

MEDIA GUIDE 2025



ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

Media Guide - July 2025



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FOLLOW & FRIEND BALLOON FIESTA

THE OFFICIAL HASHTAG IS #BALLOONFIESTA



The Garrity Group congratulates Balloon Fiesta for all of the hard work that went into the 2025 event! Our team is humbled and honored to lead the 53rd ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta media relations team.

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Photo courtesy of Alee Noland, Don Henderson, and Triston Garcia



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3

7:00 a.m. Balloons Aloft (at local elementary schools)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4 - EXXONMOBIL DAY

5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show

6:00 a.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower

6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol

6:30 a.m. Krispy Kreme Morning Glow

7:00 a.m. Opening Ceremonies (*Chile Flight-Formation Flight Team Fly-Over*)

7:00 a.m. Mass Ascension, *powered by ExxonMobil*

8:00am - Noon Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

10:00 a.m. Chainsaw Carving Auction

3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

5:00 p.m. Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.*

6:30 p.m. Twilight Twinkle Glow™, *powered by ExxonMobil*

7:30 p.m. Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.*

7:45 p.m. Drone Light Show

8:00 p.m.* AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show

6:00 a.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower

6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol

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 Balloon Exhibition), *sponsored by City of Las Vegas, New Mexico*

8:00am - Noon Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

9:00 a.m. Fiesta of Wheels Car Show (North end of Launch Field)

10:00 a.m. Chainsaw Carving Auction

11:00 a.m. Balloon Fiesta Pin Trading (Group Tour Tent, North End of Main Street)

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ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

2025 Media Guide

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5 (CONTINUED)

- 3:00-6:00 p.m. Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
- 5:00 p.m. Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.*
- 6:00 p.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
- 6:30 p.m. Balloon Glow
- 7:30 p.m. Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.*
- 7:45 p.m. Drone Light Show
- 8:00 p.m.* AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6 - NEW MEXICO DAY

- 5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show
- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol
- 6:00 a.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
- 7:00 a.m. Balloon Launch
- 8:00 a.m. Fly In Competition Launch
- 8:00 a.m.-Noon Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7 - COCA-COLA DAY

- 5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show
- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol
- 6:00 a.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
- 7:00 a.m. Balloon Launch
- 8:00 a.m. Fly In Competition Launch
- 8:00 a.m.-Noon Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8

- 5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show
- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol
- 6:00 a.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
- 6:30 a.m. Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
- 7:00 a.m. Flight of Nations Mass Ascension
- 7:30-11:00 a.m. Fiesta de Los Globitos (Remote Control Balloons Exhibition)
Sponsored by City of Las Vegas, New Mexico
- 8:00 a.m.-Noon Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

[CONTINUED]

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

5:45 a.m.	Drone Light Show
6:00 a.m.	Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
6:00 a.m.	Dawn Patrol
7:00 a.m.	Special Shape Rodeo™, <i>presented by Duke City Redi-Mix</i>
7:00 a.m.	Balloon Launch
8:00 a.m.	Fly In Competition
8:00 a.m.-Noon	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
10:00 a.m.	Chainsaw Carving Auction
3:00-6:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
5:00 p.m.	Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.</i>
6:30 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
8:00 p.m.*	AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, KIDS' DAY SPONSORED BY CHICK-FIL-A

4:30 a.m.	Kids' Day Goodie Bag Distribution (South of the Main Street Stage)
5:45 a.m.	Drone Light Show
6:00 a.m.	Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
6:00 a.m.	Dawn Patrol
7:00 a.m.	Special Shape Rodeo™
7:00 a.m.	Balloon Launch
7:30-11 a.m.	Fiesta de Los Globitos (Remote Control Balloons Exhibition) <i>Sponsored by City of Las Vegas, New Mexico</i>
8:00 a.m.	Fly In Competition
8:00 a.m.-Noon	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
10:00 a.m.	Chainsaw Carving Auction
3:00-6:00 p.m.	Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
5:00 p.m.	Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, <i>sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.</i>
6:30 p.m.	Special Shape Glowdeo™

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10 (CONTINUED)

- 7:30 p.m. Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.*
- 7:45 p.m. Drone Light Show
- 8:00 p.m.* AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11 - EXXONMOBIL DAY

- 5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show
- 6:00 a.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol
- 6:30 a.m. Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
- 7:00 a.m. Mass Ascension, *powered by ExxonMobil*
- 8:00am-Noon Chainsaw Carving Exhibition
- 10:00 a.m. Chainsaw Carving Auction
- 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
- 5:00 p.m. Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.*
- 6:30 p.m. Night Magic™ Glow, *powered by ExxonMobil*
- 6:30 p.m. Fiesta de Los Globitos (Remote Control Balloons Exhibition)
Sponsored by City of Las Vegas, New Mexico
- 7:30 p.m. Team Fastrax™ Skydiving, *sponsored by Accident Insurance Company Inc.*
- 7:45 p.m. Drone Light Show
- 8:00 p.m.* AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12

- 5:45 a.m. Drone Light Show
- 6:00 a.m. Pilot Briefing, Pilot Briefing Tower
- 6:00 a.m. Dawn Patrol
- 6:30 a.m. Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
- 7:00 a.m. Farewell Mass Ascension, *presented by News Radio 770 KKOB*
- 8:00 a.m.-Noon Chainsaw Carving Exhibition

***All times may change due to field/weather conditions**

EVENTS INSIDE THE PARK

PILOT BRIEFING

October 4-12 (every morning 6:00 a.m.)

This provides pilots an overview of the day's flying activities, event updates, safety briefing and detailed weather forecast for the session's flying events. The briefing is open to the public and located on the west side of the park near the intersection of West Wind and Key Grab roads.

DAWN PATROL

October 4-12 (every morning 6:00 a.m.)

First held in 1978, Dawn Patrol is not only beautiful but practical. Dawn Patrol pilots take off before sunrise and fly until landing sites become visible. This pre-dawn flight gives the rest of the pilots an idea of wind speeds and direction at different altitudes.

KRISPY KREME MORNING GLOW

October 4, 5, 8, 11, 12 (6:30 a.m.)

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 4, 5, 8, 11, 12 (7 a.m.)

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.

SPECIAL SHAPE RODEO™, GLOWDEO™

October 9, 10 (7 a.m./ 6:30 p.m.)

The most whimsical of all 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.

FLIGHT OF NATIONS

October 8 (7 a.m.)

This special ballooning event, which started in 1998, highlights the international flair of Balloon Fiesta; Flight of Nations showcases all 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.

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EVENTS INSIDE THE PARK

TWILIGHT TWINKLE GLOW™, BALLOON GLOW & NIGHT MAGIC GLOW™

October 4, 5, 11 (6:30 p.m.)

Balloon Glows are highly anticipated and attended events. While each glow has its own name, they work the same. 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 AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show.

AFTERGLOW™ FIREWORKS SHOW

October 4, 5, 9, 10, 11 (8 p.m.)

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.

FIESTA DE LOS GLOBITOS

Mornings: October 5, 8, 10 (7:30-11 a.m.)

Evenings: October 11 (6:30 p.m.)

Balloon Fiesta's fifth 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 5, 8 and 10 and the glow during the evening session on October 11.

DRONE LIGHT SHOW

Mornings: (every morning 5:45 a.m.)

Evenings: October 4, 5, 9, 10, 11 (7:45 p.m.)

Over 500 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.

ACTIVITIES INSIDE THE PARK

Additional Attractions

BALLOON COMPETITIONS

All Balloon competitions at Balloon Fiesta are fly-in tasks. Pilots launch their balloon at least one mile from the launch field and attempt to fly to the field and the targets. There are different types of targets based on the task that is called. A few of the tasks used at Balloon Fiesta are listed below.

Judge Declared Goal is when a pilot drops their marker on the X. The closest to the center is the best score.

The Hesitation Waltz is a series of X's laid out on the field. A pilot may choose which X to drop their marker on. The closest to the center of the X is the best score.

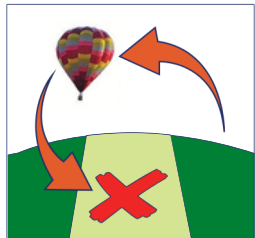
Minimum or Maximum Double Drop consists of 2 big triangles on the field with an X between them. The pilot must drop a marker in each of the triangles. The largest (maximum) or smallest (minimum) distance is the best score.

The Sid Cutter Memorial is a task designed specifically for Balloon Fiesta. A small boat is placed on the field near an X. The pilot attempts to drop their marker on or in the boat.

Ring Toss occurs on Thursday and Friday. In addition to one or more of the tasks listed above, Balloon Fiesta sets up 25' poles. Pilots attempt to ring the pole with a 14 inch plastic ring. Ring the pole, win the prize, usually cash. If more than one pilot rings the same pole, they split the prize.



DECLARED GOALS



FLY IN TASK



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ACTIVITIES INSIDE THE PARK

Additional Attractions

Visit balloonfiesta.com/Purchase-Tickets for pricing and availability

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. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

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 and hot food are available to Chasers' Club members. Guests can also purchase alcoholic beverages from the Chase Lounge. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

FIESTA SKY BOX

Fiesta Sky Boxes are an all-inclusive 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 Balloon Fiesta 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 and the Balloon Discovery Center.

GLAMPING

Located on Balloon Fiesta Park, but outside of the event boundaries, Glamping at Balloon Fiesta is an experience like no other. Enjoy a picturesque view of Balloon Fiesta's balloons from the Glamping 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.

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ACTIVITIES INSIDE THE PARK

Additional Attractions

Visit balloonfiesta.com/Purchase-Tickets for pricing and availability

CAMP 505

Located on Balloon Fiesta Park, but outside of the event boundaries, 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 fire pit and games, access to a phone charging station, filtered water and more.

BALLOON DISCOVERY CENTER

Interactive balloon exhibits demonstrate the principles of lighter-than-air flight with hands-on activities, simulations, arts and crafts. This tent is located on the North end of the field next to the Artisans tent. Guests can enjoy the Balloon Discovery Center every morning from 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and every evening from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

MERCHANDISE TENTS

Official Balloon Fiesta Merchandise is available in two tents, one on each end of Main Street. Featuring hundreds of Balloon and Balloon Fiesta related items, this is the perfect place to get the official souvenirs. In addition to the highly collectible official pins and patches, a wide variety of clothing is available – jackets, hoodies, tee-shirts, gloves, etc. – in multiple designs and patterns. Additional items include, keychains, magnets, posters and more. And don't forget the official calendar and program of Balloon Fiesta. While they are open for every session, guests can shop year-round online at BalloonFiestaStuff.com.



Photo courtesy of Don Henderson

GETTING TO BALLOON FIESTA PARK

WEBSITE - balloonfiesta.com

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

OFFICIAL APP

The official Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta app will include important event and schedule information. Available for download from Google and Apple App Stores.

ADMISSION

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

The Balloon Fiesta does not offer refunds for unused tickets. However, rain checks will be issued if an individual session must be canceled due to weather or other safety considerations, without any balloons inflating. The tickets can be used for any other balloon session at the 2025 Balloon Fiesta.

View maps of Balloon Fiesta Park, along with directions, parking information and tips for getting around the Park, at balloonfiesta.com.

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. 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. Bike Valet is available during all Balloon Fiesta sessions. Hours of Operation:

- Days with dual sessions: Morning Session is 4:30 am - 10:30 am and the Evening Session is 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm.
- Days with only morning sessions: 5:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

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GETTING TO BALLOON FIESTA PARK

PARKING

Parking is \$20 per vehicle per session (cash only). 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 specific name, and the gates are numbered, guests should remember the name and number of the gate through which they entered the field. QR code maps will be available around the field to help you navigate back to your car. Parking opens at 4:30 a.m. for the morning session and 3:00 p.m. for the evening session.



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GETTING TO BALLOON FIESTA PARK

PARK & RIDE

There are four convenient locations available for Balloon Fiesta guests to park their car and get a bus ride to Balloon Fiesta Park. Park & Ride tickets will be sold online at balloonfiesta.com/Park-Ride 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 4:00 a.m. and 5:30 a.m. for morning sessions. Buses will start return service to the park and ride locations at 8:00 a.m. and will run until approximately 11:30 a.m.
- Afternoon/Evening Sessions – Each park and ride location will have two waves of shuttles to Balloon Fiesta Park loading approximately at 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. for afternoon sessions. Buses will start return service to the park and ride locations at 7:00 p.m. 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 \$23 (62 & Older), Children \$13 (6-12), children 5 or younger are free. Pricing for purchases made after midnight for a session on the day of is: Adults \$28 (13-61), Seniors \$26 (62 & Older), Children \$13 (6-12), children 5 or younger are free. Pricing, locations, schedules and tickets are available online at balloonfiesta.com/Park-Ride. There is no Park & Ride service on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, but traffic is usually lighter those days and typically there is plenty of parking available at Balloon Fiesta Park.

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 Balloon Fiesta Park. Our guests at the Coronado Mall and Hoffmantown Church locations will go through bag checks and metal detectors prior to boarding. Our guests arriving to the park from Cottonwood Mall and Intel 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.

NEW MEXICO DAY AND RAINCHECK POLICIES

NEW MEXICO DAY

October 6

New Mexico Day: In appreciation of New Mexico residents' continued support of the Balloon Fiesta, Monday, October 6, 2025, will be New Mexico Day at the Balloon Fiesta. New Mexico residents who show a photo ID or a utility bill with a New Mexico address will receive free admission to flying events for the day. Active-duty military can bring a military identification card and will also receive free admission. Tickets for children 12 and under are always free. New Mexico Day free admission does not include parking.

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, without any balloons inflating. Tickets can be used for any other balloon session at the 2025 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, and the tickets can be used for any other balloon session at the 53rd ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta.

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 at the 53rd ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta. 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 2025 session. "Bus only" tickets will be available online for \$13.00 to ride to the park for another session, based on availability.

BALLOON FIESTA EVENT SAFETY

The Balloon Fiesta Event Safety Team coordinates a multiagency presence at Balloon Fiesta Park that includes more than 20 federal, state, and local law enforcement, first responders 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 Event Safety Officers complement law enforcement and first responders. In 2025, the event will have more than 150 event safety officers 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 event 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 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:

- 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 Event Safety Officers before being allowed into 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 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 North of the main stage 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 another 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, concealed 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 aircrafts 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 is a federal offense.

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

VISITOR INFORMATION

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 guests can purchase a balloon ride from Balloon Fiesta Park during Balloon Fiesta. Rainbow Ryders: 800.725.2477, rainbowryders.com.

TRAVEL AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS

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

RV TRAVEL

Every year thousands of enthusiastic RVers gather around Balloon Fiesta Park and fill the RV lots with excitement and community spirit. Balloon Fiesta is proud to welcome RVers and look forward to hosting them year after year. RV sites go on sale every January. Keep an eye on our website at balloonfiesta.com/RVS/ and on social media for the official "Go Live" date. We'll announce the date shortly after this year's event concludes. If you have questions, please call 505.821.1000 or email rvspace@balloonfiesta.com.

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 - visitalbuquerque.org
Facebook: @VisitABQ
Twitter: @VisitABQ
Instagram: @visitabq

New Mexico Tourism Department
505-827-7400 - newmexico.org
Facebook: @NewMexico
Twitter: @NewMexico
Instagram: @newmexicotrue

BALLOON FIESTA COLLECTABLES

OFFICIAL 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, balloon glow pins and collectible pins from previous Balloon Fiestas.



While many vendors will sell balloon pins, the official pins are available only at the Official Merchandise tents at the north and south ends of the field. Official pins have the Balloon Fiesta logo on the back.

PIN TRADING

On the first Sunday and second Saturday, Balloon Fiesta hosts “Trading Only” sessions in the Group Tours Tent near the north end of Main Street with pin sales not 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.

BALLOON FIESTA POSTER

Balloon Fiesta has been working with artists since 1979 to bring amazing works of art in the form of our official serigraph poster. Serigraphs are captivating in appearance and the quality and clarity is appreciated over traditional printing. The serigraph process employs a mesh screen to apply ink to various surfaces. Stencils are created on the screen made with silk or synthetic mesh stretched tightly over a frame. The mesh blocks areas on the screen that are not meant to be printed. The ink is then passed through the open mesh spaces, usually with the help of a squeegee. To create a multi-colored image, like our Balloon Fiesta Poster, each color in the design needs a separate screen and printing pass, creating layers. This makes for an impressive, highly collectible piece of art.

[CONTINUED]

BALLOON FIESTA COLLECTABLES

BALLOON FIESTA POSTER CONTINUED

This year's Serigraph Poster was designed and painted by Jason Valencia. He is a Native American, born and raised in the Pueblo of San Felipe, New Mexico. He is a self-taught artist who started painting in 1998. He works with acrylic paints to create his pueblo style customized art. His work is authentic, colorful and inspiring. He enjoys painting and creating his art while still learning as he goes.



Jason is a proud father of five children. He loves teaching youth the skills he was blessed with, hoping they will be inspired to carry it on into the future. Jason's art has been showcased at SWAIA-Santa Fe Indian Market; the American Indian Arts Festival at Autry Museum in Los Angeles, CA; the Heard Museum in Phoenix, AZ; the Cherokee Art Market in Tulsa, OK and many more local events.

Signed and unsigned, numbered posters can be purchased in the Official Merchandise Tents, or online at BalloonFiestaStuff.com. In addition signed and unsigned metal prints of the poster art are also available.



BALLOON FIESTA RECOGNITIONS

HERITAGE AWARD - 2025

RAY BAIR

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® (AIBF) Heritage Award recognizes individuals who have significantly impacted Balloon Fiesta through preserving the organization's corporate or event history, promotion, communication, or other innovations that have been shown to help achieve AIBF's mission statement. This year's award recognizes longtime AIBF Board Member and ballooning safety advocate Raymond Bair.



Ray Bair has been involved in ballooning since the 1980s and began flying in the Balloon Fiesta in 1987. Licensed in both hot air and gas balloons, Ray has long been renowned in the ballooning community for his focus on safety and balloons, Ray has long been renowned in the ballooning community for his focus on safety and pilot development. For many years Ray was an Federal Aviation Administration Designated Examiner, certifying dozens of pilots for private and commercial licenses. He is known as an exacting, thorough and demanding flight instructor. Even when he flies for fun, he sets goals for himself (referred to as “tasks”) for every flight.

Ray has been a member of the AIBF Board of Directors since 1999, serving as Secretary in 2002-2005, Vice President in 2006-2007, and President in 2008-2009. He also headed the America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race Command Center for several years, has served on the Anderson Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum Board of Trustees and until recently organized the annual Christmas Eve Balloon Glow at Albuquerque's Arroyo del Oso Golf Course.

Ray was Balloon Federation of America President 2005–2007 and helped create the first BFA convention. He is also a Past-President of the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association (AAAA), where he remains quite active.

Ray is also highly respected for his prowess as a competitor. He is a former champion (in 2009) of Albuquerque's Top Gun Competition Ballooning Organization, and in 2021, at the age of 80, he came within six points of winning the Balloon Fiesta overall competition championship. Ray came in second, besting many of the nation's top competitive balloonists.

The Bair's are a ballooning and Balloon Fiesta family: wife Carol ran the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association's Pilot Hospitality Center at the Balloon Fiesta for two decades. Ray and Carol's sons John and David and granddaughter Erin are also pilots, making the Bair's one of America's first three-generation ballooning families.

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BALLOON FIESTA RECOGNITIONS

HERITAGE AWARD RECIPIENTS

In 2005, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® (heritage committee) established the Heritage Award honoring pioneers in ballooning and Balloon Fiesta in particular. Recognized with a special pin, the award is presented each year in recognition of those who have perpetuated the legacy they've helped to create.

Sid Cutter	2005
John Davis	2006
Bob and Marge Ruppenthal	2007
Dr. Tom McConnell	2008
Kim Vesely	2009
Tom Rutherford	2010
Jim Shiver	2011
Dick Brown	2012
Scott Appleman	2013
Wally Book	2014
Dick Rice	2015
Jacqueline Hockey	2016
Matt Guthrie	2017
Charlotte Kinney	2018
George Hahn	2019
Jim Byrd	2020
Mark Sullivan	2021
Paul Smith	2022
Chuck Raskob	2023
Rod May	2024



SCAN TO VIEW HERITAGE AWARD
RECIPIENTS & BIOGRAPHIES



Photo courtesy of Don Henderson

[CONTINUED]

BALLOON FIESTA RECOGNITIONS

HALL OF FAME

Hall of Fame inductees have contributed to the success of Balloon Fiesta through their gifts of time, energy and talent. The 2025 inductee will be announced during the event.

Sid Cutter	1983	Frank Mezzancello	2004
Tom Rutherford	1983	Carol Rymer Davis	2005
Charles L. Hines	1984	Steve Yazzie	2006
Harry Kinney	1984	Al Tetreault	2007
Ben Abruzzo	1985	Harry T. Season	2009
Maxie Anderson	1985	Pat J. Brake	2010
John C. Davis IV	1985	Bruce King	2010
Sheri Moore	1987	Sam Baxter	2011
Marge Ruppenthal	1988	Richard Abruzzo	2011
Bob Ruppenthal	1991	Ray Bair	2012
Jacqueline Hockey	1992	Rodney A. May	2012
Jim Shiver	1993	Kim Vesely	2012
Al Kinney	1994	John R. Sena	2013
Thomas McConnell, MD	1995	Dick Rice	2016
Bruce W. Hale	1997	Scott Appelman	2017
Jim “Badtoe” Benson	1998	Charlotte Kinney	2018
Jim Baca	1998	Randy LeFevre	2019
Betty Perkins	1998	Jim Byrd	2020
Aubrey Cookman	1998	Ken Tuley (Art Lloyd Jr.)	2021
Mark Sullivan	1998	Jewel Cutter	2022
Jodi Baugh	1999	Paul Smith	2022
Linda Rutherford	2001	Nancy Wertz	2023
George Hahn	2002	Steve Stucker	2023
JW Byrd	2004	Chuck Raskob	2024

SCAN TO VIEW HALL OF FAME MEMBERS & BIOGRAPHIES



(1983 – 1999)



(2000 – Present)

ABOUT BALLOON FIESTA

The ExxonMobil 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 52 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. 2025 marks the 53rd event for the ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

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. All of the balloons launch from Balloon Fiesta Park, an 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.



Photo courtesy of Triston Garcia

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Balloon Fiesta is managed throughout the year by a volunteer board of 24 directors. In addition to event planning, they address complex policy, administrative, safety and traffic issues. Each year, the board elects its members. Every two years, the board elects its officers.

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.

OFFICERS

President: Neil Jackson

Vice President: Mark Sullivan

Secretary: Gary Bennett

Treasurer: Jeff Lawrence

DIRECTORS

JR Allison

Tania Armenta

Ray Bair

Peg Billson

Jay Czar

John Davis

Barbara Fricke

Jim Garcia

Matt Guthrie

Steve Komadina, M.D.

Jerry Lovato

J.J. Mancini

Rod May

Tom McConnell, M.D.

Richard (Dick) Rice

Harry T. Season, Jr.

John Sena

Al Tetreault

Bill Walker

Ty Young

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

2025 AIBF STAFF

- Executive Director: Julie Morgas Baca
- Director of Operations & Logistics/Event Director: Jennifer Garcia
- Finance Director: Martha Gonzales
- Field & Facilities Manager: Curt Dahlquist
- Field & Facilities Assistant Manager: Cameron Clements
- Sponsorship & Marketing Director: Stephanie Prendergast
- Sponsorship Sales Assistant: Christie Roybal
- Merchandise Director: Lisa Mulder
- Merchandise Manager: Chani Kaibetoney
- Transportation Manager/ Public Safety Liaison: Brian Lindley
- Community & Education Outreach Manager: Tracey Hawkins
- Pilot Coordinator: Miranda Portillo
- Concession / Artisans / Main Street Entertainment: Erica Hahn
- Navigator Coordinator: Jory Slingerland
- Balloon Fiesta Live! / Photographers / Technology Support: Ken Tuley
- Finance Assistant / RV Coordinator: Mary Chando
- Hospitality & Community Outreach Director: Shamaine Giannini
- Communications Manager – Stephanie Kitts
- Administrative & Operations Manager: Sue Gonzales
- Administrative Coordinator: Cavell Miller

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STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

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 members 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 nonprofit organizations that sell programs, direct traffic and many other roles to help raise funds for their organization.



SPONSORS AND 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 a commitment to the event and community, and provide an opportunity for employees to get involved. The cost of sponsoring at Balloon Fiesta varies based on 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 ExxonMobil 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 2024 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta attracted an estimated 838,337 guest visits during the nine-day event. According to the 2024 Economic Impact Report commissioned by the Balloon Fiesta, it is estimated that 85% of visitors to Balloon Fiesta were from outside of New Mexico. Balloon Fiesta guests generated an estimated \$216,331,436 of total economic impact for businesses in the Albuquerque metropolitan area, \$127,253,786 of that amount being direct economic impact.



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SPONSORS AND ECONOMICS

FINANCING BALLOON FIESTA

Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (AIBF) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in New Mexico. It hosts a world-renowned, nine-day ballooning event each year and operates as a self-sustaining entity, reinvesting all revenue back into the event. AIBF is managed by a volunteer board of directors and a full-time staff of 20. Each year, the organization raises more than **\$7 million** to produce the event. Funding comes from five primary sources:

- 1. **Event Ticket Sales**
- 2. **Sponsorships**
- 3. **Merchandise Sales**
- 4. **Vendor and Concession Fees**
- 5. **RV Space Rentals**



Photo courtesy of Gilbert Quintana

MEDIA

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.

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.

Balloon Fiesta media credentials do not allow entry into RESTRICTED AREAS for any purpose. Restricted areas include Event 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.

- Corporate Village Tents, Fiesta Tents, Gondola Club, Chasers' Club
 - Rented by and restricted to Balloon Fiesta sponsors, guests or members.
- Officials' Compound, Officials' Towers
 - These are areas central to Balloon Fiesta flight operations. The Officials' Towers include the pilot briefing tower and balloonmeister tower.
- Public Safety Command Center
 - 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

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 Balloon Fiesta Park and the 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 Event Safety Team.

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

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.

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 2: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. – Media Registration/Credential Pick up
- October 3: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. – Media Registration/Credential Pick up
- October 3: 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. – Media Welcome Party
- October 4: (Opening Day): 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 5: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 6, 7 & 8 (Monday-Wednesday): 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- October 9: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 10: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 11: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 12: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

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MEDIA

BALLOON FIESTA LIVE STREAM

The Balloon Fiesta will provide a high-quality, live stream of the morning and evening sessions, October 4-12, 2025. The feed will be hosted on Vimeo and can be embedded or accessed directly through the media page. It is optimized for viewing on multiple devices and platforms.

BALLOON FIESTA LIVE!

Balloon Fiesta Live! is a live-hosted show of all 14 sessions of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta®. Anchored by Art Lloyd Jr. and Ted Maes, it's the next best thing to being at Balloon Fiesta in person! With multiple and unique camera angles, Art and Ted provide expert commentary based in part on their personal experience in flying hot air balloons and their friendship with many of our pilots and crews from our "rooftop studio". Diane Kinderwater brings her broadcast background to the team as the on-field reporter. The on-air roster, backed up by a team of dedicated Balloonists and the top-notch production company, Windfire Production and Engineering, this stream outshines any coverage anywhere of a live balloon event.

If you can't be at Balloon Fiesta in person, or just want to relive the experience, check out *Balloon Fiesta Live!* The live stream is available on [BalloonFiesta.com](https://www.balloonfiesta.com), the Balloon Fiesta's YouTube, Facebook, on Albuquerque's Community Access Channel and on low power TV available for about a 4 mile radius of Balloon Fiesta Park. First airing in 2017, all the shows are archived and available for viewing. In 2024, the broadcast stream topped 1 million views, surpassing the number of guests attending the event in person. You can read more about the *Balloon Fiesta Live!* Program and operations in this year's official program.



Photo courtesy of Triston Garica

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 a.m. each morning.

Electronic event updates are also available via text message and through the event's twitter/X 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 10 knots (approximately 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. Information will be announced and posted in the Media Tent as well as via official Balloon Fiesta text message, Twitter/X 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. Morning Pilot Briefings are open for the public to listen in; please keep any conversation and radio communication to a minimum.

FLAGPOLE NOTIFICATION

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 flagpole 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 (NOTE : the yellow flag will fly until pilot briefing concludes for respective morning and afternoon sessions.)
- Red = The field is closed for inflations

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BALLOON FIESTA WEATHER

IDEAL FLYING CONDITIONS

Since balloons move with the wind, information about the weather is imperative when deciding whether to fly. Before launching, pilots will gather all available weather information concerning the flight and the flight area. Pilots only fly when the weather is close to ideal—when skies are clear and wind conditions are favorable.

Balloons need stable wind to operate effectively, and the atmosphere is most stable during the first few hours at sunrise and the last hours before sunset. Additionally, the temperature is usually cooler in the mornings and balloons fly 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 only need 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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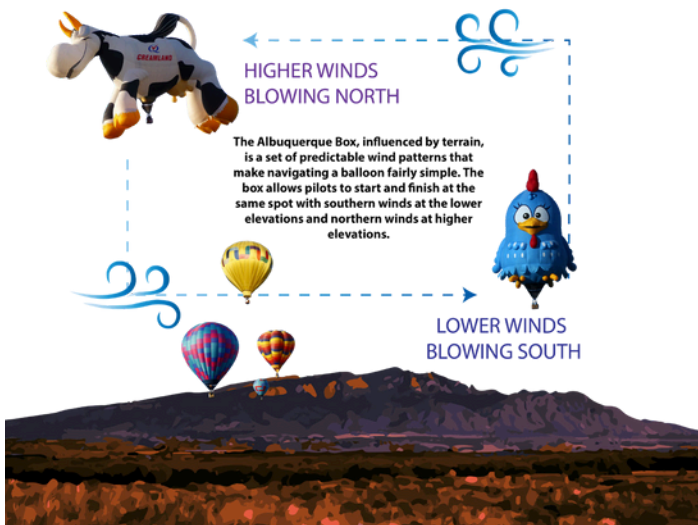
BALLOON FIESTA WEATHER

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 eliminates 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 elevations, 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.



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.

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BALLOONING HISTORY

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.

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’s 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 around the world.

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 619 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 more than 500 balloons per event, with more than 800,000 guest visits over and more than a million views online over the course of nine days.

BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

MILESTONES

1972 was the first year of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Events included the 1st Roadrunner-Coyote Balloon Race, the Balloonist Ball, and tours of the surrounding towns and pueblos.

1973 hosted the First World Championship, crowning of the Balloon Fiesta Queen, the first mass ascension, and the Balloon Fiesta parade.

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 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 performed at Kirtland Air Force Base, and the US Navy Leapfrogs also joined the celebration.

1984 included MusicFest, 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.

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.

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BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

MILESTONES

1990 had pop stars Three Dog Night perform, a special shapes event as well as 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 special shape balloon based on the “Simpsons” characters and included large-scale fireworks.

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.

2000 set the balloon launch record, with the largest number of balloons attending in the history of the Balloon Fiesta, 1013 balloons. Helicopters from the TV stations helped out by drying the field so the Special Shape Glowdeo could happen.

2001 the Balloon Discovery Center opened, 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 the cost of admission and parking was raised to \$5.

2003 was the year that the Balloon Fiesta created the Gondola Club and started the Fiesta del Vino.

2010 was the first year that 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 first Music Fiesta™, featuring country music superstar Darius Rucker.

2015 the world famous Parabatix Sky Racers 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.

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BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

MILESTONES

2017 was the year Balloon Fiesta introduced the Candlestick show to the opening ceremonies, and Balloon Fiesta Live! was created.

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.

2020 was the first year Balloon Fiesta did not hold an event since its inception; the 49th event was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While the event was postponed, Balloon Fiesta Live! Broadcast anyway to a large number of viewers.

2021 brought Balloon Fiesta its first Remote Control Balloon Exhibition, featuring 50 remote-controlled balloons that are a fraction of the size of traditional hot air balloons.

2022 was the 50th event, a milestone celebration for Balloon Fiesta.

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.

2024 marked the 52nd event, all of the 14 sessions occurred. There were no cancelations or rain checks.



FACTS AND FIGURES

2025 THEME

53rd Balloon Fiesta Theme: Painted Horizons

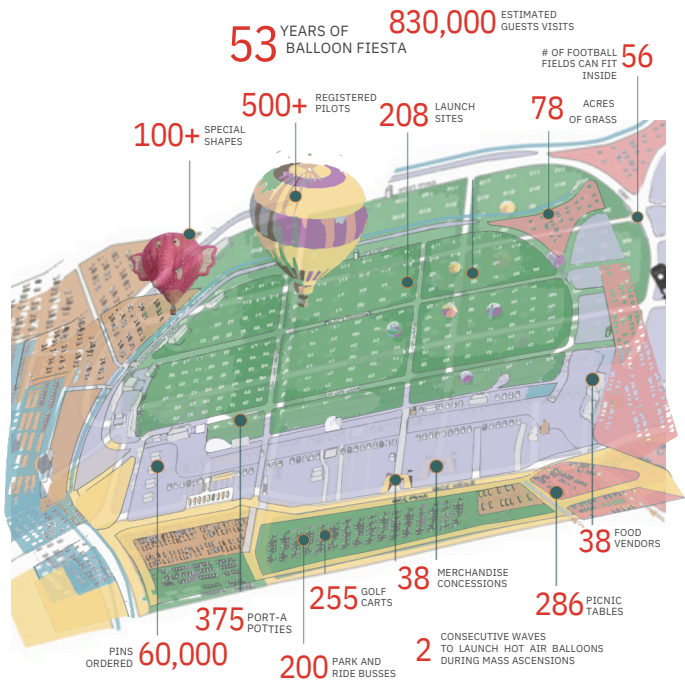
This year’s theme is Painted Horizons. It includes more than 500 hot air balloon pilots who will be invited to fly during the nine-day event. There is a new theme to Balloon Fiesta every year; the theme is reflected in merchandise, printed and digital artwork.

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

There are 12 countries represented at the 2025 Balloon Fiesta including: Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Mexico, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom and the United States.

International balloons will enjoy their moment in the spotlight on Wednesday, October 8, during Flight of 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.

LAUNCH FIELD BY THE NUMBERS



[CONTINUED]

FACTS AND FIGURES

MAIN STREET BY THE NUMBERS

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

CONCESSIONS, MERCHANDISE VENDORS & ARTISANS

With over one-third of a mile of concession space on Balloon Fiesta's Main Street, there is sure to be something that will delight guests of all ages. From breakfast burritos to green chile cheeseburgers and Balloon Fiesta souvenirs to handmade arts and crafts, be sure to take a stroll down Main Street and experience all that Balloon Fiesta has to offer.

2025 FOOD CONCESSIONS

Baskin Robbins/Poppy's Coffee and Snacks	Hatch Shack
Bing Tea	Indonesian Satay
Blake's Lotaburger	JPZ Concessions
Chile Traditions	Krispy Kreme Doughnuts
Chocolate Chip Cookie Company	La Luz Coffee/Just Squeezed
Crazy Pineapple	Luckys Pizzeria & Cafe
Cruising Cones Soft Serve Ice Cream and	New York Deli Southside
Hot Cocoa	NM Pinon Coffee
Curry Leaf	Perico's
Dunkin Donuts	Platero Fry Bread & Navajo Tacos
Flavor of Tabasco	Quesada's New Mexican Food
Fresh Frys, Hand Dipped Corn Dogs, and	Red Roadrunner LLC
Cheese Curds	Rex's Hamburgers
Fry Factory	Seafood Cajun Concessions LLC
Fryin Brian's	The Sweet Spot
G & G Concessions, Inc.	TJ's Texas BBQ
Gourmet Doner Kebab	Tom Thumb Donuts

2025 MERCHANDISE VENDORS

All Tribe Silver	Guatemaya Imports
Alpaca World	Inka Gold Art LLC
Amazing Jumps Kids Zone	Kendra Scott
Arizona Tube Art	Maritza's Colors
Balloon Fiesta Official Merch	Mayan Art
Balloon Hat Man	Montgolfier Gifts
Balloon Souvenirs	New Mexico Quilters Association
Bear Hollow Wood Carvers, LLC	Pandora
Beloon Decor	Peruvian Inkas Art
Best Selection Jewelry and Gifts	Plano Pin Company, LLC
Better Living	Rainbow Ryders
Chuck Jones Gallery	Reflections In Metal
Cool Air Chair	Scooter Rental
Cutco	ShannieGirl
Daiwa By U.S. Jaclean, Inc.	Southwest Sky
DAJO Adventure Gear, LLC	Teams Hot Sports
Discover Balloons	The Mas Boutique
Eddie Valentin	Toadland Pewter Inc.
	VTG

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FACTS AND FIGURES

2025 ARTISANS

- Akala’s Jewelry
Astra Statera Art
Blended with Nature
BondFire Permanent Jewelry
Celtic Moon Studios, LLC
Colorburst Studios
Hope Springs Gourmet Foods & Artistry
House of Hatters
Inkchievous
James Rogers Silversmiths
Jennifer Patterson Designs
Judy Brandon Jewelry
K and C Naturals LLC
Lujaqui
Michelle’s Art Design
- Native American Traders
One Offs Plus
Remnants by Studio G7
Ridge Line Rings
Smokin Joe’s Custom Art
Spencer’s Custom Wood
Studio G7
Sundreams by Kate
Tazzlyfe
The Doodle Shop
The Head’s Creation
True Honey Teas
Victoria’s Southwest Designs
Zion Blankets Luxury Alpaca



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HOT AIR 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 BALLOON?

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 ExxonMobil 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.

2025 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

EXXONMOBIL ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA® CELEBRATES 53RD EVENT

“Painted Horizons” to Launch October 4-12, 2025

Albuquerque, NM - The ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® will launch from Balloon Fiesta Park, October 4-12, 2025. The 53rd event will feature more than 500 hot air balloons, of which at least 100 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 ExxonMobil 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. Balloon Fiesta staff, board of directors and volunteers are preparing for the nine-day event. Here are the popular and confirmed events for this year's event:

Balloons Aloft: For locals and early visitors, ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta will kick off from local schools with Balloons Aloft on October 3, 2025. During Balloons 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 500 hot air balloons launch to the skies in multiple waves with hopes of catching the infamous Albuquerque Box. The ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta's five signature morning mass ascensions launch both weekends (October 4-5, 11-12) and mid-week (October 8).

Flight of the Nations: In observance of all the visiting international pilots, this mid-week mass ascension will take place on October 8, 2025. Wednesday's opening ceremony will begin with international pilots flying their countries' flags from their balloons.

Balloon Glows: Balloon Fiesta Park lights up on five special nights for the signature Balloon Glows (October 4-5, 9-11). Imagine walking among 200-300 hot air balloons in a static display as they flicker under the Albuquerque skies. One of the most popular places for selfies is 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 ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta. More than a hundred special shape balloons are anticipated for the 53rd event, many of which will be featured during the Special Shape Rodeo™ and Glowdeo™. A flying frog, cow, and pig will join a host of other shapes as they resemble items of a child's toy box floating overhead.

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2025 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

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.

Fiesta de Los Globitos, sponsored by The City of Las Vegas, NM:

ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta's remote-control balloon rally will feature at least 80 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 5, 8, and 10, as well as a mini glow on October 11, at 6:30 p.m.

Entertainment: In addition to the magical spectacle of balloons, ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta will showcase live music with local Albuquerque and New Mexico bands/artists from the main stage following flying events and in advance of Balloon Glows™.

More at Balloon Fiesta Park: Guests will also be able to visit over one-third of a mile of concession space on ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta's Main Street with food concessionaires and different merchandise vendors, as well as returning attractions like the Artisans at Balloon Fiesta, Balloon Discovery Center, drone light show, Team Fastrax Skydiving™, chainsaw carving, and AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show. Guest options, including Chasers' Club, Gondola Club, Glamping, Camp 505 and the Concierge Program, will be available this year.

For more information about the 2025 event, visit balloonfiesta.com.

About the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, Inc.

The ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is 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. For details on events, schedule, and entertainment visit our website www.balloonfiesta.com and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X and TikTok via @BalloonFiesta.

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2025 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

2025 BALLOON FIESTA TICKETS ON SALE

Albuquerque, NM – Tickets for the 2025 ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® will be available for purchase Friday, April 4. Several ticket options will be available to guests, including general admission, Park & Ride and ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta® hospitality programs. The 53rd event will launch from Balloon Fiesta Park October 4-12, 2025. General admission tickets are available for purchase at the Balloon Fiesta offices (4401 Alameda Blvd NE., Albuquerque, NM 87113) or online at balloonfiesta.com/Purchase-Tickets (fees will be added for online credit card sales).

Returning this year, as a special thanks to New Mexico residents for their support over the years, general admission tickets will be free on “New Mexico Day,” October 6. ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta guests will only need to present a New Mexico photo ID or utility bill with a New Mexico address at the ticket booth on Monday, October 6, to retrieve a free ticket and enter the park.

ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta guests can choose from a few ticketing options, including but not limited to:

- **General Admission:** One session (morning or evening), \$15 per person (Children 12 and under free).
- **Park & Ride:** One session ticket, which includes round-trip transportation to Balloon Fiesta Park from a remote location and admission. Adults \$25 (13-61), Seniors \$23 (62 and Older), Children \$13 (6-12). Ticket prices increase if purchased on the day of the event.
- **Gondola Club:** A private area with a picturesque view of the field that offers guests delicious food, local entertainment, premium parking, courtesy shuttles, and outdoor seating. Tickets are \$150 per session (Children 5 and under are free).
- **Chasers’ Club:** Includes admission, private patio seating, private restroom access, a catered meal, and access to a bar. Tickets are \$75 per session (Children 5 and under are free).

For guests seeking camping options at ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta this year, the Glamping experience offers a three-night stay in a safari tent, complete with premium amenities and all-session admission, tickets starting at \$1,600 for 1-2 guests, \$2,100 for three guests, and \$2,600 for four guests. Camp 505 provides a unique three-night camping experience for two guests starting at \$800 within walking distance of the Launch Field, featuring ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta-branded tents and equipment that guests can take home. There are also a select number of camping sites available during the event.

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2025 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

For an elevated view of the spectacle, the Fiesta Sky Box offers a premium group experience for up to 20 guests at \$5,000 per session, including private upper deck seating and catering. Meanwhile, the Concierge Program, starting at \$350 for two guests, provides a personalized behind-the-scenes tour with golf cart transportation. These exclusive packages are designed to enhance the Balloon Fiesta experience, offering comfort, convenience, and unforgettable memories.

Raincheck: If a decision is made to not inflate the balloons, ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta will rain-check that session. Guests will still be able to enjoy all ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta amenities for the remainder of the session. In the event of a rain-checked session, guests should retain their ticket. The ticket will be reactivated in the form of a general admission ticket, valid for any remaining session in the current year. The status of all ExxonMobil Balloon Fiesta sessions will be available on the [website](#) and official app.

For more information on all tickets and to purchase, visit the [Balloon Fiesta Ticket Page](#).

About the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, Inc.

The ExxonMobil Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is 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. For details on events, schedule, and entertainment visit our website www.balloonfiesta.com and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X and TikTok via @BalloonFiesta.



STORY IDEAS

BALLOON FIESTA STORY IDEAS

- First-year rookie pilot
- Balloons Aloft – more than 100 balloons launch from select Albuquerque and Rio Rancho schools prior to the start of Balloon Fiesta.
- Balloon Competitions
- Best wedding proposals at the Balloon Fiesta
- Balloon Fiesta Hall of Fame
- Cost to buy and operate a balloon
- Craziest memories/events from the Balloon Fiesta
- Camp 505
- Favorite special shapes
- Fiesta de los Globitos (Remote Control RC Balloons)
- Fireworks shows and the people behind them
- Flying Competitions
- History of ballooning in Albuquerque
- How special-shaped balloons are manufactured
- How a balloon is built
- Why Albuquerque for the Balloons? -Weather
- How ground crews get the field in shape and ready
- 86-acre field – size equal to 56 football fields
- Meteorologists – meet the Balloon Fiesta weather team
- 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
- 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
- Zebras – personalities and responsibilities
- Balloon Fiesta Live! a live hosted show of all 14 sessions

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 properties on Central Avenue (Route 66), including El Vado Motel, Monterey Motel, Imperial Inn and Hotel ZAZZ. Additions to the city include Ex Novo Brewing Company's downtown taproom and restaurant, new and renovated developments at Winrock Town Center, and new hotels, restaurants and coffee shops. 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

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WHILE YOU'RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

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

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 sopaipillas. 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 features a diverse culinary scene, with Italian, French, Brazilian, Vietnamese, Indian, Chinese, Thai, Latin, Southern soul food and more. Albuquerque is home to Sawmill Market, 505 Central Food Hall, Tin Can Alley and Green Jeans Farmery—making Albuquerque the food hall capital of the state. 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

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WHILE YOU'RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

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](https://www.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 features new Asia and Australia expansions.

<https://www.cabq.gov/artsculture/biopark>; (505) 768-2000

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. Explore more than 100 trails for hikers of all abilities while taking in incredible views of the city below. Don't miss the most recent addition, TEN 3 Restaurant, where you can dine at over 10,000 feet.

[SandiaPeak.com](https://www.sandiapeak.com); (505) 856-7325 | [Ten3Tram.com](https://www.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](https://www.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](https://www.visitabq.org/golf)

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WHILE YOU'RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

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

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

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 Balloon 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!



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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