Day One

Arrive in Albuquerque where your guide will meet you at Sunport International Airport. Spend the night at Hotel Andaluz where the famous spy Harry Gold disclosed secrets about the atomic bomb to the enemy.

May – October, 9 Night Guided Tour

Over many centuries outer space has played an important role in New Mexico. Whether native or visitor to this land, people have explored and used the space over this state in many different and, at times, unexpected ways. This tour takes you to some of the most fascinating and intriguing sites.

Day Two

Learn from the Ancients at Petroglyphs National Monument, displaying a vast number of messages painted and chipped on the volcanic rocks.

Visit the National Museum of Nuclear Science & History, part of the Smithsonian museums system, to learn about the history and technologies of the atomic era. An important chapter of the atomic history is right here in New Mexico.

Stroll through town to see buildings that were at the center of the atomic saga in mid 20th century, and where Project Mercury’s astronauts came for training.

Day Three

Travel to Chaco Culture National Historical Park. This site is at the center of the captivating history of the Ancient Puebloan civilization. Signs of astronomical events are depicted on the high canyon walls, and the extraordinary number of kivas, or ceremonial chambers, tell us that this was an important religious center. You will also hear about archaeo-astronomy and the influence that the skies and the stars had on the architecture and life of this people.

Day Four

The house where Oppenheimer lived

Visit Coronado National Monument, where we will see frescoes belonging to the ancient pueblo located nearby-rare examples of ancient paintings of that era.

On the way to Los Alamos we stop at Valles Caldera National Preserve, created by one of the world’s largest volcanic eruptions 1.2 million years ago. Here the Apollo astronauts came for their training.

In Los Alamos we tour the most significant places of the Manhattan Project. Here, scientists from all over the world lived and worked totally isolated, surrounded by the mountains of the Pajarito Plateau to build the weapon that would end World War II. We arrive in Santa Fe in the evening. The oldest capital of the United States, renowned for its art and creative community.

Day Five

In Santa Fe we see some key sites of the atomic era. The building where scientists and workers at Los Alamos left their identity and became a number. A second place is along the Santa Fe River where an exchange of secret documents with details on the work happening “up there on the mountains” took place between a Los Alamos scientist, Klaus Fuchs and the Soviet Union spy, Harry Gold.

Later, we visit the New Mexico History Museum, then spend some free time shopping and exploring. Early evening we take a ghost tour with an expert to visit sites where spirits from the past are supposedly still roaming.

Dinner is at La Fonda Bar where scientists from Los Alamos would often gather for some time away from their life with atoms. La Fonda is a historic hotel, the first established at the end of legendary Santa Fe Trail.
We head south and stop at the Very Large Array, a radio observatory among the world’s most important, that significantly contributed to the observation of Black Holes. There are 27 parabolic dishes, each 82 feet in diameter, arranged in a Y shape.

We take a short break for lunch in San Antonio, birthplace of Conrad Hilton, who was founder of the famous hotel chain. Then we continue towards Roswell, stopping at the Valley of Fire for a walk among a vast volcanic rocks valley created by an eruption that happened 5,000 years ago. It’s like taking a walk on the moon!

Roswell is called the UFO world capital for good reasons. You will find out the details tomorrow at the Museum and Research Center.

Visit the International UFO Museum and the Walker Aviation Museum where ufologists think aliens from the crashed space craft were kept prisoners. It also is the take-off place of the B-29 flights to Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the beginning of August 1945. Closed in 1967, this base was the largest of Strategic Air Command during the early years of the Cold War.

Next stop Alamogordo for a visit to the Museum of Space History where many different exhibitions offer exclusive insights into space programs. You will see some of the first experiments, as well as a collection of objects from space explorations. In the Hall of Fame you will learn more about the pioneering astronauts from all nations. You can also walk in the garden dedicated to the Apollo 1 and Space Shuttle Challenger & Columbia astronauts. The IMAX Theater has a variety of interesting movies.

We then drive up into the forest of the Sacramento Mountains for an overnight at The Lodge Resort, which some say might be haunted.

Not far from Cloudcroft, high in the Sacramento Mountains, we visit two important observatories. First, the National Solar Observatory located in a small village with the perfect name, Sunspot. We will learn about the ongoing scientific research dedicated to the relationship between the sun and the earth. Next, we visit nearby Apache Point which is mainly used for night observations.

Back to the plain, we spend time walking and sliding down the bright white sand dunes of White Sands National Monument, the largest of its kind in the world.

Driving nearby, we will talk about the Trinity Site, learning about the history of the first atomic explosion that took place here on July 16, 1945 at 5:29:45, considered the beginning of the Atomic Era. It was followed a month later by the bombing of Japan.

En route to an evening in Las Cruces we take a look at a very unusual museum with all sorts of space memorabilia. The water tank tells various stories depicted in scenes painted on its cylindrical surface between 1960 and 1986 by unknown space enthusiasts. A true Folk Art monument!

We leave at 7.30am to meet with Follow the Sun Tours in Truth or Consequences, the exclusive and official tour operator for Spaceport America. It is from here that tourists will soon take flights into the space. The stunning new buildings of the Spaceport resemble a contemporary architectural monument, in sheer contrast with the nearby arid Camino Real, an ancient trail that over 400 years ago saw the arrival of the Spanish Conquistadores. Following our glimpse through the Gateway to Space, we return north to Albuquerque for a farewell dinner.

Day Ten

Departure from Albuquerque Sunport International Airport.

Seven Directions offers custom cultural tours of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and the Southwestern USA. In addition to space, Seven Directions recently added Adventures with an Expert and Agritourism Experiences For more information or to reserve your tour, contact Seven Directions Tours at www.sevendirections.net Tel.877.992.6128 – 505.820.3305 e-mail: info@sevendirections.net