

Group TravelMasters Presents: Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta

"The Land of Enchantment" October 10 -14, 2019



This tour is a "Guaranteed Departure"



- 4 Nights, 8 Meals
- Balloon Fiesta
- Twilight Twinkle Glow Program
- AfterGlow Fireworks Show
- Dawn Patrol and Breakfast
- City tour of Albuquerque
- Albuquerque Old Town
- Acoma Pueblo & Sky City
- Sandia Peak Tram
- Santa Fe Tour
- Loretto Chapel
- Turquoise Museum

Price Per Person: Twin - \$ 1,490.00

DAY 1: ARRIVE ALBUQUERQUE - AFTERGLOW

The "Land of Enchantment" welcomes you as you arrive in beautiful **Albuquerque** today (*please arrive by 1:00pm). Meet your Western Leisure tour director and transfer to your hotel. After some time to settle in, join the group and drive to Balloon Fiesta Park to begin your **Balloon Fiesta** experience. Enjoy dinner at the Chaser Club with direct access onto Fiesta Field for the **Twilight Twinkle Glow™**, and **AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show**. The **Twilight Twinkle Glow** starts when all the balloons fire their burners and light up at the same time. It is perhaps the most spectacular single moment in all of Balloon Fiesta. The Twinkle Glow is followed by New Mexico's most spectacular fireworks display. Together they are Balloon Fiesta's most popular events. (D)

DAY 2: ALBUQUERQUE BALLOON FIESTA Today you will learn why Albuquerque is called the Balloon Capitol of the World. Depart for an early morning transfer to the Fiesta Field to witness the Dawn Patrol and have **breakfast at the Chasers Club**. The **Dawn Patrol** began at Balloon Fiesta in 1978, when two California balloonists developed position lighting systems that allowed them to fly at night. Dawn Patrol pilots take off in the dark and fly until it is light enough to see landing sites. Just at dawn when the winds are calmest, watch the **mass ascension** in a rainbow of colors at the world-famous **Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta**. Later this morning enjoy a driving tour of Albuquerque, "The Jewel of the American Southwest." You will see the downtown area as well as the University of New Mexico before stopping in **Albuquerque's Old Town**. Old Town's tree-lined plaza and charming adobe buildings and churches are sure to delight the sightseer and the shopper! The afternoon is free to relax and have lunch on own. This evening, join the group for dinner at a local restaurant featuring the local cuisine of New Mexico. (B,D)

DAY 3: INDIAN PUEBLO CULTURAL CENTER - ACOMA PUEBLO SKY CITY This morning visit the **Turquoise Museum** where you will enter the museum through a mock mine tunnel and see the veins and nugget formations just as if you are a miner. Learn about rare specimens and the process of grinding and shaping the stones before time at leisure in the gift shop. Then we'll experience a fascinating introduction to the way of life enjoyed by America's first "apartment dwellers," the Pueblo tribes of the Southwest. At the **Indian Pueblo Cultural Center**, you'll see their artifacts and crafts, and learn about the cultural and religious customs that have helped preserve this society for over 1,000 years. Next, travel to **Acoma Pueblo** for an included lunch and touring. The Pueblo offers a window in time where Native people carry on the customary traditions of their ancestors through Native American pottery making and tribal celebrations. Enjoy a guided tour of the **Sky City Cultural Center** followed by a visit to **Haak'u Museum** to view the exhibits, stunning Pueblo pottery and Southwest Indian art created by renowned Native American artists. *(Acoma Pueblo is subject to closure on short notice due to tribal ceremonies or events, a similar experience will be substituted if a closure occurs) Return to Albuquerque and visit New Mexico's famous **Sandia Peak**, home to the tram that will whisk you 10,680 feet into the air for an unsurpassed view from the summit. On a clear day, you can easily see the wonderful New Mexico landscape in a 100-mile circle at your feet. Return to the hotel with the evening free in Old Town. (B,L)

DAY 4: SANTA FE

Today we're off to **Santa Fe**. The **Turquoise Trail**, named for the exquisite mineral that was once mined here, leads you to your first stop of the day, the real-life ghost town of Madrid. Madrid looks exactly like a ghost town should, with its rows of empty, ramshackle houses that once were the homes of three thousand miners and their families. The only sign of life now is the artists who come to paint this picturesque place, and who display their wares to the interested buyer. After time to explore this relic of the past, continue on to the first state capitol in the United States, "The Royal City of the Holy Faith of Saint Francis," better known as Santa Fe. Founded in 1609, the city offers many historic and scenic delights. Your tour will be a combination of driving and walking to the many famous sights including the historic Santa Fe Plaza with a view of the **Palace of the Governors**, the **Loretto Chapel**, a miniature model of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris, and the oldest church in New Mexico and more. There will be free time to explore the many wonderful shops, art galleries and restaurants for lunch on own. Take a chance to stroll through the **Indian Market**, where native arts and crafts are available directly from the artists who created them. In the late afternoon, travel back to Albuquerque, with some time to relax before a delightful **farewell dinner at a local restaurant**. (B,D)

DAY 5: HOME

After breakfast, transfer to the Albuquerque Airport for your departure home. (B)