

THE ENCHANTED CIRCLE TOUR

Distance: 84 miles/136 KM

Time: 4 hours minimum

Route: From Taos Plaza, Hwy. 64 north to Hwy. 522 north to Questa; Hwy. 38 east to Red River, then south to Eagle Nest and Angel Fire; Hwy. 64 west to Taos.

The most popular tour in our area, this **National Forest Scenic Byway** circles **Wheeler Peak**, the highest in New Mexico at 13,161 feet. Throughout the drive, you'll see some of the oldest rocks in the southwest—quartz and feldspar that date back two billion years. Look for special Enchanted Circle markers to help guide your way.

Travel through the lush **Hondo Valley** and watch for the sign to the **D.H. Lawrence Memorial**. The English author spent much of his time from 1922 to 1925 writing in the solitude of a ranch on this property. After his death, Lawrence's ashes were brought here and placed in a chapel built by his widow, Frieda.

Continuing north, the scar on the mountains to your east was left by the San Cristobal/Lama fire of 1996, which destroyed almost 8,000 acres of national forest. Reforestation projects continue today.

Stop at the **Red River Fish Hatchery** which has free self-guiding tours of a show pond and several trout raceways. Children especially enjoy the show pool of the large rainbow trout, but fishermen downstream benefit from the harvest, too! Every year volunteers carry containers of brown trout fry down to the **Rio Grande** to help propagate the trout population.

In **Questa**, you will want to visit Artesanos de Questa. Local woodworkers, tinsmiths, painters, stained glass workers and sculptors show their work at this cooperative. Continue past Molycorp, Inc., which mines and mills molybdenum, a steel-hardening agent and lubricant.

Take a break in **Red River** and enjoy a stroll through this family-oriented town with an old west feel, complete with saloons and a melodrama theater. Red River offers winter skiing and snowboarding; the ski area lifts also operate in the summer.

As you leave Red River begin looking for elk and other wildlife between **Bob Cat Pass** and **Eagle Nest Lake**, one of the finest trout and landlocked salmon waters in the United States.

The old gold mining town of **Elizabethtown** is off to the south. Established in 1870 after gold was found, this was the first incorporated town in New Mexico, with at least seven saloons and three dance halls.

Visit the **Vietnam Veterans Memorial**, built by Dr. Victor Westphall and family in memory of the death of his son and others in Vietnam.

Take a break in **Angel Fire**, a four season resort with skiing, golfing, shopping and restaurants.

Drive the twisting canyon road back to Taos. Many of our artists live and work in this canyon. If you would like to visit their studios, more information is available in the little village of **Shady Brook**.