

adventurewomen

THE DESTINATION IS JUST THE BEGINNING

## BIG BEND

# Hiking, Paddling, and Stargazing



November 10 - 16, 2023



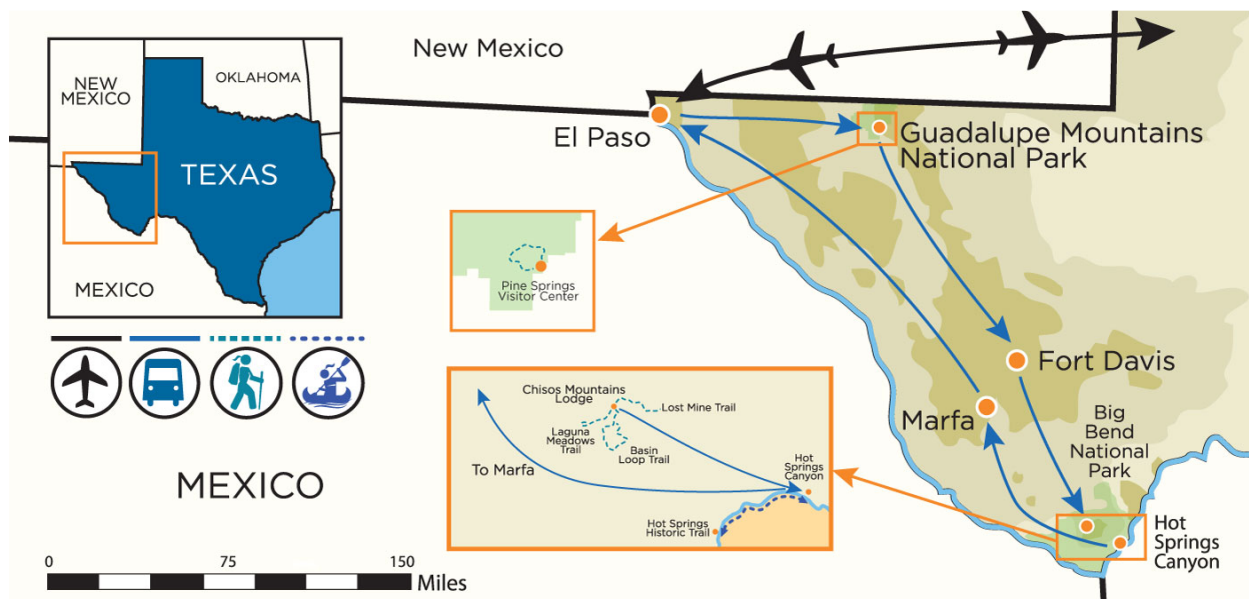
## BIG BEND

# Hiking, Paddling, and Stargazing

### TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Attend a Star Party at the McDonald Observatory
- ▶ Take in stunning sunrises in the Chisos Mountains within Big Bend National Park
- ▶ Explore the Rio Grande by canoe and take a dip in the hot springs
- ▶ See the fossils of the world's largest known flying dinosaur and visit a ghost town

### TRIP ROUTE



## BIG BEND

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### QUICK VIEW ITINERARY

- Day 1 arrive in El Paso, enjoy time on your own
- Day 2 hike in Guadalupe Mountains National Park, stargaze at the McDonald Observatory
- Day 3 explore Fort Davis, discover dinosaur fossils, visit a ghost town
- Day 4 hike in Big Bend National Park
- Day 5 explore the Chisos Mountains while hiking and stargazing
- Day 6 paddle along the Rio Grande
- Day 7 depart El Paso

### ACTIVITY LEVEL

High Energy


### TRIP PRICE

Main Trip: \$4,995

Optional Single Accommodations: \$800

# BIG BEND

## Hiking, Paddling, and Stargazing



your adventure  
in depth

DAY 1  
Friday  
11/10/23

### Arrive in El Paso, Texas

As its name suggests, Big Bend National Park is a stretch of land that is located in the big S-shaped bend in the Rio Grande river along the border between the United States and Mexico. The park is a study in geographical contrasts with desert, canyons, and vegetation spread throughout the area.

#### Arrival Information

Arrive in El Paso, Texas (ELP) at any time today and make your way to the Hampton Inn & Suites El Paso Airport Hotel on your own. You will have the day and night to get some rest or explore El Paso on your own.

Accommodations  
Hampton Inn &  
Suites El Paso

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DAY 2  
Saturday  
11/11/23

### Guadalupe Mountains National Park

The McDonald Observatory is an astronomical facility within the University of Texas, Austin that is one of the nation's leading research centers for astronomy. The extremely dark night skies make for excellent stargazing conditions for scientists, students, and visitors alike.

#### Pick Up and Transfer

Following breakfast buffet at the hotel, meet your guide at 7:30AM Mountain Time in the hotel lobby and set off on a 2-hour drive to Guadalupe Mountains National Park, which is just over the time zone into Central Time.

#### Drive to Fort Davis

Following lunch, you'll head out on a scenic 2-hour drive with expansive views of West Texas en route to the historic town of Fort Davis. Established in 1854, Fort Davis is the highest elevation town in the state of Texas at 5,050 feet above sea level.

#### Hike in Guadalupe Mountains National Park

After making sure your watch is set one hour ahead for Central Time, you will set off from the visitor center at Guadalupe Mountains National Park for a hike around the trails before enjoying a picnic lunch.

#### Check In and Dinner

After arriving at the hotel, check in and relax a little before enjoying dinner with the group.

#### Stargazing

Later this evening, you will take a quick drive to the McDonald Observatory at the University of Texas, Austin where you will participate in one of their famed star parties along with the general public. Take a tour of the constellations and observe an assortment of planets and stars through various telescopes before heading back to the hotel.

#### Hiking Information

4 miles with 600 feet of elevation gain

Accommodations  
Hotel Limpia

Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch,  
dinner

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DAY 3  
Sunday  
11/12/23

### Guadalupe Mountains National Park to Fort Davis

Fort Davis is home to a historic calvary post where the men who were known as Buffalo Soldiers were stationed during the second half of the 1800s to protect emigrants during the western expansion of the United States.

#### Hike through Fort Davis Historical Site

Get a glimpse of life in the frontier of West Texas and learn more about the native plants of the area as you explore the Fort Davis Historical Site.

#### Fossil Discovery

Drive south as you make your way toward Big Bend. About 2 hours into your journey, you will stop at the Fossil Discovery Exhibit where you will see the astonishing Quetzalcoatlus northropi, the world's largest known flying creature which had a 36-foot wingspan and weighed over 500 pounds!

#### Visit Terlingua

After a picnic lunch, drive another hour to Terlingua, a former mercury mining town that became a ghost town when the price of mercury collapsed in 1947 and the mines closed. In the 1960s, it experienced a renaissance when artists, musicians, naturalists, and river guides moved there and tourism reshaped the local economy.

#### Check In and Dinner

Check into your hotel and then head to the nearby Starlight Theater Restaurant, and adobe structure built in the 1930s as the Chisos Movie Theater. When the mines went bust, the roof materials were sold for scrap, leaving only the adobe walls intact. The roofless adobe building became a gathering place for open-air parties, concerts, and plays, thus the Starlight Theater was named. In 1990, the building was restored - including a new roof - but the adobe walls still remain.

#### Hiking Information

2 miles with 500 feet of elevation gain

Accommodations  
Big Bend Holiday  
Hotel  
Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch,  
dinner

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DAY 4  
Monday  
11/13/23

### Fort Davis to Big Bend National Park

The Santa Elena Canyon is the most majestic within Big Bend National Park. The towering stone walls can be seen for miles as the Rio Grande abruptly changes direction.

#### Hike in Santa Elena Canyon

After breakfast this morning, drive an hour to Santa Elena Canyon, one of the most dramatically beautiful locations within Big Bend National Park with cliffs of up to 1,500 feet forming the canyon walls. Enjoy a short hike here before driving an hour to the Panther Junction Visitor Center to get oriented within the park that stretches from the shores of the Rio Grande to the top of the Chisos Mountains.

#### Another Hike before Dinner

Spend the afternoon relaxing at the hotel which will be home for the next two nights or setting off on a hike along the Basin Loop Trail before enjoying dinner with the group at the lodge.

#### Hiking Information

4 total miles with 200-500 feet of elevation gain

Accommodations  
Chisos Mountains  
Lodge  
Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch,  
dinner

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DAY 5  
Tuesday  
11/14/23

### Big Bend National Park

Located in the heart of Big Bend National Park, the Chisos Mountains are the only mountain range in the United States that is completely contained within one national park. With the highest peaks stretching to about 7,800 feet above sea level, the Chisos Mountains offer a great setting for rewarding day hikes with great views.

**A Day of Hiking** Today is all about the Chisos Mountains, as you'll start the day with a hike to the Lost Mine which offers sweeping views of the surrounding mountains stretching as far as the Sierra Maderas del Carmen mountains in Mexico. After your morning hike, head back to the lodge for lunch. Then head back to the trail for an optional hike on the Laguna Meadow Trail before sitting down with the group for dinner back at the lodge.

**Enjoy the Night Sky** After a full day of hiking and a wonderful dinner, try to save some energy to do some informal stargazing in some of the darkest night skies in the country. See if you can find the constellations that you learned about a few nights earlier at the McDonald Observatory.

**Hiking Information** 5 miles with 1,100 feet of elevation gain and an optional hike of another 8 miles with 1,800 feet of elevation gain

Accommodations  
Chisos Mountains  
Lodge  
Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch,  
dinner



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DAY 6  
Wednesday  
11/15/23

### Big Bend National Park to Marfa

The Rio Grande river acts as the natural border between the United States and Mexico in Texas. At just under 1,900 miles in length, this river features areas of towering canyons, whitewater rapids, and dramatic wildlife.

#### Paddling the Rio Grande

Take in another gorgeous sunrise in the Chisos Mountains before driving 45-minutes to meet your local river guide. After an orientation about the gear and safe paddling, you will launch your canoe (or raft if the water is higher) and paddle down the Rio Grande. It's a gentle paddle with some faster sections and some stunning scenery. You will stop at the ruins of the Hot Springs Motel to explore the area on foot, eat a simple pack lunch, and enjoy a soak in the hot spring at the riverside pool. Then hop back in your boat and head down the river through the most dramatic part of the canyon. After your paddle, you can change clothes before driving 2 and a half hours to the quirky, art-centric community of Marfa.

#### Farewell Dinner

After settling into your historic hotel in Marfa, enjoy an animated farewell dinner as you share stories about the highlights of your time in Big Bend.

Accommodations  
Hotel Paisano

Meals Included  
breakfast, lunch,  
dinner

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DAY 7  
Thursday  
11/16/23

### Depart

Bid farewell to your new AdventureWomen friends after you make your way back to El Paso for your flight home.

**Drive Back to El Paso** After breakfast, begin the 3-hour drive back to El Paso. You'll stop at the famed Prada Marfa art installation along the way.

**Departure Information** Depart from El Paso, Texas (ELP) after 2:30PM or plan to extend your trip a day or two to continue exploring on your own.

*Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.*

Meals Included  
breakfast

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### Accommodation Details

#### Hampton Inn & Suites El Paso Airport

Conveniently located just five minutes from the El Paso International Airport, the Hampton Inn & Suites is a comfortable accommodation in which to spend the night after a day of traveling.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, conditioner, hair dryer, air conditioning, WiFi

#### Hotel Limpia

The Hotel Limpia is centrally located in Fort Davis, Texas and has proudly been welcoming guests for over 100 years. Enjoy a peaceful stay in this historic building nestled in the Davis Mountains.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, conditioner, hair dryer, air conditioning, WiFi

#### Big Bend Holiday Hotel

Step back in time as you spend the night in the heart of a ghost town. With comfortable rooms, vintage decor, and a rustic backdrop, the Big Bend Holiday Hotel is the perfect place to spend a night in West Texas.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, air conditioning

#### Chisos Mountains Lodge

Chisos Mountain Lodge is the only lodging within Big Bend National Park. Enjoy the peace and scenery from your comfortable accommodation.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, air conditioning, WiFi in public areas

#### Hotel Paisano

A charming and historic hotel located in the middle of Marfa, the Hotel Paisano was built in the 1930s and has been the social hub of the quirky town of Marfa.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, air conditioning, WiFi

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### Included:

- ▶ Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- ▶ All meals as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- ▶ Ample snacks throughout the trip
- ▶ All park fees
- ▶ All gratuities except for guides

### Not Included:

- ▶ Meals not specified in the itinerary
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- ▶ Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- ▶ Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- ▶ Items of a personal nature
- ▶ Gratuities for guides

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### Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 61-90 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-60 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. Travel insurance information will be sent to you once you have registered for your trip.

### Switching Trips

Our deposits are nonrefundable and nontransferable. If for some reason you need to switch to a different trip, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you, but switching is not guaranteed.

### No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

### Health Insurance

You must have your own health insurance to participate in an AdventureWomen trip.

### Adventure Travel Today

At AdventureWomen, we want everyone to understand that our excursions are adventure travel vacations and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one **actively participates**, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to **experience an active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends**. Most of all, we want our trips to be **fun!**

**good-natured realist and have a sense of humor!** Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. **Being on time** is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well-being of both individuals and the group!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a