



MEDIA GUIDE

2023



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THE OFFICIAL HASHTAG IS #BALLOONFIESTA



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The Garrity Group congratulates Balloon Fiesta for all of the hard work that went into the 2023 event! Our team is humbled and honored to lead the 51st Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta media relations team.



2023 MEDIA GUIDE WELCOME

Welcome to the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta's 51st edition!

Moving through the air in the gondola of a balloon offers an exhilarating View from Above of the vibrant Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta field and the New Mexico landscape. Other balloons create a canopy of color as they lift off and move quietly below. The silent motion of a hot air balloon is punctuated by the whooshing burst of sound from its burner or friendly greeting from spectators below. As the voyage continues beyond the launch field once unseen wildlife jump clearly into view.

The experiences felt, seen and heard by the pilot and passengers from above are only matched by the experiences of those on the ground, watching hundreds of balloons simultaneously inflate and launch into the expansive New Mexico sky or glow in the pre-dawn or post-sunset hour. The 80-acre launch field provides plenty of opportunity for spectators to move away from crowds and immerse themselves in the event by getting up close to the balloons and crews.

More than 550 pilots and their crews of traditional and special shape hot air balloons and gas balloons, representing 16 countries, are uniting in Albuquerque for your enjoyment and the camaraderie of the sport. This year is particularly special as the United States and Balloon Fiesta welcome the 66th Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, the world's oldest air race and the world championships for gas ballooning. This is only the fifth time this event has been held in the United States in the last 40 years. Eighteen hydrogen filled balloons will launch, each with two of the world's most distinguished pilots seeking to fly the farthest from the launch field over the course of days to win. The teams' progress can be viewed in real time, via the free YB Tracking app, or on Balloon Fiesta's website. The evening launch of the gas balloons, with each team's national anthem playing as they ascend, is an experience not to be missed.

While hot air balloons are the stars of the show during mass ascensions and competitions throughout the week, there is plenty of other entertainment. From a 600-drone light show,

to skydivers, to sand sculptors, music and shopping we believe there is truly something for everyone! Balloon Fiesta's Board of Directors, staff and thousands of volunteers (Navigators) work year-round to ensure your enjoyment of this spectacular event. Thank you to all of them and to our pilots, balloon crews, sponsors and government partners for their unwavering commitment to the success of this event.



Welcome to Balloon Fiesta! Thank you for joining us and enjoy the view from below or above!

Judy Nakamura
President, AIBF

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Photos courtesy of Alee Noland, Don Henderson and Triston Garcia



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6

7:00 a.m. Albuquerque Aloft launches around Albuquerque and Rio Rancho

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show, *sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino*
6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol Show, *presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort*
6:30 a.m. Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
7:00 a.m. Opening Ceremonies
7:00 a.m. Mass Ascension
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
10:00 a.m. Chainsaw Carving Auction
2:00 p.m. Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Inflation
3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Great American Kit Show
5:00 p.m. Team Fastrax Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc.*
6:00 p.m. Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Launch
6:00 p.m. Twilight Twinkle Glow™
7:30 p.m. Team Fastrax Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc.*
7:45 p.m. Drone Light Show, *sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino*
8:00 p.m. AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8

5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show, *sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino*
6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol Show, *presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort*
6:30 a.m. Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
7:00 a.m. Mass Ascension
7:30 - 11:00 a.m. Fiesta de los Globitos - Remote Control Balloons Exhibition
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
9:00 a.m. Fiesta of Wheels Car Show (located on north end of Launch Field)
10:00 a.m. AIBF Chainsaw Carving Auction

[CONTINUED]

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8 (CONTINUED)

- 11:00 a.m. Balloon Fiesta Pin Trading (Group Tour Tent north end of Main Street)
- 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
- 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Great American Kite Show
- 5:00 p.m. Team Fastrax Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc*
- 6:00 p.m. Balloon Glow *powered by ExxonMobil*
- 7:30 p.m. Team Fastrax Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc*
- 7:45 p.m. Drone Light Show, *sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino*
- 8:00 p.m. AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

MONDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol
- 7:00 a.m. Ascension Balloon Launch (on and off Balloon Fiesta Park)
- 8:00 a.m. Fly-in Competition Begins
- 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10 COCA-COLA DAY

- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol
- 7:00 a.m. Ascension Balloon Launch (on and off Balloon Fiesta Park)
- 8:00 a.m. Fly-in Competition Begins
- 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Auction

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol Show, *presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort*
- 6:30 a.m. Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
- 7:00 a.m. Flight of the Nations Mass Ascension
- 7:30 a.m. Fiesta de los Globitos Remote Control Balloons Exhibition
- 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. AIBF Chainsaw Carving Demonstrations

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12

6:00 a.m.	Dawn Patrol
7:00 a.m.	Special Shape Rodeo™
7:00 a.m.	Ascension Balloon Launch (on and off Balloon Fiesta Park)
8:00 a.m.	Ring Toss Fly in competition Begins
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
10:00 a.m.	Chainsaw Carving Auction
3:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
4:00 - 5:00 p.m.	<i>Greak American Kite Show</i>
5:00 p.m.	Team Fastrax Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc.</i>
6:00 p.m.	Special Shape Glowdeo™
7:30 p.m.	Team Fastrax Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc.</i>
7:45 p.m.	Drone Light Show, <i>sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino</i>
8:00 p.m.	AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, KIDS' DAY PRESENTED BY CHICK-FIL-A

4:30 a.m.	Kids' Day Goodie Bag Distribution begins (South of Main Street Stage)
5:45 a.m.	Drone Light Show, <i>sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino</i>
6:00 a.m.	Dawn Patrol
7:00 a.m.	Special Shape Rodeo™
7:00 a.m.	Ascension Balloon Launch (on and off Balloon Fiesta Park)
7:30 - 11:00 a.m.	Fiesta de los Globitos Remote Control Balloons Exhibition
8:00 a.m.	Fly in competition
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
10:00 a.m.	Chainsaw Carving Auction

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13 (CONTINUED)

3:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Great American Kite Show
5:00 p.m.	Team Fastrax Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc</i>
6:00 p.m.	Special Shapes Glowdeo™
7:30 p.m.	Team Fastrax Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc</i>
7:45 p.m.	Drone Light Show, <i>sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino</i>
8:00 p.m.	AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14 EXXONMOBIL DAY

5:45 a.m.	Drone Light Show, <i>sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino</i>
6:00 a.m.	Dawn Patrol <i>presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort</i>
6:30 a.m.	Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
7:00 a.m.	Mass Ascension, <i>powered by ExxonMobil</i>
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
9:13 a.m. - 12:09 p.m.	Annular Solar Eclipse
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Great American Kite Show
10:00 a.m.	Chainsaw Carving Auction
11:00 a.m.	Balloon Fiesta Pin Trading (Group Tour Tent north end of Main Street)
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Music Fiesta
3:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
5:00 p.m.	Team Fastrax Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc</i>
6:00 p.m.	Night Magic™ Glow, <i>powered by ExxonMobil</i>
6:00 p.m.	Fiestas de Los Globitos Remote control Balloons Exhibition
7:30 p.m.	Team Fastrax Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company, Inc</i>
7:45 p.m.	Drone Light Show, <i>sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino</i>
8:00 p.m.	AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15

- 5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show, *sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino*
- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol Show, *presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort*
- 6:30 a.m. Morning Glow
- 7:00 a.m. Farewell Mass Ascension, *presented by News Radio 770 KKOB*
- 8:00 a.m. - Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
- 11:00 a.m.

AfterGlow™ times may change due to field/weather conditions
****North end of Launch Field for the pin trading**



BALLOON FIESTA PUBLIC SAFETY

The Balloon Fiesta Public Safety Team coordinates a multiagency presence at Balloon Fiesta Park that includes more than 20 federal, state and local law enforcement, first responder and government entities to ensure that the annual event is a safe place for its pilots, guests, volunteers and employees.

Since 1991 and keeping in mind the high-profile nature of the event's international stature, Balloon Fiesta Public Safety Officers complement law enforcement and first responders. In 2023, the event will have more than 100 public safety personnel working in conjunction with law enforcement officers and other first responders to keep Balloon Fiesta Park the safest place to be in New Mexico. Our public safety team and law enforcement will be visible throughout Balloon Fiesta Park, including all public entrances to our event. This includes the entrances used by credentialed media entering Balloon Fiesta Park. Each of our eight (8) public entrances will have six to eight lanes for bag checks and metal detector screening. Each gate will have marked lanes for those with bags (Bag Check Lanes) and those without bags (Express Lanes).

Information and best practices for guests:

- Conceal Carry, weapons and knives longer than 4" are not allowed into Balloon Fiesta Park during the 50th event.
- Metal detectors will be used at our public entrances. Each entrance will have six to eight security lanes with marked "Bag Check" lanes and "Express" lanes (without bags)
- All bags and coolers will be checked by Balloon Fiesta Public Safety Officers before being allowed onto Balloon Fiesta Park.
- There will be bag checks, the fewer items you have, the faster you'll get through the security line.
- Guests without bags to check will be able to get through the security process faster than guests with bags, chairs and coolers.
- Limit the number of items you bring to Balloon Fiesta Park.
- When possible, bring personal items in a clear or see-through bag or container.
- Children and their caregivers are often distracted with the balloon-filled sky. Visit the New Mexico State Police's Tag-Your-Tots, station South of the Main Street Stage or at Gate 32 (NE corner of the Launch Field), when you arrive. Have a plan in place if you become separated.
- If you see something that looks unsafe or suspicious, alert a public safety officer, launch director (zebra) or other Balloon Fiesta official.
- For the protection of our guests, the following items are not allowed at Balloon Fiesta Park during our event: Weapons/Firearms/Knives(4"), conceal carry weapons, bicycles, spike jewelry/wallet chains, alcohol/drugs, animals (except service animals) and items deemed by Balloon Fiesta Public Safety as potentially dangerous to other guests or the venue will not be allowed inside.

Aviation Note: The airspace within a four-mile radius of Balloon Fiesta Park is covered by a Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR). This area, controlled by the Federal Aviation Administration determines which aircraft are allowed to fly into and over Balloon Fiesta's airspace. This includes hot air balloons, gas balloons, helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. **DRONES ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE BALLOON FIESTA AIRSPACE AT ANY TIME.** Flying unauthorized aircraft in a federal offense. Balloon Fiesta Park is a NO DRONE ZONE

COVID-19-Illness Notice

Balloon Fiesta continues to provide the option of cashless systems and has hand sanitizers around Balloon Fiesta Park. There are presently no mask or social distancing requirements. If you do not feel well and or have a fever, please do not attend Balloon Fiesta

EVENTS INSIDE THE PARK

DAWN PATROL SHOW **October 7-15 (every morning)**

The Dawn Patrol Show is not only beautiful but practical. The Dawn Patrol began at Balloon Fiesta in 1978. Dawn Patrol pilots take off before sunrise and fly until landing sites become visible, giving other balloonists an idea of wind speeds and direction at different altitudes. On Mass Ascension days, the Dawn Patrol balloons put on a show with a choreographed inflation and launch set to music.

MORNING GLOW **October 7, 8, 11, 14, and 15**

A tradition established in 2010, balloonists will participate in a morning balloon glow. Immediately following the launch of the Dawn Patrol Show, a “baker’s dozen” balloons will light up the field with a balloon glow. They will then launch with the rest of balloons on the field at sunrise.

MASS ASCENSIONS **October 7, 8, 11, 14, and 15**

A breathtaking premier morning event, the Mass Ascensions feature hundreds of colorful hot air balloons launching to the skies in two waves. The dazzling and vibrant show can last up to two hours.

66TH GORDON BENNETT **October 7**

The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett is a premier gas balloon distance race. It is the oldest and most prestigious event in aviation and the ultimate challenge for pilots. The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta has been selected to host the 66th event. Balloons will launch from Balloon Fiesta Park and the balloon that travels the farthest distance will be the winner. Each country is allowed to enter its three best teams. The last time that this event was hosted by Balloon Fiesta was in 2008.

SPECIAL SHAPE RODEO™, GLOWDEO™ **October 12 and 13**

The most whimsical of all flying events, the Special Shape Rodeo and Glowdeo were started in 1989 and showcase captivating airborne works of art that include a penguin, frog, owl, fish aquarium and much more. Balloons take to the air for the Special Shape Rodeo™ and during the Glowdeo balloons stay grounded and inflate, giving Balloon Fiesta guests an up close and personal view.

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EVENTS INSIDE THE PARK

TWILIGHT TWINKLE GLOW™, BALLOON GLOW & NIGHT MAGIC GLOW™ **October 7, 8 and 14**
Highly anticipated events, the Twilight Twinkle Glow™, Balloon Glow and Night Magic Glow™ light up Balloon Fiesta Park. Just before dusk, balloons are inflated and tethered, the Balloonmeister then orders ignition and the burners fill the balloons and the sky with a kaleidoscope of brilliant colors. Guests can walk amongst the balloons and take in the brilliance. The magnificent tradition, started in 1979. The evening concludes with a spectacular fireworks show.

AFTERGLOW™ FIREWORKS SHOW

October 7, 8, 12, 13 and 14

After the launch field is clear of balloons, on scheduled evenings, the AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show begins. Guests interested in seeing the fireworks show should arrive in time for the evening's balloon event.

FLIGHT OF THE NATIONS MID-WEEK MASS ASCENSION

October 11

This special ballooning event, which started in 1998, highlights the international flair of Balloon Fiesta; Flight of the Nations showcases all of the participating countries during a mid-week flight. Balloon teams representing each country will carry their nation's flag in the flight that precedes the mid-week Mass Ascension.

FIESTA DE LOS GLOBITOS **October 8, 11, 13 and 14**

Balloon Fiesta's third annual remote-control balloon rally will feature dozens of tethered balloons, which are ¼ scale model balloons, about 30 feet tall. The mini mass ascensions will take place at Balloon Fiesta Park, from 7:30-11 a.m. on October 8, 11 and 13 and the glow during the evening session on October 14.

DRONE LIGHT SHOW **October 7, 8, 12, 13, 14 and 15**

400 drones will light up Balloon Fiesta's sky during the Drone Light Show. The show, first introduced during the 50th event, is back for another year and will showcase a fleet of drones displaying a series of fun designs, choreographed to music. The show is flown by Verge Aero, the recipient of Simon Cowell's Golden Buzzer on America's Got Talent.

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EVENTS INSIDE THE PARK

Additional Attractions

THE GONDOLA CLUB

The Gondola Club is a reserved area with special parking, private seating, delicious food and private bathrooms just for members. The Gondola Club is located at the southwest corner of the launch field. For more information or to purchase tickets contact the Balloon Fiesta office at 505.821.1000 or 888.422.7277.

THE CHASERS' CLUB

Chasers' Club members receive access to the Chasers' Club Hospitality area including the outdoor "Chase Lounge," both located at the north end of the launch field. Delicious beverages, pastries and hot food are available to Chasers' Club members. Guests can also purchase alcoholic beverages from the Chase Lounge. Guests pay an additional fee for access to the Chasers' Club.

FIESTA SKY BOX

New last year, were Fiesta Sky Boxes, a VIP experience for groups of up to 20 guests. The experience includes access to a specially outfitted shipping container that provides an elevated view of Balloon Fiesta, from a prime location on the launch field. Included is admission to the event, private access to the Box's upper deck seating for balloon and fireworks viewing, "Grazing Boxes," a host bar and more.

MAIN STREET

A thrilling one-third mile of food, merchandise and exhibits await Balloon Fiesta guests on Main Street. A foodie's dream—Main Street has it all; from traditional New Mexican cuisine to festival favorites.

CONCIERGE PROGRAM

The Concierge Program provides guests with access to a tour-guide via golf cart. It is perfect for first-timers, photographers or guests with mobility issues, as this package enables guests to see all there is to see in one session. Stops can include concessions, chainsaw carvers, the Artisans Tent, Balloon Discovery Center and the Balloon Museum.

GLAMPING

Glamping at Balloon Fiesta is an experience like no other. Enjoy a picturesque view of Balloon Fiesta's balloons from the Glamping tent village. This village is within walking distance to the Launch Field, making it easy to avoid traffic. In addition to a safari style tent, guests receive access to private restrooms, shower trailers and a hospitality area with grills, games and lounge chairs.

CAMP 505

New to Balloon Fiesta this year, Camp 505 offers a new onsite camping option for Balloon Fiesta guests. Located within walking distance to the Launch Field, Camp 505 will offer branded camping equipment that guests can keep when they leave, a hospitality area with a firepit and games, access to a phone charging station and filtered water and more..

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HOT AIR BALLOON COMPETITIONS

JUDGE DECLARED GOALS

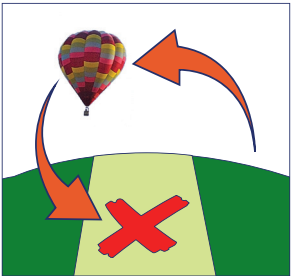
A competition where balloon pilots must fly to designated targets at least one mile away from the launch field. This event tests even the best pilots' skills. Judge Declared Goals may occur during the weekday morning flying events.



JUDGE DECLARED GOALS

FLY-IN TASK

Ranging from drop heights of only inches to 200 feet above the ground, even the most talented balloon pilots are challenged when it comes to fly-in tasks. Pilots must drop a weighted marker on a specified target within Balloon Fiesta Park. Variations of these tasks are demonstrated in competitions like Balloon Fiesta Golf and Minimum Double Drop. Fly-in Tasks may occur during the weekday morning flying events.



FLY IN TASK

KEY (PRIZE) GRAB A.K.A. RING TOSS

Definitely one of the most difficult competitions, the Ring Toss is one of the most popular and exciting to watch and compete in. Balloons launch from at least one mile away and fly to the field. Once there, pilots must navigate to one of five tall poles. Each ring is worth a fabulous prize if the pilot can place it over one of the poles. The Ring Tosses occur during morning flying events on Thursday and Friday.



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GETTING TO THE PARK AND INTO BALLOON FIESTA PARK

WEBSITE - www.balloonfiesta.com

Get the latest event schedule, information on hotels, balloon rides, maps and tickets at www.balloonfiesta.com. Photo galleries, news releases and updates are also available.

OFFICIAL APP – download the official Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta app for important event and schedule information.

ADMISSION

General admission tickets for all balloon sessions will be available at the Balloon Fiesta Park entrance gates, online at www.balloonfiesta.com and the Balloon Fiesta office for \$15. Children 12 years and younger are FREE when accompanied by an adult.

The Balloon Fiesta offers no refunds for unused tickets. However, rain checks will be issued if an individual flying session must be cancelled due to weather or other safety considerations, and the tickets can be used for any other balloon session at the 2023 Balloon Fiesta.

View maps of the Balloon Fiesta Park for directions, parking information and getting around the Park are also available at www.balloonfiesta.com.

PARKING

Parking is \$20 per vehicle per session. There are no in and out privileges. General parking lots are located on the east and south sides of the Park. Each parking lot has been assigned a Looney Tunes Character, and the gates are numbered, so please remember the character and number of the gate through which you entered the field. QR code maps will be available around the field to help navigate you back to your car. The Park opens at 4:30 a.m. for the morning session and 3:00 p.m. for the evening session.

BIKE VALET

Balloon Fiesta guests who enjoy riding bikes have access to 30,000sf of free parking, an easy access bike trail and safe storage at the south end of the Launch Field next to the Albuquerque International Balloon Museum. Bike Valet is staffed by volunteers from Bike ABQ, NM Touring Society and City of Albuquerque Parks and Recreation Bike Safety Program. Cyclists can take the Paseo del Bosque Trail that runs along the AMAFCA North Diversion Channel that crosses underneath Paseo del Norte and Alameda, ending just north of the Balloon Museum, in the Bike Valet parking station. Balloon Fiesta Bike Valet hours of operation: Days with dual sessions: 5:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m.; Days with only morning sessions: 5:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Bike Valet is available all Balloon Fiesta sessions.

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GETTING TO THE PARK AND INTO BALLOON FIESTA PARK

PARK & RIDE

There are three convenient locations available for Balloon Fiesta guests to park their car and get a bus ride to Balloon Fiesta Park. These locations include Coronado Center, Hoffmantown Church, Cottonwood Mall and Intel* (additional information below). Park & Ride tickets will be sold online only or at the Balloon Fiesta office based on availability. There are no ticket sales at the Park and Ride locations.

- Morning Sessions – Each park and ride location will have two waves of shuttles to Balloon Fiesta Park loading approximately at 4:00am and 5:30am for morning sessions. Buses will start return service to the park and ride locations at 8:00am and will run until approximately 11:30am.
- Afternoon/Evening Sessions – Each park and ride location will have two waves of shuttles to Balloon Fiesta Park loading approximately at 3:00pm and 4:30pm for afternoon sessions. Buses will start return service to the park and ride locations at 7:00pm and will run until about 10:00 p.m..

Park and Ride tickets include transportation and admission for a specific session. The pricing is: Adults \$25(13-61), Seniors (62 & Older) \$23, Children (6-12) \$10, children 5 and younger are free. Pricing for purchases made after midnight for a session on the day of is: Adults \$28(13-61), Seniors (62 & Older) \$26 Children (6-12) \$13 children 5 and younger are free. Pricing, locations, schedules and tickets are available online at <https://balloonfiesta.com/Park-Ride> . There is no Park & Ride service on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday but traffic is usually lighter those days and there is typically plenty of parking available at Balloon Fiesta Park.

Park & Ride Locations:

Eastside: Hoffmantown Church (northeast parking lot), Coronado Center (southwest corner near San Pedro)

Westside: Cottonwood Mall (northeast parking lot), Intel* (southeast parking lot)

*Location available weekends only

Fiesta Express Park and Ride Security Notice:

Please keep in mind that if you bring bags and coolers to Balloon Fiesta they will need to be checked by security before you enter into Balloon Fiesta Park. Our guests at the Coronado Mall and Hoffmantown Church locations will go through bag check and metal detectors prior to boarding the bus to Balloon Fiesta Park. Our guests arriving at the park from Cottonwood Mall and INTEL (Rio Rancho) will go through security checks after arriving at Balloon Fiesta Park. Regardless of where you go through our bag check/security process we will have express lanes (no bags) and bag-check lanes (bags) available.

For the protection of our guests, the following items are not allowed at Balloon Fiesta Park during our event: Weapons/Firearms/Knives, conceal carry weapons, bicycles, spike jewelry/wallet chains, alcohol/drugs, animals (except service animals) and items deemed by Balloon Fiesta Public Safety as potentially dangerous to other guests or the venue will be allowed inside.

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GETTING TO THE PARK AND INTO BALLOON FIESTA PARK

RAINCHECK POLICIES

The Balloon Fiesta offers no refunds for unused tickets. However, rain checks will be issued if an individual session must be canceled due to weather or other safety considerations, and the tickets can be used for any other balloon session at the 51st Balloon Fiesta.

General Admission Tickets: Retain the ticket for re-admission in the event the session is canceled. Electronic tickets will be automatically reactivated by the ticketing company for raincheck events.

Gondola Club Tickets: Once your order has been processed there are no refunds. Your ticket may be used as a raincheck for general admission to an alternative session. The Gondola Club does not close if a flying event has been canceled. The Gondola Club is still open for the buffet and entertainment.

Park & Ride: No weather refunds for the transportation part of the ticket. The ticket may be used as a raincheck for general admission for a future 2022 session. "Bus only" tickets will be available online for \$12.00 to ride to the park for another session, based on availability.

BALLOON RIDES

Taking a balloon ride during the most celebrated ballooning event in the world is truly a once in a lifetime experience. Rainbow Ryders is the official Balloon Fiesta ride company and the only company from whom guests can purchase a balloon ride from Balloon Fiesta Park during Balloon Fiesta. Rainbow Ryders: 800.725.2477, www.rainbowryders.com.

TRAVEL AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS

The Balloon Fiesta website has plenty of travel tips and hotel suggestions on its website. From www.balloonfiesta.com click on 'Tickets & Reservations' and then "Lodging" from the top menu for hotel reservations and look under 'This Year's Event' and 'Travel Help' for travel tips.

RV TRAVEL

RVing is one of the major components of Balloon Fiesta, every year thousands of joyful RVers occupy the Balloon Fiesta Park RV section. Balloon Fiesta Park gladly welcomes RVers, for more information call 888.422.7277 or 505.821.1000. You can also visit www.balloonfiesta.com/RV-Information for more information.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Between Balloon Fiesta sessions there is a lot to see and do in Albuquerque. For more information, reach out to Visit Albuquerque and the New Mexico Department of Tourism.

Visit Albuquerque

800.284.2282 www.visitalbuquerque.org

Facebook: @VisitABQ Twitter: @VisitABQ Instagram: @visitabq

New Mexico Tourism Department

505-827-7400 www.newmexico.org

Facebook: @NewMexico Twitter: @NewMexico Instagram: @newmexicotrue

Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

BALLOON FIESTA PINS

Balloon pins have become an important tradition within Balloon Fiesta. These yearly emblems are the most collected, most traded and most talked about merchandise at the Balloon Fiesta. There are 60,000 pins sold every year, and they come in all shapes and sizes—just like the balloons themselves. There are official event pins, commemorative pins, special event pins, gas balloon race pins and collectible pins from previous Balloon Fiestas.



On the first Sunday and the second Saturday Balloon Fiesta hosts “Trading Only” sessions in the Group Tours Tent near the north end of Main Street with no selling of pins allowed. It gives pin traders a chance to meet with fellow collectors and admirers from all over the world. For the pin traders in training, a brief discussion is presented with an overview of the pin trading phenomenon and an introduction to the hobby.

HERITAGE PINS

In 2005 the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Heritage Committee established the Heritage Pin, a limited-edition commemorative pin honoring pioneers in ballooning, and the Balloon Fiesta in particular. The Heritage Pin is awarded every year in recognition of those who have perpetuated the legacy they’ve helped to create.

Heritage Pin Honorees

2023 – Chuck Raskob is a Balloon Fiesta Safety Officer, has served as a volunteer official for the America’s Challenge Gas Balloon race for the past 23 years and for the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett in 2005, 2008 and 2023. His many contributions include issuing trackers that monitor the gas balloons’ in-flight positions, hydrogen safety and checking and repair of the field’s grounding grid, and assisting with the weigh-off and launch. He has also become the Fiesta de los Globitos event organizer.

2022- Paul Smith is Balloon Fiesta’s Executive Director and has been for the last 25 years. Paul, a lawyer by professional background, assumed leadership of the year after Balloon Fiesta moved to the current Balloon Fiesta Park. May improvements to the park enjoyed by balloonists and guests today, happened under his watch, including a fully grassed launch field, VIP guest experiences, Bike Valet, expanded RV parking, Music Fiesta, Chainsaw Carving exhibitions, the fireworks and more.

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Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

Heritage Pin Honorees (continued)

2021- Mark Sullivan is a pilot, competitor and event organizer in both hot air and gas ballooning. He earned his commercial hot air balloon license in 1983 and gas rating in 1985, currently has 3330 hours. In 1995 he founded the America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race held annually at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

2020 – Jim Byrd – also known to many as Jimmy -- began his ballooning career in March 1973 when he joined the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association (AAAA) as a non-flying club member. Jim was Assistant Safety Officer for AIBF in 1984 and 1985 but is best known for his contributions to competition scoring. Jim wrote the first software for scoring balloon races in 1990, which was used by both AAAA and the Balloon Fiesta. He succeeded his father as America's Challenge chief scoring officer after his father passed away in 2007, a position he still holds.

2019 – George Hahn earned his private and commercial pilot ratings in 1977 and 1978. In the next decade, George became a leading figure both in the Balloon Fiesta and in the ballooning community, especially well known for promoting continuing education for pilots and safe flying practices. He became the Chief Safety Officer for AIBF in 1984, Assistant Balloonmeister in 1985, and Balloonmeister in 1986 and 1987. George served 22 years on the Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors, including terms as Vice-President in 1989 and 1990 and as President in 1991.

2018 – Charlotte Kinney first flew in Balloon Fiesta in 1977 and began volunteering soon after. By the early 1980s she was a member of the Balloon Fiesta's Board of Directors. In 1981, Charlotte served as Assistant Balloonmeister, second-in-command of the Balloon Fiesta's flight operations. The next year she assumed the top post of Balloonmeisterin (a feminine form of Balloonmeister), the first female in the Balloon Fiesta's history to direct and oversee all flying events. She also played a large role in developing a Balloon Fiesta daily newsletter and is an award winning co-author of the Balloon Fiesta Heritage Committee's book Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

2017 –Matt Guthrie and the Balloon Fiesta literally grew up together. As a youngster growing up in Albuquerque, Matt took his first balloon flight in 1974, just the third year of the Balloon Fiesta's existence. He was hooked and began spending as much of his time around balloons as he could. Matt joined the Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors in 1996 and this year takes on additional responsibilities as the Board's Vice-President. He continues to be an inspiration to every starry-eyed youngster who dreams of becoming a balloonist.

2016 – Jacqueline Hockey was one of the earliest members of the Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors, becoming the event's treasurer in 1978. She served on the Board for 25 years, during which time she not only oversaw corporate hospitality but many of the Balloon Fiesta's biggest private parties for sponsors, pilots, and guests. Originally from France, Jacqueline, with her fluent command of French, continues to make pilots and visitors from abroad feel especially welcome in Albuquerque.

2015 – Dick Rice is a hot air balloon pilot and longtime Balloon Fiesta supporter; having joined the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta board of directors in 1977. He has served on the board as president and treasurer, currently serving as treasurer. As a retired successful CPA, his knowledge of all things fiscal have made his contributions to the Balloon Fiesta invaluable. Dick flies the "Fiesta" balloon. **[CONTINUED]**

COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

Heritage Pin Honorees (continued)

2014 – Wally Book, one of Albuquerque's earliest balloon pilots and staunchest advocates for flight safety at the Balloon Fiesta. He has volunteered for every Balloon Fiesta in one official duty or another. For more than 30 years Wally has been a Safety Officer or Chief Safety Officer, with a brief hiatus to serve as Assistant Balloonmeister in 1999-2000 and Balloonmeister in 2001-2002. Wally speaks fluent French and has long served as an ambassador to the Balloon Fiesta's international pilots and guests.

2013 – Every Balloon Fiesta guest who enjoys the Balloon Glows and Special Shape Rodeos™ can thank Scott for the pivotal role he played in creating these signature events. Scott served on the Board of Directors of the Balloon Fiesta for five years and has also served the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau as a board member and as Chairman. As past President, Competition Director and Safety Officer of Top Gun, Albuquerque's competitive ballooning organization, he has worked hard to promote ballooning safety and healthy competition. Scott is the owner of Rainbow Ryders, the official hot air balloon ride concessionaire of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

2012 – Dick Brown - Few have played such a pivotal role in documenting the history of ballooning in New Mexico. For several years Dick edited the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Associations (AAAA) Cloudbouncer newsletter and during the period of 1974-1979 he was the Editor of the Balloon Federation of America's (BFA) Ballooning Journal. Dick earned his commercial balloon pilot license in 1973 and flew his balloon Blue Dragon in many of the early Balloon Fiestas. Dick is also a former Navy submariner and played a key role in the commissioning of the USS New Mexico (SSN-779) fast-attack nuclear submarine. He serves as chair of the USS New Mexico Committee of the New Mexico Navy League.

2011 - Jim Shiver's many contributions to the Balloon Fiesta can be appreciated by every Balloon Fiesta guest. As a longtime Balloon Fiesta board member and three-term past President, Jim Shiver quietly contributed his labors and those of his construction firm, to the tune of tens of thousands of dollars, to building the considerable infrastructure – supporting a temporary “town” with a population of almost 100,000. The 2011 Heritage Pin shows Jim with his first balloon, Four Corners, which he first flew in the Balloon Fiesta in 1979.

2010—In 1972, Tom Rutherford was an aspiring young politician with a golden radio voice at In 1972, Tom Rutherford was an aspiring young politician with a golden radio voice at the radio station 770 KOB (now KKOB). When the station asked Sid Cutter to organize a balloon race as a part of the radio station's 50th anniversary celebration, Tom was assigned to assist with the “balloon” portion of the event. He fell in love with balloons and ballooning and joined Sid's corporate and events promotion company called World Balloon Championships. For many years Tom flew balloons for corporate clients—most notably Budweiser—at events around the country. As Tom's balloon career took off, his political career did too. He served as a State Senator for 24 years and was Majority Floor Leader at the time of his retirement. He served two terms on the County Commission of Bernalillo County.

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Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

Heritage Pin Honorees (continued)

2009 – Kim Vesely has been writing about balloonists and ballooning as a former TV news reporter and freelance writer for more than 30 years. She has covered many of ballooning's great "firsts" including the Double Eagle II trans-Atlantic crossing, Double Eagle V trans-Pacific crossing, and the Kitty Hawk flight across North America. Since 2002, Kim has served as editor of the Balloon Fiesta program; additionally, her work has appeared in Ballooning, Balloon Life, and other publications. She has written more articles for the AIBF program than any other person, often without byline. She served on the Balloon Fiesta Board in 1988-89 and currently serves on the AIBF Heritage Committee and on the Board of Trustees for the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum.

2008 – Dr. Tom McConnell, is known by most as "Father Time," and is best known as the pilot of "Zia" (the New Mexico State Flag balloon) that has in itself become a widely recognized symbol of the Land of Enchantment. Tom is one of Albuquerque's earliest balloon pilots, part of the second "class" of balloon pilots trained through the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association (AAAA) in 1973.

2007 – Bob and Marge Ruppenthal - This dynamic duo has often been referred to as "long-time" supporters of Balloon Fiesta. They both served as President of the Board of Directors for Balloon Fiesta. Marge was president in 1980 and 1981; Bob was president in 1989 and 1990. Marge took the helm of the organization as Executive Director in 1989, and served in the capacity for eight years until 1996. The Ruppenthals caught the "ballooning bug" in the 70s, bought a balloon, became pilots, and the rest is history.

2006 – John Davis' longtime involvement with ballooning and Balloon Fiesta is legendary. John is the longest serving active member of the Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors (1976-present). John has served as Balloonmeister and as President of Balloon Fiesta. He has also served on the board of the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association (AAAA) and as Balloonmeister of several national and international events including the US National Balloon Championships twice – 24 years apart.

2005 – Sid Cutter's vision put Albuquerque on the map as the hot air balloon capital of the world. Sid had no idea that a little birthday party surprise for his mother would evolve into the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Thanks to Sid's sense of adventure and tenacity, the Balloon Fiesta has grown from a modest gathering of 13 balloons in 1972 to the largest gathering of hot air balloons in the world.

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COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

BALLOON FIESTA HALL OF FAME

Hall of Fame inductees have contributed to the success of Balloon Fiesta through their gifts of time, energy and talent.

Sid Cutter	1983	JW Byrd	2004
Tom Rutherford	1983	Frank Mezzancello	2004
Charles L. Hines	1984	Carol Rymer Davis	2005
Harry Kinney	1984	Steve Yazzie	2006
Ben Abruzzo	1985	Al Tetreault	2007
Maxie Anderson	1985	Harry T. Season	2009
John C. Davis IV	1985	Pat J. Brake	2010
Sheri Moore	1987	Bruce King	2010
Marge Ruppenthal	1988	Sam Baxter	2011
Bob Ruppenthal	1991	Richard Abruzzo	2011
Jacqueline Hockey	1992	Ray Bair	2012
Jim Shiver	1993	Rodney A. May	2012
Al Kinney	1994	Kim Vesley	2012
Thomas McConnell, MD	1995	John R. Sena	2013
Bruce W. Hale	1997	Dick Rice	2015
Jim “Badtoe” Benson	1998	Dick Brown	2016
Jim Baca	1998	Scott Appelman	2017
Betty Perkins	1998	Randy LeFevre	2019
Aubrey Cookman	1998	Jim Byrd	2020
Mark Sullivan	1999	Ken Tuley (Art Lloyd Jr.)	2021
Jodi Baugh	1999	Jewel Cutter	2022
Linda Rutherford	2001	Paul Smith	2022
George Hahn	2002	2023 Honoree to be announced 10/14/23	



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COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

BALLOON FIESTA OFFICIAL POSTER SERIES

The 2023 Official Balloon Fiesta Serigraph Poster, titled “When the Sky Calls” is the first poster, following a five-part series leading up to the 50th event. It depicts a scene of balloons floating over Albuquerque, with notable landmarks the Rio Grande River and Sandia Mountains in the background.

The poster was painted by Kevin A. Short, an internationally recognized American painter and printmaker. Mr. Short has a number of connections to the Balloon Fiesta. In addition to being one of the youngest pilots to fly in the event; his mother Gail Short was a Balloon Fiesta board member for five years and a past president of the organization in 1984; and he was a creator of the original “Fiesta” hot air balloon.

To get a copy of this year’s poster go to www.balloonfiestastuff.com.



ABOUT BALLOON FIESTA

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is an event internationally recognized as the sport's premier event and is produced by a private, non-profit corporation.

Throughout its previous 50 events, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta event has brought a sense of fun and adventure to Albuquerque and the world that is unmatched. It has grown from a quaint launch of 13 balloons in 1972 to the massive nine-day celebration it has become today. 2023 marks the 51st event for the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta powered by Exxon Mobil.



During Balloon Fiesta, guests can expect to see more than 500 balloons participating in early morning Mass Ascensions, enchanting Special Shape balloons filling the skies, and, in the evening, 200 balloons light up the evening sky with Balloon Glows and spectacular fireworks. On the first Saturday evening, gas balloons launch at dusk to the strains of the team country's national anthem, floating slowly up and away competing in a distance competition as a part of the Gordon Bennett Cup (a long-distance gas balloon race). All of the balloons launch from Balloon Fiesta Park, a 86-acre grassed launch field - the size of 56 football fields. Pilots participating in the competitive events will launch off site and fly towards Balloon Fiesta Park on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during the event.

Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Mission Statement

To conduct the world's premier ballooning event, while promoting the sport of ballooning, the City of Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico, nationally and internationally.

Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors

The Balloon Fiesta is managed throughout the year by a volunteer board of up to 24 directors. In addition to event planning, they address complex policy, administrative, safety and traffic issues. Each year, the board elects officers. The 2023 Officers are President Judy Nakamura, Vice-President Neil Jackson, Secretary Mark Sullivan and Treasurer Richard (Dick) Rice.

Directors include JR Allison, Tania Armenta, Ray Bair, Gary D. Bennett, Peg Billson, Jay Czar, John Davis, Barbara Fricke, Jim Garcia, Matt Guthrie, Steve Komadina, M.D., Jeff Lawrence, Rod May, Tom McConnell, M.D., Doug Schwebach, Harry T. Season, Jr., John Sena, Al Tetrault, Bill Walker and Ty Young.

The Balloon Fiesta Board members work tirelessly behind the scenes; it is a tremendous commitment, requiring more than wearing the official Balloon Fiesta jacket. Our community is fortunate to have such dedicated neighbors who are committed to providing the City, the State, the country and the world the greatest ballooning event year after year.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

STAFF

A small professional team, work throughout the year to produce each Balloon Fiesta. They serve in one of six primary areas:

- Event Production: Oversees all ballooning events, social events and pilot registration
- Merchandising: Poster series, official merchandise, balloon pins
- Marketing: Advertising, corporate sponsorships, ticketing and membership programs
- Field Maintenance: Grounds preparation and maintenance during the event
- Communications: Publicity, media relations and social/digital media
- Administration: HR, finances, legal

2023 AIBF STAFF

Executive Director: Sam Parks	Concessions/ Artisans/Main Street Entertainment/Music
Controller: Martha Gonzales	Fiesta Manager: Erica Hahn
Field Manager: Damian Duran-Arias	Pilot Coordinator: Taylor Caldwell
Event Director: Jennifer Garcia	Assistant Merchandise Manager: Chani Kaibetoney
Sponsorship Sales Director: Stephanie Prendergast	Balloon Fiesta Live/Video Producer/Photographers:
Sponsorship Sales Assistant: Jory Slingerland	Ken Tuley
Merchandise Manager: Lisa Mulder	Warehouse Manager: Curt Dahlquist
IS Manager: Mike McKnight	Receptionist: Cavell Miller
Transportation Manager: Amanda Brady	Public Safety Director: Sean Wallace
RV-Manager: Jennifer Schurman	Director of Media Relations: Tom Garrity
Navigator Manager/Balloon Discovery Center - Tracey Hawkins	Media Relations: Amanda Molina, The Garrity Group
	Media Relations: Andie Mercer, The Garrity Group

VOLUNTEERS

More than 3,000 volunteers including chase crew members are needed to produce the nine-day ballooning event each year. Their work begins months before the first balloon is sighted floating in the October sky and they share a wide variety of skills and talents on the field and in the Balloon Fiesta office. They do everything from managing temporary RV lots, painting gates and ticket booths, installing flags, rolling and mailing event posters, counting pins and being member of chase crews. Most of these balloon-loving folks have been volunteering for a number of years and are very much part of the widespread ballooning community. There are also a number of nonprofit organizations that sell programs, direct traffic and many other roles as a fundraiser for their organization.

BALLOON FIESTA LIVE!

Balloon Fiesta™ Live! is a live stream of all 14 events of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Anchored by Glen Moyer and Art Lloyd Jr., it provides multiple and unique camera angles, and expert commentary. Joined in 2018 by fellow balloonists/journalists Ruth Lind and Kim Vesely, the Balloon Fiesta Live! on-air team has more than 125 years of ballooning and broadcast experience. In 2022, The 14 shows generated a total of 511,814 views on YouTube and Facebook.

SPONSORS & ECONOMICS

Many of the magnificent events presented at Balloon Fiesta are due in large part to the local and national businesses that sponsor them. Balloon Fiesta sponsorships demonstrate commitment to the event and community and provide an opportunity for employees to get involved. The cost of sponsoring at Balloon Fiesta varies based upon the visibility and promotion a sponsor receives from its association with the event.

There are currently more than 70 organizations from small local businesses to international corporations that make the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta a worthwhile investment. Representing a significant portion of the Balloon Fiesta's funding, sponsors are vital to the success of the community celebration. For a complete listing of sponsors, visit <https://balloonfiesta.com/Official-Sponsors> or email sponsors@balloonfiesta.com.

ATTENDANCE AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

The 2022 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta attracted an estimated 828,800 guest visits during the nine-day event. According to the 2022 Economic Impact Report commissioned by the Balloon Fiesta, it is estimated that 76 percent of visitors to Balloon Fiesta were from outside of New Mexico. Balloon Fiesta guests generated an estimated \$203,191,854 of total economic impact for businesses in the Albuquerque metropolitan area, \$119,524,620 of that amount being direct economic impact.

DOLLARS SPENT, INDIRECTLY
AND DIRECTLY BECAUSE OF
BALLOON FIESTA

203.19
MILLION

DIRECT
SPENDING

119,524
MILLION

OUT OF AREA
ATTENDEES
SPENT AN
AVERAGE OF
\$176 PER DAY
WHILE VISITING

\$176

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT
JOBS ARE GENERATED
AS A RESULT OF THE
IMPACT OF THE
BALLOON FIESTA

1,227

IN STATE TAX REVENUES GENERATED DURING
BALLOON FIESTA

6.87
MILLION

FINANCING BALLOON FIESTA

Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is a non-profit (501-c-3) organization, based in New Mexico. It is a self-sustaining event that reinvests revenue back into the event. It is managed by a volunteer board of directors and a full-time staff of 18 people. The organization receives no direct monetary subsidies from any government taxing authority. The organization raises more than \$7 million each year to produce the nine-day festival. Funding comes from five primary sources.

- RV Space Rentals
- Admission and Parking
- Sponsorships
- Concession Fees
- Merchandise Sales

MEDIA ACCESS

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is a regular favorite of local, national, and international media organizations. Over the past five years, more than 36,000 stories have featured the event, our pilots, sponsors, and guests.

Media credential applications may be submitted through the Balloon Fiesta website (<https://balloonfiesta.com/Media>). Media registration for the 2023 event will remain open until September 2023. Applications will be reviewed and approved on a rolling basis.

Credentialed media at Balloon Fiesta are provided the opportunity for a hot air balloon ride (based on availability), complimentary parking, event entry, access to a photography tower, wireless internet access, logistical support from our professional media team, entry into the media hospitality tent and invitations to media receptions and dinners.

The media hospitality tent is located near the Southeast corner of the Launch Field, just north of the Pilots' Pavilion (also known as the Sid Cutter Pilots' Pavilion). The media tower is an easily recognized landmark of the media tent.

A Balloon Fiesta media credential allows easy access for coverage of most official Balloon Fiesta events. Applications for credentials are accessible online and must be accompanied by a letter of assignment or an overview of your media project. Media credentials provide access to most of the areas on Balloon Fiesta Park. However, there are a few areas for which additional permission must be granted before entering.

A media credential does not provide access to these areas:

- **Corporate Village Tents, Fiesta Tents, Gondola Club, Chasers' Club** - Rented by and restricted to Balloon Fiesta sponsors, guests or members.
- **Officials' Compound, Official's Towers** - These are areas central to Balloon Fiesta flight operations. The Officials' towers include the pilot briefing tower and balloonmeister tower.
- **Public Safety Compound** - This area is restricted to official personnel only due to the multi-agency integration of public safety organizations.
- **President's Compound** - A very attractive area for reporters, photographers and videographers because of its location above the Launch Field as well as the accompanying views. Those views also make the area very attractive to the RV guests who rent the area well in advance of the event each year. Limited escorted access to this area is provided by the media team, as available.
- **Field During Competitions** - During all days of flying competitions, access in the competition area requires an official media escort. Requests need to be made in advance and safety vests must also be worn on the field.

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MEDIA ACCESS

PARKING AND VEHICLE ACCESS

Credentialed media organizations will receive access to Balloon Fiesta parking. Parking passes will be provided when media pick up their credentials. Credentials are needed to access both the Balloon Fiesta Park and Media Tent.

News vehicles may only access the launch field at specific times and must have proper vehicle identification and correct Balloon Fiesta passes (Media parking passes only provide access to media parking areas and will not provide access to the launch field or areas inside the admission gate); crews must have Balloon Fiesta media credentials as well as a station/media identification. Drivers of news vehicles seeking access to drive onto the launch field or inside the admission gate may be required to submit to a background check. All vehicles are subject to searches by the Balloon Fiesta Public Safety Team.

Any access to the launch field or inside the admission gate must be pre-approved by the Director of Media Relations.

Balloon Fiesta media credentials do not allow entry into RESTRICTED AREAS for any purpose. Restricted areas include: Public Safety command center, Officials tower, fireworks staging area, propane refueling areas, hydrogen fueling areas, and/or photographs from the top of buildings on the south end of the field.

BROADCAST GUIDELINES

Television and radio broadcasters using mobile backpacks and live mobile backpacks (i.e. TVU and LiveU) must present the gear for inspection when picking up credentials.

All two-way, marti, microwave and satellite frequencies used to provide live coverage of the Balloon Fiesta must be registered with Balloon Fiesta Media Relations well in advance of Balloon Fiesta.

Broadcasts must not interfere with the Balloon Fiesta public address system, field operations, communications related to the safe operation of hot air or gas filled balloons and broadcasts of official media.

For local radio broadcasters, please be aware that Balloon Fiesta sponsorship agreements restrict “live” radio broadcasts to the Albuquerque market to phone reports no longer than two minutes in length when they are on the Balloon Fiesta field.

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MEDIA ACCESS

MEDIA TENT

Location – Hours of Operation – Activities

The AIBF Media Tent is located on the southeast corner of Balloon Fiesta Park, very close to the launch field. There will be no storage provided for tripods, backpacks, and equipment. The media tent schedule is as follows:

- October 5: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. – Media Registration/Credential Pick up
- October 6: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. – Media Registration/Credential Pick up
- October 6: 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. – Media Welcome Party
- October 7 (Opening Day): 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 8: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 9, 10 & 11 (Monday-Wednesday): 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- October 12: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 13: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 14: 5 a.m. – Noon & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 15: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.



BALLOON FIESTA WEATHER

Weather is always a factor as it is with any outdoor event. Balloon Fiesta's primary concern is safety when making decisions concerning cancellation or postponement. News organizations will receive any cancellation notices from the Balloon Fiesta media representative immediately after the Pilots' weather briefing at approximately 6:30 each morning.

Electronic event updates are also available via text message and through the event's twitter account.

On-site, event updates are also provided with a Green Yellow Red flagging system that uses a flag pole located mid-field, behind the Main Street Stage. Additional information is located later in this section.

MORNING MASS ASCENSIONS/ SCHEDULED FLYING COMPETITIONS

Winds faster than 10 knots (approximately 11.5 mph), less than 3 miles visibility, clouds below 1,500 feet and rain will postpone or cancel the launch.

EVENING BALLOON GLOWS/FIREWORKS

Wind faster than 11.5 mph or rain will cancel or delay static illumination of inflated balloons. Fireworks can still be displayed with wind up to 20 mph.

DELAY AND CANCELLATION PROCESS

The Balloon Fiesta will make the first announcements about any delays or event cancellations to the balloon pilots. The announcement will be made as part of regular Pilot Briefings. The initial briefing is held before each event at the Pilot Briefing Tower on the west side of Balloon Fiesta Park except the briefings for Glowdeos will be in the Pilots' Pavilion. Morning Pilot Briefings are open for the public to listen in; please keep any conversation and radio communication to a minimum. Information will be announced and posted in the Media Tent as well as via official Balloon Fiesta text message, Twitter and Facebook accounts. Unless the weather creates a dangerous situation, Balloon Fiesta Park will remain open even in the case of a balloon flight cancellation.

FLAG POLE NOTIFICATIONS

Because mobile phone and wireless access can be hampered with so many people at Balloon Fiesta Park, the Balloon Fiesta created a flagging system to notify guests about the status of flying events based on the color of the flag. The flag pole located adjacent to the Stage in the center of Main Street will fly one of three flags:

- Green = The launch field is open for inflations
- Yellow = Events are temporary delayed or no decision has been made
- Red = The field is closed for inflations (NOTE: the red flag will fly until pilot briefing concludes for respective morning and afternoon sessions)

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BALLOON FIESTA WEATHER

IDEAL FLYING CONDITIONS

Since balloons move with the air, information about the weather is imperative when deciding whether to fly. Before launching, pilots will contact one or more weather services to find out about weather and wind conditions in an area. Pilots only fly when the weather is close to ideal—when skies are clear and wind conditions are favorable.

Balloons need stable air to operate effectively and the atmosphere is most stable during the hours just following sunrise and those hours are also the best for finding calm gentle winds. In some parts of the world this also applies to the hours just before sunset. Additionally, the temperature is usually cooler in the mornings and the balloon flies better in cooler weather since the hot air gets a better “lift”.

The only control a pilot has over a balloon is vertical, so they don't want to fly around the middle of the day when different pockets of air are rising and falling.

THE “ALBUQUERQUE BOX”

The fall weather in Albuquerque is known for its clear days and cool morning temperatures. This weather and what is known as the Albuquerque “box” will help this year's Balloon Fiesta to become another spectacular spectator event. When the “box” is working, guests are able to see hundreds of balloons create a kaleidoscope of color in the Albuquerque sky – there is nothing like it anywhere else in the world.

The “box” is a combination of upper and lower level winds created by the Rio Grande Valley and enhanced by the Sandia Mountains. The box enables balloonists to back-track their flight pattern and land close to their launch sites conjuring the impression of flying inside a box. Cool air from the north near the surface will take pilots one direction while higher winds blow in the opposite direction. Pilots need only to change elevation to fly back along their original course. Some wind patterns will allow a pilot to dip their gondola in the Rio Grande for a “Splash and Dash” other patterns will move balloons toward the Sandia Mountains.

This unique relationship of mountain formations and wind characteristics has brought many balloonists back to Albuquerque year after year to enjoy beautiful ballooning weather. This “box” allows the hundreds of balloons that lift off from the field during Balloon Fiesta's Mass Ascensions to remain close to the field, creating a colorful visual display found nowhere else in the world.

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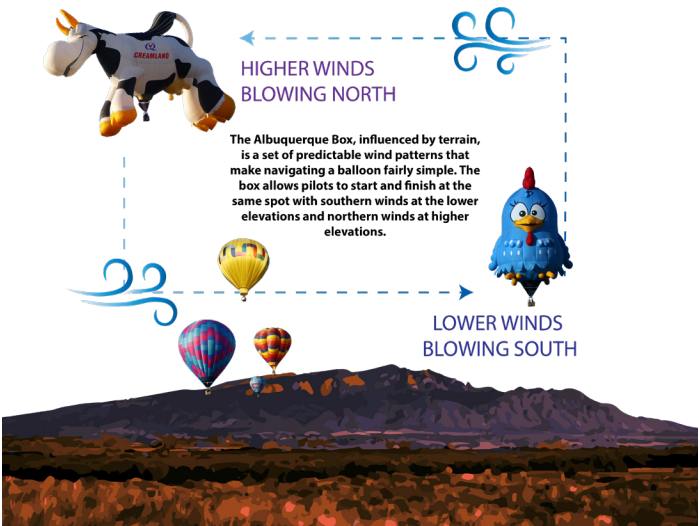
BALLOON FIESTA WEATHER

THE SCIENCE OF THE “ALBUQUERQUE BOX”

This wind pattern for which the Albuquerque area is well known and occurs under stable conditions during the fall season when no strong weather systems are affecting the area. On days when the “box” occurs, it dissipates by mid-morning as the sun heats the ground, resulting in thermal turbulence which mixes the separate layers of air and eliminating the low-level inversion.

During the nighttime hours, the air near the ground surface is cooled by the process of radiational cooling. This process is most efficient with clear skies, low humidity, and light wind. Cooler, and therefore denser air flows downslope to lower elevations along arroyos and river valleys. The cool air that flows through the Rio Grande valley is shallow (generally no more than a few hundred feet in depth). During the early morning hours this air flows southward down the valley from higher to lower elevation much as any fluid flows downhill. A north wind generally less than 10 mph results in the middle Rio Grande Valley.

The stable “river of air” occurs below a temperature inversion which separates it from warmer, less dense air above the inversion, just as vinegar is separated from oil by differences in density. The wind direction in the air mass above the shallow inversion can be different than that below the inversion. In an “ideal” box pattern, the wind blows in exactly the opposite direction with a north wind at the surface and a south wind above the surface. A skillful pilot can bring a balloon back to near the point of takeoff by changing altitudes to ride wind currents in different directions. Upon takeoff the pilot first heads south towards downtown, then ascends higher where the winds c then take the balloon back north towards Balloon Fiesta Park.



BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

50 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

- 1972 was the first year of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. It was founded by Sid Cutter. Events included the 1st Roadrunner-Coyote Balloon Race and tours of the surrounding towns and pueblos.
- 1973 hosted the First World Championships, crowning of the Balloon Fiesta Queen, the first mass ascension and Balloon Fiesta parade.
- 1974 was the third annual Balloon Fiesta and a new Balloon Fiesta Queen was crowned.
- 1975 marked the introduction of the AAAA Cloudbouncer Balloon Rally, and the Balloon Fiesta was permanently moved to October. It also saw the introduction of the Air Force Thunderbirds, as well as the balloon seminar and the trade show.
- 1976 was the year that the AIBF became incorporated, and introduced the KODAK Giant Film Box Drop, the Tumbleweed Drop, helicopter performances, a parachute drop and the sunrise prayer service.
- 1977 encompassed not only the traditional Mass Ascension, but also the Annual Balloon Bash, a parade, and flying competitions.
- 1978 marked the first Zoo party, the “Natural Light” Chicken Flying Contest, as well as balloon dances, Mass Ascensions, the KODAK Film Drop and the Blue Angels Flying team from Kirtland Air Force Base
- 1979 was the first year of the official Balloon Fiesta poster—and still had all of the traditional events like the Mass Ascension, parade and sunrise prayer service.
- 1980 was the year that the US Navy Leapfrogs joined the festivities, and the Balloon Fiesta started the Key Grab as well as the Best Dressed Balloon Crew Contest. The Kiwanis club also joined and sold VIP parking for \$0.25.
- 1981 was the tenth Balloon Fiesta and featured the first video briefing, the first air show, road run, gas race and Jim Franklin’s Wild Waco air show. The Thunderbirds preformed at Kirtland Air Force Base, and the US Navy Leapfrogs also joined the celebration.
- 1982 marked the first unfortunate event in the history of the Balloon Fiesta—there was a fatality at an official event. The 11th annual Balloon Fiesta included the Mule Balloon Bust, the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, the Morgan Horse and Carriage Show, and a costume ball as well as a new kite flying contest.
- 1983 incorporated a 10k run, radio controlled aircraft and performances from high school bands around the state.
- 1984 included a kite flying demo, the first Park and Rides, the US Army “Golden Knights” Parachute Team and a picnic in addition to all of the traditional events.
- 1985 kept up with the times and included a bike and trikes/BMX race team demo, a Frisbee demo, the Albuquerque Vaulters, the Masters of the Universe, the Bob Sears Air Show, NASA Aerovan and a toga party.

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BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

50 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

- 1986 presented a tremendous weather surprise—it snowed on the last day. That didn't stop the festivities though—there was a picnic at Spanish Village on the state fairgrounds, and the Otto the Airshow Helicopter performance.
- 1987 started an event which is now one of the biggest events at the Balloon Fiesta—the Balloon Glow, which was started to commemorate 75 years of statehood. The Balloon Glow was joined by the Misty Blues All Female Sky Divers, the Leapfrogs, picnics, Mass Ascensions and parades.
- 1988 was the last year of the Balloon Fiesta gas race. The Balloon Fiesta also brought in the Oktoberfest at Civic Plaza and the dance and BBQ at the Sundance Saloon. It was also the first year that featured a commemorative coin.
- 1989 started another tradition—the Special Shape Rodeo. The Air Show, the International Mariachi Fiesta, and the first Dawn Patrol were also celebrated that year.
- 1990 had pop stars Three Dog Night perform, a special shapes event as well as including the US Navy parachute team and the Enchantment Sky Divers.
- 1991 was the 20th Balloon Fiesta, and included all of the established traditions—sky diving, bands, dawn patrol, a parade, and the Special Shape Rodeo.
- 1992 saw the first special shape balloon based on the “Simpson” characters, and included large scale fireworks. KODAK became the official title sponsor.
- 1993 hosted the 37th Gordon Bennett Gas Race, and started the first midweek Mass Ascension as well as the Manfred Radius Gilder Show.
- 1994 Included the 8th World Gas Balloon Championships and the special shape mass ascension.
- 1995 was the First America's Challenge Race, and included the Leapfrogs, Mass Ascensions and glows.
- 1996 added the first Dawn Patrol Show, Sivage Thomas “house grab” and new flying events.
- 1997 started the Flight of Nations, the Cool Cut Showcopters, Fiesta Stand Up Parachute Accuracy Open, Sky Dive New Mexico-State Parachute Accuracy Championships and the USAF Pararescue School Demo Team.
- 1998 was the year that special shape balloons had grown to be so popular that they were the only balloons to launch from the field on Thursday and Friday mornings and glow on the same evenings.
- 1999 was the second year the Balloon Fiesta hosted the Gordon Bennet Cup, and included the American Flyer Powered Parachutes Demo, and the kite expo.

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BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

50 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

- 2000 set the balloon launch record, with the largest number of balloons attending in the history of the Balloon Fiesta. Helicopters from the TV stations helped out by drying the field so the Special Shape Glowdeo could happen.
- 2001 opened the Balloon Discovery Center, the Balloon Fiesta was limited to 750 balloons, the blackjack race was started and grass was added to the rest of the launch field.
- 2002 raised the cost of admission and parking to \$5.
- 2003 was the year that the Balloon Fiesta created the Gondola Club, and started the Fiesta del Vino.
- 2004 was the first year of the Fiesta Challenge, and it was the last year for the New Mexico Challenge. The Balloon Fiesta also included a salute to veterans.
- 2005 marked the 49th Gordon Bennett Gas Race and the third time it was hosted in Albuquerque, included Bunnies and Balloons for Easter and was the first year for the Albuquerque Aloft program at local elementary schools.
- 2006 was the first year for the Balloon Fiesta brick program and the chainsaw carving contest.
- 2007 was the year for \$1 admission for Albuquerque Residents on the first Saturday. It was also the beginning of the Twilight Twinkle Glow and was Fiesta del Vino's last year. There was a record number of attendees that year.
- 2008 had the 52nd Coupe Aeronautique Gordon Bennett, performance from Josh Gracin, and expanded Park and Ride.
- 2009 included the beginning of the Chasers' Club and Patron and Crew Chief memberships were established. America's Challenge Gas Race canceled due to weather after inflation had been completed—there was a lot of helium and hydrogen used without flying anywhere.
- 2010 was the first year for the popular Bike Valet was made available for Balloon Fiesta guests.
- 2011 was dedicated to the "Father of Fiesta" Sid Cutter and was the year that the Balloon Fiesta received a Guinness World Record for the Greatest Mass Hot Air Balloon Ascent.
- 2012 was New Mexico's centennial and the first year that hydrogen was used exclusively to provide lift to the teams participating in the America's Challenge Balloon Race.
- 2013 was the year of the first Music Fiesta, featuring country music superstar Darius Rucker.

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BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

50 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

- 2014 will welcome the Blue Sky Pavilion, a space at Balloon Fiesta Park solely dedicated to hosting guests' milestone events like weddings, reunions and anniversary parties.
- 2015 the world famous sky racing team, Parabatix flew at Balloon Fiesta Park. A daily laser show was also featured for the first time and this year also introduced the 12,000-square-foot Sid Cutter Pilots' Pavilion and a bronze statue of Sid welcoming pilots, crews and guests.
- 2016 will be the first year the Balloon Fiesta will host the Balloon Federation of America's US Women's National Championship
- 2017 was the year Balloon Fiesta introduced the Candlestick show to the opening ceremonies.
- 2018 marked the year that Balloon Fiesta introduced two new guest programs to the event; Glamping and the Concierge Program.
- 2019 was the first year Balloon Fiesta introduced a second Park and Ride loading and unloading location at Balloon Fiesta Park and the year that Team Fastrax made their debut
- 2020 was the only year Balloon Fiesta did not hold an event since its inception; the 49th event was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2021 **brings Balloon Fiesta its first Remote Control Balloon Exhibition, featuring 35 remote controlled balloons that are a fraction of the size of traditional hot air balloons.**
- 2022 is the 50th event, a milestone celebration for Balloon Fiesta and the year that Balloon Fiesta introduced a drone show and Fiesta Sky Boxes
- 2023 was the year that Balloon Fiesta hosted the 66th Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race and staged a special Balloon Glow as a part of the Annular Solar Eclipse viewable from Balloon Fiesta Park and the first year for Camp 505



FACTS AND FIGURES

2023 THEME

51st Balloon Fiesta Theme: A View From Above—the 51st Balloon Fiesta

This year's theme is A View From Above. It includes 546 hot air balloon pilots invited to fly during the nine-day event. There is a new theme to Balloon Fiesta every year; the theme is reflected in merchandise, printed and digital artwork.

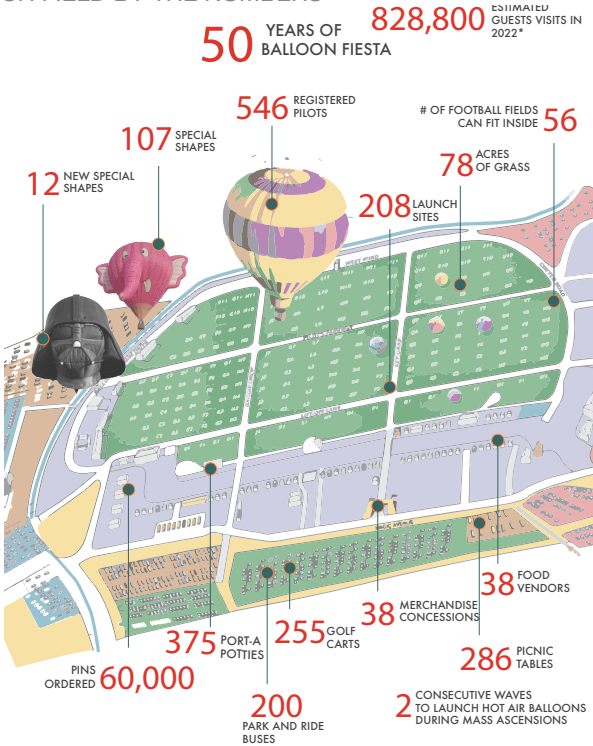
COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

There will be 12 countries participating in this year's Balloon Fiesta including: Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Mexico, Spain, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the United States.

International balloons will enjoy their moment in the spotlight on Wednesday, October 11, during Flight of the Nations, an event that honors all the countries represented at Balloon Fiesta. Up to two balloons from each country will launch while carrying their country's flag to begin the Mass Ascension.

Additionally, there will be nine countries participating in the Gordon Bennett, including: Austria, France, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States.

LAUNCH FIELD BY THE NUMBERS



FACTS AND FIGURES

MAIN STREET BY THE NUMBERS

- 38 Food Concessions – everything from famous New Mexican breakfast burritos to funnel cakes
- 38 Merchandise Concessions – official Balloon Fiesta merchandise, pins, art and crafts, and more.

2023 FOOD CONCESSIONS

5Baskin Robbins/ Poppys Coffee and Snacks
Blakes Lotaburger
Chile Traditions
Chocolate Chip Cookie Company
CiCis Pizza
Crazy Pineapple
Cruising Cones
Dunkin’ - MIDDLE
Dunkin’ - NORTH
Dunkin’ - SOUTH
Famous Lasyone’s Restaurant...
Louisiana Cajun Creole Cuisine
Friar Kettle Corn
Fry Factory
Fryin’ Brian’s
G & G Concessions, Inc.
Gourmet Food Trucks LLC dba
Desert Sun Cafe
Hatch shack
Indonesian Satay
JJ’s Concession

JPZ Concessions
KRISPY KREME DOUGHNUTS
La Luz Coffee/Just Squeezed
MIDDLE
La Luz Coffee/Just Squeezed NORTH
La Luz Coffee/Just Squeezed SOUTH
Macology
NM Pinon Coffee MIDDLE
NM Pinon Coffee NORTH
NM Pinon Coffee SOUTH
Perico’s
Platero Fry Bread
Quesada’s
Seafood Cajun Concessions LLC
Sun Mountain Concessions Hand
Dipped Corn Dogs and Cheese Curds
Tom Thumb Donut Yellow - NORTH
Tom Thumb Donuts Red - SOUTH
Tot Box
Uncle T’s
Zina’s Blue Corn



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FACTS AND FIGURES

2023 MERCHANDISE VENDORS

All Tribe Silver	New Mexico Quilters Association
ALPACA WORLD	Pandora
Arizona Tube Art	PERUVIAN INKAS ART
Balloon Hat Man - MIDDLE	Plano Pin Company, Inc.
Balloon Hat Man - NORTH	Scooter Rental
Balloon Hat Man - SOUTH	SHANNIEGIRL
KTJM - ROVING	southwest sky NORTH
Balloon Souvenirs	southwest sky SOUTH
Chuck Jones Gallery	Southwestern Design – Jewelry and
Cool Air Chairs	Gifts – Best Selection Inc
Cutco Cutlery	Spoonman Creations
Daiwa by U.S. Jacleen, Inc.	Star Glow Products/Aaron awoyale
DAJO Adventure Gear, LLC	Associate llc
Discover Balloons	TEAMS HOT SPORTS
Guatemaya Imports	The Lobo Den
HomeTown Fireworks, LLC DBA	The Sock Mafia
PhotoBrick World	Toadland, Inc.
Inka Gold Arts	TWO LUMPS OF SUGAR, INC
Kendra Scott	Ultimate Comfort Living (Total
Maritza's Colors	Comfort Marketing)
Mayan Art	
Montgolfier Gifts	

OFFICIAL BALLOON FIESTA PINS

- 60,000 pins ordered

BALLOON FIESTA VOLUNTEERS

- More than 1,000 wonderful and dedicated volunteers make Balloon Fiesta happen year after year. Additionally, more than 2,000 chase crew volunteers will help get the balloons into the air!



BALLOONING HISTORY

The first gathering to watch a flying machine began in France in 1783, in part to satisfy the curiosity of the Montgolfier brothers, Joseph and Etienne. The two enterprising paper manufacturers entertained the King and Queen of Versailles, along with a crowd of 40,000 people, by sending aloft a smoke-filled balloon carrying as passengers a duck, a rooster and a lamb.

The first human passengers (Pilatre de Rozier and Marquis d'Arlandes) were carried aloft some 3,000 feet in the first manned, untethered balloon flight ever recorded on November 21, 1783. Two weeks later, a Frenchman, J.A.C. Charles and his friend, Monsieur Robert, launched a hydrogen gas balloon near Paris for a two-hour, 27-mile flight.

One year later, the first hot air balloon ascent in the United States occurred when a 13-year-old boy, Edward Warren, ascended over Baltimore in a tethered hot air paper balloon.

All through the 19th century, American ballooning featured two different types of aerostats. For lengthy flights, hydrogen or "mixed gas" was preferred. For rapid, briefer ascents, smoke-filled balloons proved to be more viable. During the Civil War, balloons were used for spotting and reconnaissance and occasionally were used to carry the U.S. mail and aerial photography.

In 1859, John Wise (with three passengers) inflated his gas balloon "Atlantic" in St. Louis and flew eastward in an attempt to cross the Atlantic Ocean. After an 800-mile adventure, a severe storm forced him to land in Henderson, New York.

Two years later in a smaller balloon "Enterprise," Lowe flew from Cincinnati over the Appalachian Mountains, landing in South Carolina where startled officials arrested him for being a Yankee spy.

For the next 100 years, very little progress was seen in the world of ballooning. A few would-be aeronauts performed tethered ascensions at state fairs around the country.

One such ascension occurred in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1882. Saloon keeper P.A. Van Tassel owned and operated a balloon called the "City of Albuquerque." It was highly touted as an attraction for the 4th of July celebration on the Territorial Fairgrounds. After numerous delays to his much talked about "lift off," Van Tassel's craft finally reached an altitude of 14,207 feet and flew over the Rio Grande River before it came to rest in a cornfield near the Fairgrounds.

There were other similar adventures, but nothing of real historical significance until 1906. At that time, James Gordon Bennett, Jr., publisher and owner of the New York Herald, organized the Gordon Bennett Cup Race. The first trophy was won by an American aeronaut, Frank P. Lahm, and his co-pilot Henry Hersey, who flew their balloon 395 miles from Paris to Whitby, England.

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Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

BALLOONING HISTORY

In 1907, a Chicagoan, Joseph A. Blondin, came to Albuquerque, and attempted to inflate a 25,000 cubic foot balloon envelope of rubberized silk. His “mixed-gas” three-hour flight was fraught with problems, as was another attempted ascension by Blondin in 1909.

A mild amount of interest persisted for many years, but it wasn’t until 1960 that a steady interest in ballooning began. Hot air balloon manufacturing firms began “popping up” in the U.S., most of them in the west and southwest. During the next decade, various balloon flight records for altitude, distance and duration aloft were set by several pilots, among them Ed Yost and Don Piccard.

In 1971, Albuquerque’s Sid Cutter celebrated the 42nd anniversary of his family’s flying service company and his mother’s birthday, with a Raven balloon inflated as a centerpiece in the Cutter Flying Service hangar. This family social event has become a part of ballooning history because of its impact on the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta which was first organized as a 13 balloon rally the following year.

In February 1973, the first World Hot Air Balloon Championship was held in Albuquerque and again in 1975 before it was shifted to other sites in Europe and the U.S.

In 1978, well-known Albuquerque balloon adventurers Ben Abruzzo and Maxie Anderson, along with Larry Newman piloted the first balloon ever to cross the Atlantic Ocean. Their helium filled balloon, the Double Eagle II, landed on August 17th in Miserey near Paris, 137 hours and 6 minutes after leaving Presque Isle, Maine.

In January of 2015 gas balloon pilots Troy Bradley and Leonid Tiukhtyaev, the “Two Eagles” team completed their 7,000-mile journey across the Pacific from Japan to Mexico, surpassing the previous distance record (5,209 miles) for gas balloons.

Today, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta has expanded to an over 500 balloon event, with more than 700,000 guest visits over the course of nine days.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Everything You Wanted To Know About Hot Air And Gas Balloons

WHAT ARE HOT AIR BALLOONS MADE OF?

The bag – or envelope, as it's more properly called – is made of a reinforced fabric called rip-stop nylon. Polyester and other fabrics are sometimes used. The materials are very lightweight and very strong. The fabric is coated on the inside to prevent leaks. The fabric used at the lower portion of the balloon is a fire-resistant material like Nomex, which is what firemen and race car drivers wear.

HOW IS A HOT AIR BALLOON INFLATED?

During the inflation process, ballooning becomes a group sport. Since a balloon is quite unwieldy on the ground, it can take about four people to get a balloon inflated. Of course, the more people there are the more fun you can have. To start off, the envelope is stretched out on the ground and attached to the basket, which is lying on its side. A small gasoline-powered fan blows air into the balloon envelope. Then the burner is turned on, and the air in the balloon is heated. The hot air rises, lifting the balloon upright.

WHAT ARE THE BASKETS MADE OF?

The baskets are usually woven out of wicker since it is strong, lightweight and flexible. Wicker is also very easy to maintain and holds up well under the stress of repeated landings.

HOW BIG ARE HOT AIR BALLOONS?

The typical sport balloon ranges in size from 65,000 to 105,000 cubic feet in volume, and when inflated stands around 70 feet tall (or equivalent in height to a building with seven floors).

HOW DO BALLOONS FLY?

Hot air balloons fly because hot air rises. When the pilot heats the air inside the envelope, it becomes lighter than the air around the envelope and floats up into the sky. The pilot can control the balloon's altitude by adjusting the temperature of the air inside the envelope. To make the balloon come down, the air inside the balloon is allowed to cool. To climb, more heat from the propane burner is added, increasing lift.

HOW DO YOU STEER THE THING?

Strictly speaking, you don't. The balloon goes where the wind takes it. However, the winds at varying altitudes may blow in different directions and at different speeds, so the trick is to climb or descend to an altitude where the wind is blowing the direction you want to go.

HOW FAST DOES A BALLOON GO?

As fast, or as slow, as the wind. Since the balloon has no forward propulsion system, its speed is determined entirely by the speed of the wind. That's why balloon races are events of accuracy, not speed.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO FLY A HOT AIR BALLOON?

Conditions are usually the best just after sunrise and one or two hours before sunset. This is the time of day when winds are calmest and the air most stable.

HOW HIGH DO HOT AIR BALLOONS FLY?

Most balloon flights occur between 500 and 2,000 feet above the ground. But balloons can fly at treetop level or go much higher. The world record for altitude in a hot air balloon is 65,000 feet.

HOW LONG CAN A HOT AIR BALLOON STAY UP?

It depends. Normally, the balloon carries enough fuel to remain aloft for two hours, but factors like outside air temperature, weight being carried in the basket, and weather determine the duration of the flight.

WHAT KIND OF FUEL IS USED FOR A HOT AIR BALLOON?

Propane is the most common fuel, but butane is sometimes used in remote areas where propane is not available. The fuel is carried in aluminum or stainless-steel tanks that range from 10 – 25 gallons in size. The average fuel consumption for a sport size balloon is about 15 gallons an hour.

HOW DO YOU GET THE BALLOON BACK?

With the help of friends who drive a van or pickup truck. This chase crew is usually in contact with the pilot by means of two-way radios and follows the flight of the balloon (as well as the existing roads allow) and should be on hand to make the recovery when the balloon touches down.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GAS BALLOON AND A HOT AIR BALLOON?

A gas balloon is completely enclosed and is filled with helium or hydrogen gas. A hot air balloon gets its lift from heating the air within. Hot air balloon flights usually last about an hour, while gas balloon flights can last for days. Gas balloon flights require much more preparation for cold weather, high altitudes, and flying at night. Gas balloonists also pack enough food and water for several days.

HOW DO YOU ARRANGE FOR A RIDE IN A HOT AIR BALLOON?

Reservations for a hot air balloon ride can be made with Rainbow Ryders Inc., the official ride concessionaire for the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. The Rainbow Ryders tent is located near the North end of the field and near Gate 9. For reservations, call: 1-800-725-2477.

2023 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA® CELEBRATES 51ST EVENT

World's Largest Ballooning Event Takes to Skies October 7-15

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta celebrates its 51st event with more than 550 hot air balloons representing 12 countries. The 51st event will occur October 7-15, 2023 at Balloon Fiesta Park, in Albuquerque, NM.

Key dates, events and facts:

- Opening day at Balloon Fiesta Park will kick off with the Opening Ceremonies, beginning at 6:45 a.m. on October 7, 2023.
- Hot air ballooning competitive flying takes place on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, with pilots competing to win prizes.
- Flight of the Nations, held Wednesday, October 11 in advance of the mid-week mass ascension, will honor countries participating in the 51st event. This year, there are 12 countries represented in the 2023 Balloon Fiesta.
- Special shapes 107 amazing special shapes will be flying at Balloon Fiesta this year, 12 shapes will make their inaugural appearance. Special Shape balloons will take to the skies for their own mass ascension and balloons glows on Thursday and Friday at Balloon Fiesta Park.
- 546 primary pilots have registered to fly in this year's Balloon Fiesta, many of them bring more than one balloon.



2023 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA® CELEBRATES 51ST EVENT

Celebration to Launch October 7-15, 2023

Albuquerque, NM - The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, powered by ExxonMobil will launch from Balloon Fiesta Park, October 7-15, 2023. The 51st event, will feature more than 550 hot air balloons, of which at least 107 will be special shape balloons. The organization looks forward to welcoming pilots, their crews and guests from all over the world to help celebrate the international event.

The Balloon Fiesta is known for its signature mass ascensions, largest gathering of special shape hot air balloons and epic Balloon Glows in the shadows of the Sandia mountains. This year's event will feature the prestigious Gordon Bennett gas balloon race, a distance competition that has previously seen teams fly as far as Wisconsin. Balloon Fiesta staff, board of directors and volunteers are in the midst of finalizing details for the nine-day event. Here are the popular and confirmed events for this year's event:

ABQ Aloft: For locals and early visitors, Balloon Fiesta will kick off from local schools with Albuquerque Aloft on October 6, 2023. During Albuquerque Aloft, students, teachers and parents gather on their school grounds to meet pilots and crew and experience the excitement of watching and learning how balloons fly.

Mass Ascensions: More than 550 hot air balloons launch to the skies in multiple waves with hopes of catching the infamous Albuquerque Box. The Balloon Fiesta's five signature morning mass ascensions launch both weekends (October 7-8, 14-15) and mid-week (October 11).

Balloon Glows: Balloon Fiesta Park lights up on five special nights for the signature Balloon Glows (October 7-8, 12-14). Imagine walking among 200-300 hot air balloons in static display as they flicker under the Albuquerque skies. One of the most popular places for selfies are in the midst of an "all-burn burner blast"

Special Shape Balloons: The largest collection of hot air balloons will fill the skies during the nine days of Balloon Fiesta. More than a hundred special shape balloons are anticipated for the 51st event., many of which will be featured during the Special Shape Rodeo and Glowdeo. A flying frog, cow and pigs will join a host of other shapes as they resemble items of a child's toybox floating overhead.

Dawn Patrol & Show: Each morning includes a colorful display of hot air balloons launching to the skies in pre-dawn hours. Pilots will fly until it's light enough to see landing sites. In addition to providing a visual treat, they provide a valuable service to other balloonists by giving them an idea of wind speeds and directions at different altitudes.

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2023 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

CELEBRATES 51ST EVENT (continued)

66th Gordon Bennett: The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett is a premier gas balloon distance race. It is the oldest and most prestigious event in aviation and the ultimate challenge for pilots. The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta has been selected to host the 66th event. Balloons will launch from Balloon Fiesta Park and the balloon that travels the farthest distance will be the winner. Each country is allowed to enter its three best teams. The last time this event was hosted by Balloon Fiesta was in 2008. The race is set to launch from Balloon Fiesta Park on October 7, 2023 with 17 Gordon Bennett Teams currently registered.

Flight of the Nations: In observance of all the visiting international pilots, this mid-week mass ascension will take place on October 11, 2023. Wednesday's opening ceremony will begin with international pilots flying their countries' flags from their balloons.

Fiesta de Los Globitos: Balloon Fiesta's third annual remote-control balloon rally will feature at least 57 tethered balloons, which are scale model balloons, about 20 feet tall. The mini mass ascensions will take place at Balloon Fiesta Park, from 7:30-11 a.m. on October 8, 11 and 13, as well as a mini glow on October 14.

Entertainment: Music Fiesta will be held on Saturday, October 14, beginning at 1:00 p.m. This year's lineup will include Headliner and Country Star Lee Brice, Quartz Hill Records recording artists Runaway June and opening act, Brandon Saiz. Guests who attend Music Fiesta can stay and enjoy that evening's Night Magic Glow, Drone Show sponsored by Sandia Resort and Casino, Team Fastrax Skydiving team and AfterGlow fireworks.

Annular Solar Eclipse: This year's Balloon Fiesta event has a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of viewing the Annular Solar Eclipse during the International Balloon Fiesta starting at 9:13 a.m. on Saturday, October 14, 2023. NASA will have a presence at this year's Balloon Fiesta with representatives staffing a tent and giving out complimentary viewing glasses for all guests to enjoy the eclipse.

More at Balloon Fiesta Park: Guests will also be able to visit more than 40 food concessionaires and 40 different merchandise vendors, as well as enjoy returning attractions like the Artisans at Balloon Fiesta, a sand sculpture artist and Balloon Discovery Center. Guest options including Chasers' Club, Gondola Club, Glamping, Camp 505 and the Concierge Program will be available this year.

About the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, powered by ExxonMobil is a festival of hot air balloons that takes place in October in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. It is the largest gathering of balloons and balloonists in the world. The 2022 event generated \$203.19 Million into the Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico economies. For details on events, schedule, entertainment and photographs visit our website www.balloonfiesta.com and follow us on Twitter @BalloonFiesta and Facebook.

2023 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

2023 BALLOON FIESTA TICKETS GO ON SALE APRIL 7

Albuquerque, NM – Tickets for the 2023 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, powered by ExxonMobil will be available for purchase online, Friday, April 7, 9 a.m. MDT. Guests planning to attend the international 51st event will be able to purchase tickets for general admission, Park & Ride, and Balloon Fiesta hospitality programs. Available tickets include:

- General Admission: One session (morning or evening) will sell for \$15 this year and are available to guests 12 and older (12 and younger are free).
- Park & Ride: One, session ticket includes a round-trip to Balloon Fiesta Park from a remote location and admission. Adults \$25 (13-61), Seniors (62 & Older) \$23, Children (6-12) \$10 and children 5 and younger are free. Locations for Park & Ride include: Coronado Center, Hoffmantown Church, Cottonwood Mall and Intel.
- Gondola Club: A private area, with a picturesque view of the field, the Gondola Club offers guests delicious food, local entertainment, premium parking, courtesy shuttles, and outdoor seating. Tickets are \$130 per adult, per session and \$70 per child (ages 4-12) per session.
- Chasers' Club: Access to Chasers' Club includes admission, private patio seating, private restroom access, a catered meal and access to a bar. Tickets are \$65 per person, per session and children 6 and younger are free.
- Glamping: The glamorous camping experience includes a three-night stay in a safari tent, admission to the event for all sessions during the stay, premium parking, linens, heater and refrigerator, access to power, restroom and shower trailers and more. The cost for the three-night experience starts at \$1,600.
- Concierge Program: With a personal concierge and golf cart transportation for the duration of one session, guests will be treated to a behind-the-scenes look at Balloon Fiesta Park. The package includes one premium parking pass, general admission tickets and a welcome gift. The cost for the package starts at \$350 for two guests.
- Fiesta Sky Box: A VIP experience for groups of up to 20 guests, Fiesta Sky Box includes access to a specially outfitted shipping container with an elevated view of Balloon Fiesta. The package includes admission for 20 guests, private access to the Box's upper deck seating, food, drinks and more. The cost is \$5,000 per session.
- Camp 505: New this year, is a camping option for Balloon Fiesta guests, located within walking distance to Balloon Fiesta's Launch Field. Participating guests will stay in Balloon Fiesta-branded tents and have the option to take home, the tent and other Balloon Fiesta-branded camping equipment when they leave. Guests will have access to a hospitality area with a fire pit and games, a phone charging station, filtered water and more.

For more information on all tickets and to purchase visit the Balloon Fiesta Ticket Page. About the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, powered by ExxonMobil is a festival of hot air balloons that takes place in October in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. It is the largest gathering of balloons and balloonists in the world. The 2022 event generated \$203.19 Million into the Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico economies. For details on events, schedule, entertainment and photographs visit our website www.balloonfiesta.com and follow us on Twitter @BalloonFiesta and Facebook.

2023 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA ANNOUNCES 2023 NEW SPECIAL SHAPES

51st Event Includes 12 New Special Shape Hot Air Balloons

Albuquerque, NM - The 51st Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta will host a variety of special shape balloons as a part of the world's premier balloon event, October 7-15. This year's event will include 107 special shape balloons representing six countries; 12 of those shapes will make their first Balloon Fiesta appearance.

Special shape hot air balloons (and the pilot's home country) making their inaugural appearance at Balloon Fiesta include:

Balloon Name	County
Baby T-Rex	United States
Bella the Bulldog	United Kingdom
Coocko Mag	Brazil
Dyno	United Kingdom
First in Flight	United States
Jota Balloon	Brazil
Lulu	United States
Magic Luna	Brazil
Milkyway	United States
Pico	United Kingdom
Seabed	Brazil
Vampirella	Belgium

In addition to these new balloons, many Balloon Fiesta Special Shape favorites will also be making a return. These include Airabelle of Canada; Darth Vader of the United States; and Tom Cat of the United States. Here is a full list of special-shape balloons: <https://balloonfiesta.com/Special-Shape-Rodeo>

While many of the special shapes will be flying throughout the event, Balloon Fiesta has several events featuring special shape balloons. The Special Shape Rodeo™ (morning) and Glowdeo™ (evening) events will take place Thursday, October 12 and Friday, October 13.

More information on Special Shapes at Balloon Fiesta can be found, here: <https://balloonfiesta.com/Special-Shape>.

The new special shapes can be seen, here: <https://www.tiktok.com/@balloonfiesta>

2023 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

NEW SPECIAL SHAPES (continued)

About the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is an annual festival of hot air balloons that takes place every October in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. It is the largest gathering of balloons and balloonists in the world. The 2019 event generated \$186.82 Million into the Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico economies. For details on events, schedule, entertainment and photographs visit our website www.balloonfiesta.com and follow us on Twitter @BalloonFiesta and Facebook.



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STORY IDEAS

- New Balloon Fiesta Executive Director, Sam Parks
- First-year rookie pilot, Paul Smith, former Balloon Fiesta Executive Director
- 2023 Annular Eclipse
- Albuquerque Aloft – over 100 balloons launch from select Albuquerque and Rio Rancho schools prior to the start of Balloon Fiesta.
- Pilots with the greatest number of years of attendance in succession:
 - 48 Years: Tarp Head & Bill Glen
 - 47 Years: Orv Olivier
- Best wedding proposals at the Balloon Fiesta
- Cost to buy and operate a balloon
- Craziest memories/events from the Balloon Fiesta
- Camp 505
- Favorite special shapes
- Fireworks shows and the people behind them
- Flying Competitions
- History of ballooning in Albuquerque
- Games for balloonists
- How special shapes balloons are manufactured
- How a balloon is built
- Why Albuquerque for the Balloons? -Weather
- How ground crews get the field in shape and ready
- 78-acre field – size equal to 56 football fields
- Meteorologists
- Montgolfier Diplome – the most distinguished ballooning award
- New/foreign pilots
- Official photographers
- Oldest/newest sponsors
- Oldest/newest food concessionaire
- Oldest/youngest pilot
- Oldest/youngest volunteer
- Prizes and competitions
- RV cities on and near Balloon Fiesta Park during Balloon Fiesta
- Remote Control (RC) Balloons
- Safety – what it takes to make a safe Balloon Fiesta on the ground and in the air
- Smallest/largest balloon
- World records set at Balloon Fiesta
- X Marks the Spot landing spaces

GORDON BENNETT GAS RACE

STORY IDEAS:

- What is the Gordon Bennett?
- Who was James Gordon Bennett? Creating challenging competitions – including the world’s first auto race and first airplane race, was just one of his passions.
- Life aboard a Gordon Bennett gas balloon. Space and togetherness are at a premium; can you imagine being cooped up with a friend or spouse in a closet with no roof 10,000 feet above the earth for three days?
- What is their “shopping list” for the trip
- How do you go to the bathroom up there (The most frequently asked question)?
- Weather: how does it affect the Gordon Bennett? What is ideal weather, and what causes problems?
- What goes up must come down: Challenges of landing
- Officials and international cooperation: An international team under the supervision of the FAI will officiate the race.
- Command Center: the team that watches over the race 24-7, working with the pilots, their ground crews and support members, air traffic control, and law enforcement was built in Albuquerque to run the America’s Challenge and are among the most experienced in the world
- Chasing: Yes, the Gordon Bennett balloons have chase crews – on steroids! Their long-distance journeys are an adventure in themselves.
- A second chance? Several of the international pilots, including Willi Eimers, Krzysztof Zapart, Max and Andreas Michels, Balthasar Wicki, Benoît Pelard, Benoît Péterlé, and two of the American teams came to Albuquerque to fly in last year’s America’s Challenge, only to be grounded by persistent bad weather. But they’re back to try again.
- The Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett is sanctioned and run by the FAI (Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, the World Air Sports Federation). The FAI governs, promotes, and celebrates air sports, from space flight to paragliding and all forms of aviation, and certifies world records.

For additional facts and tips, visit our recent news releases, here: <https://balloonfiesta.com/News-Updates>

WHILE YOU'RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

Visitors to Albuquerque are treated to an authentic Southwestern experience. As one of the oldest cities in the U.S. (founded in 1706), Albuquerque boasts a unique multicultural heritage and history where Native American, Hispanic, Latino, Anglo, Western and other cultural influences are a part of everyday life. Nowhere is the confluence of past and present more dramatic than here in Albuquerque, where the modern city skyline is nestled between ancient volcanoes, the beautiful Sandia Mountains and an endless blue sky.

WHAT'S NEW

While exploring Albuquerque, you'll notice the more than \$300 million in hospitality investments made in recent years, including luxury property Hotel Chaco in the Sawmill District and the renovated historic El Vado and Monterey motels on Central Avenue (Route 66). Additions to the city include Sawmill Market, 505 Central and Tin Can Alley food halls—making Albuquerque the food hall capital of the state—the Hacienda Spa at Los Poblanos Historic Inn & Organic Farm and new developments at Plaza Don Luis in Old Town, to include wine-tasting rooms, a taproom, restaurants and retail. With the once-in-a decade “Dream of Flight” renovation project underway and increased service at the Albuquerque International Sunport, there has never been a better time to connect with this vibrant Southwestern city.

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

Albuquerque is home to more than 20 museums and cultural centers, featuring everything from art and history to turquoise and nuclear science. Historic Old Town offers more than 150 shops, restaurants and galleries within a walkable plaza. VisitABQ.org/culture

NATIVE AMERICAN PUEBLOS

Albuquerque is the gateway to Native American pueblo culture. The state is home to 23 Native American tribes comprising 19 pueblos, three Apache tribes (the Fort Sill Apache Tribe, the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the Mescalero Apache Tribe), and the Navajo Nation, which spreads through New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. For more information, visit the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. IndianPueblo.org; (505) 843-7270

HISPANIC CULTURE

Explore an extensive collection of traditional and contemporary Hispanic art or experience an outdoor concert, dance performance or film at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. While there, don't miss the Torreón, which houses the 4,000-square-foot “Mundos de Mestizaje,” North America's largest concave fresco, celebrating 3,000 years of Hispanic history. NHCCNM.org; (505) 246-2261

ARTS

Albuquerque's incredible arts scene offers a vibrancy and color that mirrors the city and its residents. A multitude of cultures have inspired remarkable art and architectural styles in the city—including stunning public art installations. Galleries and museums showcase a range of artistic styles, offering a thriving arts scene with exhibitions featuring visual arts technology and new media, performance poetry, jewelry and much more. VisitABQ.org/art

WHILE YOU'RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

PERFORMING ARTS

Albuquerque is home to a thriving performing arts scene, with several venues offering tickets ranging from \$10-\$15. Albuquerque's flourishing arts community offers the chance to catch amazing live theater, dance, music, poetry and other performing arts at one of Albuquerque's many venues.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

With more than 310 days of sunshine per year and an average altitude around 5,500 feet, Albuquerque and its neighboring two-mile-high Sandia Mountains provide excellent terrain for hiking and biking in the summer, and sledding or snowshoeing in the winter. The city's location in a high-desert rift valley also lends itself to hot air ballooning, cycling, affordable golfing, rock climbing, bouldering, geocaching, bird watching, fishing, rafting, kayaking, paddle boarding, llama trekking, horseback riding and much more throughout the year. VisitABQ.org/outdoors

CULINARY

New Mexican food is truly unique. The star ingredient is the chile pepper—our state vegetable. Harvested in the late summer while still green, the long, narrow peppers are served freshly roasted and peeled, or frozen for use throughout the year. Most often you'll find green chile made into a spicy sauce that's ladled over enchiladas, burritos and stuffed sopapillas. Red chile peppers, left on the plants to ripen to a deep garnet color, are strung into ristras to dry. These dried red chile peppers are rehydrated and pureed into a velvety smooth sauce that adorns huevos rancheros, tamales and enchiladas—served stacked, not rolled. Our state question is “red or green?” If you want both, answer “Christmas” to order like a local.

Aside from traditional New Mexican food, the city's culinary scene is a cultural melting pot with Italian, French, Brazilian, Indian, Chinese, Thai, Latin, Southern soul food and more. A blend of upscale establishments and casual comfort food is sprinkled throughout the city, allowing for a scene that's always deliciously accessible. VisitABQ.org/cuisine

WINE & BEER

New Mexico is the oldest wine-growing region in the country, and area wineries offer tastings and tours. The city is also home to an ever-growing number of local microbreweries and taprooms, and the nation's first officially designated Brewery District. VisitABQ.org/wine-beer

MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

ABQ BioPark

The ABQ BioPark is an award-winning environmental museum comprising four facilities: Aquarium, Botanic Garden, Zoo and Tingley Beach. The Aquarium houses a popular River Otter exhibit; a new Butterflies and Bees exhibit recently opened at the Botanic Garden; and the Zoo is now home to the Penguin Chill exhibit and brand-new Asia expansion. <https://www.cabq.gov/artsculture/biopark>; (505) 768-2000

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Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

WHILE YOU'RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

SANDIA PEAK AERIAL TRAMWAY & SKI AREA

Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway & Ten 3 Restaurant

North America's longest aerial tramway travels 2.7 miles from the base of the Sandia foothills northeast of Albuquerque to the 10,378-foot Sandia Peak. In the summer, enjoy the cool temperatures and fresh mountain air while mountain biking or hiking on top of the peak. Don't miss the most recent addition, TEN 3 Restaurant, where you can dine at over 10,000 feet. SandiaPeak.com; (505) 856-7325 | Ten3Tram.com; (505) 764-8363

PETROGLYPH NATIONAL MONUMENT

More than 20,000 images are carved into rocks at Petroglyph National Monument, providing an opportunity for people today to share the cultures of those who long ago inhabited the Rio Grande Valley. The monument provides a variety of hiking opportunities from basic, nearly flat hikes to moderate hikes of several miles. NPS.gov/petr; (505) 897-8814

GOLF IN ALBUQUERQUE

Green fees are considerably less expensive on our golf courses than at comparable courses around the country. The Albuquerque area offers a plethora of public and private courses in varying levels of difficulty, several of which are on Native American land, or visit Topgolf for a more casual experience. VisitABQ.org/golf

FILM PRODUCTION IN ALBUQUERQUE

MovieMaker Magazine consistently names Albuquerque a top place to live and work as a moviemaker. "Breaking Bad" and "Better Call Saul" have put Albuquerque in the spotlight in recent years and have drawn visitors from around the world. In addition to those productions, other recent film and TV projects include:

Bands of Enchantment • Flaming Hot • Poker Face • Stranger Things • Whiskey Tango Foxtrot • Independence Day: Resurgence • Sicario • The Avengers • Terminator Salvation • Transformers • The Book of Eli • No Country for Old Men • The Lone Ranger • Crazy Heart • and many more! VisitABQ.org/film

AROUND THE CITY DURING BALLOON FIESTA

Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta®

During the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta®, the city is a flurry of activity. After you have covered every inch of this year's Fiesta, check out VisitABQ.org/Balloon-Fiesta for additional events and activities taking place throughout the city.

Balloon Fiesta is extra special this year as the second Saturday (Oct. 14) coincides with the annular/"ring of fire" eclipse, for which Albuquerque is in the path of totality. Visitors can watch balloons go up in the morning, and see another show in the sky about an hour after they land.

Be sure to stop by the Visit Albuquerque Mobile Visitors Center, located midfield at Balloon Fiesta Park, to pick up a copy of the Albuquerque City Guide, which includes coupons to local businesses, a citywide calendar of events, and helpful information about things to do and see in the city. While there, snap a photo in the Albuquerque Frame—a giant 8-by-8-foot picture frame located midfield—with the amazing backdrop of colorful balloons. And don't miss the Visit Albuquerque "Red or Green?" hot air balloon in the skies during Fiesta, which celebrates two beloved Albuquerque treasures – chile and ballooning.

For more information on all there is to do in Albuquerque, go to VisitABQ.org or follow @VisitABQ on social media.

Thank you for visiting Albuquerque!

NOTES

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Did You Know?

VisitABQ.org



Recognized as one of the most culturally diverse cities in the country, Albuquerque's ethnic tapestry is reflected in its architecture, artwork, cultural centers and cuisine. Countless customs and traditions are a vibrant part of daily life in the city, making Albuquerque the cultural capital of the Southwest.

1

The Albuquerque metro area has just over **920,000 residents**.

2

The city spans 187 square miles at elevations ranging from **4,500 to 6,500 feet above sea level**.

3

The **breakfast burrito** is said to have originated at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® in the 1970s.

4

The Sandia Mountains on the city's east side rise to more than 10,600 feet in elevation and turn a **watermelon pink color at sunset**.

5

The official New Mexico state question is, "**Red or Green?**" referring to red or green chile when ordering New Mexican cuisine. For those who want both red and green chile, tell the server, "Christmas."

6

Albuquerque is home to **more than 20 museums and cultural centers**, a **historic Old Town** area featuring more than 150 shops, galleries and restaurants, and a **nostalgic stretch of Route 66** that combines vintage and modern for an exciting visitor experience.

From balloon-filled skies to neon-lit streets, give your best shots the chance to be featured on our @VisitABQ social pages by tagging your photos with the hashtag #TrueABQ.

Did you know that the Balloon Fiesta is the world's most photographed event?

Commemorate your visit to the Fiesta with a photo inside Albuquerque's life-sized picture frame. The frame is located midfield at the Albuquerque Visitor Information Booth.



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ALBUQUERQUE

CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE