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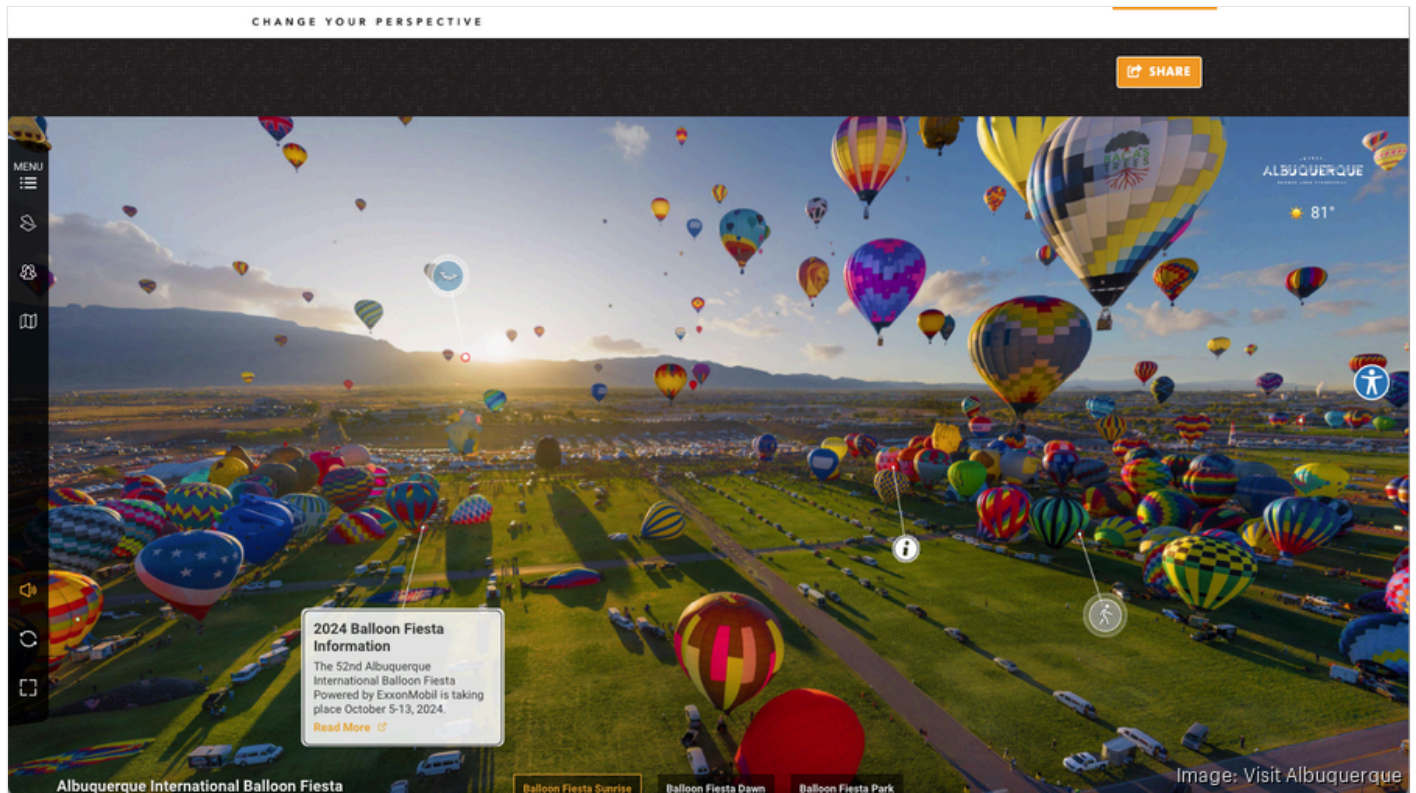
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# Visit Albuquerque launches virtual tour, gives visitors 'high-level inspiration'



Visit Albuquerque recently launched a new virtual tour, allowing potential visitors to see the city's sights before arriving.

VISIT ALBUQUERQUE



By **Drew Goretzka** – Economic Development Reporter , Albuquerque Business First  
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Visit Albuquerque has launched an interactive virtual tour of Albuquerque, a new tool the organization hopes will help visitors better plan their trip to the city.

Developed by San Francisco-based software company SKYNAV, the tour follows in the footsteps of other city's attempting to attract more tourists, with similar programs being created for Cincinnati, Ohio; Fort Worth, Texas; and Panama City Beach, Florida, among others.

The application, located on Visit Albuquerque's website, features all of Albuquerque's major neighborhoods, including Nob Hill, East Downtown, Uptown, the South Valley, Westside and North Valley. There are also classic landmarks, including Balloon Fiesta Park and Sandia Peak Tramway.

Rachel Howard, director of marketing for Visit Albuquerque, said the primary goal of the new tool is to serve as "high-level inspiration" for visitors, allowing them to get a bird's eye view of the city and plan their trip from there.

"Really showing off all the beauty of Albuquerque in these really spectacular aerial views of the city, of all the different parts of the city," Howard said. "Then, allowing people to kind of jump into the street view and interact with information, and videos and all sorts of other kinds of media to learn more."

There was a previous tour available online, Howard said, but it was heavily outdated, primarily relying on videos instead of the interactive approach SKYNAV takes. One priority for the new version was to represent all areas of the city.

Each neighborhood featured has a number of attractions. Uptown, for example, shows off its two major shopping centers, while Nob Hill highlights the city's sports stadiums. Some dining options are also included, such as Barel's Coffee House in the Barel's Neighborhood and El Pinto Restaurant in the North Valley.

Howard said the tour's current attractions were picked due to them being good choices for tourists new to Albuquerque, but added that Visit Albuquerque plans on updating it with ones they may have missed the first go-around.

"Now that we've launched, maybe we'll start learning of holes, places that we've missed," Howard said. "Nothing really specific yet, but just knowing that we can continue to add to it if we feel like there's things that we maybe need to add."

The upfront cost of the tour was \$21,500, according to Howard, with Visit Albuquerque needing to continue to pay a yearly licensing and maintenance fee of about \$7,500. The project was funded out of the organization's base funding, not the recently implemented Albuquerque Tourism Marketing District tax.

Albuquerque, like many American cities, is expected to see a high number of visitors over the next few months. The Transportation Security Administration is forecasting airlines will carry around 271 million passengers this summer – the highest volume ever recorded. At the Albuquerque International Sunport, more than 1.2 million seats are

expected to be bound for the airport between June and September of 2024, a nearly 5% increase from 2023.

**T H E L I S T**

## Airlines Serving the Sunport

Total passengers in 2023

Rank	Prior Rank	Airline name
1	1	Southwest Airlines
2	2	American Airlines
3	3	United Airlines

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