

Big Bend National Park

The Big Bend is a wildly beautiful natural region, with a complex and fascinating history. Over one million acres of public land offer hiking, camping, river running, horse riding, mountain bicycling, jeep touring, and abundant sightseeing opportunities on paved and improved roads. Accommodations run the range from convenient and comfortable to resort luxury. Dedicated in 1944, the park is cradled¹ in the bend of the Rio Grande River along the Texas/Mexico border where outstanding² examples of Chihuahuan Desert topography and ecology attract nature enthusiasts from all over the world. A land of contrasts, Big Bend contains geological marvels, historic and prehistoric treasures and an amazing diversity of plant and animal life across its dramatic range of elevations.

Explore the Mountains

With over 150 miles of backcountry³ roads and 200 miles of trails, walking, hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding are all popular options for exploring the park. Some of the most popular hikes include:

- Window View Trail, perfect for a mountain sunset;
- Rio Grande Village Nature Trail, offering some of the best birding in the region;
- Chihuahuan Desert Nature Trail, where native plant life is identified along a half-mile path.

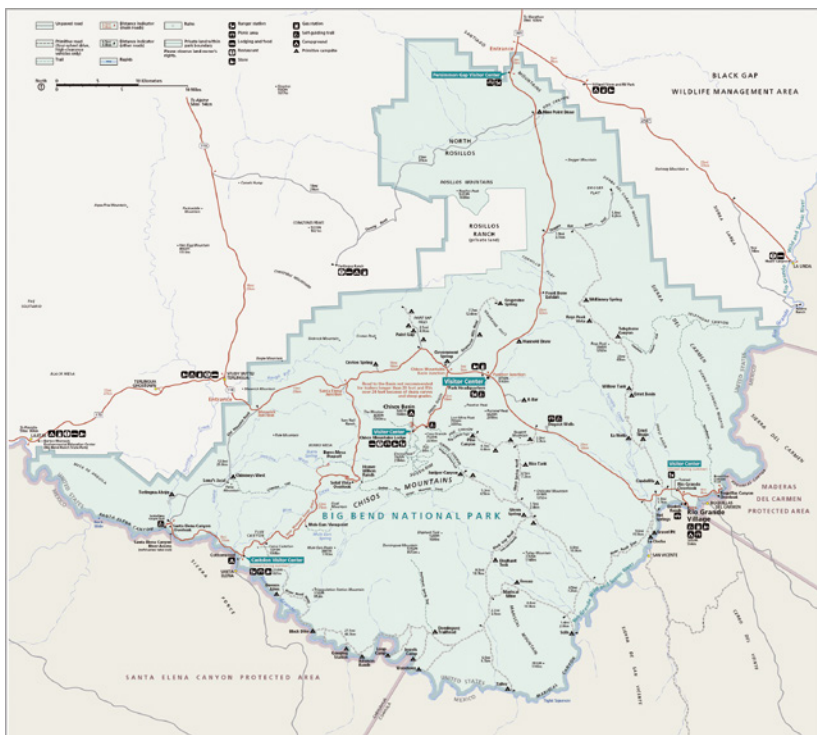
Ride the River

The 118 miles of the Rio Grande that border the park wind through the Santa Elena, Boquillas, and Mariscal canyons. A river trip by raft, canoe or kayak is an unforgettable way to encounter the remote wilderness of Big Bend. Half-day floats to multi-day camping trips are available.

Camp the Desert

There are three developed campgrounds in the park, all with water, restrooms⁴, and some with primitive shelters. Public showers and laundry facilities are available at the Rio Grande Village Store. Most of the campsites operate on a first-come first-served basis and fill up quickly in March, April and during the holiday season. A limited number of sites in Rio Grande Village and Chisos Basin allow advance reservation from November to April.

(Adapted from *Big Bend Travel Guide*)



GLOSSARY

- 1 placed
- 2 noticeable
- 3 remote, difficult to access
- 4 public toilets

ACTIVITIES

1 Find in the text the words corresponding to the following definitions.

- 1 A flat structure, typically made of planks, or barrels, that floats on water and is used for transport
- 2 The observation and study of birds with the naked eye or through binoculars
- 3 Something that provides cover or protection, as from the weather
- 4 The daily disappearance of the sun below the western horizon
- 5 Surface features of a place or region
- 6 Going on an extended walk for pleasure or exercise

2 List Big Bend main attractions.