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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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September lodging surge lifts Cochise County sales

BENSON — Hotels and motels powered Cochise County's September, with inflation-adjusted lodging sales 20.2% above a year earlier. Retail sales gained 2.3% after adjusting for inflation, while restaurant and bar sales slipped 1.0%.

Through the first nine months of 2026, the picture is more restrained. Countywide lodging is up 3.6% and dining is up 0.9%, but retail remains 3.1% below the same period of 2025. Collections from remote sellers, which count sales by businesses without a physical Arizona presence, rose 8.9% in September and are 10.2% higher year to date.

Arizona as a whole followed a similar pattern. Statewide retail sales grew 4.2% in September after inflation, stronger than Cochise County's gain, though they are down 0.2% for the year. Hotel and motel sales rose 4.8% for the month and 3.0% year to date, well short of the county's monthly jump. Restaurants and bars statewide fell 2.3% in September but are 1.0% ahead for the year, and remote-seller sales surged 21.0% for the month and 12.4% year to date.

Bisbee posted the strongest lodging performance among the county's communities, with inflation-adjusted hotel and motel sales up 59.9% in September and 12.6% through the first nine months. Restaurants and bars gained 11.7% for the month and 4.8% year to date, and retail rose 6.4% in September, although retail is still 2.2% below last year's pace.

Douglas continued to show the most dependable growth. Retail sales climbed 11.5% in September and are up 6.4% for the year, while restaurant and bar sales increased 1.9% for the month and 9.3% year to date.

Huachuca City's retail sales jumped 29.3% after inflation in September, the largest monthly gain among the retail figures reported, yet they remain 3.9% lower for the year.

Tombstone also saw a sharp rebound, with retail up 10.3% and restaurants and bars up 21.7% in September. Lodging there slipped 4.2%, and all three categories remain below 2025 levels year to date: retail by 6.3%, dining by 3.8% and lodging by 4.5%.

Sierra Vista's lodging sales rose 22.0% in September, but they are still 6.4% lower year to date. Retail edged up 1.1% for the month and is down 3.4% for the year, and restaurant and bar sales fell 2.1% in September while remaining 1.8% higher year to date.

In Willcox, retail grew 6.5% for the month and is 1.3% above last year, but restaurants and bars fell 18.3% in September and are down 9.7% for the year. Lodging there declined 7.6% for the month and 4.5% year to date.

Benson had the toughest month. Lodging sales fell 34.7% after inflation, restaurant and bar sales dropped 12.5%, and retail slipped 0.9%. Year-to-date declines are 10.9% for both lodging and dining, and 4.2% for retail.

The September figures point to a lodging-led recovery in several communities rather than a broad-based upturn. Retail is rebounding month to month in most places, but yearly totals remain negative in Benson, Bisbee, Huachuca City, Sierra Vista and Tombstone, with Douglas and Willcox the exceptions.

For more information on the Cochise County economy, including current and historical data, visit CochiseEconomy.com, a partnership project of Southeast Arizona Economic Development Group, Arizona G&T Cooperatives, and community sponsors.

Major industry sales

	September 2026	September 2025	Year-over-year Growth	Year-over-year Inflation-adjusted Growth	Year-to-date 2026	Year-to-date 2025	Year-to-date Growth	Year-to-date Inflation-adjusted Growth
ARIZONA								
Retail	$9,124,555,898	$8,443,034,447	8.1%	4.2%	$80,105,910,205	$77,642,467,914	3.2%	-0.2%
Restaurant/Bar	$1,873,214,003	$1,848,618,655	1.3%	-2.3%	$18,092,321,549	$17,327,259,071	4.4%	1.0%
Hotel/Motel	$403,029,758	$370,618,980	8.7%	4.8%	$4,366,916,348	$4,102,924,301	6.4%	3.0%
Remote Seller*	$1,581,997,748	$1,260,825,731	25.5%	21.0%	$13,688,044,367	$11,779,656,842	16.2%	12.4%
COCHISE COUNTY								
Retail	$101,427,453	$95,610,705	6.1%	2.3%	$882,962,381	$882,009,539	0.1%	-3.1%
Restaurant/Bar	$18,024,386	$17,546,078	2.7%	-1.0%	$174,949,921	$167,843,906	4.2%	0.9%
Hotel/Motel	$4,241,779	$3,403,193	24.6%	20.2%	$41,392,719	$38,639,933	7.1%	3.6%
Remote Seller*	$21,980,970	$19,454,079	13.0%	8.9%	$203,552,015	$178,791,270	13.8%	10.2%
BENSON								
Retail**	$7,116,207	$6,922,268	2.8%	-0.9%	$63,337,103	$63,939,211	-0.9%	-4.2%
Restaurant/Bar	$1,514,262	$1,668,537	-9.2%	-12.5%	$14,236,320	$15,459,785	-7.9%	-10.9%
Hotel/Motel	$173,170	$255,646	-32.3%	-34.7%	$2,334,348	$2,535,927	-7.9%	-10.9%
BISBEE								
Retail	$3,141,557	$2,845,756	10.4%	6.4%	$29,013,948	$28,710,418	1.1%	-2.2%
Restaurant/Bar	$1,095,178	$945,390	15.8%	11.7%	$12,075,922	$11,148,300	8.3%	4.8%
Hotel/Motel	$662,600	$399,364	65.9%	59.9%	$4,955,095	$4,256,953	16.4%	12.6%
DOUGLAS								
Retail***	$11,085,870	$9,584,682	15.7%	11.5%	$98,475,961	$89,578,551	9.9%	6.4%
Restaurant/Bar	$2,013,867	$1,904,480	5.7%	1.9%	$19,334,063	$17,111,590	13.0%	9.3%
HUACHUCA CITY								
Retail	$1,053,808	$785,939	34.1%	29.3%	$6,937,303	$6,987,539	-0.7%	-3.9%
SIERRA VISTA								
Retail	$55,894,208	$53,287,390	4.9%	1.1%	$495,098,842	$496,154,707	-0.2%	-3.4%
Restaurant/Bar	$10,077,771	$9,927,097	1.5%	-2.1%	$99,340,093	$94,387,769	5.2%	1.8%
Hotel/Motel	$1,785,580	$1,410,879	26.6%	22.0%	$17,345,314	$17,928,386	-3.3%	-6.4%
TOMBSTONE								
Retail	$1,432,558	$1,251,737	14.4%	10.3%	$13,295,227	$13,732,627	-3.2%	-6.3%
Restaurant/Bar	$754,071	$597,406	26.2%	21.7%	$7,444,303	$7,490,149	-0.6%	-3.8%
Hotel/Motel	$343,989	$346,149	-0.6%	-4.2%	$4,014,172	$4,065,466	-1.3%	-4.5%
WILLCOX								
Retail****	$5,068,138	$4,586,531	10.5%	6.5%	$44,949,050	$42,931,095	4.7%	1.3%
Restaurant/Bar	$1,216,186	$1,435,131	-15.3%	-18.3%	$11,213,519	$12,020,467	-6.7%	-9.7%
Hotel/Motel	$528,386	$551,395	-4.2%	-7.6%	$5,354,351	$5,423,594	-1.3%	-4.5%

Source: Estimates by US Economic Research based on Arizona Department of Revenue tax collection data.
Note. Inflation adjustments made using CPI-U. Retail excludes food for home consumption. * Includes sales from sellers without a physical presence in Arizona and annual gross sales in-state of $100,000 or more. **Excludes single Items over $5,000. ***Excludes single Items over $10,000. ****Excludes single Items over $1,250.

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