

NATIVE AMERICAN PUEBLOS

Discover New Mexico's culture among ancient cliff dwellings and petroglyphs that serve as a glimpse into the lifestyles and beliefs of the area's earliest civilizations. Albuquerque is the gateway to Native American culture. There is no better place to start for an authentic Native American experience. The city is home to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, which provides an overview of pueblo life and the differentiating characteristics of each pueblo in New Mexico. The state is home to 22 Indian tribes, comprised of 19 pueblos, two Apache tribes (the Jicarilla Apache and the Mescalero Apache) and part of the Navajo Nation, which spreads through New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. The pueblos are Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jémez, Laguna, Nambé, Okhay Owingea, Picurís, Pojoaque, Sandia, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Santa Ana, Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, Taos, Tesuque, Zia and Zuni. Most are within an hour's drive of Albuquerque.



Fall signals the celebration of the harvest season with special ceremonies, dancers in brilliant costumes and sacred rituals. Drums beat with an insistent cadence. The dancer's costumes help tell the story of the dance while feathers, jewelry and beads communicate other aspects of the dance. Each dance tells a unique story and serves a distinct purpose. The natives converse in tongues both strange and fascinating to the outsider. The air is filled with the fragrance of piñon smoke. Red chile ristras (strings) decorate many homes, with the chiles destined to add their distinct flavor to stews and sauces throughout the winter. The sights, sounds and smells are a feast for the senses. The works of many talented Pueblo Indian artists and craftsmen are frequently on display and for sale: hand-made jewelry, pottery, distinctive crafts and even traditional Indian food. Bread baked in the traditional horno (outdoor oven) is delicious, as is fry bread, best consumed straight from the pan - hot and honey-drizzled.



Pueblo life is a window to another world and time. Not relegated to history books or museums, this is a living culture carrying on the centuries-old traditions of their ancestors. Visitors admitted into pueblos to view the dances are expected to respect the customs and traditions. Some pueblos have strict rules governing photography, sketching and tape recording. Visitors must abide by the laws and rules of the pueblo they visit. Most pueblos have a tribal office that can answer any questions.

Indian Pueblo Cultural Center

The Indian Pueblo Cultural Center is located in Albuquerque. All 19 pueblos are represented through displays of weaving, pottery, jewelry, clothing and photography. The center is home to an extensive art galleries and a shop with Native American pottery, jewelry, music, paintings, sculpture and much more. The Pueblo Harvest Café provides a taste of local cuisine infused with flavors common to Native American pueblos throughout New Mexico. (505) 843-7270 www.indianpueblo.org



Pueblo Tours



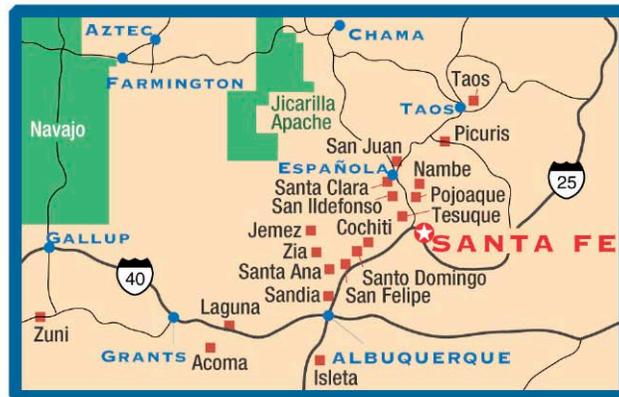
©Ron Behrmann

“Into the Sunset Western Pueblo Tours” now features day tours to the pueblos of Acoma and Zuni. The tours, “Experience Zuni” and “Destination Acoma,” start in Albuquerque at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and offer transportation, pueblo step-on guides, traditional pueblo meals, guided walking tours through each site’s museum, cultural center and mission. Village tours are led by a member of each respective pueblo. Tours accommodate between 10 and 55 guests. Tours must be scheduled in advance at (505) 843-7270.

“Experience Zuni” features two alternating tours on Wednesdays to Halona Iidiwan’a (the Middle Village) and includes either the Old Zuni Mission or the A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center. Zuni was first of the pueblos to have encountered the Spanish explorers in 1540 in their search for the mythical “Seven Cities of Gold.” Saturday and Sunday tours to Zuni are also available.

“Destination Acoma” features the Sky City Cultural Center, Haak’u Museum and historic “Sky City,” the longest continuously occupied village in North America. This tour is offered every Tuesday and Thursday.

New Mexico’s Pueblos and Reservations



- Pueblos
- Indian Reservations
- Cities
- Interstate Highways
- State Highways