



## Are We There Yet?, LLC

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# Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta

***See hundreds of Hot Air Balloons soar above the desert while staying warm in our reserved seats in the Chasers' Club!***

**Oct 9-12, 2024**

Up, up and away go the balloons into the New Mexico sky each October. Few spectacles on earth rival the Mass Ascension, when hundreds of multi-colored balloons lift off from Balloon Fiesta Park to drift in the crisp early-morning high-desert air. We'll see it in comfort from the Chasers' Club, as well as enjoying the evening balloon glow with fireworks, a trip to Santa Fe, and the culture and history of the Southwest.

### **Wed, October 9 – To the Land of Enchantment!**

We meet at the airport before heading to New Mexico, the Land of Enchantment! Upon arrival in Albuquerque, our local tour guide will meet us in the baggage claim area of the Albuquerque International Airport and lead us to our waiting motor coach. We head to Albuquerque's historic Sawmill District and the Sawmill Market, an artisanal food hall that celebrates culinary traditions and emerging trends alike with a diverse mix of local food vendors, full-service restaurant experiences, and unique retail.

We then head towards our hotel, where we will **stay at the Drury for all 3 nights**. Enjoy hot appetizers and cocktails at the hotel before we depart for a buffet dinner at El Pinto Restaurant, regarded by locals and visitors alike as the place for the finest in Traditional New Mexican cooking. El Pinto gives you true Southwestern warmth and hospitality, with splashing fountains, extensive gardens and inner courtyards adding to the unmistakable local color. **(L, Hot Apps, D)**

### **Thurs, October 10 – Pueblos and Glowdeos!**

We begin our day going to the Acoma Pueblo, known as "Sky City," located in the spectacular West-Central Plateau of New Mexico. Acoma Pueblo, situated 350 feet above an outstretched valley atop a massive sandstone mesa at 7,000 feet above sea level, is the oldest continuously inhabited settlement in the United States.

We then have lunch at the **66 Diner** named after the famous highway that once passed through town. Next we visit the **Indian Pueblo Cultural Center**, dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of Pueblo Indian culture, history and art. The Center is committed to educating all generations of visitors and is your gateway to the lifeways and culture of the indigenous inhabitants of New Mexico. The Center has a museum, gallery and gift shop. The museum documents the origins, spoken traditions, arts and crafts and cultural development of the Pueblo.



This evening we head to Balloon Fiesta Park for the evening **Glowdeo**. During the glow, balloons inflate at dusk, remain tethered, and light their burners in a synchronized fashion. The "glow" effect is created by the same burner system used in flight; however, pilots use various means to bypass the "pre-heat" coils on the



burner. These coils help the burner work efficiently, but the flame is a dull blue and does not emit a lot of light. The first Balloon glow was held to celebrate the 75th anniversary of New Mexico's statehood. Guests will enjoy a **Dine and Glow** experience at the **Anderson Abruzzo International Balloon Fiesta**. After the glow, the **AfterGlow Fireworks Show** will dazzle and delight you. Return to the Drury after the fireworks. **(B,L,D)**

### Fri, October 11 – Mass Ascension Day and Santa Fe

We leave the hotel bright and early to enjoy the **Flight of the Nations Mass Ascension** at the **Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta**. Few spectacles on earth rival the Mass Ascension of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, as upwards of 500 balloons lift off from Balloon Fiesta Park to drift in the crisp high-desert air of New Mexico. Ballooning enthusiasts from around the world converge on the Duke City each year to delight in the amazing range of balloons in every color, size, and shape imaginable. The thermal currents above Albuquerque make for some of the finest ballooning conditions in the world. The famous "Albuquerque Box" effect enables pilots to ascend from the field, move with the air currents at different altitudes and in different directions, and even backtrack along their original course to land in the spot they took off from. As we have tickets to the **Chasers' Club**, we have **guaranteed seating in a private patio** located on the north end of Balloon Fiesta Park, as well as **beverages, desserts and a hot food item**. They will also have alcoholic beverages for sale.



**NOTE: BALLOON FIESTA IS A WEATHER-DEPENDENT EVENT.** While early October weather is generally ideal for hot-air ballooning, strong winds or storms may delay or cancel balloon events. October in the high desert of New Mexico can be chilly so be sure to dress in layers, and bring sunscreen for when the sun comes up. The average low is 40°F and the average high is 71°F, however, you will be out on the open field during the event so plan on cooler temperatures. It is recommended you wear a coat, gloves, hat and scarf.



We head out this morning to Santa Fe via the **New Mexico Rail Runner Express**. The first commuter rail service in New Mexico, it was completed in 2006 and runs nearly 100 miles across the desert. (Service permitting) When we arrive, we have the opportunity to enjoy a **walking tour of Santa Fe**. See the historic Plaza, St. Francis Cathedral, the Loretto Chapel, with its famous "miraculous" staircase, and the San Miguel Mission. Founded in 1610, Santa Fe was the last stop on the Camino Real, the fabled Royal Road that stretched from Mexico City to the northernmost reaches of the Spanish Empire. Today it is the heart and soul of the Southwest, and "Santa Fe Style" is synonymous with all the best the region has to offer. Its historic Plaza, winding streets, covered arcades, hidden gardens and courtyards, and Pueblo-style architecture reflect the blending of Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo cultures. **(B, L, Hot Apps)**

### Sat, October 12 – Heading Home

We will have one more beautiful sunrise here in ABQ before heading out for lunch and shopping in Old Town before arriving at the airport for our return home. We bid farewell to ABQ and have fond memories of our time together. Thank you for traveling with us! **(B)**

#### Tour includes:

- Round trip flights on Southwest – where bags fly free!
- Private chartered transportation throughout tour
- Stay all 3 nights in Albuquerque Drury – only unpack once!
- A day in Santa Fe
- Admission to the Glowdeo and Mass Ascension, with seating at the Chasers' Club
- 7 meals, including 3 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 1 Dinner, including two meals at the Chasers' Club!
- Visit the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center

- Tour of Sante Fe and Albuquerque's Route 66
- All other Activities as indicated
- Baggage Handling
- Professional Tour Directors Dea Hoover and Declan Rutan
- All gratuities including step-on guides, included meals, driver and director

**Tour Price:**

\$3,088 per person double

\$3,529 pp, single

\$2,947 pp, triple

\$2,791 pp, quad

**Save 3% on this tour! Watch hundreds of balloon rise into the Southwestern sky for  
\$2,995 pp dbl occ when paying by check or money order!**

\$2,995 pp dbl

\$3,423 pp sgl

\$2,859 pp tpl

\$2,791 pp, quad

Trip cancellation and interruption insurance available at an additional charge. Please see the brochure available from our office. Additional Insurance can be bought if you purchase optional tours later.

*Please note: Any notice of fuel surcharges imposed by carriers and/or attractions will be disclosed at least 30 days prior to tour departure.*

Make your reservations today with a \$500 deposit, including trip cancellation and interruption insurance if desired. By purchasing coverage at time of deposit, you will be covered for all pre-existing conditions as well as protected if something happens on the tour. We also offer Cancel Any Time which returns 80% of your tour price if cancelled prior to tour for a non-covered reason. Please ask when you contact the office for information on all coverages available. Because this is a special event, our Final Payment Date is August 10, 2024.

Balance on tour is due August 10, 2024 and no refunds will be given after that time except via Travel Insured Insurance. Space will be limited to 20 air tickets. After those are sold, price will be based on live air. There still may be a price increase before final payment if airline incurs a fuel surcharge. Space held for first travelers with deposit. Following this a wait list will be formed. Please send a check along with your name, address, phone number and all roommates' names if you are sharing a room.

Ask about our special hotel rates at St. Louis airport hotel before or after the tour. Note this price reflects airfare when purchased at final payment. If you attempt to book after this date, there may be a substantial increase in price or you may have to arrive on a separate flight. Once this tour fills, a wait list will be formed. Please send a check or call with a credit card, cash is good too, along with your name, address, phone number, all roommates' names if you are sharing a room and any dietary or walking restrictions.