

County Profile for

Santa Cruz County


 Arizona Commerce Authority Logo

 Map of Santa Cruz County

Santa Cruz County is Arizona’s smallest county, encompassing only 1,238 square miles. Created by the 20th Territorial Assembly in 1899, the county is named after the river that flows into Mexico from Arizona before winding back into Santa Cruz and Pima counties. The river was named Santa Cruz, which means Holy Cross in Spanish, by Father Kino in the 17th century. The fertile Santa Cruz Valley was populated by Pima Indians when the Spaniards first arrived in the 1690s and established several missions, one of which, Tumacacori, is a national historical park. Nogales, which means walnuts in Spanish, was chosen the county seat and remains such today. It serves as one of the major gateways between the U.S. and Mexico. There are strong commercial, religious and cultural ties between Nogales, Arizona, and its sister city across the border, Nogales, Sonora. Tubac, founded in 1752 when the Spaniards built a presidio or fort, began as an early outpost for exploration and evolved to silver and gold mining and ranching in the 1800s. Recognized as Arizona’s first European settlement, it was here that The Weekly Arizonian, the first newspaper of what became the territory of Arizona, was published. It is also home to Arizona’s first state park – Tubac Presidio State Historic Park. Since the late 1940s, the community has gained a reputation as one of the premier artisan communities in the state, with more than 120 shops, studios and galleries in Tubac and neighboring communities of Amado and Tumacacori. Given its border location, tourism, international trade, manufacturing and services are the county’s principal industries. Nogales is home to three land ports of entry, including the Mariposa Port with eight commercial lanes serving more than 300,000 trucks entering Arizona annually. The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management own 54 percent of the land; the state of Arizona, 8 percent; individual or corporate ownership, 38 percent and other public lands comprise the remaining percent. Santa Cruz is one of the only counties in Arizona without an Indian Reservation.

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POPULATION

| | 2000 | 2010 | 2023 (est.) |
|-------------------|--------|--------|-------------|
| Santa Cruz County | 38,381 | 47,539 | 48,468 |

Office of Economic Opportunity

SALES TAX / TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Santa Cruz County | 1.00% |
| State | 5.60% |

Arizona Dept. of Revenue & Arizona Tax Research Foundation

LABOR FORCE

| | 2000 | 2010 | 2022 |
|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Civilian Labor Force | 14,747 | 20,881 | 18,942 |
| Unemployed | 1,209 | 3,184 | 1,644 |
| Unemployment Rate | 8.2% | 15.2% | 8.7% |

Office of Economic Opportunity

WORKFORCE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

| | Count | Share |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Less than high school | 6,569 | 22.1% |
| High school or equivalent, no college | 8,158 | 27.5% |
| Some college or Associate degree | 8,733 | 29.4% |
| Bachelor's degree or advanced degree | 6,209 | 20.9% |

American Community Survey

INDUSTRY (RANKED BY EMPLOYMENT)

| | Count | Share |
|---|-------|-------|
| Education, health care & social assistance | 3,809 | 21.3% |
| Retail trade | 2,208 | 12.4% |
| Transportation, warehousing, & utilities | 2,144 | 12.0% |
| Arts, entertainment, food & recreation services | 1,680 | 9.4% |
| Public administration | 1,403 | 7.9% |
| Wholesale trade | 1,234 | 6.9% |
| Construction | 1,116 | 6.2% |
| Professional, scientific, & administrative services | 989 | 5.5% |
| Manufacturing | 865 | 4.8% |
| Finance, insurance & real estate | 827 | 4.6% |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, & mining | 731 | 4.1% |
| Other services, except public administration | 703 | 3.9% |
| Information | 161 | 0.9% |

American Community Survey

This profile was prepared by the Arizona Commerce Authority in cooperation with local sources. For further information, please contact:

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