New Mexico

The National Scenic Byways Program

The National Scenic Byways Program, established by Congress in 1991, recognizes historic, scenic and culturally important roads, all of which promote economic development and tourism in communities around the country. New Mexico boasts 26 scenic byways in total, eight of which are National scenic byways while eighteen are State scenic byways. New Mexico enacted the state scenic byways program on July 31, 1998 in partnership with the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the New Mexico State Highway. Additional funding has since come from SAFETEA-LU (2005).

Key points:

- New Mexico is home to 26 Scenic Byways, including 8 National Scenic Byways, and 18 State Scenic Byways.
- The Abo Pass Trail State Scenic Byway has been a byway for centuries - now, it is part of the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument, which can be visited along the byway.
- El Camino Real National Scenic Byway is the country’s oldest and most used “highway” - The Camino Real brought European colonists to New Spain 22 years before the pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock.
- El Camino Real National Scenic Byway stretches over 600 miles through New Mexico and both Northern and Southern California.
- A recent National Scenic Byway Foundation survey showed that 44 state scenic byways in 24 states are prepared to seek designation as a National Scenic Byway.

The Trail of the Mountains Spirits Scenic Byway offers breathtaking views of Gila Hot Springs and the Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument.
Map Key:
The numbers following each byway name below match with the respective byway’s numbered location on the map.