

BIG BEND ADVENTURE

6 DAYS (5 Meals)

\$629 PER PERSON

*Be overwhelmed at the majestic beauty of the area. It's big, it's awesome, it's Texas! Spend two nights in the very center of **Big Bend National Park** at the **Chisos Mountain Lodge**. Surround yourself with jagged outcroppings and mountain woodlands. Marvel at the **Santa Elena Canyon** carved by the Rio Grande River with walls extending 800 feet into the sky. Visit the **Hallie Stillwell Museum**, a tribute to a woman who braved the wilds of this rugged area. Tour is scheduled to see the **Chihuahuan desert in bloom**.*

DAY 1 - What an adventure! Follow the Rio Grande River going West to **Rio Grande City**, home to Fort Ringold, the first fort west of Fort Brown. On to **Roma**, site of the filming of Zapata. After a lunch stop in **Laredo**, we move inland toward **Carrizo Springs** before turning again toward the Mexican border and **Del Rio**. Settle in for your **overnight** at the **La Quinta** in **Del Rio**.

DAY 2 - An **included continental breakfast** begins a big day of sight-seeing with time to see it all! Just a hop and a skip down the road is the Seminole Canyon. Next stop, **Langtry**, supposedly named for Actress Lillie Langtry and known for the antics of **Judge Roy Bean**, who was, in the 1880's, the "**Law West of the Pecos**". As you enter the Big Bend, you will visit **Hallie's Hall of Fame Museum** opened in 1991, a tribute to Hallie Stillwell, a pioneer woman who braved the wilds of the West. The museum tells the history of a ranch family in the Big Bend region. Admire displays of **antique farm and ranch equipment** and a **candelilla wax camp**. Enter the **Chisos Basin** as the sun's rays are at their very best angle to appreciate the majestic, towering rock formations of the **Big Bend**. Sit quietly and watch for the white tail deer. Listen for the canyon wren or the call of the raven. Enjoy a filling meal at the Lodge Restaurant. **Overnight** in the **Chisos Mountain Lodge**. **CB, PL**

DAY 3 - After breakfast, explore Big Bend by taking the 1/4 mile self guided **Window View Trail** right at our Lodge. Begin our driving tour at **Panther Junction**, park headquarters, where a fifty yard loop trail over level terrain will acquaint you with the many cacti and other common plants of the Chihuahuan Desert. A trip along the **Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive** will give you a good taste of the desert and will lead you to the Rio Grande and **Santa Elena Canyon**, one of the park's most beautiful natural wonders. There are scenic overlooks and exhibits all along the way. Bring plenty of film for your camera. Take a short walk into the canyon to see where the steep canyon walls meet the Rio Grande. Enjoy a picnic lunch back at **Cottonwood Camp Ground**. Visit **Castolon Historic Compound**, a cavalry encampment during the days of Pancho Villa's border raids. **Overnight** in the **Chisos Mountain Lodge**. **PL**

DAY 4 - Reluctantly, we leave the basin. Prairie verbenas, ocotillo cactus, and prairie daisies brighten our way as we take the scenic drive to **Boquillas Canyon**. As we leave the Big Bend National Park, our road leads toward the **ghost town of Terlinqua**, brought back to life each year by an annual chili cookoff, a festive event enticing thousands of visitors to the Big Bend each fall. Relive the old west in the privately owned town of **Lajitas**. As we leave this area, you can truly say, "**I have experienced Big Bend**." Stop for lunch in **Alpine**, the largest city in the largest county in Texas. Home to Sul Ross University and cowboy poetry, Alpine is an oasis in the Chihuahuan Desert with its tree lined streets and commercial orchards. Arrive into **Fort Stockton** where we tour the **old fort** the **Annie Riggs Museum**. Nearby is the St. Genevieve Winery, reputedly the largest in Texas and the fifth largest in Texas. Sample their wines at your included dinner. **Overnight** at the **La Quinta** in **Fort Stockton**. **D**

DAY 5 - After an ample **included continental breakfast**, it is on down the road to visit the fantastic **Caverns of Sonora** called unbelievable by cave authorities. A past president of the National Speleological Society said "**This is the most indescribably beautiful cavern in the world. Its beauty cannot be exaggerated even by Texans**." After your no-host lunch in Sonora, you will be treated to some of the most **spectacular scenery** in the **Texas Hill Country** as we travel through Junction, Leakey, Concan and into **Uvalde**, former home of Vice-President John Nance Garner. Tonight, be entertained by a rousing performance of the **Sahawe Indian Dancers**. A comfortable bed awaits you for your **overnight** at the **Holiday Inn in Uvalde**. **CB**

DAY 6 - Be impressed by the workmanship at **The Mesquite Factory**, a one of a kind, one man work shop that produces \$5000.00 mesquite rocking chairs as well as beautiful conference tables for large corporations in the north. Time permitting visit the former home of John Vance Garner. Leaving Uvalde, we pass through the **Spinach Capital of the World**, title claimed by the little town of **Crystal City**. Arrive in Rio Grande City for lunch. Arrival back to the Rio Grande Valley should be about 5:00p.m.

PRICE PER PERSON

Single - \$879
Double - \$629
Triple - \$599

DEPARTURE DATE

February 23, 2010

Departs from **Brownsville** at 6:00a.m.; from **Harlingen** at 6:30a.m.; from **Weslaco** at 7:00a.m.; from **Mission** at 8:00a.m. or from your park with a specified number.

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