

[Home](#) > [Where to Travel Next](#) > [Road Trips](#)

ROAD TRIPS

3 Short But Sweet Road Trip Ideas Across New Mexico

by Davina Van Buren



Albuquerque is an ideal starting point for a variety of road trip excursions. (Photo: Alamy)

New Mexico isn't called the Land of Enchantment for

nothing.

The state is home to stunning natural scenery, from dense pine forests and national parks to expansive high plains and rugged mountain peaks. Since it's one of the least-populated states in the U.S., it's entirely possible to find opportunities for solitary connection with its natural wonders.

These natural landscapes of New Mexico are deeply intertwined with vibrant Native American cultures and heritage, which have profoundly shaped the state's colorful, one-of-a-kind culture.

There are myriads of opportunities to connect with the state's rich history and culture, whether by engaging with its diverse artistic communities and exploring its notable dining destinations. When combined with its breathtaking scenic views and picture-perfect sunsets, you have the recipe for a truly enchanting road trip adventure.

You can combine these three road trip ideas into one extended journey across New Mexico or instead opt for a shorter day trip to one of these locations — your pick! Get ready to embark on a thrilling road trip adventure across the Land of Enchantment.

Albuquerque to Santa Fe

Distance from Albuquerque: 102 kilometers (63 miles)

Driving Time: 2 hours

To kick off your adventure, you can take 1-25 North, but for a more scenic and leisurely drive, you can take the back road from Albuquerque to Santa Fe. The Turquoise Trail National Scenic Byway (Hwy 14) links Albuquerque to Santa Fe, winding through 15,000 square miles of central New Mexico. Along the way, you'll through the quaint mining towns of Golden, Madrid and Cerillos, all of which provide opportunities for leg-stretching and shopping for Native American art, pawn

jewelry and souvenirs.

Once in Santa Fe, you'll quickly see why it's best known for its thriving arts scene. More than 100 galleries line both sides of vibrant Canyon Road, some of which have larger-than-life outdoor installations and moving parts. Make sure your camera is charged, so you don't miss the countless photo opportunities around you!

Next, stop by the [Georgia O'Keeffe Museum](#), which is home to a rotating exhibition of more than 3,000 renowned artists' original works. The museum is just a few blocks from Santa Fe Plaza, a historic central courtyard and the heart of the town. You'll find street food, vendors selling handmade jewelry and great opportunities for people-watching.

If you have time, build in some relaxation time at [Ten Thousand Waves](#). This Japanese-style bathhouse and spa is just 10 minutes from downtown, but feels like another world. Relax among the juniper pines in a steamy whirlpool tub, or indulge in one of several unique spa services offered, like the [Ashi Anma foot treatment](#) or an [oxygen facial](#).

Santa Fe to Taos

Distance from Santa Fe: 112 kilometers (70 miles)

Driving Time: 2 hours

Taos is small, with a population of just a few thousand people, but it is mighty. A year-round destination, there are ample opportunities for outdoor recreation. In summer, you can hike and mountain bike the surrounding Sangre de Cristo mountains.

Adrenaline junkies will love the [Angel Fire Zipline Adventure Tour](#), which features six segments that let thrill-seekers soar high above the majestic Moreno Valley. Come winter, Taos is a popular southwest [ski destination](#), with numerous hot springs to soak in after a long day on the slopes.

Like Santa Fe, Taos is filled with art galleries, museums and cultural offerings. Plan your road trip from Albuquerque around one of the many [festivals](#) in Taos

happening throughout the year.

Hungry yet? The Love Apple is popular with locals and tourists alike. Housed in a Catholic chapel that was built in the 1800s, the restaurant serves a seasonal, organic menu. All meats are pasture-raised and even the flour is locally-milled.

Bonus: the variety of vegetarian and gluten-free menu options mean that even the pickiest eaters can find something delicious to enjoy.

Taos to Spaceport America

Distance from Taos: 635 kilometers (395 miles)

Driving Time: 7 and a half hours

From Taos, either head back the way you came, or circle back on Highway 64 East to I-25 South to see a bit more of the state. You're heading toward Truth or Consequences, a city about the same size as Taos, but with a decidedly different atmosphere — it's slightly more touristic, without the upscale galleries, cafes and museums.

T or C, as locals call it, is famous for two things: its unusual name, and the dominating presence of delightful hot springs. Almost every tiny family-owned hotel has their own private spring.

Your final destination is Spaceport America — a 'space airport' intended for a future where humans can take commercial flights into space. Although there are several spaceports around the world already, this one is different. Most spaceports are former airports or military bases, but Spaceport America was built specifically for space travel. Take a guided tour of the facilities to discover the growing space tourism industry and interact with the spaceport's crew members.

As you can see, New Mexico offers a plethora of options for an enjoyable road trip within a short drive of Albuquerque. So after you've soaked up all the sights, sounds, and flavors of Albuquerque, pack up the car and get out to experience the magic of the open road.

Where to Stay

ence
,
ott
uquerque >

Marriott
Albuquerque >

TownePlace
Suites
Albuquerque
North >

SpringHill
Suites by
Marriott
Albuquerque
University
Area >

Residence
Inn by
Marriott
Santa Fe >

Fairfi
Inn &
Suite
by
Marri
Santi
Fe

Related Articles



ROAD TRIPS

Find France’s Joie de Vivre on a Road Trip from Lille to Provence



ROAD TRIPS

Ancient Sites and Winding Roads: 5 Road Trips from Da Nang, Vietnam



ROAD TRIPS

Forests, Fjords and Fishing Villages: 5 Epic Nordic Road Trips



ROAD TRIPS

Plan a Road Trip Around These 6 Hotels in the Middle East and Africa



DESTINATION

Where do you want to go?

DATES

Check In & Check Out



Find
Hotels

Travel is Better as a Marriott Bonvoy Member

Join Marriott Bonvoy® for exclusive member rates and earn points toward free nights at over 30 hotel brands and 10,000 global destinations.



MEMBER RATES



ONCE IN A LIFETIME
EXPERIENCE

FREE NIGHTS

Join Now



LUXURY

PREMIUM

SELECT

LONGER STAY

TRAVELER SITES

Traveler en Español



We are Marriott Bonvoy Traveler. We tell stories about the power of travel. We believe that travel creates connections and core memories. It broadens the mind and bridges the distance between us. Our stories are the spark to explore the world’s most compelling destinations, guiding you to the places that only locals know, revealing the unique experiences that bring a place to life and bring you closer to the people and passions you love.

Follow Us On



[Learn More About Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Center](#)  [Your Privacy Choices](#) [Interest Based Ads](#)

[Tracking Preferences](#)

© 2024 Marriott International, INC