
SONOITA
WINE COUNTRY
Where Arizona's Wine Heritage Began
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Where Arizona's Wine Story Comes to Life.

Deep Roots, High-Desert Wines

The Mission Era (1600s–1700s)
Long before high-tech irrigation and tasting rooms, winemaking in Southern Arizona began with Jesuit missionaries. In the late 17th century, Father Eusebio Kino introduced European grapevines (Vitis vinifera), primarily the "Mission" grape, to the Sonoran Desert. These early vineyards produced wine used almost exclusively for Catholic sacraments and mass.

Prohibition & The Long Drought (1915–1970s)
Arizona voted for state-level Prohibition in 1915, five years before the 18th Amendment went into effect nationally. The law wiped out early commercial vineyards across the territory, forcing local drinking culture underground into speakeasies and moonshine stills. For over 50 years, commercial grape growing in Southern Arizona was virtually nonexistent.

The Godfather of Modern AZ Wine (1970s)
The modern renaissance started in 1973 with Dr. Gordon Dutt, a soil scientist at the University of Arizona. Dutt noticed striking similarities between the red, iron-rich terra rossa soil of Sonoita/Elgin and famous wine regions like Burgundy, France. Battling skepticism that the desert was too hot, he proved that high elevations (around 4,500 to 5,000 feet) provided the cool nights necessary for grapes to thrive. In 1979, Dutt planted Arizona's first post-Prohibition commercial vineyard, Sonoita Vineyards.

Legal Breakthroughs & The First AVA (1980s)
Winemakers faced strict post-Prohibition laws that made running a vineyard unprofitable. In 1982, pioneer growers lobbied the state legislature to pass the Domestic Farm Winery Bill, allowing wineries to operate tasting rooms and sell directly to consumers. Two years later, in 1984, Sonoita/Elgin earned official recognition as Arizona's very first American Viticultural Area (AVA).

Southern Arizona's wine country is a breathtaking expanse of high-desert grasslands and rugged "Sky Island" mountain basins, where vineyard rows stretch across golden prairies at unexpected elevations of 4,000 to 5,000 feet. Cradled by dramatic peaks like the Santa Ritas and Chiricahuas, the region blends intense Southwestern sunshine with crisp mountain breezes, yielding dramatic day-to-night temperature swings that give local grapes their distinct character. Far from polished resort valleys, the land feels authentically wild and unpretentious—a rustic, windswept oasis where red clay soils, native yucca, and wide-open horizons frame family-owned vineyards forged by Southwestern passion and grit.



Winery & Tasting Room Directory

Southern Arizona

1. Arizona Hops & Vines
3450 AZ-82, Sonoita, AZ 85637 | (301) 237-6556
azhopsandvines.com

2. Autumn Sage Vineyards
90 Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (602) 904-2120 autumnsage.com

3. Callaghan Vineyards
336 Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (520) 455-5322
callaghanvineyards.com

4. Charron Vineyards
18585 S Sonoita Hwy, Vail, AZ 85641 | (520) 762-8585
charronvineyards.com

5. Copper Hop Ranch & Microbrewery
5 Fairview Ln, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (520) 528-2609
copperhopranch.com

6. Deep Sky Vineyard
124 Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (520) 490-6170
deepskyvineyard.com

7. Dos Cabezas WineWorks
3248 AZ-82, Sonoita, AZ 85637 | (520) 455-5141
doscabezas.com

8. Elgin Winery & Distillery
471 Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (520) 455-9309 elginwd.com

9. Flying Kite Vineyard & Tasting Room
435 Lower Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (602) 617-6155
flyingkitevineyard.com

10. Flying Leap Vineyards & Distillery
342 Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (888) 431-5777
flyingleapvineyards.com

11. Four Tails Tasting Room
3170 Hwy 83, Sonoita, AZ 85637 | (520) 386-2878
fourtailsvineyard.com

Please check individual winery hours before visiting.





Winery & Tasting Room Directory

Southern Arizona

12.Los Milics Vineyards
423 Upper Elgin Road ,Elgin, AZ 85611 | (272) 568-9463
losmilicsvineyards.com

13.Queen of Cups
320 Smelter Ave, Patagonia, AZ 85624 | (520) 300-0815
queenofcupswines.com

14.Rune Wines
3969 HWY82, Sonoita, AZ 85637 | (520) 338-8823 | runewines.com

15.Salvatore Vineyards
313 Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (480) 483-5051 passioncellars.com

16.Silver Strike Winery
334 E Allen St, Tombstone, AZ 85638 | (520) 678-8200
silverstrikewinery.com

17.Sonoita Vineyards
290 Elgin-Canelo Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (520) 455-5893
sonoitavineyards.com

18.Sunset Ride Vineyards
3266 HWY 82, Sonoita, AZ 85637 | (520) 216-7223
sunsetride.com

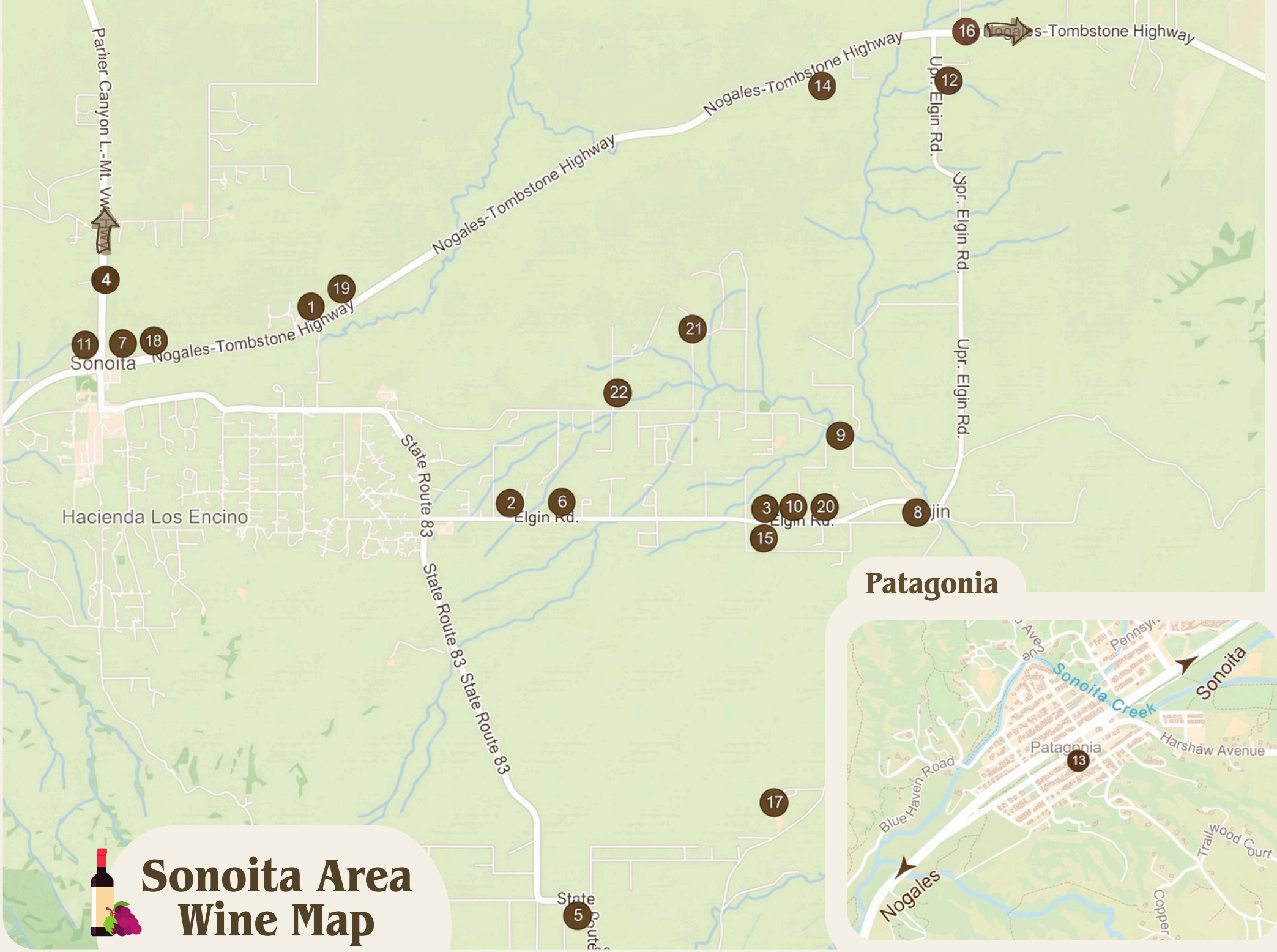
19.The Meading Room
3470 HWY 82, Sonoita, AZ 85637 | (520) 428-1170
themeadingroom.com

20.Twisted Union Wine Co.
370 Elgin Rd, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (520) 455-5582
twistedunionwinecompany.com

21.Vino Stache Winery
6 Lone Mesquite Ct, Elgin, AZ 85611| (480) 266-0515
vinostache.com

22.Wilhelm Family Vineyards
21 Mountain Ranch Dr, Elgin, AZ 85611 | (520) 455-9291
wilhelmfamilyvineyards.com

Please check individual winery hours before visiting.


Sonoita Area Wine Map
Patagonia
Nogales-Tombstone Highway
Upr. Elgin Rd.
Elgin Rd.
State Route 83
Parlier Canyon L.-Mt. Vw
Sonoita
Hacienda Los Encino
Sonoita Creek
Harshaw Avenue
Blue Haven Road
Trail Wood Court
Nogales
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Restaurants, Saloons & Cafes

- The Steak Out Restaurant & Saloon
- The Cafe
- Ranch House Tavern
- El Campo Cantina
- Copper Brothel Brewery
- Pronghorn Pizza
- The Biscuit
- Sunset Ride Vineyards
- Corner Scoop
- Sonoita Heritage Coffee

Hotels, Inns & Bed & Breakfasts

- Sonoita Inn
- Rancho Milagro Bed & Breakfast
- Casitas at Los Milics Vineyards
- NextDoor @ Dos Cabezas

Guest Ranches, Vacation Homes & RV / Camping

- Double R Guest Ranch
- Sonoita Fairgrounds RV & Dry Camping

Convenience Stores, Markets & Fuel

- Sonoita Mercantile
- Sonoita Mini Market
- Dollar General
- Sonoita Feeds

Must Stop: Sonoita Fairgrounds

Ranch country has more to it than wine. Just south of the Highway 82 and 83 crossroads, the Sonoita Fairgrounds host annual community events, including the Sonoita Horse Races, the Labor Day Rodeo, and the Santa Cruz County Fair each September. If your visit lines up, it's a fun way to see local life.



Dates change each year; check www.sonoitafairgrounds.com or call (520) 455-5553 before planning around an event or for more information.