



DAY TRIP TO ARIVACA

From Green Valley · Pima County, Arizona



FARM AND RANCH



Photo: The Old Pueblo, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0

LIVING TOWN

Unincorporated community of about 600 people (2020 census) with a post office, a library branch and a community center.

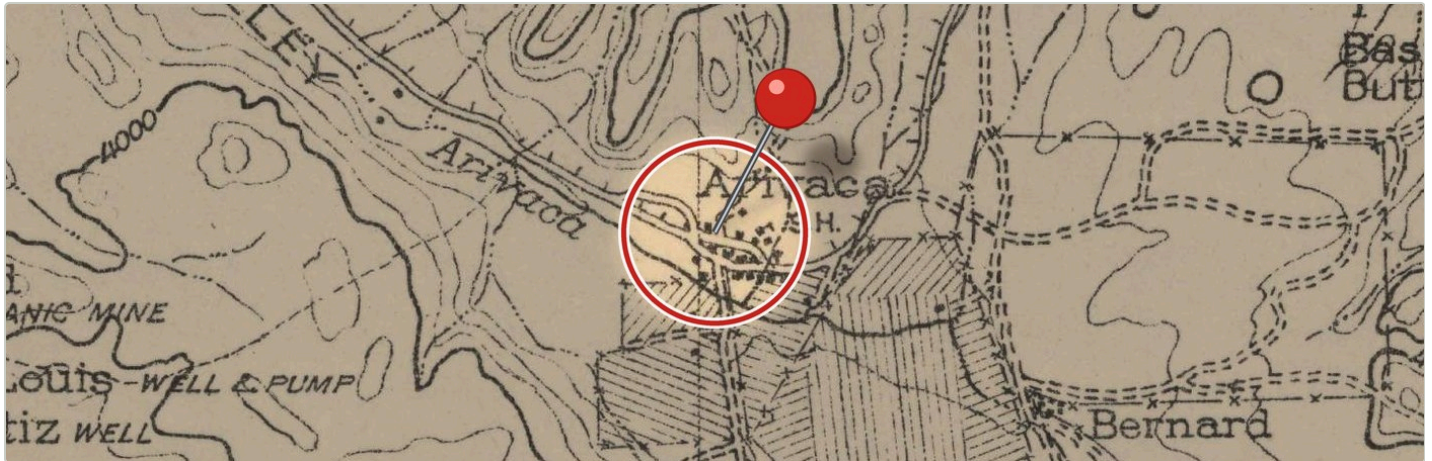
Arivaca makes an easy half day from Green Valley on paved roads. Look at the 1879 schoolhouse and the old adobes from the street, then walk the boardwalk at the Arivaca Cienega on the edge of town. It's a living town, so treat the old buildings as private homes and businesses.

A SAMPLE DAY

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Morning | Drive down I-19 and west on Arivaca Road, past the Cerro Colorado mine site. |
| ☐ Late morning | Walk the Arivaca Cienega boardwalk on the east edge of town. |
| ☐ Midday | See the schoolhouse, the post office and old stage depot, and Main Street. |
| ☐ Afternoon | Head back the way you came, or continue on Ruby Road toward Oro Blanco. It turns to graded dirt after about six miles. |

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH

- **The schoolhouse.** The whitewashed adobe and its National Register marker, from the street.
- **The stage depot.** The big tin-roofed building beside the post office.
- **The cienega.** Cottonwoods and the boardwalk over the wetland.
- **Drones.** The refuge trail page doesn't cover them. Ask the refuge before flying.



USGS topographic map, 1920 (public domain). The ring and pin mark the town.

DAY TRIP ESSENTIALS

DRIVE	33 mi, about 54 min each way from Green Valley. From Tucson: 59 mi, about 1 h 23 min.
OPEN	The town is open year-round. The refuge trails at the cienega and on Arivaca Creek are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
ADMISSION	The refuge charges no fee. The schoolhouse is viewed from outside; we found no posted interior hours.
TIME ON SITE	The cienega loop is a little under a mile and takes about an hour. Allow another hour for the town.
RESTROOMS	The refuge's trail page doesn't list restrooms at the Arivaca trails.
FOOD AND WATER	A 2016 photo shows the Arivaca Mercantile on the main street, but we found no current hours. Bring food and water, especially in the warm months.
ON FOOT	The cienega trail is a boardwalk loop under cottonwoods along a seasonal stream.
PHOTOGRAPHY	The old adobes are private. Photograph them from the street.

BEFORE YOU GO

- Check the status with the land manager before you go; conditions change.
- Stay out of mine shafts, tunnels and unstable buildings.
- Leave artifacts where they lie. Removing them can be a crime.
- Carry water, a paper map and a charged phone; signal is often poor.

Coordinates 31.57720, -111.33140 • 31°34'38"N
111°19'53"W

Full guide abandonedtowns.com/arizona/arivaca/

Directions [Google Maps](#)

Details checked October 2026. Hours, prices and access change: confirm before you go.