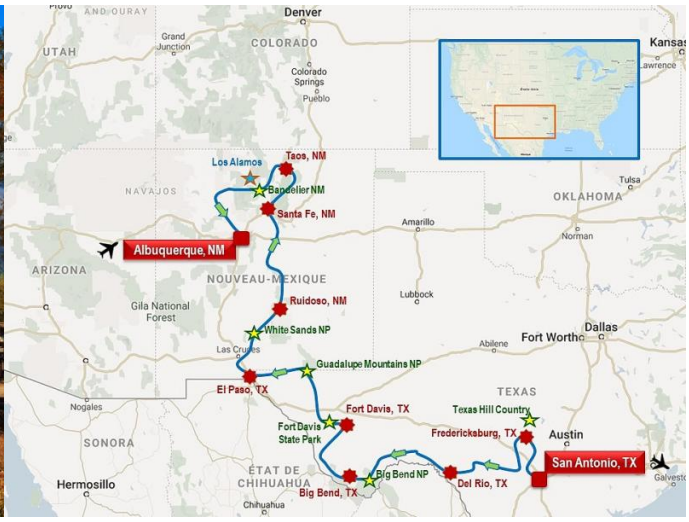
From Texas to New Mexico





Starting from **San Antonio**, a superb journey in the footsteps of another **West**, between **corrals**, the **Rio Grande**, **pueblos**, **vineyards** and **presidios**. After the **Texas Hill Country**, **Big Bend National Park** and **El Paso**, on the edge of **Mexico**, head for the **pueblos** of **New Mexico**, via **Santa Fe** and **Taos**, before going back down to **Los Alamos**, the **cliff dwellings** of **Bandelier**, then **Albuquerque**, the end of the journey. Optional **stay** extension at a **ranch** near **Tucson** in **Arizona** (connection by car or plane).



Day 1

Arrival in San Antonio, Texas. Discover the Riverwalk, Spanish missions and the vibrant Mexican Market Square.



Day 2

Meet at The Alamo, in the heart of the city. Its famous and tragic 1836 battle foreshadowed the birth of an independent Texas. Fascinating, the excellent San Antonio Museum of Art features very diverse collections: American, Asian, European, contemporary…

Head north to the large, green Brackenridge Park, home to the zoo, the aquarium and lovely Japanese gardens. Special mention for the superb McNay Art Museum, which houses high-quality masterworks: El Greco, Sisley, Manet, Pissarro, Gauguin, Cézanne, Picasso, Modigliani, Renoir…

Another great outing: Mission San José, south of the city. Founded by Spanish Franciscan missionaries in 1720, it's one of the most impressive missions, both for its scale and the variety of its buildings. In the evening, you may even catch a San Antonio Spurs (NBA) game…

Overnight in San Antonio.



Day 3

Yes, Texas has its own local produce! After a detour along the Guadalupe River and around Canyon Lake, you reach the Texas Hill Country, with its green hills, charming villages, deep gorges, lush nature… and its vineyards.

Wine is produced in Texas. Driving the “Texas Hill Country Wine Trail” is an original and unexpected experience, with no fewer than about forty wineries in the area. Enjoy responsibly if you have to drive… You'll pass a few lovely towns, such as Boerne.

We suggest pushing on to the beautiful site of Enchanted Rock, a massive pink granite dome rising 130m above the surrounding valley. Arrival in Fredericksburg, your stop for the day. It's a little slice of Germany—reflected in the architecture and in the food scene, with its famous “biergartens”.

Overnight in Fredericksburg.



Day 4

You have not quite finished with the Texas Hill Country: today's route makes a detour via Kerrville, a pleasant small town on the banks of the Guadalupe River. It's a great chance to stretch your legs and enjoy a coffee (or a small glass of wine) before getting back on the road.

Del Rio is a transit stop on the way to the stunning Big Bend National Park, on tomorrow's agenda.

Less than 5 km as the crow flies from the Mexican border, straddling the Rio Grande, this small town's main attraction is the nearby ????? Lake Amistad, offering plenty of hiking options and water activities.

If you have a bit of time, drive out to San Felipe Springs: it's the perfect spot for a quick swim.

Overnight in Del Rio.



Day 5

Texas is a big baby: 1.25 times the size of France and nearly 22 times Belgium!

Today's stage takes you to Big Bend (one of Texas' two national parks,

along with Guadalupe Mountains). It gets its name from the bend in the Rio Grande, which forms the border here.

Made up of desert expanses and mountains (the Chisos), rising to 2,700m, the climate is extreme: under 15 cm of rainfall per year—yet wildlife and vegetation thrive.

Spring is when the desert blooms. There are many hiking trails. The Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive is a road route dotted with viewpoints over impressive breaks in the landscape, such as Santa Elena Canyon. Allow a good extra 2 hours (for less than 50 km).

Overnight in the park (subject to availability), in Terlingua (a ghost town) or in Lajitas.



Day 6

Beyond prickly pear cacti, creosote bushes (whose roots can plunge down to 10m underground), and the famous giant yuccas (which can reach 6m high), many animal species are found here: reptiles, kangaroo rats, birds, black bears, lynx, roadrunners (the famous “beep-beep” from the cartoon)…

The Rio Grande Village Nature Trail is picturesque and offers great views of the river, the Chisos Mountains and the Del Carmen Mountains. For a dream sunset, this is the place to be.

The Boquillas Canyon Overlook is one of the park's best viewpoints, with a trail down to the river. Boquillas is the only crossing point to/from Mexico.

Finally, the park is known for offering some of the most beautiful starry skies in the country. It's at dusk that the landscapes are at their most striking.

Overnight in the park (subject to availability), in Terlingua (a ghost town) or in Lajitas.



Day 7

The route follows the Rio Grande via El Camino del Rio, without a doubt one of the most spectacular roads in Texas, crossing the Chihuahuan Desert.

You pass through the former mining ghost town of Terlingua, then through Redford and its farming community, before reaching Presidio, a typical small town of adobe houses that once hosted a Spanish mission.

Head north toward the Davis Mountains, the “Texas Alps”. Their highest point is Mount Livermore, at 2,700m.

Depending on the time, take the Davis Mountain Loop, a route that notably crosses Davis Mountains State Park.

Do not miss stargazing at the McDonald Observatory, home to some of the clearest skies in North America! An unforgettable experience, especially during the nightly “Star Party” (Tue, Fri & Sat).

Overnight in Fort Davis or in the park.



Day 8

Today's stage is quite long, so leave early.

Head to Guadalupe Mountains National Park, near New Mexico, where another national park lies nearby: Carlsbad Caverns, home to the largest known cave network in the world, carved by sulfuric acid in the subsoil.

You won't have much time in the Guadalupe Mountains—where the highest peaks of Texas rise—but we recommend a walk from the Pine Springs visitor center, for example on the Guadalupe Peak Trail.

Then drive to El Paso, a border city with Mexico (neighboring Ciudad Juarez). El Paso deserves a few hours, notably for its historic district and the views from the scenic road overlooking it to the north.

Overnight in El Paso.



Day 9

Head to the surprising Organ Mountains–Desert Peaks, designated a national monument. At the top of the small loop road, plan a short morning walk to enjoy the magnificent panorama over the whole region!

On your way into New Mexico, stop at White Sands National Park. The site features dazzling white dunes at the heart of the world's largest gypsum desert, at 1,200m altitude.

Wander through this incredible landscape, where flora and fauna have developed remarkable adaptations. Access can be closed by the US Army for a few hours in case of… missile testing (the Holloman military base is right next door).

Then drive to Ruidoso, a small mountain town perched in the Sierra Blanca, in the Rockies. The area is a winter ski spot…

Overnight in Ruidoso.



Day 10

After enjoying the cooler mountain air and the Lincoln National Forest, head to Santa Fe. You'll take the Billy the Kid Trail, named after the famous outlaw who roamed the area. Then the beautiful Turquoise Trail will make your day.

You pass through small mining towns that capture all the magic of the “Old West”… Many have found a new life with sometimes “New Age” vibes. Restored old buildings in bright colors have become saloons, art galleries or artists' studios—like Madrid, Golden and Cerrillos. Don't hesitate to stop and visit one or another pueblo.

It's a chance to discover Native American culture, taste local products and pick up local crafts. You arrive in Santa Fe, the capital of New Mexico.

Overnight in Santa Fe.



Day 11

Founded by the Spanish in 1607, Santa Fe—located on Route 66—is a city with a largely Hispanic population.

Perched at 2,100m, it stands out for its adobe-style architecture. The charming historic center, around the central Plaza, is home to dozens of art galleries, as well as the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum, dedicated to the famous painter.

Overnight in Santa Fe.



Day 12

Today's stage is short but rich: the “High Roads” to Taos cross charming pueblos at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, rising to 3,960m.

Chimayó is home to one of New Mexico's major cultural sites: El Santuario de Chimayó, an adobe chapel prized for its miraculous virtues. Next come Córdova, Truchas and its lanes lined with adobe houses (with views over the Rio Grande valley), and Las Trampas with its church listed as a historic monument.

Set in a desert valley nestled into the Sangre de Cristo, Taos is unique. At the crossroads of Native American, Spanish and Anglo civilizations, its pueblo is made up of multi-storey earthen buildings, inhabited for over 1,000 years by the Taos people. Wander around the Hacienda de Los

Martinez or the San Francisco de Asís Mission.

Overnight in Taos.



Day 13

Head southwest via the “Low Roads”, toward Española and then Los Alamos. It was in this remote corner of New Mexico that the famous “Manhattan Project” was developed under Oppenheimer, leading to the atomic bomb. This is very well explained in the excellent Bradbury Museum.

The region abounds with ancient cliff dwellings. While Puye Cliff Dwellings (reachable from Española, on tribal land) is worth the detour, it is Bandelier National Monument, a few miles south of Los Alamos, that truly deserves your attention—if only for the beautiful viewpoint at Tyuniyi.

Continue along the Jemez Mountain Trail, through the gorgeous Valles Caldera forest. You drive across an ancient “supervolcano” (like Yellowstone), pass through Jemez Springs, known for its natural hot springs, before descending to Albuquerque.

Overnight in Albuquerque.



Day 14

Drive out to Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks, a small park with unique geological formations in the West: gigantic cones with striking shapes, created by successive volcanic eruptions.

Stroll through the historic district of the city, on the banks of the Rio Grande, around the Old Town Plaza. Fans of the excellent series Breaking Bad can follow the trail of the various filming locations.

Overnight in Albuquerque.



Day 15

End of this wonderful fly & drive tour in the USA. Drive to Albuquerque airport and fly back to Europe.

Extension: contact us

Possibility to modify the end of the route to include a stay at the magnificent Tanque Verde Ranch, at the gates of Saguaro National Park, in southern Arizona

Accommodation