

County Profile for

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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Santa Cruz County, Arizona



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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