on a large family ranch near Duncan, Arizona.
 44. The city of Phoenix was named for the mythical Egyptian phoenix bird—which burst into flame and was reborn from its ashes—because the town sprouted from the ruins of a former civilization.
 45. Santa Cruz County (1,237 sq. miles) is the smallest of Arizona's 15 counties, but is larger than more than 72 countries.
 46. Spanish Franciscan friar Marcos de Niza was the first European to explore Arizona. He entered the area in 1539 in search of the mythical Seven Cities of Gold.
 47. The best-preserved meteor crater in the world is located near Winslow, Arizona.
 48. Camels were imported in the 1850s to survey the future Route 66 across northern Arizona.
 49. The Arizona Cardinals are the oldest continuous franchise in the National Football League, dating back to 1898.
 50. The worst range war and family feud in the West, which claimed the lives of dozens of ranchers, ironically occurred in a place called Pleasant Valley, Arizona.
 51. The average state elevation is 4,000 feet.
 52. The cactus wren is the official state bird. It gets its name from the fact that it likes to build nests in the protection of thorny desert plants, like the saguaro cactus.
 53. The Navajo Nation spans 27,000 square miles across the states of Utah, Arizona and New Mexico, but its capital is seated in Window Rock, Arizona.
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54. The amount of copper utilized to make the copper dome atop Arizona's Capitol building is equivalent to the amount used in 4.8 million pennies.
 55. Between the years 1692 and 1711 Spanish missionary Father Eusebio Kino did more than just found missions in Arizona; he also taught many tribes the basics of agriculture and supplied them with cattle and seed grain.
 56. The Castilian and Burgundian flags of Spain, the Mexican flag, the Confederate flag, and the flag of the United States have all flown over the land we now know as Arizona.
 57. Near Yuma, the Colorado River's elevation dips to 70 feet above sea level, making it the lowest point in the state.
 58. The geographic center of Arizona is 55 miles southeast of Prescott near the community of Mayer.
 59. You could pile four 1,300-foot skyscrapers on top of each other and they still would not reach the rim of the Grand Canyon.
 60. Nearly 5 million people visit Arizona's Grand Canyon National Park each year.
 61. The hottest temperature recorded in Arizona was 128 degrees at Lake Havasu City on June 29, 1994.
 62. The coldest temperature recorded in Arizona was 40 degrees below zero at Hawley Lake on January 7, 1971.
 63. The Lost Dutchman, Jacob Waltz—who is alleged to be the owner of the yet-undiscovered Lost Dutchman Gold Mine in Arizona's Superstition Mountains—was actually a German.
 64. Arizona's official state colors are blue and gold.
 65. The Palo Verde is the official state tree. Its name means "green stick" and it blooms a brilliant yellow-gold in April or May.
 66. The saguaro cactus blossom is the official state flower. The white flower blooms in May and June, opening in the middle of the night and closing the next day—surviving only about 18 hours for pollination.
 67. A saguaro cactus can store up to nine tons of water.
 68. The Arizona towns of Adair and Alamo Crossing are now underwater, having been swallowed up by the formation of dams that created Fool Hollow Lake and Alamo Lake (respectively).
 69. The State Motto is Ditat Deus, which means "God Enriches" in Latin.
 70. From 1973 to 2007, Arizona was the only state with official state neckwear, the bola tie. In 2007, New Mexico also adopted the bola tie as the official State Tie.
 71. The state of Massachusetts could fit inside Maricopa County (9,922 sq. miles).
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72. The westernmost battle of the Civil War was fought at Picacho Pass on April 15, 1862 near Picacho Peak in Pinal County.
 73. There are 11.2 million acres of National Forest in Arizona, and one-fourth of the state is forested.
 74. Tubac was the first European Settlement in Arizona (1752).
 75. Turquoise is the official state gemstone. The blue-green stone has a somewhat waxy surface and can be found throughout the state.
 76. World War II brought many military personnel to train at Luke and Thunderbird airbases in Glendale.
 77. Jerome, Arizona was named for Eugene Jerome of New York City, who never visited the town.
 78. Two Arizonans have won their party's nomination for President: Barry Goldwater and John McCain.
 79. Wyatt Earp was neither the town marshal nor the sheriff in Tombstone at the time of the shoot-out at the O.K. Corral. His brother Virgil was the town marshal.
 80. The Navajo Nation Zoological and Botanical Park is the only tribally-owned zoo in the U.S.
 81. The ringtail is the official state mammal. It is a fox-like, nocturnal animal that measures about two-and-a-half feet long.
 82. The Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona holds more archives and individual works by 20th-century North American photographers than any other museum in the nation. Its archives contain an estimated 3.8 million items.
 83. On June 6, 1936, the first barrel of tequila produced in the United States rolled off the production line in Nogales, Arizona.
 84. The world's tallest Kachina doll, measuring 39 feet tall and fashioned of concrete, is located in Carefree, Arizona.
 85. Once a rowdy copper mining town, Jerome's population dwindled to as few as 50 people after the mines closed in 1953.
 86. The Sonoran Desert is the most biologically diverse desert in North America.
 87. The Arizona tree frog is the state's official amphibian.
 88. Bisbee is the Nation's southernmost mile-high city.
 89. The two largest manmade lakes in the U.S. are Lake Mead and Lake Powell—both located in Arizona.
 90. Arizona is the only state in the nation that elects a Mine Inspector.
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91. The longest remaining intact section of Route 66 can be found in Arizona and runs from Seligman to Topock, a total of 157 unbroken miles.
92. The 13 stripes on the Arizona flag represent the 13 original colonies of the United States.
93. Thirteen species of rattlesnakes live in Arizona, more species than in any other state.
94. The University of Phoenix Stadium, home to the NFL Cardinals, retractable roof and rollout field combination is a first in North America.
95. The negotiations for Geronimo's final surrender took place in Skeleton Canyon, near present day Douglas, Arizona, in 1886.
96. Prescott, Arizona is home to the world's oldest rodeo, and Payson, Arizona is home to the world's oldest continuous rodeo—both of which date back to the 1880s.
97. Downtown Yuma, Arizona is one of only two designated National Heritage Areas west of the Mississippi.
98. Kartchner Caverns, near Benson, Arizona, is a massive limestone cave with 13,000 feet of passages, two rooms as long as football fields, and one of the world's longest soda straw stalactites: measuring 21 feet 3 inches.
99. The Litchfield Naval Air Facility (now called the Phoenix-Goodyear Airport) was the training base for the Navy Blue Angels aerial demonstration team until 1968.
100. At 221 miles long, Apache County is the longest county in the U.S., stretching from the Utah border to just south of Alpine, Arizona.
101. BONUS FACT – Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport has the world's only public transport system that goes over an active airport taxiway.

This list was compiled and researched by the Arizona Office of Tourism and the Arizona Centennial Commission staff with the assistance of Marshall Trimble, Arizona's Official State Historian.
