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COCHISE COUNTY SKIES IDEAL FOR ASTRONOMY

Cochise County, Ariz. – Get away from any metropolitan area, and you Many have wished upon a star. But, how many people have ever taken the time to really explore the night sky’s wonders? Cochise County, with comfortable temperatures year-round and clear skies free from city lights, is ideal for a stargazing holiday. All it takes is one of Cochise County’s many idyllic areas or great off-the-beaten-path camping spots. Whether novice stargazers or expert astronomers, Cochise County takes visitors on a galactic journey with some of Arizona’s best astronomy.

San Pedro Valley Observatory now open in Benson – Celebrate astronomical events at the newly reopened San Pedro Valley Observatory in Benson. Once home to a small bed & breakfast inn, the Vega Bray has been renamed and is now the San Pedro Valley Observatory. The new owners purchased three new telescopes and have upgraded the facilities. With these telescopes and the HyperStar System, developed by a Tucson astronomer, the observatory offers a high-quality, educational astronomy experience tailored to the individual astronomer. **Contact:** The San Pedro Valley Observatory, 1311 South Astronomers Road, Benson, 1-888-455-6934 or <https://www.arizona-observatory.com/>

Sunglow Ranch in Pearce – Sunglow Ranch is a nature lover’s paradise. Surrounded by the arrestingly beautiful Chiricahua Mountains, Sunglow Ranch offers vibrant views of the night sky free from the distracting lights of the city. Astronomy pads are available by reservation; famous photographers and astronomers have frequented the popular area since its inception. **Contact:** 1-866-786-4569 or www.sunglowranch.com.

Huachuca Astronomy Club’s Observatories in Sierra Vista – With 15 local observatories owned by amateur sky-watchers, this premier astronomy club in Cochise County enjoys sharing the boundless skies with groups and visitors. Some of the observatories are open to the public, by reservation; other open-to-the public events are the club’s monthly astronomy nights. These “star parties” are held to educate the curious and budding astronomers on planetary and astral wonders. **Info:** <http://www.hacastronomy.com/>

Patterson Observatory in Sierra Vista – Located at the University of Arizona’s South Campus in Sierra Vista, this research observatory is open to the public by reservation only. It includes a 16-foot dome housing a Ritchey-Chretien telescope, a classroom suitable for teaching or lectures and a second observatory with a number of telescopes that are operated remotely. Through the telescope, visitors may observe both directly in real time with video cameras that feature real-time connected monitors that are attached to the telescope. **Contact:** 520-458-8278 or <http://www.uas.arizona.edu/observatory/>

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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