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COCHISE COUNTY, ARIZONA: “LAND OF LEGENDS”

Cochise County, Ariz. – Ever walked in Wyatt Earp’s footsteps, delved into an underground mine or explored a living cave?

Cochise County, in southeastern Arizona less than 90 minutes from Tucson, offers these unique adventures and so much more. Nicknamed the “Land of Legends,” the county is larger than the state of Connecticut and is rich with some of the greatest tales of our nation’s past. One of the most culturally, historically and geographically diverse areas in the American Southwest, Cochise County’s cities include Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Sierra Vista, Tombstone and Willcox.

To explore this “Land of Legends” is to take a journey back in time to the days of Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and the Clanton gang while still enjoying present day luxuries such as elegant bed and breakfasts and wonderful flavors. Some of Cochise County’s most famous attractions include the O.K. Corral and the Cowboy Hall of Fame as well as natural attractions as Kartchner Caverns State Park, a virtually unspoiled limestone cave with 13,000 feet of passages and rooms as long as football fields.

The county is named for legendary Chiricahua Apache Chief Cochise, who led his people in their unsuccessful attempt to retain their homeland. Cochise County’s history dates back to 9000-6000 B.C., and evidence of today’s Native Americans ancestors have been found in the area.

Spanish Conquistadors and missionaries built short-lived outposts on their northern frontier, but it was not until the late 1800s, when the Southern Pacific Railroad first traversed the region and rich copper and gold mines were discovered, that other settlers populated the area. Many of Cochise County’s cities were booming mining towns, full of gunslingers, lawmen and rowdy cowboys.

When the mines were depleted or flooded by rising groundwater, the population dwindled but the Old West spirit continued. Today, hundreds of registered National Historic Places and buildings, walking tours, popular Old West re-enactments and even a movie set carry on the spirit of days gone by.

Not just for history buffs, the county’s natural wonder defies categorization. Cochise County boasts hiking, biking and birding attractions including camping and RV sites. Sierra Vista has been named the “Hummingbird Capital of the United States,” and other areas teem with birds.

Nature lovers can enjoy the Coronado National Forest, which covers an estimated 1.78 million acres of southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico. The San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area encompasses more than 50,000 acres along the San Pedro River and includes a diverse cross-section of plant and animal life.

Travelers looking for international attractions are also in luck! Douglas sits on the U.S.-Mexico border and shares a positive cross-cultural relationship with its sister town Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico. Neighboring Naco, Arizona and Naco, Sonora, south of Bisbee provide easy access to Mexico.

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Whether visitors are gunning to live like cowboys, itching to explore the great outdoors or simply want to soak up a little Mexican culture, Cochise County is an ideal holiday. Welcome to the “Land of Legends!”

Located in southeastern Arizona, Cochise County is one of the most culturally, historically and geographically diverse areas in the American Southwest. Its legendary communities—Benson, Bisbee, Douglas, Tombstone, Sierra Vista and Willcox—were strategically located less than a day’s journey by stagecoach and are now just a short drive from one another.

For more information about Cochise County, visit the Cochise County Tourism Council’s website at www.explorecochise.com.

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