

New Mexico 6-Day Itinerary:-

Day 1 Arrival

For guest arriving by air we pickup at the Albuquerque, MN Airport at 2 p.m. (please see travel information below).

For guest arriving by car we meet at the San Geronimo Lodge in Taos, NM. Check in time is 3 p.m. (driving directions can be found by visiting the inns website at www.sangeronimolodge.com).

Our first day activity is an orientation meeting scheduled for approx. 6-6:30 p.m., followed by dinner as a group.

Day 2 (4.5 to 6 miles) The colorful sandstones of the Colorado Plateau that drew artist Georgia O'Keefe to Ghost Ranch now lure us. We set out in the morning for Chimney Rock. A gradual climb through a brilliant landscape leads to this viewpoint, high above the Chama River valley. Lunch is in the shade of a cottonwood near the visitor center. Easier afternoon options may include Echo Amphitheater or fascinating Plaza Blanca, while the climb to Kitchen Mesa features a challenging scramble.

Day 3 (4 to 7 miles) The Rio Grande cuts a deep steep-sided gorge through 800' of volcanic rock; a stark landscape of jumbled boulders softened by occasional trees and the rushing waters of the river. One option will start at the rim of the canyon and descend a rough trail to La Junta, the confluence of the Red River and the Rio Grande. From there the trail proceeds upstream past groves of Ponderosa Pine and gushing springs to a cluster of petroglyphs. After lunch beside Big Arsenic Springs an ascent of the canyon ends with a easy hike along the rim.

For others, the day starts with a visit to Taos Pueblo, the oldest continuously inhabited community in the United States. The two main structures at this UNESCO World Heritage Site are over 1000 years old. After a short guided tour, enjoy the unique shops and people of the pueblo. A hike along the rim of the Rio Grande Gorge at the Gorge Bridge is followed by lunch. The afternoon may include a nature/history trail near Pot Creek; a wade in the Rio Grande at Pillar; or an opportunity to explore the shops and galleries of Taos.

Day 4 (6 to 9 miles) We are off to Chimayo today taking the Taos High Road through the Sangre de Christo Mountains. Our hike starts at 10,400' above sea level in a forest thick with spruce and fir trees. The steady uphill can be a challenge at this altitude, but as we move steadily along a fine view overlooking Serpent Lakes awaits us at treeline. The more ambitious can continue on to the ridgeline and some may even reach the summit of Jicarita Peak. Along the way you may see Alpine Flowers, Marmot, Pika, and possibly Elk or Big Horn Sheep.

Day 5 (4 to 7 miles) For nearly 500 years, Frijoles Canyon was home to the Anasazi, ancestors of the modern Pueblo people. Bandelier National Monument protects the ruined adobe and cave dwellings of these ancient inhabitants. A trail to the rim allows for an overview of the canyon before descending to the interpretive trail below. You can instead choose to spend the whole morning on the interpretive trail where ladders and staircases allow you to explore the cliff dwellings. After lunch we hike down the beautifully forested canyon past volcanic formations to a dramatic view of the Rio Grande and a Upper and Lower Falls....or enjoy the informative visitor center and well-stocked gift shop.

Day 6 (3.5 to 7 miles) Back to the Sangre de Christo Mountains; this time not far from Sante Fe. You can choose a challenging hike to scenic Nambe Lake or a shorter hike to Raven Rock while some hikers may elect to spend their day in Santa Fe. The short but vigorous hike to Raven Rock, with its impressive views of nearby mountains and the distant Rio Grande valley, still enables hikers to explore Sante Fe for most of the afternoon, while the Nambe Lake hike will allow for an hour or two in the city. We'll hike to Nambe Lake on one of the most rewarding trails imaginable passing through thick evergreen forests and magical Aspen groves; along rushing streams; through alpine meadows alive with wild flowers; beneath towering mountain peaks festooned with snow.

Day 7 (up to 3 miles) Only a half day of hiking at Tent Rocks today, but what a hike! We'll walk a narrow slot canyon through ancient volcanic ash deposits deeply eroded into narrow canyons and fantastically shaped hoodoo's. The trail steepens as we emerge from the canyon to the mesa-top for wide open views of the Rio Grande Valley and surrounding mountains. After returning to our vans, we'll travel back to Sante Fe for lunch.

NEW MEXICO - THE INNS

DAY ONE, TWO & THREE

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DAY FOUR

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DAY FIVE & SIX

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Debbie Allman

If you would like additional information about the inn and hotels we will be lodging with, we invite you to visit their web site, or call and request a brochure.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Our pick up is from the Albuquerque Airport at 2 p.m. on the first day of the trip. Please call us at (800) 869 0949 two week prior to departure date to confirm pick-up.

We will return hikers to the airport by 3:30 p.m. on the last day of the hike.

If you are driving, we will meet you at approx. 3:30 p.m. at The Inn on the Alameda in Santa Fe, where you can leave your car until we return there on day five.

FOR ASSISTANCE PLEASE CONTACT OUR TRAVEL SERVICE: BETTER TRAVEL @ 1-800-331-6996