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# A Wild West preserve

OLIVER LEE MEMORIAL STATE PARK

BY DAVID SALCIDO

**S**outhern New Mexico is a hotbed of historic detritus going back centuries. Names like Billy the Kid, Pancho Villa, Pat Garrett, and Colonel Albert J. Fountain are familiar shadows of our outlaw past. Specters of the Old West hide in plain sight, everywhere you go. One figure, however, is as surreptitious as the land south of Alamogordo bearing his name: Oliver Lee Memorial State Park.

Described at different times as a rancher, a law officer, a state legislator, a businessman, a gunman, an outlaw, and a murder suspect, Oliver Milton Lee's lasting legacy is the land he homesteaded in the 1890s. Despite being tied to the murders of historical figures such as Pat Garrett, Lee is remembered as a cattleman who put Alamogordo on the map. His former residence in Dog Canyon stands as a memorial to that facet of his personality.

The park itself features Lee's historic ranch house – rebuilt from ruins and authentically furnished to give a glimpse into history – alongside abundant cottonwood trees and perpetually flowing springs. Campsites run from dry and rocky to lush and scenic, providing breathtaking views down into the Tularosa Basin and White Sands National Monument in the distance. The high desert vegetation

provides cool comfort to hikers, picknickers, and nature enthusiasts alike.

With campground facilities running the gamut from developed dry sites to ADA compliant locations, including a site with sewer hookups, restrooms with running water and even showers, the park is a great retreat for weekend getaways and day trips alike. A visitor center offers historic background and exhibits, while gardens and group facilities offer opportunities for social escapes.

To get there, drive eight miles south of Alamogordo on US Hwy. 54 to Dog Canyon Road. Turn left and from there drive four miles east toward the Sacramento Mountains to the parking area and visitor site. Open year round, peak times are October through May, when reservations are highly advisable. For more information, call 505-660-7381.

Oliver Lee Ranch House (COURTESY PHOTO)





# Other Attractions in Alamogordo



## 575 Brewing Company

234 W. 8th St.

Hours: 2-10 p.m., Wednesday-Friday  
2-8 p.m., Sunday

Info: 575-437-8804

## D.H. Lescombes Winery & Bistro

261 Panorama Blvd.

Hours: 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Monday-Thursday  
11 a.m.-10 p.m., Friday-Saturday  
11 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday

Info: 575-616-5595

## Memories Fine Dining

1223 N. New York Ave.

Hours: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Tuesday-Wednesday  
5-8 p.m., Thursday-Saturday

Info: 575-488-0888

## New Mexico Museum of Space History

3198 State Rte. 2001

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday,  
Wednesday-Saturday  
12-5 p.m., Sunday

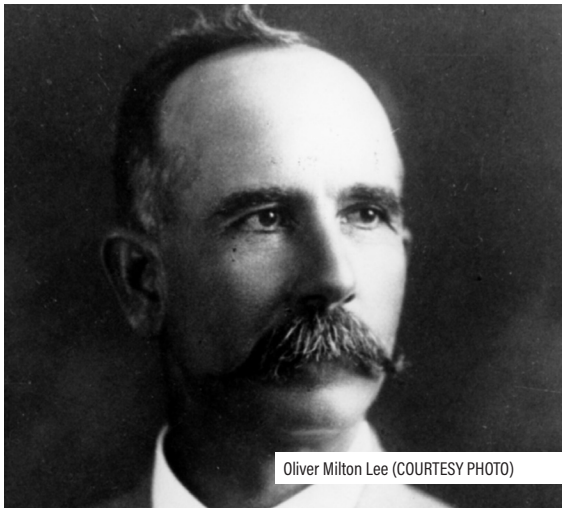
Info: 575-437-2840

## Tularosa Basin Museum of History

1004 N. White Sands Blvd.

Hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday

Info: 575-434-4438



Oliver Milton Lee (COURTESY PHOTO)



Rock formations (COURTESY PHOTO)



Las Cruces Bulletin



Did you know that despite his colorful reputation as a gunfighter and rancher, Oliver Milton Lee died peacefully in his bed on December 15, 1941 after suffering a stroke and lapsing into a week-long coma?

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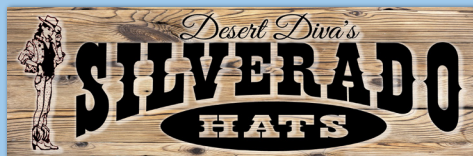
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# An oasis for adventure

## BOTTOMLESS LAKES STATE PARK

BY DAVID SALCIDO

**W**hen you think of Roswell, what's the first thing that comes to mind? If you said aliens, you're in the majority. Since 1947, Roswell has been ground zero for UFO lore, but though the fifth largest city in New Mexico has embraced its extraterrestrial heritage, there is much more going on than meets the conspiratorial eye.

Just 30 minutes southeast of the Alien Capital of the World lies the terrestrial wonder known as Bottomless Lakes State Park, a scattering of seven small park lakes bordered by high red bluffs. Made up of limestone sinkholes ranging from 17 to 90 feet deep, the park is a haven for nature lovers, hikers, fishers, swimmers, boaters, and scuba divers.

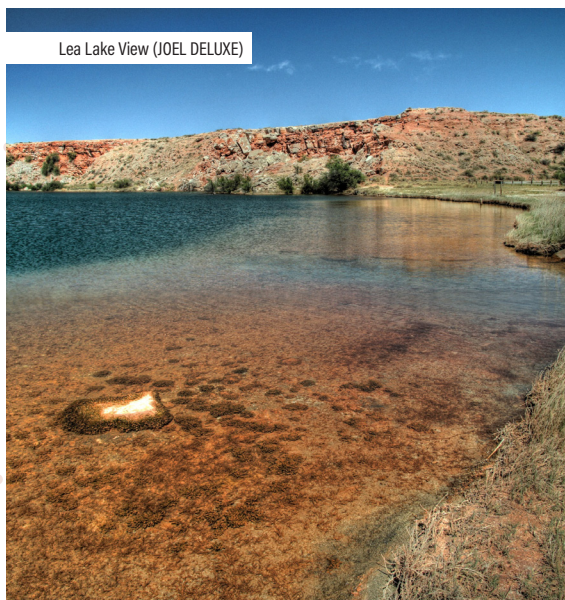
Originally part of a Spanish land grant, the area holds the distinction of being the very first state park in New Mexico. This designation in 1933 came about due to recognition by the ninth Governor of New Mexico, Arthur Seligman, who saw the potential for recreational development in the area, making him probably the first ecologically dedicated politician to hold the office.

Tapping the Civilian Conservation Corps, set up to develop infrastructure in remote areas, the park still makes use of buildings constructed during the

Great Depression and is a fine example of early 20th century craftsmanship. But that's not all it has going for it. With 4.53 total miles of accessible bluff and wetlands trails, a day use area with a beach, playground, a sand volleyball court and 24 picnic shelters, 32 total campsites with hook-ups, and even wildlife viewing blinds, it's an outdoor enthusiast's dream.

To get there drive east on US-380 about twelve miles to Bottomless Lakes Road, turn south on NM 409 and drive another three miles following the signs. The park is open daily from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, call 575-988-3638 or visit the website at [BottomlessLakesStatePark.com](http://BottomlessLakesStatePark.com).

Lea Lake View (JOEL DELUXE)





# Other Attractions in Roswell



## Black Cock Brewery

1719 SE Main St.

Hours: 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday-Wednesday  
11:30 a.m.-11 p.m., Thursday-Saturday

Info: 575-742-8389

## Hanger 209

209 N. Main St.

Hours: 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Monday-Saturday;  
9 a.m.-6 p.m., Sunday

Info: 575-840-8246

## Pecos Flavors Winery

412 W. 2nd St.

Hours: 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday  
Info: 575-627-6265

## Roswell Museum

1011 N. Richardson Ave.

Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily  
Info: 575-624-6744

## Sara's Mediterranean Café & Grill

3012 N. Main St.

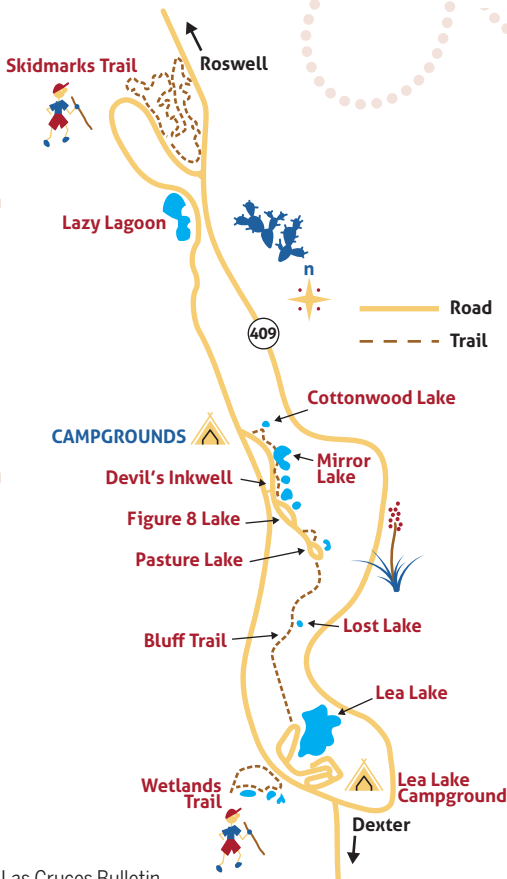
Hours: 11 a.m.-8 p.m., Monday-Saturday  
11 a.m.-7 p.m., Sunday  
Info: 575-622-3344



Bottomless Lake State Park (TIM LEWIS)



Lea Lake (MARTY LUNS福德)



Did you know that Bottomless Lakes State Park got its name because cowboys, trying to measure the depth with ropes, were unable to reach the bottom, leading them to believe the lakes were bottomless?



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# The footsteps of giants

## PREHISTORIC TRACKWAYS NATIONAL MONUMENT

BY DAVID SALCIDO

**D**inosaurs? In New Mexico? Well, more like proto-dinosaurs, which is still pretty cool. And though it isn't possible to actually see these magnificent specimens up close and personal, there is one way to see evidence of their passage. That evidence lies just north of Las Cruces in the wilds of the Robledo Mountains, in an area known as the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument.

Established by U.S. Congress in 2009, the 5,280-acre monument exists primarily to protect a major deposit of Paleozoic Era fossilized footprints left behind by amphibian, reptiles and insects, along with plants and petrified wood dating back 280 million years. Discovered in 1987 by amateur paleontologist and citizen scientist Jerry MacDonald, the monument is home to one of the most well-preserved, diverse, and scientifically important Early Permian track sites in the world.

The lore tells us that MacDonald excavated three long trackways from what is now known as the Discovery Site, toting 2,500 slabs of stone out of the area on foot. Those slabs are now part of the Jerry MacDonald Paleozoic Trackways Collection, on display at the Las Cruces Museum of Nature and Science, as well as the Carnegie Museum of

Natural History, and the Smithsonian.

Opportunities for hiking, horseback riding and off-road driving exist in portions of the monument, but because of the possibility for vandalizing, you won't find a detailed map of the area. Guided by a BLM representative, the hike into the Trackways follows an uneven and sometimes rocky trail for about two miles, round trip. BLM cautions that you should "Be prepared with water, closed toed shoes, snacks, sunscreen, cameras and whatever else you need for a healthy, happy hike." Words to live by if you have never experienced the Chihuahuan Desert firsthand.

To get there, take either Picacho Ave/Hwy 70 north, or US 85 north to Shalem Colony Road to the south side of the Rio Grande River, take a right on Rocky Acres Trail and go about ¼ mile to Permian Track Road. Turn left onto the dirt road and take it to the parking area by the trail head. The monument is open year-round and there are no fees. For more information, contact the BLM at 575-525-4300 or BLM Prehistoric Trackways National Monument Ranger McKinney Briske at 575-525-4334.



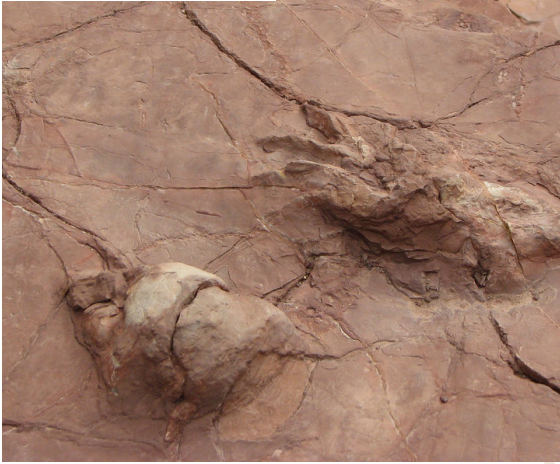
Prehistoric Tracks Detail (COURTESY)



## Other Attractions in Las Cruces



Prehistoric Track Fossils (COURTESY)



### D.H. Lescombes Winery & Bistro

1720 Avenida de Mesilla

Hours: 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Monday-Thursday  
11 a.m.-10 p.m., Friday-Saturday  
11 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday

Info: 575-524-2408

### Dry Point Distillers

1680 Calle de Alvarez #C

Hours: 5-10 p.m., Thursday  
4-11 p.m., Friday,  
11 a.m.-11 p.m., Saturday

Info: 575-652-3414

### Icebox Brewing Company

2825 W. Picacho Ave.

Hours: 3-9 p.m., Monday-Thursday  
3-10 p.m., Friday  
12-10 p.m., Saturday  
12-7 p.m., Sunday

Info: 575-526-7129

### La Nueva Casita

195 N. Mesquite St.

Hours: 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Wednesday-Monday

Info: 575-523-5434

### Las Cruces Museum of Nature and Science

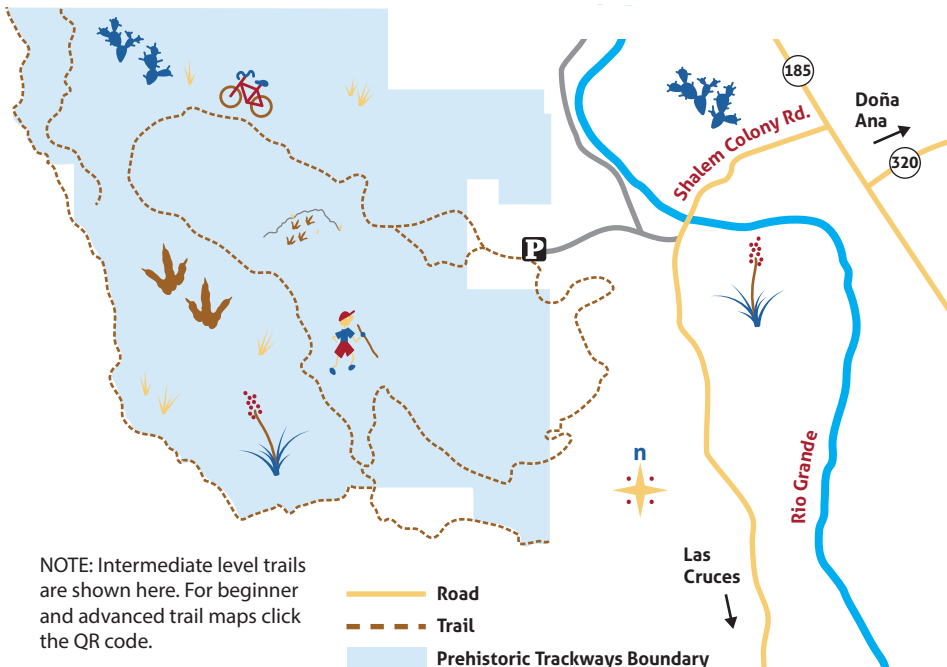
411 N. Main St.

Hours: 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tuesday-Friday  
9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Saturday

Info: 575-522-3120

Did you know that some of the footprints discovered in the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument have three toes, while others look almost simian or bearlike, despite no known creatures with such traits having existed in the Permian period?

## DID YOU KNOW?



NOTE: Intermediate level trails are shown here. For beginner and advanced trail maps click the QR code.

— Road  
- - - Trail  
Prehistoric Trackways Boundary



Scan for trail maps & info

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The third annual Cloudcroft Beerfest will be held from noon to 8 p.m. on **Saturday, June 21**, and noon to 6 p.m. **Sunday, June 22** at Zenith Park, 1001 James Canyon Highway, Cloudcroft, N.M. The popular festival will celebrate craft beer from local breweries and will also have a selection of local wine. The event is family friendly and guests 18 years old or younger are free to attend.



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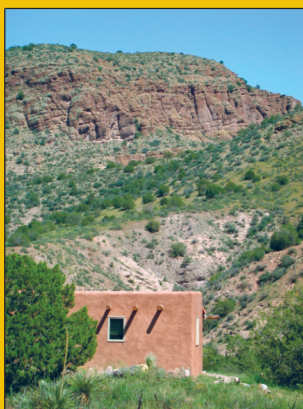


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# An oasis in the desert

## SITTING BULL FALLS

BY DAVID SALCIDO

Carlsbad Caverns is a celebrated destination point for thousands of people from around the world annually. They are not, however, the only recreation area worth noting. A simple day trip can lead the curious traveler to a rare treat on the national landmark's back doorstep: the tallest waterfall in New Mexico, Sitting Bull Falls.

Like many of New Mexico's many "enchantedments," the toponymy of Sitting Bull Falls is somewhat obscured by legend and liberally sprinkled with tall tales. Perhaps the most oft-told tale is one in which, on a bright moonlit night in 1881, a small group of natives led by the infamous Lakota Chieftain rustled some cattle and were followed by a posse into the canyon, where they discovered the falls and named them accordingly. The problem with that legend, however, is that the real Sitting Bull was in Canada in 1881 skirmishing with the U.S. Cavalry.

Upon arrival at the location, one finds oneself in a literal oasis, with shaded picnic structures, modern restrooms, cooking grills, trash cans and sidewalks providing easy access to the viewing deck for the 150 foot, spring fed waterfall, all surrounded by lush green vegetation.

The hike to the falls, itself, is a light one and can

barely be considered a hike at all, unless one wants to climb the rough step-like trail to the top of the falls. But even that is likely to leave only the most out-of-shape visitor winded. Either way, reaching the area where the waters cascade down from sheer rock cliffs into natural, moss-covered pools is a real treat, especially if visited on a weekday, when the area is much less crowded.

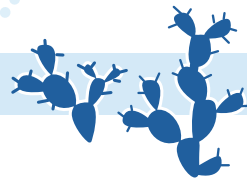
Sitting Bull Falls Recreation Area is located about 50 miles southwest of Carlsbad, New Mexico. To get there head north on N. Canal St. for about a mile, then continue onto U.S. Hwy. 285 N. for another 11 miles. Turn left onto NM-137 S. for approximately 23 miles, then right on to Sitting Bull Falls Rd. for another 7.5 miles. Open year round, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., April 1 – September 30; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., October 1 – March 31. Gate closes 30 minutes before closing time.



Sitting Bull Lagoon (DAVID SALCIDO)



## Other Attractions in Carlsbad



### Balzano Family Vineyard

5230 7 Rivers Hwy.

Hours: 1-8 p.m. Friday

4-8 p.m. Saturday-Sunday

Info: 575-361-4993

### Carlsbad Museum

418 W. Fox St.

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday

10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Saturday

Info: 575-887-0276

### Guadalupe Mountain Brewing Company

3324 National Parks Hwy.

Hours: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., 5-9 p.m. Monday-Thursday

11 a.m.-2 p.m., 5-10 p.m. Friday

4-9 p.m., Saturday

Info: 575-887-8747

### Milton's Brewing

213 W. Mermod St.

Hours: 4-10 p.m. Tuesday-Friday

2-10 p.m. Saturday

2-8 p.m. Sunday

Info: 575-725-5779

### Yellowbrix Restaurant

201 N. Canal St.

Hours: 7 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday-Friday

8 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturday-Sunday

Info: 575-941-2749



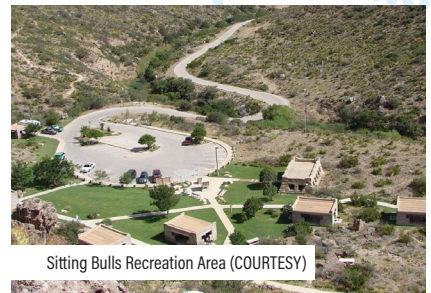
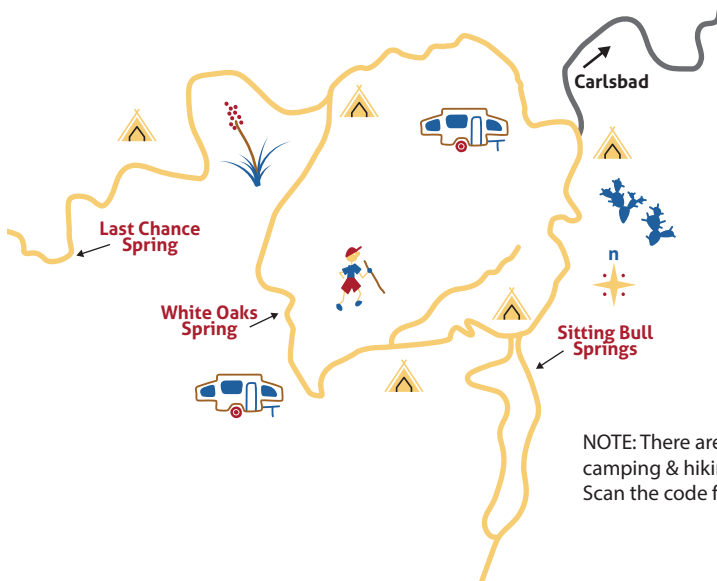
Did you know that there are records indicating the Apaches called Sitting Bull Falls "gostahanaguti," or "hidden gulch," but no records exist explaining how the monument got its unusually non-regional name?



## DID YOU KNOW?



Cliff Overhanging the Falls (DAVID SALCIDO)



Sitting Bulls Recreation Area (COURTESY)



NOTE: There are multiple camping & hiking sites for use. Scan the code for details.

Scan for trail maps & info



# Looking for geodes?

## ROCKHOUND STATE PARK

BY SUSAN MORÉE

If you're the rock-hunting type, you'll find your vein at Rockhound State Park, just 19 miles south of Deming, New Mexico.

In addition to geodes, visitors can look for obsidian, quartz crystals, agate, onyx and jasper, just to name a few of the minerals to be found there. Rockhound State Park opened in 1966 and was the first to allow the public to collect rocks and minerals to take home. Visitors are allowed to carry out one 15-pound bag for personal use.

Although the site is in southern New Mexico, the state park is in the Little Florida Mountains. But not to worry. The Spanish explorers who named the range were not confused about their location. The word "Florida" is Spanish for "flowery." The Spaniards who first came to the area were remarking on the abundant wildflowers they found growing on the mountain slopes.

It is beautiful still.

Don your hiking boots when you come. The Little Florida Mountains have great trails and views to die for. The highest elevation in the Little Floridas is 5,660 feet. Just to the south of the Little Floridas are the Florida Mountains, which are a higher elevation, with peaks that soar to 7,448 feet.

Into birding? At Rockhound State Park you might

catch sight of a Bewick's wren or a greentailed towhee, a black-chinned sparrow or a ruby-crowned kinglet. During summer months (be sure to hike with water!) you might run into a lesser nighthawk or a common poor-will.

There are campsites, including some with electric hook up and RV dump stations, restrooms with showers and areas for group camping and picnicking. There's also a gift shop for those who want a souvenir to remember your trip by.

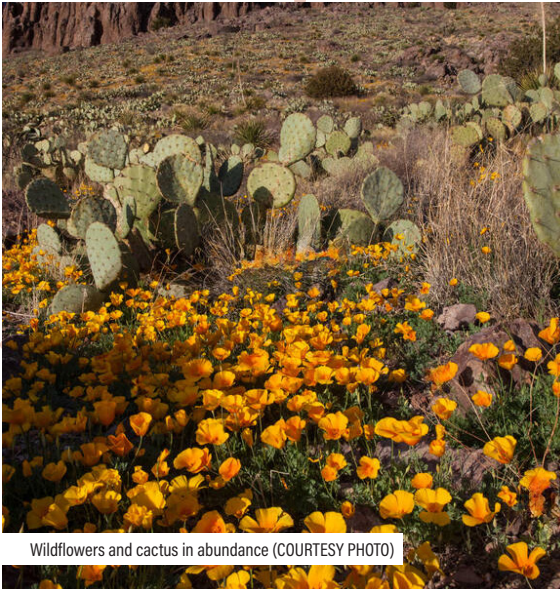
To get there, from I-10, take exit 102 to Frontage Road then turn south on NM 11. Drive for five miles then turn east on Rockhound Road/State Road 141 and drive another nine miles.

Prickly pear cactus (COURTESY PHOTO)





## Other Attractions in Deming



Wildflowers and cactus in abundance (COURTESY PHOTO)



Did you know the building that now houses the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum was built to be an armory for the U.S. National Guard and was used after Pancho Villa raided Columbus, New Mexico?



### DID YOU KNOW?

### Deming Luna Mimbres Museum

301 S. Silver Ave.

Hours: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday

Info: 575-546-2382

### D. H. Lescombes Winery & Tasting Room

7075 Hwy. 549 SE

Hours: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Thursday & Saturday

11 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday

11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday

Info: 575-546-1179

### Luna Rosa Winery

3710 West Pine Street

Hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday

12-6 p.m. Sunday

Info: 575-544-1160

### Adobe Deli Restaurant

3970 Lewis Flats Rd. SE

Hours: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Saturday

11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday

Info: 575-546-0361

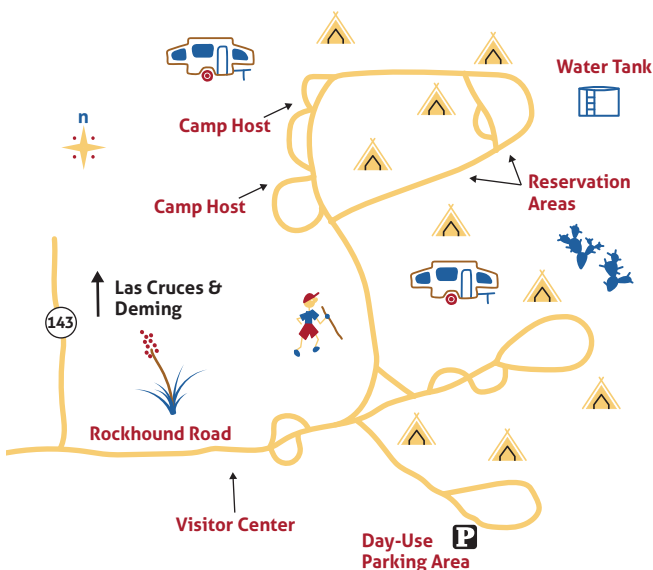
### Elisa's House of Pies and Restaurant

2020 Hatch Highway

Hours: 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday

8 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday

Info: 575-494-4639



Geodes in Abundance (COURTESY PHOTO)



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# The view from here

## OL' LILLY MEMORIAL

BY SUSAN MORÉE

A plaque to commemorate Ol' Lilly – or Ben Lilly – as a legendary killer of mountain lions and bears is also a beautiful site to view the mountains he so loved in the Gila National Forest just outside of Silver City, New Mexico.

Silver City got its name from ore deposits discovered in the 1870s, which created boom times for the Wild West town now located at the edge of the Gila National Forest. It is a quaint town with a charm all its own. It's a great place to enjoy a cup of joe at an indie-owned coffee shop and chat with a local. Time slows down in 'Silver,' as the residents affectionately call it, in a way that lets you catch your breath and enjoy your day.

To the east and north of Silver City you can find the Gila National Forest, which contains both the Aldo Leopold Wilderness and the Gila Wilderness. Only 18 miles north of Silver is the Ben Lilly Memorial, an area with lovely views.

Lilly was born in Louisiana, but he arrived in the Gila in 1911. Lilly boasted of shooting over 1,000 mountain lions as part of the forest management at the time around Silver City. He killed apex predators in the Gila Forest with zeal and legend has it that he killed the last grizzly in the Gila (pronounced Hee – la).

Although the ethos around hunting has changed since Lilly's time, he is still remembered.

After Lilly died in 1936, friends erected the memorial to his memory about 18 miles north of Silver City. The memorial bears Lilly's face flanked by a bear and a mountain lion, as if all three are keeping watch for wildlife.

There are many hiking trails and campgrounds nearby.

To get there, from I-10, take exit 82A from Deming to pick up U.S. Hwy. 180W toward Silver City. In Silver City, take N.M. 15 toward Pinos Altos. Pass the turn for Pinos Altos and drive another three miles north.

Wild Rock Formations (COURTESY)





# Other Attractions in Silver City



## Silver City Museum

312 W Broadway St.

Hours: 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tuesday-Friday  
10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday  
Info: 575-538-5921

## La Esperanza Vineyard and Winery

100 De La O Sherman

Hours: 12-7 p.m. Friday-Sunday  
Info: 505-259-9911

## Little Toad Creek Brewery & Distillery

200 N. Bullard St.

Hours: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Sunday-Wednesday  
11 a.m.-11 p.m. Thursday  
11 a.m.-12 a.m. Friday-Saturday  
Info: 575-956-6144

## La Vie Un Est Bistro

112 W. Yankie St.

Hours: 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Wednesday  
11 a.m.-3 p.m. & 5-8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday  
11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday brunch  
3-5 p.m. Sunday Caribbean special  
Info: 575-284-7006

## Buckhorn Saloon & Opera House

32 Main St. Pinos Altos

Hours: 3-9 p.m. Friday-Saturday  
3-8:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday  
Info: 575-538-9911



Willow Creek (COURTESY)



Ben Lilly Memorial (COURTESY)



Did you know Ben Lilly led President Theodore Roosevelt on a hunt in Louisiana? According to legend, it was while on that hunt that Roosevelt refused to shoot a bear tied to a tree. The story got out and a store owner back east created the 'Teddy Bear,' which became a hit.



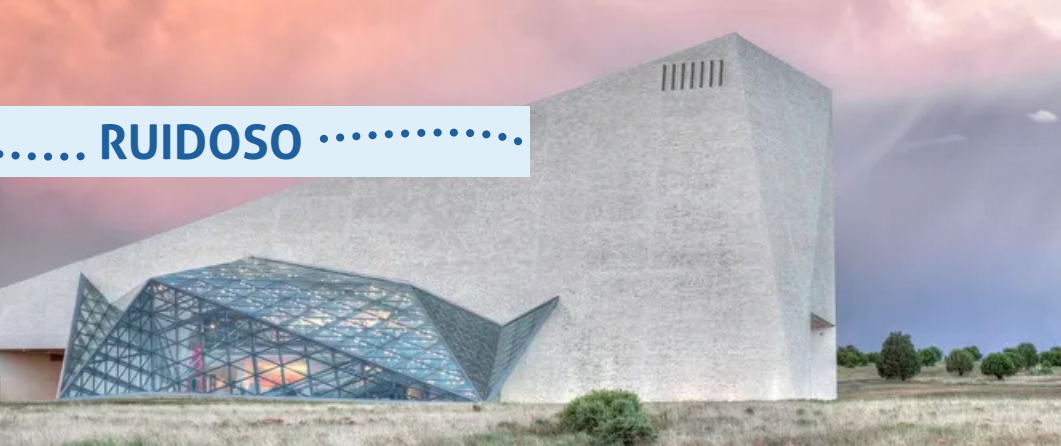
## DID YOU KNOW?



Scan for detailed map & info



Steps Leading to Memorial (COURTESY)



# The show must go on

## SPENCER THEATRE

BY SUSAN MORÉE

If you know Ruidoso, then you know it's a gem in the pines with a reputation as a great place to ski or to just escape the heat during the summer.

But did you know the area is also home to an "aristocrat among theaters," the Spencer Theater for Performing Arts in Alto, New Mexico?

The Spencer is a magnificent 50,000 square foot vision of modernist design. It is made of white-flecked stone quarried in Spain. The architect, Antoine Predock, had the stone finished in Italy.

How did such an architectural gem housing the performing arts wind up in a place so far from the bright lights of the big cities like New York, Chicago or L.A.? The person who had the theater built, Jackie Bancroft Spencer Morgan, was a wealthy local who loved the arts and decided to have it brought to her back yard.

Jackie Spencer Morgan's first husband, Hugh Bancroft Jr., was a local rancher and heir to a New York City fortune. After he died, Jackie remarried Dr. Spencer, a local practitioner, and stayed put.

She also gave freely of her inherited fortune. And she came to love the theater, so she hired Albuquerque-based architect Antoine Predock to

design a performing arts center just outside of Ruidoso. Predock is best known for his design of the Padres Stadium (now known as Petco Park) with its breathtaking views of San Diego.

The Spencer building is so unique, it was 15 years in the making.

The construction cost \$22 million and was completely funded by the Spencers. There are over 300 glass panes in the building and no two are cut the same.

Predock took inspiration from early opera houses in Europe for his design, but he was also known to be heavily inspired by the southwest in his buildings.

The Spencer is a presenter theater, so it doesn't produce shows but rather, provides space to artists, producers and to newlyweds looking for a wedding venue, to rent. It does provide theater to young children in the area.

To get there from Ruidoso head north on NM 48N for seven miles, turn right onto NM-220 then turn right onto Spencer Road in Alto.



Spencer Theatre at dusk (COURTESY PHOTO)



## Other Attractions in Ruidoso



### Wingfield Heritage House Museum

2813 Sudderth Dr.

Hours: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday-Saturday

Info: 575-257-5559

### The Ranchers Steak and Seafood Restaurant

2823 Sudderth Dr.

Hours: 11 a.m.-9 p.m. every day

Info: 575-257-7540

### Noisy Water Winery

2331 Sudderth Dr.

Hours: 10 a.m.-6:30 Monday-Wednesday

10 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday-Saturday

10 a.m.-8 p.m. Sunday & Thursday

Info: 575-257-9335

### Hall of Flame Burgers

2500 Sudderth Dr., Ste. 10

Hours: 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Tuesday & Thursday

11 a.m.-7 p.m. Friday-Saturday

11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday

Info: 575-257-9987

### Lost Hiker Brewing Company Taproom

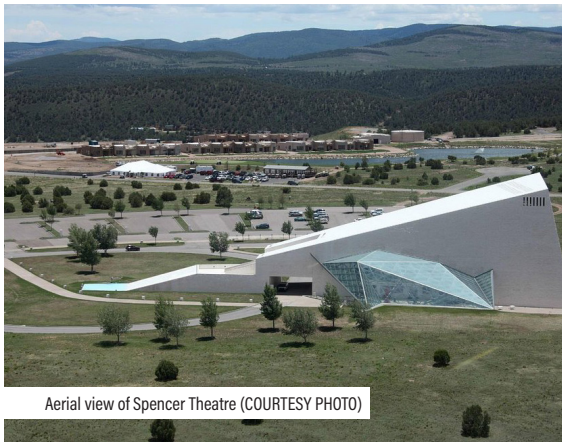
2536 Sudderth Dr.

Hours: 2-8 p.m. Wednesday-Friday

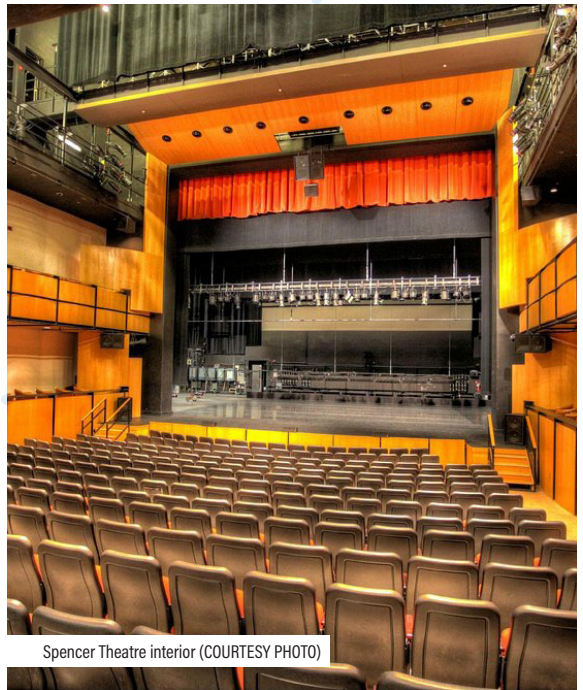
12-8 p.m. Saturday

12-7 p.m. Sunday

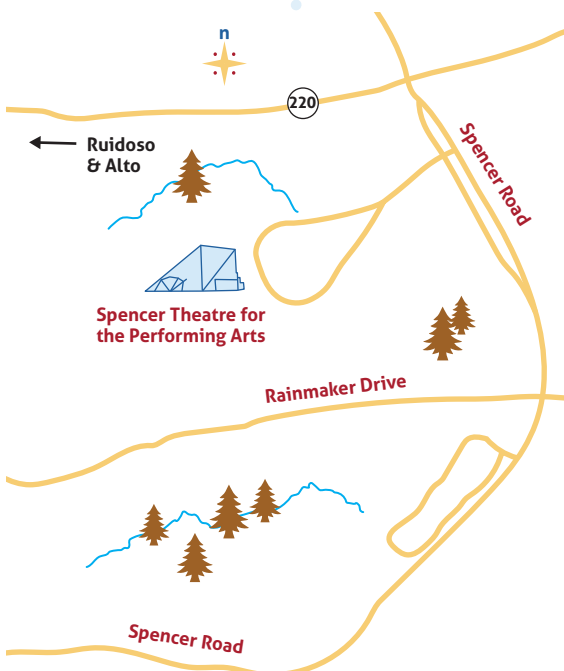
Info: 575-808-8072



Aerial view of Spencer Theatre (COURTESY PHOTO)



Spencer Theatre interior (COURTESY PHOTO)



Did you know that the star dressing room at the Spencer Theater opens into a courtyard with Bradford pear trees?



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## Museum Attractions



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[www.nmfarmandranchmuseum.org](http://www.nmfarmandranchmuseum.org)



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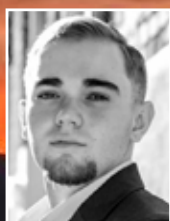
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