



Big Bend: Hiking, Paddling, and Stargazing

DURATION | 7 Days

TRIP LEVEL | High Energy

Trip Overview

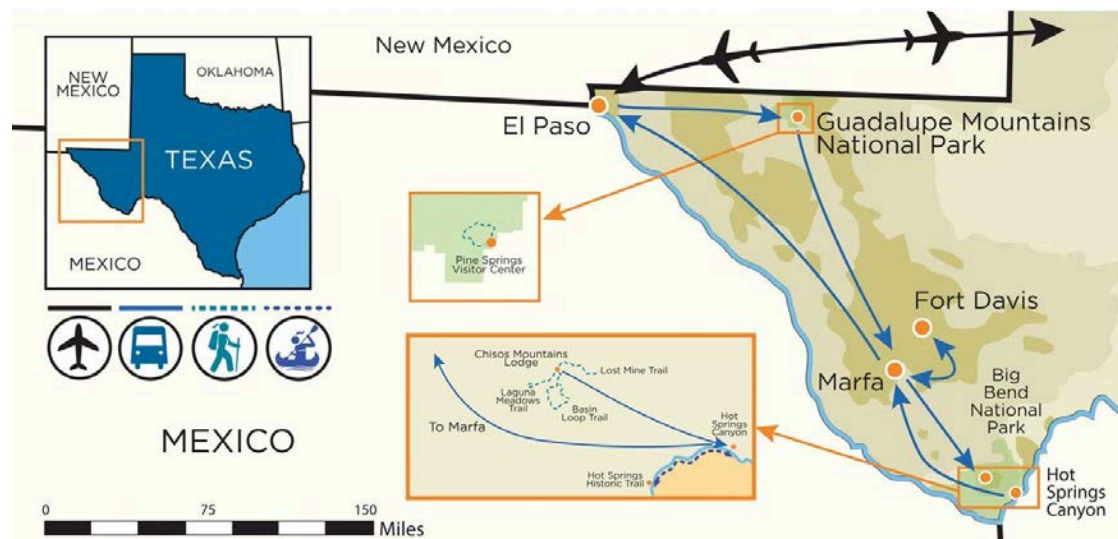
Explore Big Bend National Park in Texas, starting with stunning sunrises in the Chisos Mountains and canoeing the Rio Grande, experiencing both gentle and faster sections. Meet fellow adventurers and hike through majestic deserts and canyons under starry skies. Visit the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, hike, and enjoy a picnic amidst West Texas' vast beauty. See the incredible *Quetzalcoatlus northropi* at the Fossil Discovery Exhibit.

Attend a famed star party at the McDonald Observatory and gaze at planets and constellations through telescopes. Conclude with a farewell dinner, sharing highlights of art, fossils, canoeing, hiking, and ghost town visits in this quintessential old-west adventure in one of America's prized national parks.

Trip Highlights

- Experience a guided tour of the night sky, observing planets and constellations through powerful telescopes.
- Explore one of Big Bend National Park's most iconic features with breathtaking views of the towering stone walls and the Rio Grande.
- Paddle through the stunning scenery of Big Bend, with opportunities to see fossils and visit a ghost town along the way.

Map View



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Trip Itinerary



Day 1

Arrive in El Paso, Texas

Arrive in El Paso, Texas (ELP) by 5:00 PM today and make your way to the Hampton Inn & Suites El Paso Airport Hotel on your own. A group transfer from the airport to the hotel will be provided when most guests arrive (exact time to be determined). Private transfers at other times are available for purchase. Get comfortable at your hotel before enjoying a lively Tex-Mex welcome dinner this evening. Share stories and learn about why each woman in your trip is excited to explore more of Big Bend!

Meals: dinner | Overnight: Hampton Inn & Suites El Paso Airport



Hampton Inn & Suites El Paso Airport

Conveniently located just five minutes from the El Paso International Airport, the Hampton Inn & Suites is a comfortable accommodation in which to spend the night after a day of traveling.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, flatscreen TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning



Trip Itinerary



Day 2

Journey Through West Texas

After a hearty breakfast, meet your guide at 8:00 AM MT. Embark on a 2-hour drive to Guadalupe Mountains National Park, crossing into Central Time. Once there, you'll begin your hike from the visitor center. Post-lunch, enjoy expansive West Texas views en route to Marfa. Stop at the famed "Prada Marfa" art installation, a fake Prada store located exactly halfway between the tiny communities of Marfa and Van Horn, Texas. Arrive in Marfa and settle into your historic hotel, once home to James Dean, Rock Hudson, and Elizabeth Taylor during the filming of "Giant."

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: The Hotel Paisano



The Hotel Paisano

A charming and historic hotel located in the middle of Marfa, the Hotel Paisano was built in the 1930s and has been the social hub of the quirky town of Marfa.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, Wi-Fi, air conditioning



Trip Itinerary



Day 3

Explore Fort Davis and Participate in a Star Party

After breakfast, journey to historic Fort Davis, Texas' highest town at 5,050 feet. Established in 1854, it was home to the acclaimed "Buffalo Soldiers," African American cavalymen who protected emigrants during the western expansion. Explore the fort and learn about frontier life and native plants. Return to Marfa for lunch and immerse yourself in its vibrant arts scene. After dinner, it's a quick drive to the University of Texas McDonald Observatory in Fort Davis to participate in one of their famed star parties along with the general public. Take a tour of the constellations and observe an assortment of planets and stars through various telescopes. Today's total hiking will be 2 miles with 500 feet of elevation gain.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: The Hotel Paisano



Trip Itinerary



Day 4

A Fossil, a Ghost Town, and a Scenic Hike

Drive south toward Big Bend, stopping at the Fossil Discovery Exhibit to see the astonishing Quetzalcoatlus northropi, the world's largest known flying creature with a 36-foot wingspan! Enjoy a picnic lunch before continuing to Terlingua, a former mercury mining town that became a ghost town when the price of mercury collapsed in 1947. In the 1960s, it experienced a renaissance when artists, naturalists, and river guides moved there, reshaping the local economy. Enjoy a scenic hike near your hotel just steps from the Rio Grande. End the day with a lively group dinner. Today's total hiking will be 4 miles with 500 feet of elevation gain.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Lajitas Golf Resort



Lajitas Golf Resort

Nestled in the desert between Big Bend National Park and Big Bend Ranch State Park in Texas, Lajitas Golf Resort displays many enjoyable amenities, including an award-winning golf course, SUP Rio Grande, a thrilling zip line adventure, a relaxing spa, and various outdoor activities. Unwind by the pool or savor the stunning vista views at the resort's casual outdoor restaurant.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, flatscreen TV, safe, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi



Trip Itinerary



Day 5

Big Bend Adventures and Santa Elena Wonders

Today is all about Big Bend! Start with a one-hour drive to the visitor center to explore Big Bend's natural and human history. After a 20-minute drive, hike an iconic trail in the Chisos Mountains to a scenic overlook. Following a bag lunch, drive 70 minutes to Santa Elena Canyon, a strikingly beautiful destination within the Park, boasting canyon walls that soar up to 1,500 feet. Enjoy a short hike before returning to the hotel. Tonight, dine at the historic Starlight Theater Restaurant, an adobe structure from the 1930s. Today's hikes: 5 miles with 900 feet elevation gain, plus 2 miles with 200 feet elevation gain.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Lajitas Golf Resort



Trip Itinerary



Day 6

Paddling the Rio Grande

After breakfast, take a short drive to meet your river guide. Following a safety briefing, launch your canoe (or raft if water levels are high) and paddle down the Rio Grande, enjoying gentle waters and stunning scenery with some faster sections. Afterward, change clothes and drive three hours to Van Horn and its historic hotel. Settle into your room before a farewell dinner with your AdventureWomen friends. Reflect on cherished memories and celebrate the end of an amazing journey through this remarkable land.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Hotel El Capitan



Hotel El Capitan

A beloved historic gem in West Texas, Hotel El Capitan offers modern amenities and personalized customer service. Built in 1930 by the Gateway Hotel Chain, led by Charles Basset and designed by renowned architect Henry Trost, the hotel operated until the late 1960s. After serving various purposes, it was restored to its former glory in 2007 by Lanna and Joe Duncan. Originally part of Basset's initiative to boost tourism within 200 miles of El Paso, it stands as one of the five Gateway Hotels.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, flatscreen TV, coffee / tea maker, Wi-Fi, air conditioning



Trip Itinerary



Day 7

Depart

After breakfast, drive an hour and 45 minutes to El Paso International Airport (ELP) where you should arrive at 10:00 AM MST. We recommend scheduling your departing flight no earlier than 12:00 PM today.



What's Included

What's Included

- Accommodations as per itinerary based on single occupancy
- All meals as listed in the itinerary
- Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- Airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All ground transportation
- Ample snacks throughout the trip
- All park fees
- All gratuities except for guides

Not Included

- Meals not specified in the itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- Items of a personal nature
- Gratuities for guides

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

