



9 Unique Places to Stay in Utah

Tour the Copper Queen Mine

Bisbee's claim to fame came in the form of the accidental discovery of ore. This led to an influx of prospectors, and soon Bisbee became known as the "Queen of the Copper Camps".

Bisbee became one of the richest mineral sites in the world, producing gold, copper, silver, and zinc.

At the height of production, Bisbee was home to over 20,000 residents. It was the largest town in the Southwest between St. Louis and San Francisco!

Although the city was thriving, there were bouts of unrest. During a miner's strike in 1917, the mining company illegally kidnapped and deported 1,300 workers to New Mexico, approximately 200 miles away. They left them there with no money and a threat to never return.

The underground and open-pit mines supported the town of Bisbee for almost 100 years before the resources were depleted. The mine closed its doors for good in 1975.

Today, one of the most popular things to do in Bisbee is to take a tour of the old Queen Mine.

Tours are run every 1 1/2 hours from 9 am until 3:30 pm daily. This is a very popular tour, so book your [reservations](#) in advance.

When we arrived for the tour, our group geared up with hard hats, headlamps, and safety vests. We then hopped on board the mine train.

The train is a replica of the mine trains used in the 1800s, with a long bench down the middle that you sit and straddle.

It felt like we were on a real-life version of Disney's Mine Train as we headed 1,500 feet into the mountain to explore the old abandoned mine!

On the one-hour tour, we learned some fascinating history and experienced a small taste of what life was like while working in the mines.

There are a few stops along the way where you'll get a chance to get off the train and walk through the side tunnels. Our guide took us to a massive cavity that was once solid rock but had been slowly chipped away by the miners.

It was so cool to learn about the tedious mining process. I have so much respect for what these miners did to put food on the table for their families.

At the second stop, we were able to see some of the original mining equipment and even an elevator and shaft.

We also heard some pretty horrific stories about how dangerous it was to work in the mine. Nothing triggers my claustrophobia like imagining being packed into a tiny and rickety elevator with 10 people going through 600 feet of solid rock!

We absolutely loved the tour, it was fun, informative, and reasonably priced. Kids are welcome on the tour, but they must be 6 years or older.

After taking the mine tour, we drove over to the Lavender Pit, an old open-pit copper mine. If I HAD to choose mining as an occupation, I would definitely pick open-pit mining. No collapsed tunnels and falling mine shaft elevators here!

The colorful terraced pit is decorated with shades of lavender, but the pit was actually named after the VP of Phelps Dodge, Harrison M. Lavender.

The pits are located just south of historic Bisbee along Hwy 80. There is a large parking lot with a chain-link fence overlooking the pit. The scope and size of the 1,000-foot deep pit is quite impressive, it's worth a stop to check it out.

Visit the Lowell Neighborhood

Erie Street is a historic commercial street located in Bisbee's Lowell neighborhood. It is the perfect example of a world frozen in time.

The neighborhood was established in 1880. As miners and their families left to find work elsewhere, businesses began to close, leaving behind a ghost town.

The abandoned buildings, such as an old gas station and the Sprouse Reitz Co. department store, have been preserved in time and maintained by the city.

Along this street, you'll find vintage cars, original billboards and ads, and even an old greyhound bus.

It's such a fun little street to take photos and experience the nostalgia of yesteryear.

Stop By the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum

When visiting Bisbee, a stop at the Mining & Historical Museum is a must. Here you'll receive a quick introduction to the rich and fascinating history of the mining town.

This small museum is the first rural museum affiliated with the famed Smithsonian Institution.

The carefully curated rooms are filled with displays, artifacts, and interesting stories preserving the history of the town. The second floor is dedicated to a display of minerals and gems that were produced from the Bisbee mines.

My kids enjoyed several of the interactive exhibits geared for kids, along with the old mine train outside the museum.

There are also some interesting plaques posted, like this one detailing the Bisbee Fly-Swatting Contest.

In order to help prevent the spread of Typhoid, the city held a contest to see who could swat the most flies. Participants brought jars of dead flies to be counted, and the winner for the most flies killed in the month received \$10. I pity the poor soul who had to count thousands of dead flies!

Stay in a Haunted Hotel

You can't visit an old mining town and not look for ghosts! The [Copper Queen Hotel](#) is the oldest continuously operating hotel in all of Arizona. It is also considered one of the most haunted hotels in the state!

The Copper Queen Hotel was originally constructed by the Phelps Dodge Mining Company and first welcomed guests in 1902. The ornate and elaborate hotel catered to investors, dignitaries, and the social elite.

The Victorian-style rooms are tastefully decorated to reflect the era, you'll even find claw-foot tubs in some of the rooms.

What really draws curious guests to the hotel is the rumors of ghost sightings and paranormal activity.

The Copper Queen Hotel is home to three resident ghosts. An old man, a young boy, and a prostitute are rumored to roam these floors.

The former is believed to be the ghost of Julia Lowell, who entertained her clients in this hotel until her heart was broken and she took her own life in the hotel.

Guests can even stay in the "Julia Lowell Room," where she died. I wouldn't be brave enough to spend the night in the most haunted room in the hotel, especially with a portrait of Julia watching you while you sleep!

If you ask at the front desk, they'll let you see a guest book with handwritten stories of hauntings that former guests have experienced in the hotel. Some are funny and some are pretty creepy, I would suggest reading it AFTER your stay!

The hotel boasts an impressive guest list, hosting the likes of Marlon Brando, Julia Roberts, Nancy Reagan, John McCain, Michelle Pfeiffer, Harry Houdini, and John Wayne. You can even request to sleep in some of the rooms where they stayed.

A Few More of the Best Places to Stay in Bisbee:

- **Hotel San Ramon:** [Hotel San Ramon](#) is a charming historic hotel in the middle of the city.
- **Inn at Castle Rock:** The [Inn at Castle Rock](#) is not your typical hotel. This inn is outfitted with themed rooms, an outdoor garden, and the Apache Springs Well that flows under the hotel.
- **Bisbee Brownstone Suites:** The apartment-style rooms at [Bisbee Brownstone Suites](#) are spacious with modern decor.
- **Tombstone Monument Ranch:** For an authentic Southwest experience, check out the [Tombstone Monument Dude Ranch](#) located about 40 minutes from Bisbee. If you do visit Tombstone, be sure to check our guide for the [Best Things to Do in Tombstone](#).

Eat at the 1902 Spirit Room Restaurant

If spending the night at a haunted hotel isn't on your bucket list, you need to at least enjoy a meal at the 1902 Spirit Room Restaurant located inside the Copper Queen Hotel.

We thought that the food was pretty good and the ambiance was great.

Our server was also a lot of fun and filled us in on some of the haunted encounters he's had since working at the hotel.

While we were eating, my sister-in-law and I were sharing ghost stories when the whole row of lights behind me suddenly went out. Our server checked to see if someone bumped the switch. Nope, the switch was turned on, and there wasn't a short in the circuit. I'm not saying I believe in ghosts, but I'm also not saying I don't believe in ghosts! It was pretty eerie, but added a fun and spooky element to our visit!

The Overlook Saloon, located on the opposite side of the hotel lobby, is also a great place to grab a drink. This historic saloon was listed as one of the must-visit places in Southern Arizona by the *New York Times*.

A Few More of the Best Places to Eat in Bisbee:

- **Bisbee's Table:** The dark wood-paneled walls and black & white checkered floors create a cozy atmosphere. The food is delicious, the service is great, and they even have Trivial Pursuit cards at the table to play while you wait.
- **The Breakfast Club:** Located on the famed Erie Street, you'll find this charming breakfast joint in the historic Rexall Drug building. They are famous for their all-day breakfast and homemade pies, but they also serve a delicious lunch.
- **Café Roka:** This cafe is popular among tourists and locals alike. It is located on historic Main Street in the former Tavern Bar building. The cafe has maintained many beautiful historic elements, such as the pressed tin ceiling. The dishes are made using fresh local ingredients grown on the nearby Patagonia Farm. Live Jazz is also played on the weekends.
- **High Desert Market and Café:** This casual cafe serves a variety of food from sandwiches and soups to quiches and pastries. Their cherry almond bread pudding is a must! Enjoy your lunch on the outdoor patio when the weather is nice, and be sure to stop at the market for handmade goods.
- **Cafe Cornucopia:** A favorite among locals for its delicious food and charm.

Watch a Magic Show at the Séance Room

For a unique experience, make reservations for a magic show at the [Bisbee Séance Room](#).

The one-hour theatrical show is put on by Kenny the magician and has been rated as one of the "Top 5 Must-See Attractions in Arizona".

It is held in an intimate Victorian parlor that offers the perfect setting for this one-of-a-kind show.

The performance is interactive and highly entertaining as it combines magic, history, and a little bit of the paranormal.

Shows are held every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night. Tickets are available at the door, or you can call ahead for reservations.

Admire the Artwork

As the mines shut down, many of the residents left Bisbee in search of new jobs. The historic district soon began to draw in free spirits who were looking for an inexpensive place to settle and embark on their artistic endeavors.

They helped create the murals and colorful creative expressions that you'll find around almost every corner.

There are also many hidden gems like this tiled staircase tucked into an alley that dates back to 1902.

My favorite is this outdoor art museum located just north of the Copper Queen Hotel. It is found near 26 Brewery Ave between a tattoo parlor and the Seance Room.

There are also a wide variety of murals painted on buildings throughout the town. I love the whimsical bohemian vibe that it brings to the atmosphere.

The tasteful works of art and graffiti are part of the Lowell Americana Project. Their vision is to transform the city into a living piece of art.

If you're looking to stop into a gallery, Belleza Fine Art Gallery is located in a renovated space on the historic Main Street.

The gallery features artists from around the world and is also famous for the cookies they have been serving to guests for the past 15 years.

***Related post:** If you're planning to drive through Tucson on your way to Bisbee, check out these [10 Fun Things to do in Tucson!](#)

Stroll Along Main Street

One of my favorite things to do in Bisbee is just wander the streets. A stroll down Bisbee's historic Main Street will make you feel as if you've stepped back in time.

I fell in love with the European-style buildings with large storefront window displays.

We enjoyed window shopping and popping into a few antique stores to pick up some vintage treasures. My kids especially loved seeing the antique toys.

We also stopped at an ice cream shop with old black and white checkered floors and beautiful transom windows. True to Bisbee's character, it was named "Pussycat Gelato". Expect the unexpected.

It was some of the best gelato I've had since Italy, and trust me, I have been on a relentless search to find good gelato in the desert!

I also recommend visiting the Copper Queen Library on Main Street. This is the oldest continuously operating community library in Arizona. In 2019, it received the award for the "Best Small Library in America" by *Library Journal*.

Honestly, Bisbee is the kind of town where you can wander around with no real agenda and stumble upon the coolest finds.

Explore Brewery Gulch

During the peak of the mining days, Brewery Gulch was the notorious home of over 50 saloons and brothels.

Today, you can still find historic taverns like St. Elmo's Bar, the oldest bar in Bisbee that is still in operation. You can also see the original Muheim's Brewery Building.

In addition to a rowdy nightlife, the "Gulch" was also the bustling site of the Bisbee Stock Exchange.

It's a unique pocket in town that is steeped in history. It's easy to walk these streets and imagine what life was like back in the day.

A Few More Things to Do in Bisbee:

- **Hike "B" Mountain:** The 1.6-mile round-trip trail up Chihuahua Hill offers spectacular views over the town of Bisbee
- **Warren Ballpark:** Who would have guessed that the oldest professional ballpark in the Nation could be found in small-town Bisbee? Warren Ballpark was constructed in 1909 and has been in continuous use ever since. It has hosted everyone from Hall of Famers to the local high school team. This ballpark has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places and holds a piece of American history.
- **E-bike Tour:** Take a guided [E-bike](#) tour with the Bisbee Tour Company to explore the streets and learn about the city's rich history from a knowledgeable guide.
- **Bisbee Golf Cart Ghost Tour:** This family-friendly [Ghost Tour](#) takes you around the town on a golf cart as you learn about Bisbee's dark history and the souls who love Bisbee too much to leave!
- **Muheim Heritage House:** This pioneer home was constructed in 1898 and now serves as a heritage museum. The home and gardens have been restored to reflect the period and can be toured for a small fee.
- **Community Events:** The town of Bisbee hosts many community events throughout the year. One of the more unique events is the [Bisbee 1,000](#). The racecourse for this fitness challenge winds 4.5 miles through town and up 9 staircases, with a total of over 1,000 steps. Check the town's website for other [events](#).

If you're looking for more ghost towns in the area, check out our guide to [7 of the Coolest Ghost Towns in Arizona](#).

I hope this list helps you find the best things to do in Bisbee, I have a feeling you're going to love visiting!