

Alpine Lodge

Hiking Guide

Hiking in and around Red River

Remember to wear sun screen and take plenty of water with you!

Red River Nature Trail – 2 miles one way/ level of difficulty: Easy

There are three entrances/exits to this trail:

1. The base of the Platinum Chair Lift at the Lift House Bar & Grill. Just across from the Alpine Lodge Bridge.
2. At Brandenburg Park (in middle of town). Cross the river at the Covered Bridge
3. Goose Lake Road. Go east two miles along Hwy. 578 just past Roadrunner RV Park (on the right).

This is a well groomed trail suitable for short hikes and great for kids. It is a self-guided nature trail with signs posted along the way which explain the history, wildlife, ecology, and geology of our area. The trail follows the Red River and has a very moderate elevation gain.

Mallette Park Nature Trail - ½ mile one way/ level of difficulty: Very Easy

To get to the trail head, go straight out of the Alpine parking lot onto Mallette Road (right next to Sitzmark Sports). At the stop sign you will continue to go straight and turn into the park parking lot on your left. The trail starts just right of the tennis courts. This is a gradual trail that follows one of the many high mountain streams in the area until you reach a dirt road. From the road you can turn back to the park or continue up the road. You will have to cross the stream several times.

Pioneer Trail - 3 miles one way/ level of difficulty: Moderate to Difficult

This trail begins at the end of Pioneer Road. You can start from the Alpine and walk to the Ski Area and follow the Forest Service signs or park at the base of the Ski Area. You will have to cross the stream several times. The trail follows a road built by miners at the turn of the 19th century. There are many points of interest along the trail, including old mine shafts and historical buildings. It is highly recommended that you **Do Not Enter** the abandoned mines and buildings due to hazards that are present (mines can collapse and the floors, roofs, and walls of the building can give way).

Middle Fork Lake Trail - 2-3 miles one way/ level of difficulty: Moderate to Difficult

Drive up Hwy. 578 for about 6.5 miles until the pavement ends. You can park at the Forest Service sign or you can turn right and follow a dirt road for about a mile to a parking lot (4-wheel drive only). From the parking lot the trail head starts to your left. The hike begins at 9,500 ft. and the lake is around 11,000 ft. The trail ascends almost 1500 ft. with 23 switch backs to the lake and is one of several trails that lead to Wheeler Peak (the highest point in New Mexico). The lake is roughly 6 acres of glacial cirque nestled at the foot of Bull-of-the-Woods Mountain. Take your fishing gear and try for some of the famous Snake River Cutthroats (these range from 14-20 inches in size).

Goose Creek Canyon (Trail 65) - 6 miles one way/ level of difficulty: Difficult

Be prepared for a fairly difficult hike. Drive Hwy. 578 just past Roadrunner RV Park (about 2 miles) on your right. Parking is provided. Cross the bridge and begin a hike that starts at just less than 9,000 ft. and climbs to around 12,700 ft. - this is a beautiful hike which offers spectacular views!

Lost Lake Trail - 5-6 miles one way/ level of difficulty: Moderate to Difficult

Take Hwy. 578 for about 6.5 miles till the pavement ends. You can park at the Forest Service sign or you can turn right and follow a dirt road for about a mile to a parking lot (4-wheel drive only). From the parking lot, the trail starts to your left. After about 1 mile of hiking, you will come to a river crossing and a sign marking the trail head for Lost Lake. From there, the trail to the lake is about 4 miles and ascends to about 11,500 ft. No camping or camp fires are permitted around the lake or streams, and fishing is allowed for Cutthroat with a state license.

Horseshoe Lake Trail - 8-9 miles one way/ level of difficulty: Difficult

Take Hwy. 578 for about 6.5 miles till the pavement ends. You can park at the Forest Service sign or you can turn right and follow a dirt road for about a mile to a parking lot (4-wheel drive only). From the parking lot the trail starts to your left. After about 1 mile of hiking you will come to a river crossing and a sign marking the trail head for Lost Lake. From here, hike along Lost Lake Trail for about 3 miles to Lost Lake Junction. At the junction continue south to Horseshoe Lake. The trail becomes steeper and rockier. The hike begins around 9,500 ft. and ascends to 12,000 ft. From the lake it is only a short trip to Wheeler Peak but extending the hike in this manner is not recommended.

East Fork Trail - 6 miles one way/ level of difficulty: Moderate

Take Hwy 578 for about 6.5 miles till the pavement ends. Follow the Forest Service sign to the left (East Fork) and drive to the end of the dirt road. From here, your hike will start. Follow the trail to the Lost Lake Junction. From the junction you can go to Horseshoe Lake, Lost Lake, or Wheeler Peak. This is the easiest route. The trail is a nice gradual, ascending hike.

Wheeler Peak - 8-10 miles one way depending on route/ level of difficulty: Very Difficult

Follow the directions from East Fork trail for the easiest and fastest route. The trail will lead you to Horseshoe Lake. Once you reach Horseshoe Lake, cross the dam and climb above the southeast corner of the lake. At the top of the ridge, follow the trail that drops down the canyon. Wheeler Peak is the first peak north along the ridge line. Wheeler Peak is the highest point in New Mexico, elevation 13,161 ft. On a clear day there are incredible views in every direction. You ideally want to summit before noon to minimize problems with summer storms. Snow fields remain year-round and flurries are possible even in mid-summer. Be sure to take rain gear and extra warm clothing. Lightning and hypothermia are serious threats on Wheeler Peak and the exposed summit ridge line.

Wild Rivers Recreation Area- open year-round (a \$3 day-use fee applies)

This is a spectacular area for hiking, fishing, and enjoying the views. With several scenic overlooks and numerous hiking trails, this area was one of the original eight areas designated by Congress in 1968 as part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. It is where the Red River meets the Rio Grande and showcases the majestic beauty of the Rio Grande Gorge. If you are interested in fishing, hiking, painting, or just taking pictures this is a 'must see' wilderness area. From the Alpine turn left out of the parking lot and go west to Questa. At the stop light in Questa turn right and go out-of- town about a mile. There will be signs posted for the Wild Rivers Recreation Area (off to the left) – just follow until you reach the park entrance.

Suggested Hikes:

Big Arsenic- An excellent first time hike which includes a self-guided nature trail – it takes you to the Petroglyphs which were carved several hundred years ago by the Ute Indians. Trail distance is only 0.80 miles but the elevation change is 750ft. Level of Difficulty: Moderate

La Junta- This trail leads you to the confluence of the Red River and the Rio Grande. This is considered one of the most difficult trails in the area due to the steepness of the trail. There is over a 1000 ft. of elevation difference in 0.80 miles. Be ready for a difficult climb out of the Gorge if you take this trail.

Chiflo- This is the easiest trail leading into the Gorge. The trail leads to the Rio Grande at the north end of the park. It is a moderate hike out with 320 ft. of elevation difference from the rim to the river and the trail is 0.40 miles long.

Warning: Trails into the Gorge are considered Difficult due to large elevation changes in short distances.

The staff of the Alpine Lodge hopes that you enjoy this guide. Please feel free to give us feedback on these hikes and let us know your favorites. Take care and have a wonderful hike.