Las Cruces offers four museums, all with complimentary admission. The Branigan Cultural Center features Crossroads of History, a permanent exhibit that chronicles the founding of Las Cruces; the Museum of Art hosts revolving exhibits; the Museum of Nature and Science features a “Looking Up, Looking Down” theme that refers to its Chihuahuan Desert and space exhibits; and the Railroad Museum, located in the historic 1910 Santa Fe Depot.

The New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum is an interactive museum that brings to life the 3,000-year history of farming and ranching in New Mexico. The main building, with its beautiful view of the Organ Mountains, contains more than 24,000 square feet of exhibit space, along with catering space for meetings and events, a mercantile and theater. Visitors can watch a blacksmith in action, a cow being milked, horse being shoed, stroll along corrals filled with livestock, or through several desert gardens.

Today the charming plaza of Mesilla is home to the Basilica San Albino, several historic homes and compounds housing restaurants and bars and a number of unique boutiques. At one time, the plaza was a bustle of activity including the signing of the Gadsden Purchase in 1853 and the site of the trial of Billy the Kid in 1881. Mesilla served as a stop on the Butterfield Overland Mail Trail, also known as the Butterfield Stage, from 1857-1861. It was also home to Albert Fall, US Senator, Secretary of the Interior and focus of the Teapot Dome scandal, in which Fall was indicted for conspiracy and convicted of accepting bribes.

Dripping Springs Natural Area is a picturesque area of rocky peaks, narrow canyons and open woodlands cradled by the towering Organ Mountains, rising 1,500 feet above the valley floor. Dripping Springs, formerly known as the Cox Ranch, offers breathtaking vistas in an area that is home to great biological diversity. It also has an abandoned mine, an old tuberculosis sanatorium and a hermit’s cave.

An area of the nearby Robledos Mountains encompasses the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument, set aside to preserve a collection of the best examples of Paleozoic tracks in North America. The Paleozoic Trackways are considered one of the world’s most significant sources of pre-dinosaur fossil trackways, dated 280 million years old. The site is known as a “megatracksite” because of the quantity of footprints of numerous amphibians, reptiles, insects (including previously unknown species), plants, and petrified wood, which collectively provide new opportunities to understand animal behaviors and environments during that time. Scientists from all over the world have already declared the site a world class discovery.

Fort Selden State Monument was established in 1865 in an effort to bring peace to the south central region of present day New Mexico. Built on the banks of the Rio Grande, this adobe fort housed units of the U.S. Infantry and Cavalry stationed to protect settlers and travelers. By 1890, with more stability in the region, the fort was no longer needed and was abandoned in 1891. Today the stark adobe brick walls evoke feelings of the frontier past. A visitor center offers exhibits and living history demonstrations are occasionally offered on weekend afternoons from May – September.

Las Cruces is home to more museums and historical sites. Visit New Mexico State University, the Bataan Death March Memorial, ghost towns and more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
Rochelle Miller-Hernandez, Tourism Sales Manager
575-541-2169 / rhernandez@las-cruces.org
VisitLasCruces.com