



FACT SHEET

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THE FACTS ABOUT CENTRAL OREGON

Location:

Located just east of the Cascade Range and west of the Ochoco Mountains, Central Oregon encompasses a region that stretches from vast forests to the arid high desert. True to its name, Central Oregon is geographically centered in the state, with its largest city, Bend, about 160 miles southeast of Portland and nearly equidistant to the Washington and California borders. The region is made up of Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties, and includes the communities of Bend, La Pine, Madras, Maupin, Prineville, Redmond, Sisters, Sunriver, Terrebonne, and Warm Springs.

Population:

The population of the Bend-Redmond Metropolitan Area, which encompasses nearly all of Central Oregon, is approximately 202,000 people. With a population of approximately 95,000, Bend is the largest city and the seat of the largest county, Deschutes County.

Climate:

Because of its shifts in elevation — Maupin rests at 1,300 feet of elevation, Bend at 3,600 feet, and Mt. Bachelor tops out at more than 9,000 feet — Central Oregon is home to a vast array of microclimates. But the region is primarily arid, a result of the rain shadow effect of the Cascade Range. Bend receives on average about 11 inches of precipitation, including 23 inches of snow, and more than 300 days of sunshine in an average year. Just 22 miles to the west, one of the country's largest ski resorts — Mt. Bachelor — receives an average of 462 inches of snowfall. Central Oregon's High Desert climate often brings clear days and cool nights. Average temperatures in January hit highs of 41F and lows of 24F; in July highs reach 82F and lows of 47F.

Geography:

Central Oregon is spread from dramatic snow-capped mountain ranges to high desert plateaus. It is a historically volcanic region, where the peaks of the Cascade Range are ever-present, and lava beds, volcanic buttes, crater lakes, volcanic plugs, and lava tubes are not uncommon. The landscape varies widely, with a coniferous forest dominating the western sections of the region, and juniper forests, sagebrush, and High Desert characterizing areas farther away from the Cascade Range. Most of Central Oregon's population is concentrated along the Deschutes River, which flows north to the Columbia River through or closely near Bend, La Pine, Maupin, Redmond, Sunriver, and Warm Springs. The Deschutes' two largest tributaries, the Metolius River and the Crooked River, flow through Prineville, Terrebonne, and near Sisters. The rivers and volcanic peaks combine to help make Central Oregon such an outdoor recreation mecca.

How to get here:

The region is served by Redmond Municipal Airport (RDM), which offers around 30 daily flights with nonstop service to nine major markets, including every major Western hub. In addition, Amtrak serves Central Oregon through the Chemult, Oregon station, where passengers can connect to the Bend/Sunriver area via Amtrak Thruway Bus Service.

Central Oregon is bisected by two major highways: U.S. Highway 97, which runs north-south from Washington to California, and U.S. Highway 20, which runs east-west from the Oregon Coast to the Idaho border. Bend is approximately a two-hour drive from Eugene (130 miles), three hours from Portland (175 miles), five hours from Boise (300 miles), six hours from Seattle (325 miles), and about eight hours from San Francisco (500 miles).

Demographics:

The median age in the Bend-Redmond Metropolitan Area is 42 years old. Median household income is \$63,300 (2019)

(<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/redmondcityoregon.bendcityoregon/INC110219>)

Economy:

Once dominated by the timber industry, the Central Oregon economy has become increasingly reliant on the tourism industry. Though timber and agriculture are still critically important to the region's economy, outdoor recreation and tourism are now counted as the region's top industry with total economic impacts each year of \$1.1 billion annually from more than 4.3 million visitors.

Higher education:

Central Oregon is home to two colleges: Oregon State University-Cascades and Central Oregon Community College.

Fun facts:

- Located on the longitude of 121 degrees West, Central Oregon sits farther west than Los Angeles. The 45th Parallel North (halfway between the equator and the North Pole) passes through the region, making Central Oregon farther north than Boston.
- Mt. Bachelor is an inactive volcano that last erupted 100,000 years ago. Now home to the region's largest ski resort, Mt. Bachelor's Summit Express chairlift reaches the 9,065-foot peak and offers 360-degree views of the surrounding region.
- Smith Rock State Park, characterized by sheer cliffs of tuff and basalt cut by the Crooked River, is an international rock climbing destination. It is also generally considered the birthplace of modern American sport climbing.
- Ashton Eaton, who won gold medals in the decathlon at the 2012 and 2016 Olympics, grew up in Central Oregon and graduated from Mountain View High School in Bend.
- Bend's Old Mill District is a popular shopping and recreation site today. But it was built on the site of the former Brooks-Scanlon and Shevlin-Hixon lumber mills, the world's largest yellow pine producers in the early 1900s.
- The legendary vaudeville performer and showgirl Kate Rockwell — best known as "Klondike Kate" — moved to Central Oregon in 1910 as a homesteader and remained in the region until her death in 1957.
- With 31 breweries (2019) in the region, including 22 in Bend, Central Oregon has one of the highest rates of breweries per capita in the world.
- Between 1964 and 1966, NASA astronauts trained on the region's volcanic terrain to prepare for an upcoming moon mission. Astronaut Jim Irwin of the Apollo 15 mission even placed a volcanic rock from this area on the moon.
- Explorers John C. Fremont and Kit Carson blazed into Central Oregon in the 1840s during their famed expedition to map the Western U.S.
- With almost 40 breweries in the region, including 22 in Bend, Central Oregon has one of the highest rates of breweries per capita in the world.

ABOUT CENTRAL OREGON:

Located on the eastern slopes of the Cascade Range, where vast forests give way to the arid high desert, Central Oregon is characterized by year-round adventure, authenticity, inspiration, and environment. From the towering peaks of the Cascades to the pristine waters of the Wild & Scenic Deschutes River, and from the more urban experiences of Bend and Redmond, to the rural charms of Sisters, La Pine, Prineville, Madras, Warm Springs, and Maupin, Central Oregon offers a perfect mix of recreation and sophistication. Barely three hours from Portland, and with daily direct flights from eight major markets, getting to Central Oregon is a breeze. For more information visit www.visitcentraloregon.com or call 800-800-8334.

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