



### **Introduction to Albuquerque, New Mexico**

Located in west central New Mexico between the Sandia Mountains and the Rio Grande, Albuquerque is the largest city in the state and one of the nation's fastest growing cities (500,000 residents with 16% growth). Founded in 1706 by the governor of New Mexico, Albuquerque was named after the Duke of Albuquerque (with an "r"), the viceroy of New Spain. The Santa Fe Trail in the early 1800s introduced settlers to the region; a US army post was established in 1846; the Santa Fe Railroad in late 1800s and the Route 66 highway in the 1900s spurred additional growth. Today, Albuquerque is a center for timber, livestock and farming, and a growing area for high-technology industries. The city is home to Intel's largest manufacturing facility. At Kirtland Air Force Base south of the city is Sandia National Laboratories, a center for electronic and industrial research run by the US Department of Energy. Other industries important to the economy include health services, banking and tourism. Because of Albuquerque's high technology and military industries, it is home to a large number of people with doctorate degrees, ranking in the top ten nationally in quantity of PhDs per capita for larger cities.

## Albuquerque Culture

Albuquerque's culture is steeped in its past. There are many preserved pueblos in the area, including Taos Pueblo. The Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, located northwest of the city, showcases Pueblo languages, customs, art and food. The Petroglyph National Monument, about 10 miles northwest of the city, has thousands of prehistoric rock etchings created by Native Americans who initially inhabited the region. The Gathering of the Nations Powwow, held each April, offers Native American arts and crafts and dance competitions. The State Fair held each September includes rodeos Native American dances, livestock demonstrations, food and live music. Other area attractions include the Albuquerque Biological Park, Petroglyph National Monument, the National Atomic Museum and the Natural History Museum. The Sandia Mountains have caves containing remains of the continent's oldest humans.

## Albuquerque Leisure and Outdoors

The city is home to minor league baseball's Isotopes, the AAA affiliate of the Florida Marlins. But with the natural splendor the area has to offer, why settle for spectator sports? Albuquerque is loaded with city-owned parks, with more than 1 park for every square mile. Just 10 miles north of the city is the Sandia Lakes Recreation Area, with three great fishing lakes. The Sandia Peak Ski Area, about a half-hour away, has 26 slopes and more than 20 miles of trails for cross-country skiing. The 10,300-ft summit is accessible via a 2.7-mile aerial tramway that offers scenic views of the area. The 7-mile La Luz Trail to the top of the Sandias is excellent for hiking, with views of desert, forest and the city. Hot air ballooning is another popular and readily-available way to take in the great views. Albuquerque is a popular destination for golfers as there are 14 courses in and around the city.

