

AAA Explorer

SPRING 2021

THE MAGAZINE FOR AAA NEW MEXICO MEMBERS

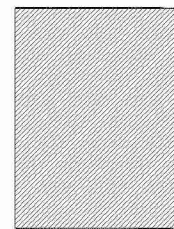
*Roads
to Roam*

Discover America's
most scenic byways

Plus

**Albuquerque's
Sawmill Market**

**Out & About:
White Sands
National Park**



5 Things to Do

BY PAMELA PORTER



SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO

BLOOMING POPPIES

LATE MARCH-EARLY APRIL Venture into fields of pure, velvety gold Mexican poppies that decorate the dusty foothills of Las Cruces. Winter moisture and sunny days determine the timing and quantity of the flowers, which can be viewed from your car and from hiking trails on both the east and west slopes of the Organ Mountains along Aguirre Springs and Baylor Canyon roads. Head to the Rockhound State Park area near Deming for access to poppies around the Little Florida Mountains; tangerine blooms can be spotted north of Lordsburg. (575) 323-1423; TINYURL.COM/NMFLOWERS.



RIO GRANDE

RIVER RAFTING

STARTING IN MARCH River runners steer their kayaks and rafts through scenic canyons beginning in the spring, when the Rio Grande around Taos begins to swell with snowmelt—and adventure. Tour guides offer a variety of trips, some for families with kids as young as 4. NEWMEXICORIVERADVENTURES.COM or TAOS.ORG/OUTDOOR-RECREATION.



ALBUQUERQUE

MURAL TOUR

YEAR-ROUND Art lovers can visit hundreds of new works and older favorites in downtown Albuquerque. Don't miss artist Jessica Angel's *The Fall of the Ten Suns* mural on the Imperial Building (pictured).



VIRTUAL

NEW MEXICO MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY AND SCIENCE

YEAR-ROUND New Mexico is the land of volcanoes and *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Interactive maps on the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science website pinpoint 25 areas of volcanic activity and regions where *T. rex* fossils have been found. Online exhibits designed for all ages spark curiosity. NMNATURALHISTORY.ORG.



EDGEWOOD

VISIT NATIVE WILDLIFE YEAR-ROUND

Discover New Mexico's native animals during up-close encounters at Wildlife West Nature Park, 122 acres of habitat for rescued critters that can't be released back into the wild. Foxes, bobcats, cougars, birds of prey, elk, coyotes, raccoons, and a black bear are not exactly tame, but they are accustomed to people. Take advantage of the photo-friendly habitats to record the 24 rescued species on display. (505) 281-7655; WILDLIFEWEST.ORG.

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: MIKE HELFRICH/ADOBE STOCK.COM; COURTESY ROGER HOLDEN; COURTESY CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE; ILLUSTRATIONS: ADOBE STOCK.COM (3)



Confirm hours and availability of businesses, attractions, and events before you visit.



Free Regional maps are available at your AAA branch.



Be sure to **designate a driver** if you plan to drink alcohol.