

Wendinger Travel invites you to the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta

Featuring Albuquerque, Santa Fe,
Rocky Mountain National Park & Estes Park

October 4 - 12, 2026
\$2,798 per person

Day by Day Itinerary

Sunday, October 4

Salina, KS

We'll begin our journey to the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta by boarding the motor coach at the designated pick-up locations. We will have an included buffet lunch at Pizza Ranch in Iowa before making our way to our overnight stay at the Courtyard by Marriott in Salina, Kansas. (L)



Monday, October 5

Tucumcari, NM

Relax and leave the driving to us as we travel across the plains of Kansas, where Kansas meets OZ. We will travel to Liberal, Kansas, to visit Dorothy's House. After lunch, enjoy an immersive Wizard of Oz tour that combines a colorful recreation of the film with stories of actual life in a 1900's farmhouse. Learn about Dorothy's life in Kansas, see the lasting influence of the Wizard of Oz, and learn why there is truly no place like home! This afternoon, we will continue our travels south to Tucumcari, New Mexico, for evening stay at the Holiday Inn Express. (B)

Tuesday, October 6

Albuquerque, NM

After departing our hotel, we'll have a midmorning arrival in cultural Old Town, the heart and soul of Albuquerque, NM. There will be ample time for enjoying lunch on our own at one of the cafes and visiting the unique local shops. Our afternoon will be filled with a guided tour of Albuquerque which is rich in history, diverse in culture, and contains many historic adobe buildings. Our accommodations for the next three nights will be the Holiday Inn Express in Albuquerque, NM. (B)

Wednesday, October 7

Albuquerque, NM

Bright and early we will attend the long awaited Balloon Fiesta. This morning will include the Mass Ascension in the Gondola Club. This includes guaranteed seating in a private open-air patio located in the Balloon Fiesta Park. You will be able to enjoy hot food along with beverages. The Mass Ascension features the largest exhibition of custom hot air balloons in the world. We will watch with excitement the inflating and launching of the balloons. After the morning session, we will return to the hotel to rest up before an included lunch at the 66 Diner, located on the Historic Route 66. The diner will transport you right back to the golden age 1950's, featuring traditional diner fare amid our vintage jukebox, soda fountain, and mid-century knick knacks! Our afternoon will include a visit to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center to learn about the Pueblo culture from ancient times to the present in the museum and exhibition galleries. You can tour the collection of murals by Pueblo artists for an inspiring and personal experience. (B, L)

Thursday, October 8

Albuquerque, NM

This morning we will visit the Turquoise Museum. Discover one of the world's largest turquoise five-generation family collection, its a stunning display of turquoise from around the world! Turquoise is New Mexico's state gem, deeply sacred to Indigenous peoples and historically mined in areas like the Cerrillos Hills, with its legacy celebrated on the scenic Turquoise Trail (Highway 14) connecting Santa Fe and Albuquerque, offering historical sites and art communities. Our next stop is Old Town, which was Albuquerque's first neighborhood. More than 300 years after its founding, it remains a center for culture, architecture, shopping, art and cuisine. Tonight we will attend the Night Magic Glow in the Gondola Club. Balloon Glow event is a mesmerizing display of color with hot air balloons ablaze against the fading night sky. You will be treated to a buffet dinner with complimentary drinks. Our location provides prime viewing of the Balloon Glow followed by a drone show and New Mexico's most spectacular fireworks to end the evening. (B, D)



**Dorothy's House
and the Land of Oz**

Liberal, Kansas

Friday, October 9

Santa Fe, NM

Early this morning, you will have an optional awesome opportunity for a hot air balloon ride (for an additional fee). After breakfast, we will head to the Anderson Abruzzo International Balloon Museum. Let your imagination soar as you discover the world of ballooning, this world-class museum showcases a large collection of balloons, equipment and memorabilia. We'll have a short drive to the Spanish town, and the capitol of the state of New Mexico, Santa Fe, where we will meet our step on guide for the afternoon.



A multiplicity of cultures, Native American Indian, Spanish, Mexican and Anglo, provide a rich and very colorful heritage. You will marvel at the Loretto Chapel, home of the miraculous staircase sometimes referred to as St. Joseph's Staircase. Puzzling architects and engineers, the mysterious staircase makes over two complete 360 degree turns, stands 20 feet tall, has no center support and rests solely on its base and against the choir loft. Tonight, discover New Mexico's Largest Entertainment Hotel – Vibrant, spectacular, and locally inspired – at Hilton Santa Fe Buffalo Thunder. Merging the excitement and glamour of a Las Vegas casino with the relaxing ambiance of the picturesque Sangre de Cristo Mountains. (B)

Saturday October 10

Grand Lake, CO

Today we will be traveling on many of Colorado's outstanding scenic byways. The Top of the Rockies byway takes us pass some of the tallest peaks in the state. You will be treated for lunch in Leadville, the highest city in the United States. The afternoon drive is particularly spectacular during the fall, with stunning golden aspens against deep green pines. Our evening accommodations will be at the Gateway Inn in Grand Lake, a small mountain town. Each room is uniquely decorated in cozy, mountain-elegant décor and furnishings. As you relax tonight, you will be treated for dinner. (B, L, D)

Sunday, October 11

North Platte, NE

Welcome to Rocky Mountain National Park and some of the highest mountains in the continental United States. This "park in the sky" captures the full grandeur of the Rocky Mountains and is understandably one of the country's most frequently visited national parks. As we drive through the park this morning, we will be making a stop at the Alpine visitor Center, which is the highest elevation visitor center in all the National Parks. We will be treated for lunch and allow time to explore and shop in Estes Park. Our afternoon drive takes us across Colorado and into Nebraska for our overnight stay in North Platte, NE at the Fairfield Inn. (B, L)

Monday, October 12

Home

Traveling home we will have had time to reminisce about our amazing experience at the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta and the rugged landscapes of the Colorado Rockies. Once again you will be treated to a buffet lunch in Iowa before returning home. (B, L)



Wendinger Travel recommends trip insurance to protect you and your investment. Our trusted partner, Travel Insured International, offers a variety of protection plans for your convenience. A quote will be provided upon registration for this tour.

COMPLETE the Wendinger Travel Reservation Form, fill in name of this tour, the dates, and the deposit amount, indicate your pick up point, and mail along with a check made out to Wendinger Travel to ensure your spot on this tour.

Your Trip Includes:

- 9 day deluxe motorcoach transportation
- 8 nights accommodations based on double occupancy
- Baggage handling
- Guided city tour of Albuquerque and Santa Fe & Loretta Chapel
- Dorothy's House, Liberal KS
- Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
- International Balloon Museum
- Gondola club - Night Magic Glow
- Chasers club - Mass Ascension
- Turquoise Museum
- Rocky Mountain National Park
- Breakfast each morning, 5 lunches & 2 dinners
- Optional Hot Air Balloon Ride for an additional fee
- Fully Escorted

General Information:

Tour Price: \$2,798 per person based on two persons sharing a double room. Single accommodations are an additional \$982 charge.

Deposit and Payment: A deposit of \$300.00 per person is required to secure your reservation. Full payment is due August 4, 2026. Credit cards are accepted. A 3.5% processing fee will be added.

Pick Up Locations: Maybe New Ulm, Mankato, Hutchinson, Belle Plaine & New Prague - please indicate on the reservation form. Finalized route & pick-up locations determined by Wendinger Travel at time of invoicing.

Responsibility: Wendinger Travel acts only in the capacity of an agent for travelers in all matters pertaining to hotel accommodations, sightseeing tours, and transportation by motor coach and is not to be held responsible for damage, expense, or inconvenience caused by itinerary or schedule changes, nor for loss, injury, or damage to any person or property, from any cause whatsoever, including parked vehicles while on a Wendinger Travel tour. The right is reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of this tour. Wendinger Travel is not responsible for individual needs of travelers. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience, a travel companion **MUST** accompany all guests requiring special assistance.

Cancellation policy: Your deposit is fully refundable up until 60 days before departure date. No refund will be given within 60 days before departure date.

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