

Enchanted Spring: Exploring New Mexico

Adventures in Good Company's General Information

Welcome to Adventures in Good Company's Springtime in the Land of Enchantment! We have compiled some information that may be helpful as you prepare for your journey. Please feel free to contact the Adventures in Good Company office (1-877/439-4042) if we can provide any additional information.

Emergency contact information

In Santa Fe we will be staying at the Hotel St Francis. Their number is 505/983-5700 or 800/745-9920. We will send out the phone numbers of our other accommodations in the pre-trip letter.

Weather

This is typically one of the nicest times of year to visit New Mexico. Average temperatures in Albuquerque are high 70s during the day and 50s at night. Santa Fe, because it is at a higher elevation, is usually 5-8 degrees cooler. Rain is uncommon and usually passes quickly.

Conditioning

No specific conditioning is suggested for this trip. There will be options to hike 5-6 miles on several days, and our days can be quite full. As is always true, the better condition you're in, the more likely that you'll have the energy to participate in all the activities that interest you. If you would like some general conditioning guidelines, please contact us.

Tipping Guidelines

Tipping at the end of the trip is completely optional. If you feel your guide(s) did an outstanding job and would like to reward them for their efforts, a suggested rule of thumb is US \$5-\$10 per person, per day. Oftentimes, trip members organize a group envelope (this makes it anonymous) and present it to the guides at the last meal.

Some fun pre-trip reading

The following diverse selection will give you some sense of the area and culture.

"People of Chaco" by Kendrick Frazier. This is one of the most highly recommended books on Chaco Canyon, describing both its history and the many puzzles that archaeologists have tried to decipher. It's aimed at the general reader and very readable. Make sure you get the 1999 edition with the latest updates.

"The Delight Makers" by Adolph Bandelier. This is a fictionalized account of life among the ancient Pueblo Indians, blending science, archaeology and history. Generally considered a good read but not terribly accurate.

"Death Comes to the Archbishop" by Willa Cather. This is the story of Catholic missionaries in mid-19th century New Mexico, with a definite pro-Spanish bias. It's known for its vivid descriptions of landscape and culture. Not everyone likes Cather.

"If Mountains Die: A New Mexico Memoir" by John Nichols. Nichols is better known for his fiction. This beautifully illustrated book shows the beauty of the land and details the struggles of the people living there with over-development.

"Bless Me, Ultima" by Rudolfo Anaya. This prize winning book tells the story of a young boy torn between Catholicism and older, more mystical beliefs and powers. The writing is beautiful.

Tony Hillerman has written a series of murder mysteries which take place on Zuni Pueblo and on the Navajo Reservation. Unraveling the mysteries often results in gaining a more intimate understanding of Indian culture.

Some useful web sites

National Park Service: The Park Service maintains web sites for each of its National Parks and Monuments and they are worth visiting. The one for Chaco Canyon Historical park is at www.nps.gov/chcu. The web site for Bandelier National Monument is www.nps.gov/band, although this one is not as good as some others.

Chaco Canyon Photo Gallery: this site at www.jqjacobs.net/southwest/chaco.html has some beautiful pictures of both the scenery and the ruins there. It gives a great sense of this beautiful area.

Bandelier National Monument: www.americansoutheast.net/new_mexico/bandelier/national_monument.html. Good information and pictures of Bandelier, much more informative than the National Park Service site