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## BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK

April 7 - 13, 2025

**BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK** comes alive in the Spring with beautiful wildflowers using a backdrop of **MAJESTIC MOUNTAINS** and **CANYONS**! We will also visit **CHISOS BASIN**, **SANTA ELENA CANYON**, **MCDONALD OBSERVATORY**, **PRUDE RANCH STAR PARTY**, **THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY**, **FORT STOCKTON HISTORIC FORT**, and **ANNE RIGGS MEMORIAL MUSEUM**! But wait, there is more! We cannot go through **MARBLE FALLS (TX)** without enjoying the **OLD FASHION PIES** at the **BLUEBONNET CAFÉ**, of course.

### Day 1 – April 7, 2025 – Tyler to Abilene (TX)

We will begin our day departing out of **TYLER (TX)** at **6:00am**. Today's leg of our journey takes us as far as **ABILENE**. We arrive in Abilene in time for lunch before taking in **FRONTIER TEXAS**. This amazing museum, located in historic downtown Abilene, is a western heritage center that allows visitors to relive the **OLD WEST** through state-of-the-art technology. Frontier Texas brings the frontier to life and lets visitors meet people who played out their lives on the Texas Frontier. We will check into our Abilene hotel early, freshen up, and set out to an early group dinner.

*HOTEL: Home2 Suites, Abilene (TX)*

*MEALS INCLUDED: Lunch & Dinner*

### Day 2 – April 8, 2025 – Abilene to Alpine (TX)

Our journey will continue across **TEXAS**, through **MIDLAND**, and into **ODESSA** where we will stop for lunch. This afternoon, we begin making our way towards **SOUTH TEXAS** to arrive in **ALPINE**. We will check into our hotel (our home for the next three nights) in time to freshen up before setting back out to enjoy dinner at one of Alpine's finest. We will not keep you out late today. You will need your rest for the next two day's adventures!

*HOTEL: Quarter Circle 7, Alpine (TX)*

*MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner*

### Day 3 – April 9, 2025 – Alpine to Big Bend National Park to Alpine

This morning, our **BIG BEND PROFESSIONAL GUIDE** will join us for a journey through **BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK**! We will travel through this desolate, yet beautiful, land learning about Big Bend's **GEOLOGY**, **CULTURAL HISTORY**, as well as it's **MEDINAL** and **EDIBLE PLANTS**. We will travel down the **ROSS MAXWELL SCENIC DRIVE**, stopping off at **SANTA ELENA CANYON** with her **MAJESTIC ROCK CLIFF WALLS** towering 1,500 FT and **SOTOL VISTA** with amazing views overlooking the **CHIHUAHUAN DESERT**. We will enjoy a picnic lunch in a **HOTSPOT FOR BIRDING**. Finally, we travel the **MOUNTAIN ROAD** up into the **CHISOS BASIN**! Here, we will enjoy the iconic "**WINDOW VIEW**" and **CASA GRANDE**. This 800,000+ acre park is full of canyons, rocks, rivers and was once the home of dinosaurs! We will watch for wildlife and all the wildflowers that should be blooming this time of the year!

*HOTEL: Quarter Circle 7, Alpine (TX)*

*MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner*

### Day 4 – April 10, 2025 – Alpine to Ft Davis / McDonald Observatory to Alpine

Today, we will keep you out late to enjoy our **STAR PARTY** to its' fullest. So, this morning, we allow time to sleep in before starting out for today's adventure. This morning, we depart for the **MCDONALD'S OBSERVATORY**! We will be taking another **TEXAS SCENIC BYWAY** up to the **MOUNTAIN TOWN OF FORT**

**DAVIS**, the highest town in Texas. We will be on the lookout for **BIG HORN SHEEP, AOUADAD**, and **MULE DEER** on our journey. Before making it to McDonald's Observatory, we will stop for a buffet lunch at **PRUDE RANCH**. Early afternoon, we head to the **WORLD FAMOUS MCDONALD OBSERVATORY**, learning how they see our fascinating Universe! We will learn about the sun in the **SOLAR TOUR**, followed by a **GUIDED TOUR** of their **OBSERVATORY**. We then make our way back to our hotel where you will be given an individual option of freshening up or remaining at the hotel for the evening. If you decide to freshen up, we have more excitement planned. We head back out to **PRUDE RANCH** for an evening dinner buffet followed by the **STAR PARTY** where we will learn about the **COSMOS** and view **STELLAR OBJECTS** through multiple **TELESCOPES**.  
*HOTEL: Quarter Circle 7, Alpine (TX)* *MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner*

#### **Day 5 – April 11, 2025 – Alpine to Big Bend National Park to Alpine**

This morning, our **BIG BEND PROFESSIONAL GUIDE** will join us again, as we travel through **TERLINGUA** and stop off at the **HISTORIC TERLINGUA GHOST TOWN**. Learn the history of the “boom and bust” mercury mining era that put this town on the map. Next, we pass by many “off grid homesites” on our way to **LAJITAS**, which boasts a history from being a landmark on the Comanche War Trail to a cavalry outpost. Then, we drive into **BIG BEND RANCH STATE PARK**, the **HIDDEN GEM OF THE BIG BEND**. We traverse the **RIVER ROAD** through the park, paralleling the **RIO GRANDE** with stunning views into **MEXICO**. Next, we travel through **PRESIDIO**, a border town with **OJINAGA, MEXICO**. Finally, we head north through **MARFA**, made famous by the **ART WORKS** of **DONALD JUDD** and his **MINIMALIST STYLE**, enroute to **ALPINE**, once again our home for the evening.

*HOTEL: Quarter Circle 7, Alpine (TX)*

*MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner*

#### **Day 6 – April 12, 2025 – Alpine to Marble Falls (TX)**

This morning, we start our journey back towards Northeast Texas but not before spending some quality time at **FORT STOCKTON HISTORIC FORT** as well as the **ANNE RIGGS MEMORIAL MUSEUM**. We will journey through more of our beautiful Texas Hill Country to arrive in **JUNCTION (TX)** for lunch. The afternoon will include two short leg-stretches before we stop for the night in **MARBLE FALLS (TX)**. After checking into our hotel with time to freshen up, we will enjoy a wonderful dinner at the **BLUE BONNET CAFÉ**. If you like **OLD-FASHIONED PIES**, this will be **PURE DELIGHT TO YOUR TASTE BUDS!!** Established in 1929, the Blue Bonnet Cafe is one of the oldest running restaurants in Texas. Specializing in southern 'comfort food', the menu offers classics like chicken fried steak (the owner's favorite) and burgers along with weekly specials, delicious breakfasts, and huge variety of pies.

*HOTEL: Hidden Falls Inn, Marble Falls (TX)*

*MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast, Lunch, & Dinner*

#### **Day 7 – April 13, 2025 – Alpine to Tyler (TX)**

Today is the last leg of our trip. We have had some long scenic days and even kept you out till nearly midnight to enjoy our Star Party to its fullest. So today, we let you sleep in a little longer than normal. Once on board our motor-coach, we take a short leisurely trip back to Tyler. Today is an excellent opportunity to exchange addresses and phone numbers with your new travel friends as you plan your next adventure with **AMERICAN TOURS**. We should arrive in Tyler a little before 4:00 PM with wonderful memories of the **BIG BEND OF TEXAS!**

*MEALS INCLUDED: Breakfast & Lunch*

**ACTIVITY LEVEL: LEVEL 2:** This tour requires average physical activity. You should be in good health, able to walk some stairs and walk reasonable distances, possibly over uneven ground, and cobblestoned streets.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** For the trip to make, we will be looking for a total of 20 registered passengers. If trip is cancelled by American Tours due to low registration numbers, ALL FUNDS are fully refunded.