

# LOS ALAMOS

## History & Science

visitlosalamos.org

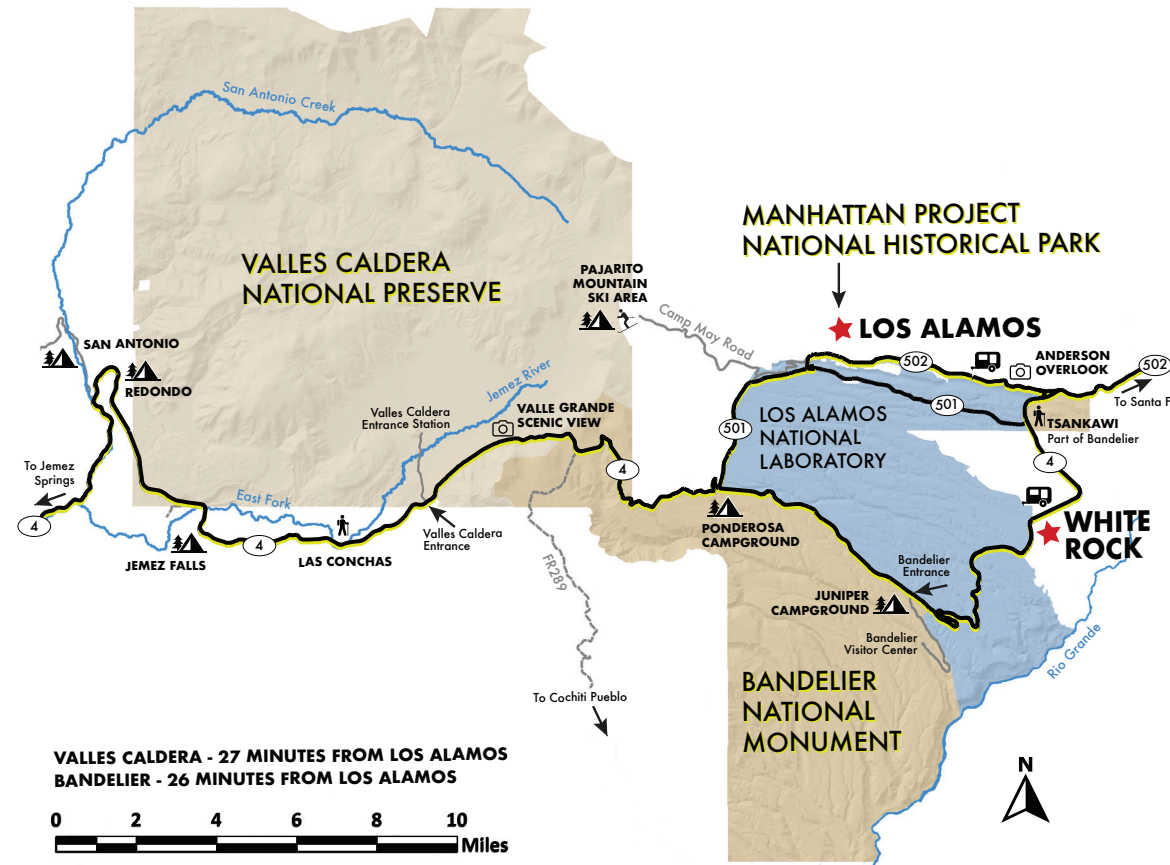


Historic Sculpture of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer

Once you've made the journey to Los Alamos, you can begin to understand how much the culture and the people are defined by this remote and beautiful landscape. While Los Alamos is known to many as the birthplace of the atomic bomb, the town's history dates back 1.6 million years with a different kind of energy—volcanic eruptions that created the Pajarito Plateau and the mesas and canyons where communities have settled for millennia: Ancestral Pueblo people, Homesteaders, Ranch School students, and thousands of scientists, soldiers, and engineers from all over the world who came to work on the Manhattan Project and stayed to create the Los Alamos community. Experience the dynamic history of this great place by visiting the museums, National Parks and other attractions profiled in this guide.

**LOS ALAMOS**  
where discoveries are made

## Los Alamos: Gateway to Three National Parks



VALLES CALDERA - 27 MINUTES FROM LOS ALAMOS  
BANDELIER - 26 MINUTES FROM LOS ALAMOS

0 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

### Valles Caldera National Preserve

NM-4 (18 miles west of Los Alamos)

Visitor Center: May-Oct: 8am-6pm  
Nov-Apr: 9am-5pm

575-829-4100 x3 | [nps.gov/vall](https://nps.gov/vall)

Picture ancient volcanic eruptions so large it created a 13-mile-wide crater. This is the Valles Caldera. Discover extraordinary views and sulfur springs as you find yourself in the midst of an active geothermal system. Find evidence of ancestral native peoples in obsidian used for tools and weapons and shepherd's signatures carved on trees. Reflect on a landscape where hunting and gathering were practiced successfully for more than 10,000 years. Let the mosaic of expansive meadows, lush forested volcanic domes, meandering streams, and old-growth Ponderosa pine groves take your breath away, as they fade into the dark night and a blanket of stars is unveiled above you. Try to count the stars as you listen to the elk bugling in the distance.

### Bandelier National Monument

15 Entrance Road off NM-4, Los Alamos

Park Hours: Dawn to Dusk

Visitor Center Hours: mid-May to mid-Oct: 9am-6pm  
mid-Nov to mid-April: 9am-5pm

505-672-3861x0 | [nps.gov/band](https://nps.gov/band)

Imagine your home carved from volcanic tuff rock and your crops planted in mesa top fields. Corn, beans, and squash were central to your diet, supplemented by native plants and meat from deer, rabbit, squirrel, and domesticated turkeys. Your dogs assisted in hunting and provided companionship. Step onto the trails, ladders and into the past as you experience life as an Ancestral Pueblo person.

### Bandelier Shuttle Information - May to October:

Visitors must use the shuttle from White Rock Visitor Center between 9am-3pm. Some exceptions apply.

### Manhattan Project National Historical Park

475 20th St., Suite C, Los Alamos

Hours vary. Please call before visiting.

505-661-6277 | [nps.gov/mapr](https://nps.gov/mapr)

More than 6,000 scientists, engineers, technicians, military, and support personnel came to live in Los Alamos and work on the Manhattan Project. This National Historical Park was established to tell the stories of these people, events, and the science that led to the creation of the atomic bomb that helped end WWII.



## Historic District Fun Facts

**Ashley Pond Park** is named after Ashley Pond Jr., the founder of the Los Alamos Ranch School, an outdoor school for boys started in 1917 to provide an education that would promote good health, strength and self-confidence.

**Bathtub Row** was named after the homes adjacent to Fuller Lodge, originally belonging to the Ranch School Headmasters. During the Manhattan Project, the head scientists called them home, including Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer. These were the only homes in town with bathtubs.

The **Historic Performing Arts Center** was constructed in 1943 and served as the East Mess Hall during the Manhattan Project, while also hosting a variety of shows, including a community production of the play "Arsenic & Old Lace," featuring Lab Director J. Robert Oppenheimer in a cameo role as "the corpse".

There's a **Historic Photo Gallery** in the lobby outside the Blue Window Bistro, in downtown Los Alamos, with historic photos of Lab directors, facilities, and noteworthy scientists.

## Must Do Discoveries:

### Local Museums

- Find the Nobel Prize at the Hans Bethe House, and learn about the honored scientists who lived there.
- Take the Guided Walking Tour of Los Alamos Historic District and learn the stories behind the buildings, gardens, parks, monuments, and the people who put Los Alamos on the map.
- What if you could power your life using pond scum? Learn about turning algae to biofuels at the Bradbury Science Museum.

### Manhattan Project National Historical Park

- Get your National Park Service Passport stamped with the special 3-section Manhattan Project stamp.
- See replicas of Fat Man & Little Boy at the Bradbury Science Museum.
- Learn about the "Secret City" at the Los Alamos History Museum.

### Bandelier National Monument

- Pueblo Loop Trail - Walk in the footsteps of Ancestral Pueblo people, search for petroglyphs, and watch wildlife along the creekside.
- Alcove House - Climb four ladders and stone steps to this alcove home, located 140 feet above the floor of Frijoles Canyon.
- Cultural Demonstrations - Every weekend between Memorial Day and Labor Day, enjoy a variety of programs, including pottery-making, drum-making, and dancing.



Los Alamos History Museum



Guided Walking Tour

## Los Alamos History Museum Campus

1050 Bathtub Row, Los Alamos  
 Monday-Friday 9am-5pm | Sat 10am-4pm | Sun CLOSED  
 Admission \$5 | 505-662-4493 | [losalamoshistory.org](http://losalamoshistory.org)

### Los Alamos History Museum

Nestled in the heart of downtown, the Los Alamos History Museum presents the stories of Los Alamos from multiple perspectives via indoor and outdoor venues, historic buildings, artifacts, documents, photographs, recordings, and interactive experiences. Begin your visit in the restored Los Alamos Ranch School Guest Cottage, where exhibits take visitors from the Pajarito Plateau's Ancestral Pueblo people to its homestead history, through the Ranch School era, and into the Manhattan Project. Find books and unique local gifts in the Museum Shop before you head out!

### Hans Bethe House

Located on Bathtub Row and named for one of the famed resident Manhattan Project physicists, the Hans Bethe House hosts the Harold Agnew Cold War Gallery, including exhibits highlighting 70+ years of post-World War II history of the Los Alamos community and the Laboratory.

### Romero Cabin

Step into this authentic homestead cabin and step back in time more than a century to a bygone way of life, and learn why homesteading on this plateau differed from anywhere else in the country. Join the History Museum's daily walking tour to see the interior of one of only three remaining area homestead cabins and the only one open to the public.

### Historic Fuller Lodge

Built in 1928 for the Ranch School, the Lodge served as a cafeteria and home for bachelor staff members and distinguished visitors. During the Manhattan Project, the Lodge was the dining and meeting hall for project staff. In 1947, the Atomic Energy Commission added three two-story wings extending north, south, and west from Fuller Lodge, so it could function as a hotel for official visitors. Today Fuller Lodge continues to serve as a gathering place for residents and visitors alike. Room 234 upstairs has been converted into a museum exhibit, showcasing items that might have been used by one of the Ranch School masters.

### Los Alamos History Museum Guided Tours

Step inside the homestead-era Romero Cabin, visit an Ancestral Pueblo site, hear about the famous 20th-century physicists who walked these streets, and learn how Bathtub Row got its name. Tours last approximately 1.5 hours. Tickets include museum admission and are available at the Los Alamos History Museum Shop. Tours limited to 16 people.

**Monday - Saturday 11:00am**  
**Tuesdays Additional tour at 1:30pm**  
**\$15 ages 19+, 18 and under - FREE with a ticketed adult**

### Self-Guided Tours

800-444-0707 | 505-662-8105 | [losalamoshistory.org](http://losalamoshistory.org)

### Self-Guided Historic Walking Tour

Visit 14 points of interest, including 800-year-old Ancestral Pueblo dwellings, early 20th-century architecture, a homesteader's cabin, story-telling art, memorials to those who came before us, and the very spot where the first atomic bomb components were designed and assembled. Move at your own pace, and enjoy the museums, shopping, and restaurants along your way.

### Self-Guided Spy Tour

Where there are secrets, there are spies. The Los Alamos Spy Tour reveals the rich story of 20th-century espionage during a time when "loose lips sink ships." Visit historic sites around Los Alamos where atomic spies like Klaus Fuchs, Theodore Hall, and David Greenglass lived, worked, and played. Pick up a Spy Tour brochure at the Los Alamos Visitors Center or download one online.

### Self-Guided Homestead Driving Tour

Try to imagine Los Alamos without its neighborhoods, shops, parks, and national laboratory. Imagine yourself back in a time of isolated log buildings, fields planted with pinto beans, families tending and protecting the crops, wagons laden with produce for the autumn trip to the valley before the winter sets in. This was everyday life for the homesteaders who lived here before the dawn of the nuclear age that brought Los Alamos to international attention. This tour will introduce you to seven sites that indicate where 17 of the homestead families established their farms.

### Bradbury Science Museum

1350 Central Ave., Los Alamos  
 Tuesday-Saturday 11am-4pm | Sunday 1-5pm  
 Monday CLOSED | 505-667-4444 | [lanl.gov/museum](http://lanl.gov/museum)

Approximately 60 interactive exhibits trace the history of the World War II Manhattan Project, highlight the Laboratory's current and historic research projects related to defense and technology, and focus on Laboratory research related to national and international economic, environmental, political, and social concerns.

#### 15-Minute Movies

**Racing Toward Dawn** - The story of the Manhattan Project.  
**Heritage of Science: Stockpile Stewardship at Los Alamos National Laboratory** - The story of LANL's current mission.

#### Gadgets Museum Shop

Stop by Gadgets, located in the museum, to find the perfect souvenir for your visit. As a non-profit store, all proceeds go to S.T.E.M. education outreach in Northern New Mexico!

#### Manhattan Project National Historical Park "Behind the Fence" Tours

Experience a "top-secret" tour of historic Manhattan Project buildings! Tours of the Pajarito Site and the Slotin Building are offered 2-3 times per year and last approximately three hours. Registration is done in advance and is on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 505-667-4444 to learn more.

### Los Alamos Nature Center

2600 Canyon Rd., Los Alamos  
 Monday, Wednesday-Saturday 10am-4pm  
 Tuesday CLOSED | Sunday CLOSED  
 505-662-0460 | [losalamosnature.org](http://losalamosnature.org)

Equipped with a full-dome planetarium, wildlife observation room, indoor and outdoor play areas, interactive indoor and outdoor exhibits, and the world's largest Penstemon garden, the Los Alamos Nature Center is your visitor center to outdoor recreation on the Pajarito Plateau. Enjoy spectacular views of canyons, mesas, mountains, and skies.

#### What Will You Discover?

Browse the demonstration gardens, get dirty in the nature play area, explore the Rotary Treehouse, learn about all the plants and animals that make up the Vertical Mile of Diversity, and find your next adventure on the large-scale, 3-D topographic map.

Come inside and meet all the critters, including the Canyon Tree Frogs, a Tiger Salamander, snakes, insects, and the resident ants in their visible ant mound. Play with the Pajarito Plateau model, cuddle up with a book in the Children's Discovery Area, or just relax and admire the breathtaking views from the floor-to-ceiling windows.

#### Planetarium Shows

Enjoy 360-degrees of immersive entertainment in the Nature Center's planetarium. Explore the cosmos, hear about the latest in space-science, see a feature film, and more!