

## Salmon Ruins

In the late 1800s, George Salmon and his family homesteaded land west of Bloomfield, NM. The property was the site of an Ancestral Puebloan ruin dating back to 1088. The site lies 12 miles south of the Aztec Ruins National Monument in Aztec, NM.

The original structure included approx. 250 rooms, many of which were destroyed in a fire in 1250, followed by a second in 1270. The Salmon family protected the remaining rooms and the San Juan County Museum Association acquired the 22-acre parcel in 1969. The site includes a museum and offers exploration of the Heritage Park, including interactive replicas of buildings as diverse as a Wild West trading post, a Navajo sweat lodge, male and female hogans, a Jicarilla Apache wickiup and a Ute tipi.

## Aztec Ruins National Monument

On January 24, 1923 the Ancestral Puebloan ruins in Aztec became a national monument. Early Euro-American settlers mistook the ruins for the handiwork of the Aztec Indians of Mesoamerica. The misnomer stuck and the town and the ruins became known as Aztec.

At Aztec Ruins National Monument one can see the original timbers holding up the roof of the West Ruin and fingerprints of ancient workers and children in the stucco walls. The West Ruin was a center of Ancestral Pueblo society that once housed over 500 masonry rooms ([www.nps.gov/azru](http://www.nps.gov/azru)). Today the West Ruin has a trail through a portion of the rooms where visitors can get a feel for how life was centuries ago.

The Great Kiva has been restored and presents a hauntingly beautiful reminder of long ago ceremonies. Self-guided tours, ranger tours, a museum and a 25-minute video are available to visitors.

Aztec Ruins National Monument is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except Memorial Day through Labor Day when hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily. The Park is closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.



Contact the Aztec Visitor Center for maps and for assistance in planning your tour of the Chacoan North Road:

Toll Free 1-888-543-GOAZTECNM  
[www.aztecnm.com](http://www.aztecnm.com)  
[goaztec@aztecnm.gov](mailto:goaztec@aztecnm.gov)

### Other Must-See Places Near Aztec:

- Aztec Museum and Pioneer Village
- Aztec Arches
- Navajo Lake State Park
- Angel Peak

The North Road, as well as the four sites described in this brochure, is along the Trail of the Ancients Scenic Byway, a 661-mile route that wanders through the unique Scenic Byway geological, cultural and historic sites of Northwest New Mexico.

### Notice:

Disturbing, vandalizing or removing any items from protected cultural or historic sites is prohibited by Federal Law (Archaeological Resources Protection Act Public Law 96-95-Oct.31, 1979).

### Warning:

Natural Gas Wells and their equipment are dangerous. Do not play on or around these locations.

### Caution:

Many of these sites are accessed via unmaintained roads that can be sandy in areas; please exercise caution when driving these roads. Rain, snow or mud may make these roads impassable. Not all sites are handicap accessible. Please carry water when travelling and hiking in remote areas. Be aware of rainstorms that can cause flash flooding, seek shelter during storms and stay out of low-lying areas. Do not attempt to drive through flooded areas.

# North Road Experience



## The Significance of a World Heritage Site

In 1972 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted the treaty "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage," ([whc.unesco.org](http://whc.unesco.org)) for the protection of natural and cultural resources that should be protected and preserved for future generations. "World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located" (UNESCO). The United States initiated the idea in 1965 with the White House Conference "World Heritage Trust." In 1968 similar ideas were developed in the "International Union for Conservation of Nature" and presented to the United Nations Conference on Human Environment in 1972 at Stockholm.



The Four Corners region is honored to house two World Heritage Sites: Chaco Culture National Historical Park, which includes the Aztec Ruins National Monument (along with five outliers managed by the BLM that include Twin Angels, Pierre's Site, Halfway House, Casamero, and Kin Nizhoni) and Mesa Verde National Park in Southwest Colorado.

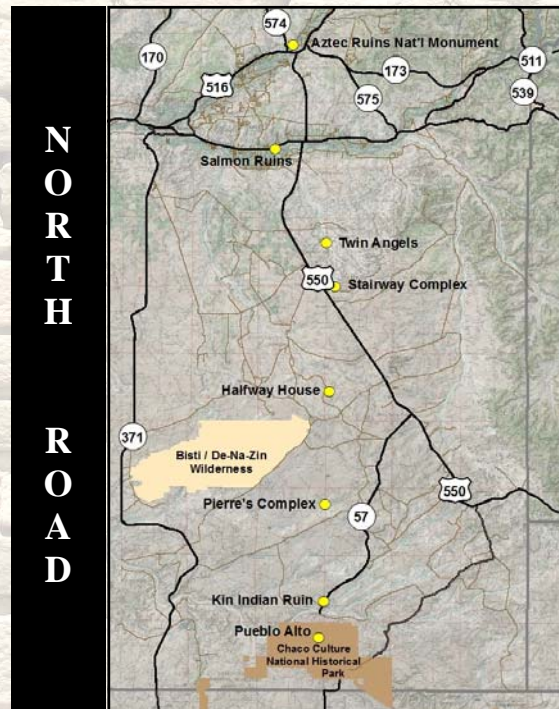
Cultural and/or natural sites must meet at least one of the ten criteria as well as be "of universal value." Criteria for the Chacoan sites include representing a masterpiece of human creative genius, bearing a unique or exceptional testimony of a cultural tradition, living or disappeared, and representing an outstanding example of architecture illustrating a period in human history.

## Significance of the North Road

In the first half of the 11th century, the Chacoan people built a road north from Pueblo Alto in Chaco Canyon.

The mystery of the Chacoan roads and their use still perplex us. The road was 30 feet wide, 60 feet in some places, did not swerve around obstacles such as cliffs or valleys, and ended at a stairway in Kutz Canyon. The road was not used by wheeled vehicles, horses, or other beasts of burden as these were not available to the Ancestral Puebloans.

The roads may have been used to transport large timbers needed in constructing Kivas and Great Houses or could have allowed groups of people to move from place to place. The significance of a north heading might suggest religious meaning as the soul was believed to come from the north and return there after death. The 35-mile stretch of road is still visible in some areas but is not accessible by vehicle.



## Chaco Culture National Historical Park

For all the wild beauty of Chaco Canyon's high-desert landscape, its long winters, short growing seasons, and marginal rainfall create an unlikely place for a major center of Ancestral Puebloan culture to take root and flourish. Yet this valley was the center of a thriving culture a thousand years ago.

The cultural of the Chacoan people began in the mid 800s and lasted more than 300 years. Using masonry techniques unique for their time, they constructed massive stone buildings (Great Houses) of multiple stories containing hundreds of rooms. The buildings were planned from the start, a stark contrast from the usual practice of adding rooms to existing structures as needed. Construction on some of these buildings spanned decades.

During the middle and late 800s, the Great Houses of Pueblo Bonito, Una Vida, and Penasco Blanco were constructed, followed by Hungo Pavi, Chetro Ketl, Pueblo Alto, and others. Sophisticated astronomical markers, communication features, water control devices, and formal earthen mounds surrounded them.

By 1050, Chaco had become the ceremonial, administrative, and economic center of the San Juan Basin. Its sphere of influence was extensive. Dozens of Great Houses in Chaco Canyon were connected by roads to more than 150 Great Houses throughout the region.



Pueblo Bonito

## Twin Angels Ruin

Twin Angels is an 11th century masonry structure associated with the Chacoan Anasazi culture. Its location is related to the Chacoan "Great North Road" which is projected to have passed through the bottom of Kutz Canyon.

Earl Morris excavated much of Twin Angels in 1915. Unfortunately after being excavated the site was extensively vandalized. In the late 1980s the Bureau of Land Management filled the holes and conducted stabilization which included replacing the mud between the stones and adding sand to the Kiva to protect the walls.

Twin Angels has several distinctive Chacoan architectural characteristics including core and veneer walls, preplanned architecture and an enclosed Kiva along the southwest side. To the south of the main structure is a low-walled room which has been identified as a herradura - a prehistoric road-related feature.



Twin Angels Great House

**CAUTION:** The location of Twin Angels Ruins at the point above Kutz Canyon creates a dangerous situation, please exercise extreme caution when visiting this site.