

New Mexico

New Mexico calls itself the land of enchantment...and it has enchanted people for thousands of years. Native Americans, mainly Pueblo and Navajo, have built settlements on these lands for centuries. Hispanics from south of what is today the US – Mexico border ventured to this region in search of gold and other riches. Later, Anglos from the United States came into the region, many by the Santa Fe Trail. Today, the state of New Mexico still draws people of diverse backgrounds and in the towns of Santa Fe and Albuquerque you can find a sushi bar next door to a restaurant serving Northern New Mexico cuisine or fare from Europe.

In the northern part of the state the towns of Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Taos attract tourists to their art galleries, restaurants and eclectic shops. Most of the population is well to the north of our route and the famous ski resorts are also located in the northern part of the state.

Amtrak takes us through the vast deserts and mountain regions of southern New Mexico. Here you will find large ranches that nowadays struggle to survive in a global economy. In addition to beef and dairy cattle, agricultural efforts on crops like chili peppers, cotton, peanuts, onions and hay make a large contribution to the New Mexico economy. Closer to El Paso, the train passes by farms which make use of the waters of the Rio Grande River for irrigation.

There are plenty of outdoor activities in New Mexico. From hot air ballooning to backpacking, you can find an activity you enjoy in this state. Public lands make up more than one third of the state. Many are open to the public for recreation, including 16 areas administered by the National Park Service.

Source(s):

www.newmexico.org

<http://www.agclassroom.org/kids/stats/newmexico.pdf>

Author(s):

Written by James E. Miculka with the National Park Service based with the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University, as part of a National Park Service Trails and Rails project funded by Amtrak, 2009.