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Convention Southwest

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BEAUTIFUL**

Natural Wonders that Enhance Events

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There are plenty of reasons that New Mexico makes an engaging place for meetings—from its awe-inspiring beauty to its Indigenous history and heritage to authentic dishes showcasing cultural ingredients like green and red chilis. New Mexico is a one-of-a-kind meetings destination, offering a treasure trove of experiences. From small towns like Roswell to urban cities like Albuquerque and Santa Fe, the “Land of Enchantment” offers the perfect place for meetings of any size.

**EVENT PLANNERS’
GUIDE TO**

NM

New Mexico

By Tammy Leytham

Located northwest of Gallup, on the Navajo Nation, the Chuska Mountains feature rugged landscapes and dramatic sandstone spires like Venus Needle.

NORTHWEST

Farmington

FarmingtonNM.org; Visit Farmington; Visit_Farmington; @FarmingtonCVB

Farmington offers a variety of spaces for meetings, conferences, and events, with a team ready to assist with site visits and planning.

The Farmington Civic Center, located downtown, features a 24,500-square-foot multi-use facility, a banquet hall, a 1,200-seat theater, and multiple meeting rooms. With modern audiovisual equipment, a full-service catering kitchen, and outdoor event areas, it can host trade shows, conferences, weddings, and performances, according to Visit Farmington tourism outreach coordinator Chantalle Bacon.

McGee Park includes a fairground and a 49,500-square-foot convention center, which can accommodate more than 5,700 people.

Another onsite multi-use building, with a capacity of 500, offers six meeting rooms and is equipped with a full kitchen.

San Juan College’s James C. Henderson Fine Arts Center is an 83,000-square-foot complex with an 800-seat performance hall, an art gallery, and flexible meeting spaces for groups of up to 750.

Other venues include Connect Space for smaller groups; Locke Street Eats, an outdoor food truck park; and Farmington Museum & Visitor Center, with an outdoor terrace offering scenic views of the bluffs and the Animas River, Bacon says. Artifacts 302 provides a rustic setting for events, with natural wood beams, high ceilings, and abundant natural light; it can accommodate up to 125 guests.

TownePlace Suites by Marriott Farmington offers three meeting rooms totaling 2,709 square feet. Renovations to the hotel’s guest

rooms and public areas were nearing completion at press time, according to Bacon. Other recently updated properties include Wingate by Wyndham Farmington in the scenic San Juan River Valley off U.S. 64, a short drive from downtown. Home2 Suites Farmington updated its entire color scheme with an elevated look inspired by the local scenery; the all-suite hotel features full kitchens, an indoor pool, a fitness center, outdoor patios, and pet-friendly accommodations. Holiday Inn Express Farmington completed light renovations last year, updating rooms with new paint, carpet, furniture, and larger TVs.

Convention attendees will find plenty to explore in Farmington’s historic downtown, offering a mix of restaurants, coffee shops, and local shops for unique keepsakes, art, and handmade jewelry. Activities include guided tours of the nearby Bisti Badlands, Chaco Canyon, and other striking landscapes.

Gallup

**VisitGallup.com; Visit Gallup;
@VisitGallup; VisitGallup**

With spectacular scenery and a throwback to Hollywood’s heydays, Gallup is a destination as unusual as the natural setting itself, according to Matt Robinson, tourism and marketing manager for the City of Gallup.

The Red Rock Park Convention Center is the city’s premier event location, tucked between the beautiful red-rock formations and in the shadow of the amazing Church Rock and Pyramid Peak. The facility can accommodate approximately 500 people, with breakout rooms, a kitchen, RV/camping spots, hiking trails, and a museum reflecting the area’s Indigenous peoples.

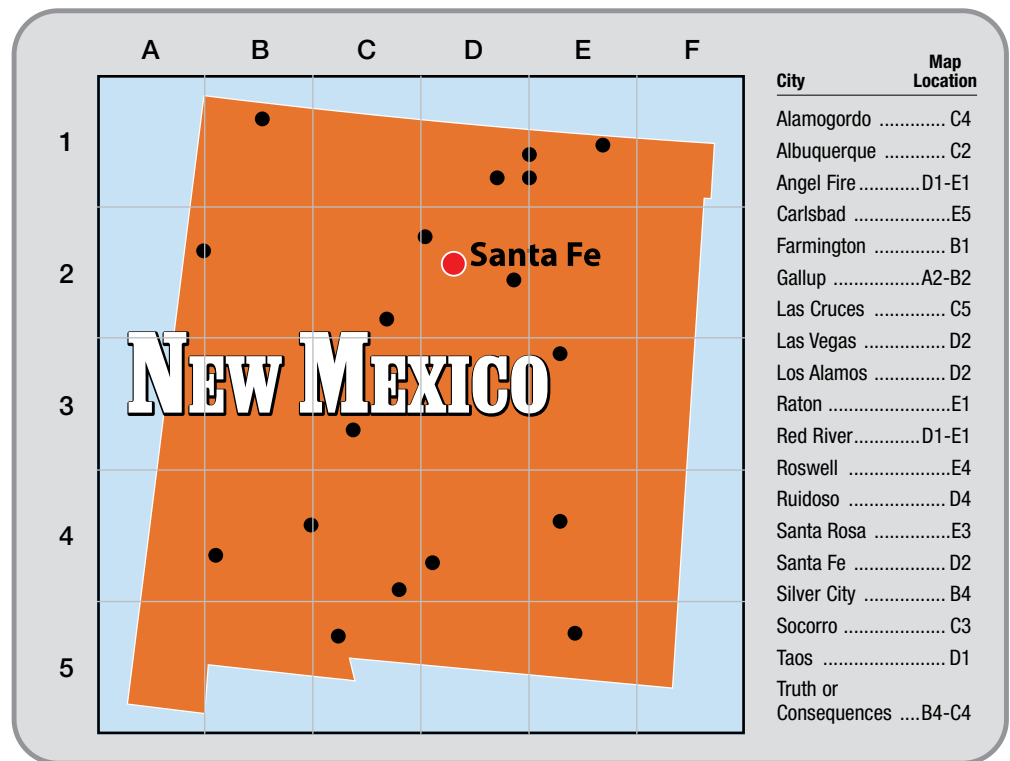
“Red Rock Park is unique,” Robinson says. “There is no other facility in New Mexico—or perhaps the entire country—that has such a beautiful backdrop and similar amenities.”

The recently renovated El Morro Events Center in historic Gallup offers 3,600 square feet of space and includes a kitchenette and modern audiovisual equipment. It can accommodate up to 120 people and can be divided into two smaller spaces. In addition, the facility is a stone’s throw from shopping, eating, and attractions.

Known for hosting Hollywood celebrities in years past, the historic El Rancho Hotel provides a beautiful outdoor area for hosting events, along with a restaurant, a gift shop, and the historic 49s Bar. The hotel gallery features photographs of Hollywood stars, and guest rooms are named for Hollywood celebrities. “This was the favorite hotel for celebrities during the ‘Golden Age of Hollywood,’” Robinson says. “Plenty of big stars stayed there, including John Wayne.”

The 66-room Comfort Suites Gallup offers a small meeting room, but what makes this property stand out is its Veterans Museum with beautiful tributes to veterans and historic objects, including a Navajo Code Talkers room, Pearl Harbor exhibit, and Medal of Honor collection. The 105-room Hilton Garden Inn is the city’s biggest and newest hotel with meeting space, offering a 3,000-square-foot event space and an onsite restaurant. The 74-room TownePlace Suites by Marriott Gallup is also a modern facility with a 2,500-square-foot conference space.

Gallup offers plenty of entertainment options for convention attendees, including unique



shopping at historic trading posts, featuring jewelry, pottery, blankets, and items reflective of local cultures.

For dining, Robinson suggests Jerry’s Café for a unique downtown experience and excellent Mexican food, while Oasis Mediterranean offers an unexpected and delightful find. “Highly rated on Yelp, it’s one of the best restaurants in the Southwest,” he says.

NORTH-CENTRAL

Angel Fire

**VisitAngelFireNM.com;
Visit Angel Fire; VisitAngelFireNM;
@VisitAngelFireNewMexico**

A village in the Rock Mountains, Angel Fire is home to ski slopes and terrain parks, quiet trails, and mouth-watering cuisine. It’s a great place for groups to escape the hustle and bustle and discover a natural retreat.

Mountain View Event Center opened in summer 2025 with a spacious astro turf lawn, covered stage, and large tent; it’s a versatile venue for hosting a range of events. In addition, Angel Fire Community Center features more than 8,000 square feet of meeting space to accommodate groups of 10 to 400. It has two meeting classrooms, a multipurpose room (gymnasium), an entry rotunda with spectacular views, and a full commercial kitchen.

Nearby, Angel Fire Resort offers a unique venue for events, with more than 20,000 square feet of dedicated flexible meeting, exhibit, and banquet space. A team of group sales specialists guides event planners through lodging arrangements, meeting details, meals, and activities.

Angel Fire’s accommodations range from the resort to slope-side hotels. Angel Fire Resort’s options include condos, homes, and chalets, many of which are ski-in/ski-out accommodations. The resort has several rooms and dining spaces available for meetings, accommodating 30 to 280 people.

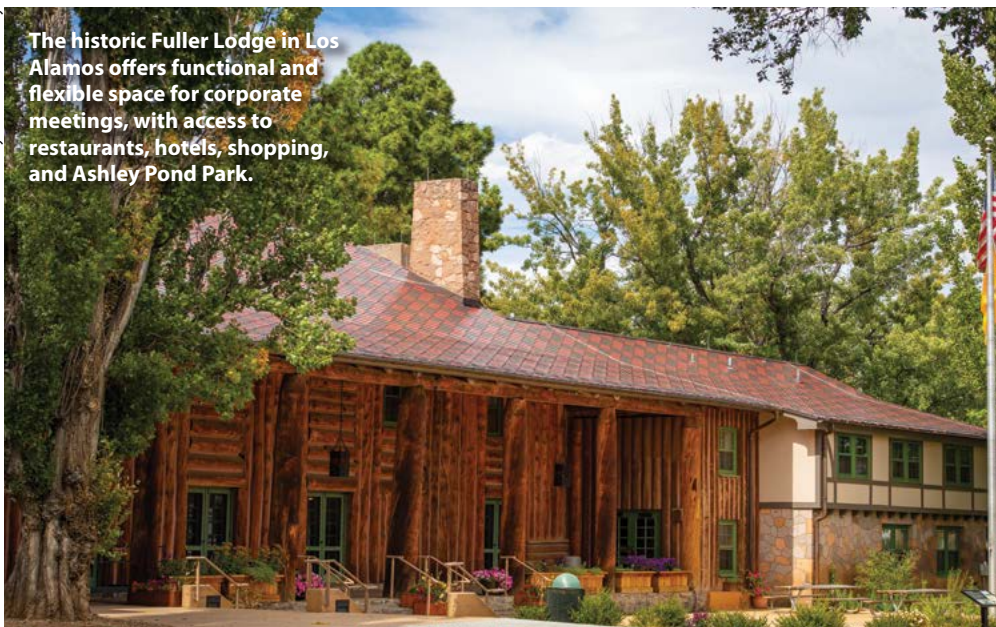
Groups can also choose from Sun Lodge condos and Elk Horn Lodge rooms and suites at the resort.

Aside from winter sports like skiing and snowboarding, Angel Fire offers a downhill/cross-country bike park, Greenbelt hiking trails, ziplining, golfing, and fishing on Monte Verde Lake.

Angel Fire also offers a vibrant dining scene with cozy cafés, craft brew pubs, and gourmet cuisine. The Morning Star Restaurant at Elk Horn Lodge is a favorite for breakfast and fresh Mexican fare. Angel Fired Pizza is a top spot for casual gatherings, while Zebs Restaurant & Bar specializes in top-quality steak and burgers, and also serves Mexican food, barbecue, and seafood.

Courtesy Los Alamos County

The historic Fuller Lodge in Los Alamos offers functional and flexible space for corporate meetings, with access to restaurants, hotels, shopping, and Ashley Pond Park.



Los Alamos

VisitLosAlamos.org; Visit Los Alamos; VisitLosAlamosNM

Los Alamos is a scientific hub that also serves as a center of arts and culture, and a gateway to three national parks.

“Los Alamos County offers a distinctive convention setting that blends inspiring mountain scenery, rich history, and a legacy of innovation,” says Ellyn Felton, marketing specialist for Los Alamos County. “Its walkable downtown, unique venues, and access to outdoor experiences create an engaging environment that encourages connection, creativity, and meaningful gatherings beyond the meeting room.”

The city offers several event venues. The Duane Smith Auditorium accommodates 1,000. The historic Fuller Lodge has a large room with a capacity of 150 and a lecture room that accommodates 120 or 80 for banquets. Pajarito Mountain Lodge Rental & Catering offers full-service catering for up to 400 guests and incredible views. The lodge can comfortably seat 160 people, with outdoor seating accommodating an additional 176. For a unique setting, Los Alamos Nature Center at Pajarito Environmental Education Center includes a planetarium with seating for 60, a classroom seating 30, private meeting space, an exhibit hall, and outdoor patio and reception areas. Also, the University of New Mexico Los Alamos has two lecture halls; one can hold 100 people, while the other holds 150.

Hotel options include the 86-room Holiday Inn Express & Suites Los Alamos Entrada Park, with two conference rooms that can be combined; 72-room Hampton Inn & Suites Los Alamos White Rock, which includes one meeting room; and 55-room Wingate by Wyndham Los Alamos.

Los Alamos serves up a rich blend of dining experiences, from authentic New Mexican cuisine to global flavors. Local favorites include Blue Window Bistro, offering gourmet burgers and delicious seafood, and Pajarito Brewpub & Grill, a great spot for craft beer lovers.

As the Gateway to three national parks, Los Alamos offers proximity to Valles Caldera National Preserve, Manhattan Project National Historic Park, and Bandelier National Monument. Other attractions include the Bradbury Science Museum at Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos History Museum, biking and hiking trails, Pajarito Ski Mountain, and Los Alamos County Golf Course. The course is expected to complete renovation of bunkers, rebuilt greens, and upgraded tees this spring.

Red River

RedRiver.org; Visit Red River, NM; RedRiverNM; @Red_River_NM; @RedRiverNewMexico

Located near Carson National Forest, Red River provides a pristine setting for small to mid-sized conferences and meetings. Red River Conference Center features more than 10,000 square feet of flexible exhibit space,

a breakout room, and outdoor space. It can accommodate groups of 10 to 700 people.

Accommodations lean toward ski resorts and lodges. The 46-room Alpine Lodge and Suites is a ski-in/ski-out property on a four-acre private park with 1,000 feet of river frontage. The property features a covered pavilion for outdoor gatherings. Other ski-in/ski-out options include the 30-room Best Western River’s Edge and 19-room Copper King Lodge, which has a four-bedroom, three-bath “Hacienda” that can be used as a retreat.

The 21-room WorldMark Red River by Wyndham offers one- and two-bedroom suites with full kitchens.

Red River is all about getting outdoors. Event planners can incorporate ski afternoons, horseback riding, off-road tours, fishing, and hiking in the itinerary.

Red River offers approximately 20 restaurants, mostly casual and serving steaks, burgers, barbecue, and hearty breakfasts. Some of the area’s breweries and wineries host group tastings, such as Sheehan Winery and Red River Brewing Company & Distillery.

Santa Fe

SantaFe.org; Visit Santa Fe, New Mexico; CityOfSantaFe; @VisitSantaFeNM; @VisitSantaFeNM; VisitSantaFeNM

Santa Fe offers 400 years of history, unique architecture, delicious dining, and spectacular scenery, along with plenty of options for meeting venues, according to Joanne Hudson, public relations manager for Tourism Santa Fe.

Built in 2008, the 72,000-square-foot Santa Fe Community Convention Center stays true to Santa Fe’s historic adobe architecture. The convention center accommodates events of all sizes, with 40,000 square feet of flexible meeting space and state-of-the-art audiovisual capabilities on par with the nation’s best facilities, according to Hudson.

The city’s unique, theater-style venues include the 450-seat, circa-1917 Saint Francis Auditorium at the New Mexico Museum of Art and the 821-seat Lensic Performing Arts Center.

The Santa Fe Farmers Market Pavilion is a flexible, warehouse-style venue, featuring a 9,800-square-foot hall with a capacity of 600. Adjacent to the New Mexico Rail Runner train, it offers access to both the Santa Fe and Albuquerque markets and has plenty of parking.

Hotels in the historic Santa Fe Plaza area with event space include the 219-room, AAA Four

Diamond Eldorado Hotel and Spa, with 25,737 square feet of meeting space; 180-room La Fonda on the Plaza, which has more than 21,000 square feet of meeting space; 182-room Drury Plaza Hotel, with 20,000 square feet; and Inn and Spa at Loretto, with 138 suites/rooms and 12,000 square feet of meeting space. A smaller hotel for intimate gatherings is 215 Washington Plaza Hotel, with seven unique suites.

Located three blocks from Santa Fe Plaza, The Washington Inn is scheduled to open early this year with 27 suites (no two suites will be alike). Construction is also underway on the Hotel Flora in the Santa Fe Railyard, a 27-key boutique hotel designed and operated by Charlestowne Hotels.

Last year, Santa Fe Regional Airport (SAF) completed the first phase of a multi-phase expansion project, bringing an additional departure gate, a larger passenger waiting area with a café, and parking and infrastructure upgrades. American Airlines and United offer flights between Santa Fe and Denver, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Los Angeles, and Phoenix.

Groups can enjoy shopping at the Native American Artisans Portal Program at the Palace of the Governors and visiting the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum and the Canyon Road Art Gallery and Railyard districts. From the convention center, attendees can explore the walkable historic Santa Fe Plaza area with historic sites, art galleries, locally owned restaurants, museums, and boutique shops. For more adventurous groups, Santa Fe offers horseback riding, river rafting, off-road excursions, and golf.

Taos

Taos.org; Visit Taos; @VisitTaosNM; @VisitTaos_NM; VisitTaos

Visitors to Taos can make recreation a part of their meeting, as the “Enchanted Circle” offers 1.4 million acres of wilderness, along with conveniently located venues in the heart of the city.

Taos grew in the late 1700s as a fortified plaza and trading outpost for the neighboring Taos Pueblo and Hispano communities. Its history and setting now provide an interesting backdrop for any size meeting or conference.

The city offers approximately 74,000 square feet of total space, which includes several hotel properties. The 156-room Sagebrush Inn & Suites Conference Center offers more than 13,000 square feet of flexible indoor and outdoor



Located in the heart of downtown—a short walk from 900 hotel rooms, restaurants, and entertainment options—Albuquerque Convention Center provides more than 270,000 square feet of flexible event space.

Courtesy Visit Albuquerque

spaces, including a 9,000-square-foot conference hall, breakout rooms, and scenic courtyards; the facility can seat up to 1,000 guests. The 84-room El Monte Sagrado has 7,000 square feet of flexible meeting space in an upscale and elegant atmosphere. Situated at the gateway to the Downtown Taos Historic District, the 51-room Hotel Willa, which opened in 2025, features an onsite restaurant and outdoor space for up to 200 guests. Originally built in the 1940s, the reimagined art-filled Hotel Willa also includes a gallery featuring works curated by Paseo Project. The gallery can accommodate up to 100 guests for corporate receptions, private dinners, and creative workshops. Located on the Historic Plaza, the 25-room Hotel La Fonda de Taos, built in 1820, includes the Karavas Conference Center, a 700-square-foot facility designed for business conferences, community meetings, and private dinner events.

CENTRAL

Albuquerque

VisitAlbuquerque.org; Visit Albuquerque; VisitABQ

Albuquerque is set to host any size event, with near-perfect weather for outdoor activities, world-class restaurants, and plenty of attractions.

The Albuquerque Convention Center is the city’s premier venue for large-scale events and conferences, offering more than 270,000 square feet of flexible event space. “Located in the heart of downtown, it provides easy access to hotels, dining, and entertainment, making it convenient for attendees and planners alike,” says Brenna Moore, director of communications and public relations for Visit Albuquerque.

The convention center has four exhibit halls totaling 166,000 square feet, a 2,300-seat auditorium, a 31,000 square-foot ballroom, and 31 meeting rooms of various sizes, all equipped with modern technology and audiovisual capabilities.

Albuquerque’s character-filled venues, such as the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and the Albuquerque Museum in Old Town, immerse attendees in a cultural setting surrounded by art and history. Other venues include the Explora Science Center, Anderson Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum, Los Poblanos Historic Inn & Organic Farm, and Casa Rondeña Winery.

Several Albuquerque hotels offer flexible meeting space. Clyde Hotel, across from the convention center, can accommodate conferences, breakout sessions, and receptions. Down the street but connected



The Santa Fe School of Cooking can customize lessons for private groups.

to the convention center via an underground concourse, the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Albuquerque has multiple meeting rooms. Steps from Old Town shops and attractions, the 188-room Hotel Albuquerque blends historic charm with modern amenities and 62,000 square feet of event space.

“Albuquerque’s hospitality scene has seen a wave of exciting new hotel openings and thoughtful renovations that offer more modern, comfortable, and stylish options for visitors and convention attendees alike,” Moore says.

The 137-room boutique ARRIVE Albuquerque, located downtown on Route 66, brings vibrant energy to a reimagined mid-century building with meeting space for up to 200 people, and a seasonal pool and lounge. The dual-branded 91-room TownePlace Suites by Marriott Albuquerque Uptown and the 126-room Element by Westin provide stylish accommodations and small meeting rooms near shops and restaurants. Hotel Andaluz, Curio Collection by Hilton is renovating its guest rooms, public spaces, and meeting areas. The hotel recently opened CHAR restaurant and G. Toti rooftop bar.

Albuquerque features a wide variety of dining options, including New Mexican cuisine at local favorites like Sadie’s or El Pinto, or one of the city’s craft breweries, such as Marble Brewery and Bow & Arrow.

NORTHWEST

Las Vegas

VisitLasVegasNM.com; Visit Las Vegas, New Mexico; VisitLasVegasNM; @VisitLasVegasNM

With Victorian architecture, several National Register districts, and outdoor recreation, Las Vegas, N.M., boasts a diverse and charming setting. Basically an outdoor museum, Las Vegas is laid out in traditional Spanish colonial style and offers a unique culture and beautiful landscapes. Downtown is a gallery of art, featuring 13 murals that reflect various aspects of the city’s history and culture.

Its natural beauty, culture, and history make it a great destination for small and mid-sized events. In the 1880s, Las Vegas was “bigger and richer than Santa Fe or Albuquerque,” according to the Historic Plaza Hotel website. “There are nearly 1,000 buildings here on the National Register of Historic Places. The heart of the City was beautiful Plaza Park.”

Overlooking Old Town Plaza Park, the 70-room Historic Plaza Hotel offers 6,000 square feet of event space with banquet seating for up to 180 guests. Groups of up to 30 people can use the downstairs saloon. The 68-room Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites by IHG offers an 850-square-foot meeting room. Ownership of the 22-room Hotel Castaneda recently transferred to locals, the Lopez and Lucero families, ushering in a new era for the historic site. Hotel Castaneda has space for small groups of 15 to 25 people and a bar for gatherings.

Raton

ExploreRaton.com; Explore Raton; ExploreRaton; @ExploreRaton

A small town tucked in the Rocky Mountains at the highest point of the Historic Santa Fe Trail, Raton is a beautiful destination with

year-round performing arts, delicious cuisine, and plenty of outdoor recreation.

The Raton Convention Center, with meeting rooms, a dining room, and a kitchen, can accommodate up to 60 people. The NRA Meeting Center offers more than 33,000 acres, executive meeting rooms, conference areas, food service, and cafeterias; the meeting rooms can accommodate up to 500 people.

Vermejo, a Ted Turner Reserve is a premier retreat site with more than 550,000 acres of majestic landscapes, modern amenities, onsite dining, and several lodging options, from mountain cabins to cottages to a turn-of-the-century mansion. It can accommodate groups of up to 100 for meetings or retreats.

Raton’s Historic Shuler Theater hosts a year-round performing arts season. The Old Pass Gallery features works by local artists, and Raton Museum preserves the city’s history.

Raton offers more than 20 local eateries, serving authentic cuisine and culinary experiences.

Santa Rosa

VisitSantaRosaNM.com; Visit SRNM; VisitSRNM

Centered around the iconic and historic Route 66, Santa Rosa is surrounded by lakes and natural beauty. The crystal-clear, sapphire waters of the Blue Hole make it one of the top diving destinations in the country.

The Blue Hole Convention Center is a versatile and well-equipped facility for hosting a wide variety of events, from corporate meetings and conventions to social gatherings. The convention center is adjacent to the famous Blue Hole. The facility includes multiple event spaces to accommodate both large and small groups, including a spacious main hall and smaller meeting rooms for more intimate gatherings or breakout sessions, and is equipped with modern audiovisual technology. Onsite catering services are available, offering groups a variety of menu options to suit different tastes and dietary requirements.

Santa Rosa’s hotels also offer meeting space. Quality Inn & Suites has a 2,500-square-foot room with a capacity of 150. Comfort Inn Santa Rosa on Route 66 offers a 1,800-square-foot room. Hampton Inn Santa Rosa, LaQuinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Santa Rosa, and Holiday Inn Express Santa Rosa, an IHG Hotel all have conference rooms.

SOUTHWEST

Las Cruces

VisitLasCruces.com; Visit Las Cruces, New Mexico; VisitLasCruces; @VisitLasCruces

Las Cruces is a dynamic city that celebrates its history and culture while looking to the future. It offers more than 3,000 rooms and more than 150,000 square feet of meeting space.

The LEED-certified Las Cruces Convention Center can accommodate groups of up to 4,000 people. With approximately 42,000 square feet of meeting space, it features a 17,236-square-foot exhibition hall, a nearly 9,000-square-foot ballroom, 10 breakout rooms, and extensive outdoor and pre-function space.

Additional venue options include the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum and New Mexico State University (NMSU). The Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum's Bruce King Building offers indoor space for large banquets or meetings, while its spacious courtyard, with views of the Organ Mountains, is popular for receptions.

NMSU's event venues include the Corbett Center Student Union, which offers a variety of spaces accommodating 12 to 700 guests. Its golf course and clubhouse provide a unique setting, featuring a 2,400-square-foot banquet hall with a capacity of 168 guests. Other NMSU spaces include the Stan Fulton Athletics Center's Villanueva Victory Club, the Spiritual Center, Pete's Patio, and Domenici Hall (summers only).

In addition, several hotels offer meeting space. The 203-room Hotel Encanto de Las Cruces is an elegant choice for meetings, offering 10,000 square feet of indoor meeting space and 25,000 square feet of outdoor event space. The 126-room Courtyard by Marriott Las Cruces, adjacent to the convention center, can accommodate 65 people for receptions and 54 for banquets. The 80-room Holiday Inn Express & Suites Las Cruces North offers flexible meeting space for up to 75 people. The 114-room Hilton Garden Inn offers approximately 3,200 square feet of space across five meeting rooms.

Silver City

VisitSilverCity.org; Visit Silver City; VisitSilverCity

Sitting at the foothills of the Gila National Forest, Silver City is home to an active arts scene, a historic downtown, unique festivals,



Situated along the Rio Grande, Riverbend Hot Springs is a relaxing attraction in Truth or Consequences.

Courtesy Sierra County Tourism

and 3.3 million acres of forest recreation. It's a hidden treasure, with more than 30 art galleries, diverse restaurants, a historic downtown, and several beautiful parks and natural sites, including the City of Rocks State Park, Gila Cliff Dwellings, Continental Divide Trail, and the Fort Bayard Historic Site.

Grant County Convention Center offers 28,000 square feet of modern meeting space, including a large ballroom and stage, five classrooms, a multipurpose area, a prep kitchen, and more. The convention center can accommodate conventions, trade shows, seminars, and other events.

Unique venues include the 11-room Bear Mountain Lodge, which can be used as a meeting retreat and offers trails connecting to the Gila National Forest; and the 53-room Murray Hotel, which is housed in an Art Deco building dating back to 1938 and has meeting space.

Silver City has several national hotel brands, including the 52-room Comfort Inn near Gila National Park, the 61-room SureStay Plus by Best Western Silver City, and the 73-room Holiday Inn Express Silver City by IHG, which includes a conference room for smaller meetings.

Silver City has more than three dozen eateries serving an eclectic mix of dishes, from soul food to green chili stew to gourmet burgers to tapas.

Truth or Consequences

SierraCountyNewMexico.info; Sierra County New Mexico Tourism; SierraCounty; SierraCountyNM; @SierraCountyTourism

As a unique destination, Truth or Consequences is a good fit for small meetings that allow their attendees sufficient free time to enjoy its hot springs and stroll downtown galleries. "We are not what one would call a 'typical' convention town," says Gina Kelley, executive director of the Geronimo Trail Scenic Byway Visitor Center. "We don't have a convention center, and have few restaurants and limited entertainment options. That said, we frequently host meetings of nonprofit boards and state agencies, as well as yoga and artist retreats."

Located approximately three blocks north of downtown is the 7,000-square-foot Truth or Consequences Civic Center; the multipurpose venue includes the Ralph Edwards Auditorium,

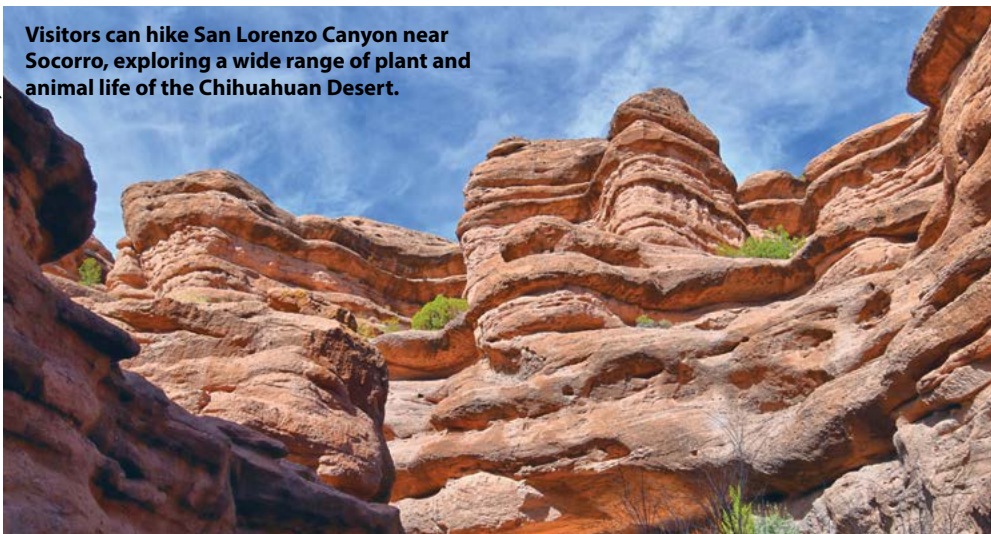
Courtesy Vermejo, A Ted Turner Reserve

Vermejo, A Ted Turner Reserve, near Raton, offers custom, all-inclusive options for conventions and corporate events.



Courtesy Visit Socorro

Visitors can hike San Lorenzo Canyon near Socorro, exploring a wide range of plant and animal life of the Chihuahuan Desert.



with tiered and floor seating. Another venue, the Albert Lyons Event Center, has a capacity of 219.

Truth or Consequences has a wide variety of unique venues for small meetings, including outdoor space at some of its hot springs hotels, the Grotto at Truth or Consequences Brewing, the El Cortez Theater, and others, Kelley notes. Groups can choose from chain hotel properties, the newest of which is Holiday Inn Express on Date Street. According to Kelley, the city is known for its downtown hot springs properties, most of which are renovated 1930s motor courts or apartments. These properties offer unique charm, but most have fewer than 20 rooms each. “We have had groups come into town that have booked rooms at multiple properties,” Kelley says.

In nearby Elephant Butte, restaurants Los Arcos and the Clubhouse at Turtleback Mountain Resort offer enough space to host groups.

Groups can enjoy a walking tour of the city’s murals (60 at last count), Geronimo

Springs Museum, fishing and boating outings at Elephant Butte Lake, and day hikes in the surrounding area. Spaceport America, located 32 miles east of Truth or Consequences, puts on a full slate of interesting events.

Socorro SocorroNM.org; Visit Socorro; VisitSocorroNM

With a rich heritage, breathtaking natural beauty, and outdoor adventure, Socorro makes an engaging setting for any type of meeting.

The City of Socorro Convention Center is equipped with a main ballroom, three breakout rooms, a kitchenette and bar, and a patio. “The capacity for the building is 300 people, and we’ve had everything from graduation parties, funerals, holiday parties, baby showers, conferences, and wildlife exhibitions to formal dinners and state legislative meetings,” says Cheyenne Cortez, director of tourism, marketing, events, and convention services for the City of Socorro.

Located on the outskirts of town, the City of Socorro Rodeo and Sports Complex is equipped with a covered arena, an outdoor arena, 128 horse stalls, 50 RV spaces with full hookups, a cross-country running course, soccer fields, and a walking trail.

As for dining, Desert Diamond, Sofia’s Kitchen, La Pasadita, Don Juan’s Cocina, and El Camino feature Mexican-American fare. Yo Mama’s Grill and Jackson Ranch Steakhouse offer a high-end feeling while still being affordable and comfortable, Cortez says. “Any of our local food options are sure to delight. They all have a good home-cooked meal feeling along with friendly service.”

Attractions include New Mexico Tech (NMT) Mineral Museum, Bosque del Apache, NRAO Very Large Array radio telescope facility, and San Lorenzo Canyon. “We’re outdoor recreation-centered around here, and all of these places provide wonderful ways to unplug and enjoy your surroundings,” Cortez says. “NMT Mineral Museum was recently renovated, and they’ve done an amazing job curating their displays and making it a great atmosphere.” The Bosque offers chances for visitors to see wildlife up close on self-guided driving tours, as well as learn about native plants and animals in the visitor’s center. “The VLA is a little bit of a trip outside of Socorro, but it is more than worth it to see what that part of Socorro County has to offer,” Cortez says. “There are great little hidden-gem restaurants along the way, and the view of the VLA for the first time is sure to be one visitors won’t forget.”

SOUTHEAST

Alamogordo

VisitAlamogordo.com; Visit Alamogordo; VisitAlamogordo

In the high desert at the base of the Sacramento Mountains, Alamogordo is a friendly, welcoming, otherworldly destination, with White Sands National Park rising from the desert in wave-like dunes. The region also boasts wineries and nut farms, offering opportunities for group tours and tastings. It’s a stunning setting for small and mid-sized events.

The Sgt. Willie Estrada Memorial Civic Center includes an auditorium with a seating capacity of 450 people, three conference rooms, and a kitchen. The facility hosts conferences, conventions, meetings, trade expositions, and other events.

For a unique venue, D.H. Lescombes Winery & Bistro can host up to 65 people in its Sunset Room and offers private tours for groups. Noisy Water Winery also has event space and offers private group tours.

The 73-room Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites Alamogordo includes event space for up to 40 reception guests. The 80-room Holiday Inn Express & Suites Alamogordo, an IHG hotel has 1,200 square feet of meeting space.

In addition to White Sands National Park, attractions include New Mexico Museum of Space History and Alameda Park Zoo, which features nearly 300 animals.

For dining, Alamogordo has more than three dozen restaurants offering a wide range of options, including pho/Thai and Asian fusion restaurants, burger joints, a brewery, and bakeries.

Carlsbad

CarlsbadChamber.com; Destination Carlsbad; CarlsbadNMChamber; @CarlsbadChamberOfCommerce664

Once known as “The Pearl of the Pecos,” Carlsbad, N.M., is home to Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Located in the Chihuahuan Desert, just 20 minutes from the city, Carlsbad Caverns is a subterranean marvel, featuring a network of majestic caves that reveal breathtaking stalactites and stalagmites.

The Pecos River Village Conference Center is located on the Pecos River, offering a picturesque backdrop for conventions and conferences. It includes the Carousel House main meeting area, which can seat 500 people theater style or 300 banquet style, and four classroom-style spaces, a large commercial kitchen, courtyards, covered dock areas, and beautiful grounds for outdoor functions.

Accommodations include the 104-room Hyatt House Carlsbad, with 5,200 square feet of meeting space to accommodate up to 500 attendees; 91-room Fairfield Inn & Suites Marriott, with meeting space for up to 30; 85-room Hampton Inn & Suites, also with space for up to 30 people; and 80-room Holiday Inn Express IHG Hotel, with 1,430 square feet of meeting space for up to 90 people.

Along the Pecos River, visitors can enjoy such activities as fishing, kayaking, and picnicking. Its scenic riverbanks offer a beach area, pickleball courts, and other recreational opportunities.

The historic Carlsbad Flume and Heritage Park stretches across the river and serves as a reminder of the city’s past.

Other beautiful sites include the Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park, Sitting Bull Falls, Brantley Lake State Park, and the 6 Mile Dam.

Ruidoso

DiscoverRuidoso.com; Ruidoso, New Mexico; DiscoverRuidoso

Ruidoso offers a compelling blend of practical infrastructure and distinctive mountain-town character.

Ruidoso Convention Center provides robust meeting capabilities, while the village’s natural beauty, walkable shopping and nightlife district, and broad range of lodging options create an inviting environment, according to the Ruidoso Tourism/Village of Ruidoso.

Ruidoso Convention Center offers 24,282 square feet of meeting and exhibit space. Its largest space, at approximately 14,994 square feet, accommodates up to 2,000 guests in theater or standing configurations. The convention center also includes 15 meeting rooms ranging from 638 square feet to 2,500 square feet.

Ruidoso’s lodging scene offers more than 4,000 rooms to appeal to a wide range of group sizes and budgets. The 118-room MCM Elegante Lodge & Suites Ruidoso, adjacent to the Ruidoso Convention Center, provides convenient, full-service accommodations for conference attendees. It includes an indoor pool, fitness facilities, and meeting spaces suitable for hospitality gatherings, board meetings, or small breakout events. The nearby Inn of the Mountain Gods on the Mescalero Apache Reservation has 12,473 square feet of meeting space to accommodate up to 150 guests. The rooms are flexible and can be adapted for small or large gatherings.

Unique venues for small gatherings include the Spencer Theater for the Performing Arts and Wingfield House Heritage Museum.

The walkable Midtown Ruidoso District along Sudderth Drive features boutiques, galleries, tasting rooms, wineries, craft beer spots, and casual nightlife. “It’s ideal for offsite gatherings and informal delegate meetups,” according to Ruidoso Tourism.

Restaurants and breweries provide everything from casual tavern-style meals to New Mexican cuisine to elevated dining experiences. The Inn of the Mountain Gods, along with other nearby casinos and resorts, offers options for groups seeking an upscale evening.

Ruidoso’s natural surroundings make it perfect for teambuilding and outdoor excursions at such attractions as Grindstone Lake, Alto Lake, and Lincoln National Forest.

Ski Apache offers skiing and winter sports; in warmer months, the gondola provides expansive mountain views, while the Screaming Eagle Mountain Coaster offers fun and adventure with twists and turns.

Ruidoso is also home to a vibrant creative community, with galleries, studios, and maker-driven boutiques throughout the Midtown District. A highlight is the spectacular Dale Chihuly blown-glass installation at Spencer Theater.

Roswell

SeeRoswell.com; Roswell, New Mexico – Tourism; @SeeRoswellNM; SeeRoswellNM

Roswell, N.M., sits at the confluence of three rivers: the Spring, Hondo, and Pecos. It is home to art museums and plenty of history, including UFO lore.

While Roswell Convention and Civic Center is currently closed due to flooding, the city has several other venues. The Eastern New Mexico State Fairgrounds offers a commercial building available for rentals through the City of Roswell. The Encanto Event Center can accommodate up to 870 guests, and the JC Venue can hold up to 100. Located in the heart of downtown Roswell, The Hi-Q Venue is a historic venue featuring an industrial style; it can seat up to 300 guests.

Some Roswell hotels offer small meeting spaces, including the 67-room Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites Roswell, which has a capacity of 49 people; 80-room Holiday Inn Express & Suites Roswell by IHG, with space for up to 45; 70-room Hampton Inn & Suites Roswell, which includes a meeting room that accommodates 25 people; and 71-room TownePlace Suites by Marriott Roswell, with a capacity of 24 people.

Attractions in Roswell include the International UFO Museum and Research Center, Roswell UFO Spacewalk and Gallery, Spaceport Roswell virtual reality experience, and Spring River Zoo.

For dining, groups can choose from elegant Antigua to the Asian Market to Portofino for Italian, and more options. 🍴