

THINGS TO SEE AND DO WHILE EXPLORING THE PARK

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PLUS 03



37.7863° N • 105.6152° W

GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL PARK

A sandbox of epic proportions.

Against the backdrop of rugged 14,000' peaks in the Sangre de Cristo mountains—the 30 square mile sand dune field, with no designated trails—invites you on an adventure. The natural and diverse system of the park ranges from great sand dunes to forests, from cottonwood groves to majestic mountain peaks and tundra. The highest elevation in the park is 13,604' above sea level.



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EXPLORING THE

GREAT SAND DUNES

Recent scientific research suggests that the Great Sand Dunes in Colorado began forming around 440,000 years ago, after a large inland lake that once covered the San Luis Valley - named "Lake Alamosa" when evidence of the lakebed was discovered in 2002 - dried up due to climate change. The predominant southwest winds blowing toward a low curve in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains helped form Colorado's Great Sand Dunes, and they still do today.



OUR FAVORITE THINGS TO SEE AND DO

Photography

There are endless possibilities but I highly recommend sunrise or sunset for the stunning contrast of colors when the shadows are cast on the dunes. Action photos are always a hit especially while sliding (or tumbling) down the dunes!

Sandboarding / Sledding

A MUST DO with or without kids. We rented from Kristi Mountain Sports and they were so friendly and great source of local knowledge. Just be prepared to be covered in fine sand that is nearly impossible to get out of your shoes and socks (and nose, ears, and hair!)

Experience the night

A certified International Dark Sky Park makes for phenomenal way to view thousands of stars.

Sketch the Dunes

literally, grab a pad of paper, chalk pencils and start sketching.

WHERE TO STAY

Alamosa

I recommend staying in the town of Alamosa which is only a 40 minute drive to the Great Sand Dunes Visitors Center. Several retail outlets offer sand sled rentals and sandboard rentals. There is a Walmart (always a bonus!) and plenty of dining and hotel options.

HOW MANY DAYS WILL YOU NEED

I recommend a minimum of 2 days to explore Great Sand Dunes National Park.