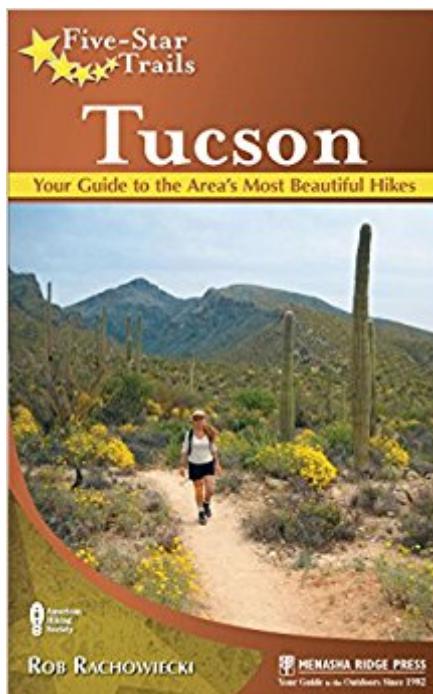


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# Five-Star Trails: Tucson: Your Guide To The Area's Most Beautiful Hikes



## **Synopsis**

Tucson lies in a saguaro-studded desert basin surrounded by four mountain ranges and book-ended by two national parks. In an hour you can drive from an arid canyon in the Arizona-Sonora desert to a pine-forested mountain at 9000 feet. Hiking trails are plentiful and as varied as the terrain. Five-Star Trails: Tucson by Rob Rachowiecki guides hikers to diverse trails suitable for anyone from wheelchair-using nature lovers to those looking for an all-day workout. Sized to fit in a pocket, this guide is convenient to keep in the car or toss into a backpack. Driving directions steer hikers to the nearest trailhead parking areas, including GPS trailhead coordinates to get them to the start of the trail. Each trail has been thoroughly researched, recently hiked and includes detailed descriptions, trail profiles and maps. At a glance categorical ratings, such as scenery, trail condition, difficulty, solitude and kid-friendliness, let you quickly select a trail that fits your tastes and ability. Other key information such as fees, restrictions for dogs as well as advice on when to visit offers you the best information so you can plan your trip with ease.

## **Book Information**

Series: Five-Star Trails

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Menasha Ridge Press; First Edition, 1st Printing edition (February 18, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0897324420

ISBN-13: 978-0897324427

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.6 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 10 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #243,837 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Travel > United States > Arizona > Tucson #4 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Nature Travel > Adventure > Canoeing #4 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Nature Travel > Adventure > Kayaking

## **Customer Reviews**

Encircled by mountains, blessed with awe-inspiring desert scenery, and flanked to its east and west by Saguaro National Park, Tucson is an absolute hiker's nirvana. Hundreds of trails provide endless opportunities to explore. Without this book, you might miss the Old Pueblo's hidden hiking treasures. But with the expert guidance of local author Rob Rachowiecki, you can experience 35 of the best trails in six distinct areas in and around the city. At an elevation of roughly 2,500 feet, Tucson's

majestic and diverse landscape has brought two national park districts, Saguaro National Park East & West, and a national forest, Coronado National Forest, to the city's doorstep. Outdoor enthusiasts can also enjoy Sabino Canyon, Mount Lemmon, the Santa Catalina foothills, and the Tucson Mountains, all just a short distance from downtown Tucson. So it's no surprise that Tucson-based outdoor and travel writer Rob Rachowiecki refers to the city as a "hiker's nirvana." "Having been born and raised in England, and then having spent a good chunk of my early adult years hiking and climbing in the Andes, I was not very prepared for Tucson summers," he explains. "Happily, I discovered I could escape into the mountain ranges surrounding the city, where the forests provided ideal conditions for enjoying the outdoors." Given the dense network of trails available in the Tucson area, Rachowiecki cuts to the quick to find the area's absolute best hiking for people of all abilities. A one-stop-shop, this guide includes some of the roughest, longest day hikes in the nearby mountainous regions, as well as hikes of more moderate length and some very easy, short strolls that are more accessible, perfect for families with small children or people with limited mobility. Rachowiecki also provides his personal recommendations for hiking trails ideal for geology buffs, history lovers, family outings, mountain summits, seasonal water features, and wheelchair accessibility, among other categories. Hikers will also find detailed driving directions to trailheads, along with original, GPS-based trail maps and elevation profiles for each trail.

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I travel throughout the U.S., and globally. I mountain bike, hike, back pack and kayak in addition to prowling through urban areas. I have a lot of guide books. This is the best overall guide I have purchased. The maps and descriptions are consistently accurate. I hiked about ten of the hikes in different areas. I loved the organization by geographical areas in Tucson, and the awesome overall map in the cover that had a numbered key to all of the trails which made it simple to narrow down choices according to your upcoming location. Maps and elevation graphs were very accurate. The descriptions really come through when you come to a spot in the trail and your not certain of the right path; as there was almost always commentary on the quandary. Directions to the trail heads were also accurate the majority of the time. I really appreciated the solitude ratings; as that is really

important to me. I think if he does a revision, he should add an extra rating in the difficulty span. I prefer trails on the more strenuous side of things. Sometimes, there didn't seem to be much of a correlation between grueling and moderate rating across trails, but I guess we all have different perspectives on what makes moderate, etc.

As a visitor during the Gem and Mineral show, I spent a week's worth of my mornings trekking around Tucson. The guide was a good read, however I am of the belief that the geology is the primary reason for being there. As such, only two trails were listed as best for geology (really? All the trails have spectacular geologic features), and those two were absent of any geologic descriptions. So, not discussing even the big picture geology of an area was sad and it detracted from my overall enjoyment of the guide. I did like the subject headings for the recommended hikes section and focused much of my time on the ridge trails and mountain sums. BTW - the books binding separated and pages started falling out after the first half hour of use on the trail.

See my review for the Levingood book - this is the one we actually used the most out of the hiking guides we bought for our Tucson vacation. It had a good mix of short and long trails, and decently-useable information on difficulty and reason thereof, which was pretty important for us as a family with a young kid and elderly folks. The book had a few flaws and minor inaccuracies (what hiking guide doesn't?), and I would definitely recommend supplementing with maps and information from the specific locations you plan to hike (Saguaro NP, for instance), but if you can only afford one hiking guide this would be a good one.

Very good book. Would be better if there were pictures of the trails and a better explanation of the distance (whether or not the distance is round trip). I would recommend this book for someone who is looking for a good starter book on hiking. The maps could also be a little more detailed.

These trail descriptions show elevation, have GPS coordinates, and best of all, are rated on a number of criteria including the extent to which the trail is workable for children. As a family traveling with a 7 year old, it's an excellent resource.

Very clear and helpful.

Good Info, I wish it was in color!

This was a gift for someone who lives in the area.

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