

*Ted Cook  
Productions*

**RIGEL**

*ASTRONOMY  
VACATIONS*

**NEW MEXICO**

**ASTRONOMY AND A LOT MORE!**

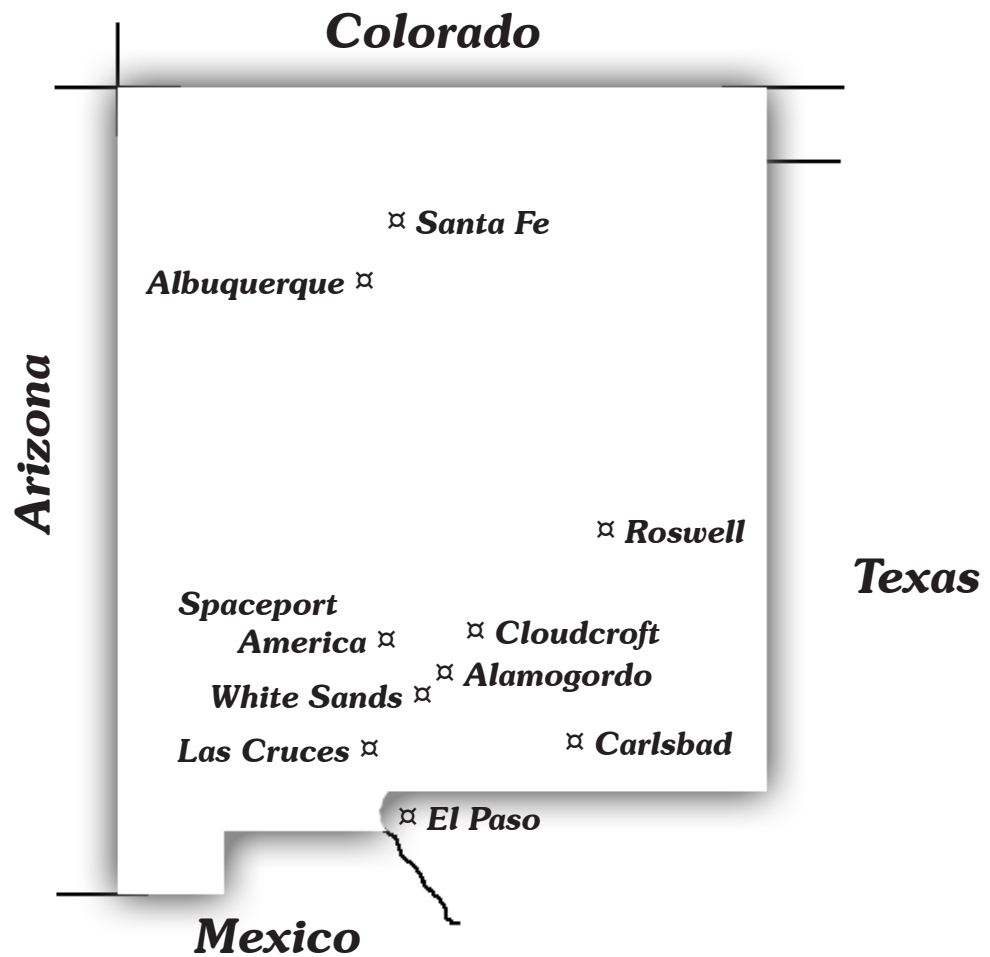
**AN ENTIRE VACATION PACKAGE**

**2013**

*A week of activities packed with  
stargazing, astronomy, history,  
natural beauty, UFOs and recreation.*

# THE ADVENTURE....

*Embark on the astronomy vacation of your dreams in Southern New Mexico. Stargazing from a fantastic dark sky site high up in the mountains. Exclusive tours of observatories and museums not available to the general public. Control of a remote telescope in Western Australia for an unbelievable opportunity to view the southern skies. Trek through incredible White Sands National Monument, visit 1000 year old petroglyphs and journey back in time to the days of Billy the Kid. Relax at the spa or play a round of golf at a hundred year old lodge nestled in the pine forest of Cloudcroft.*



*There is something for everyone.*

*Bring the family for a vacation of a lifetime.....*

# ABOUT THE TOURS

***Our vacation package is designed to provide you with a unique opportunity to experience astronomy at its best, as well as deliver a truly memorable holiday. New Mexico's remarkable dark skies are nearly unobtainable anywhere else, which is why it attracts astronomers from around the globe. Situated in Southern New Mexico is a plethora of the best astronomical and space facilities in America. On our vacations you will get exclusive tours of some of these facilities, some of which are not open to the general public.***

***Our dark sky site for nightly stargazing is at the Earthrise Institute, founded by Dr. Alan Hale (co-discoverer of the Hale-Bopp comet). Dr. Hale will give an exclusive lecture to tour participants.***

***The New Mexico Museum of Space History will not only give participants a comprehensive exclusive tour, but will provide a most unique experience - stargazing the Southern Hemisphere. From the museum, participants will be able to remotely control a telescope located in Western Australia.***

***We have made arrangements with two large observatories for private tours - Apache Point Observatory (home of the Sloan Digital Sky Survey) and Sunspot National Solar Observatory.***

***This area is also where Dr. Robert Goddard conducted his rocket experiments, and a visit to the Goddard museum in Roswell is planned. Roswell is of course also famous for the 'incident' in 1947 when something crashed on a nearby farm. A UFO? Aliens? We will visit the International UFO Museum and you can judge for yourself.***

***White Sands is home to the US Missile Test Range and has been the leading test area in the country for rocketry. In the coming years, Spaceport America, located near White Sands, will become operational and host the next phase in space travel - private space flight. But White Sands also is incredibly beautiful, and we will visit White Sands National Monument (get your cameras ready for this one).***

***Carlsbad Caverns National Park is a national treasure, an awe-inspiring work of nature. Immense underground caverns contain incredible cave formations and extraordinary features.***

***What vacation would be complete without a little R&R? A spa, golf, shopping, swimming and more. You will have ample time to relax.***

***This is the ultimate vacation for astronomers of all levels. And there is plenty for non-astronomers also - a great vacation for the entire family....***

# DARK SKY VIEWING SITE

*We will be using the Earthrise Institute dark sky site for our nightly stargazing. The site is located at 7300 feet elevation in the Lincoln National Forest about 17 miles east of Cloudcroft. We will be doing our observing about 100 meters from where Dr. Alan Hale first sighted comet Hale-Bopp in 1995.*

*The views of the universe are amazing from the site. All of the communities in the area, including Cloudcroft and Alamogordo have dark sky ordinances in effect, so light pollution is non-existent. Many objects are clear enough to be seen with the naked eye.*

*If you own your own scope and equipment, you are welcome to bring it with you. If you do not own your own scope or do not want to transport it with you on the trip, we will have scopes on-site for participants to share.*

*Although cloudy skies are a very rare occurrence in Southern New Mexico, as with any location on the planet, we are at the mercy of Mother Nature for clear nights. We have available four possible nights for viewing and timed the trips to correspond to the best weather times of the year, so we should be afforded some excellent viewing nights. It is extremely rare for poor conditions to persist for several nights in a row. Additionally, our schedule is flexible enough to be rearranged, if necessary, in the event we need to utilize a different night than originally scheduled.*

*The Earthrise Institute has been developed for the advancement and betterment of astronomy. For more information on the institute, visit their web site at [www.earthriseinstitute.org](http://www.earthriseinstitute.org).*



*Typical View from Earthrise site*



***The New Mexico Museum of Space History in Alamogordo will provide tour participants a unique experience. In addition to an indepth exclusive tour of the museum, including a visit to the museum restoration facility, we may also be able to use the museum facilities at the IMAX theater to control a telescope remotely from Western Australia (subject to availability and weather permitting in Australia). Prepare to explore the Southern Hemisphere night sky and see sights that are not able to be witnessed from North America. This is truly a fantastic opportunity.***



***The museum is also home to the International Space Hall of Fame and New Mexico's only IMAX theater, where we will get to take in the currently playing show.***

***Visit the museum web site at:  
[www.nmspacemuseum.org](http://www.nmspacemuseum.org)***



***Daytime activities include a trip to two of the local observatories, Apache Point and Sunspot.***



## ***Apache Point Observatory***

***Apache Point Observatory is home to the Sloan Digital Sky Survey and hosts scientists and astronomers from around the globe. Access inside the facility is limited and not open to the public, but we have arranged special guided tours of the observatory so you will get in to see the telescopes and receive a guided tour by observatory personnel. This is a great chance to see the inner workings of one of the nation's top astronomical observatories. NOTE: At times scientific work being conducted at Apache may limit access to certain areas.***

## ***Sunspot Solar Observatory***

***Sunspot Solar Observatory is a national observatory constantly studying the sun. It is one of the major solar observation facilities in the world. We will receive a guided tour of the facility and learn the latest in solar studies.***





## **White Sands National Monument**

*Get your cameras ready for your visit to one of the world's great natural wonders - White Sands. Great wave-like dunes of gypsum sand cover 275 square miles of desert creating the largest gypsum dune field in the world. We will take a trek out to the park, located just outside Alamogordo, where you will be able to walk the dunes and photograph this remarkable place.*

*In September, the park hosts a hot air balloon festival as around 30 giant hot air balloons take to the skies above the park.*

## **Roswell**

*In July of 1947 something crashed on a ranch near Roswell. Was it a flying saucer from an alien planet? Or a top secret balloon being tested by the Air Force? Were alien bodies recovered? The mystery of what happened that day in Roswell continues today. We will spend a day in Roswell with visits to the International UFO Museum and the Robert Goddard Museum.*



## **Magnificent Carlsbad Caverns**

*Nature at her finest! Three hours from Alamogordo, to the southeast, is one of the most spectacular places on the entire planet - Carlsbad Caverns National Park. Behold the incredible beauty and grandeur of the colossal and exquisite underground formations. The Big Room covers 8.2 acres. We will have lunch 755 feet below the surface. This is a must see destination.*



# ACCOMMODATIONS

*Top off the vacation with accommodations at a deluxe resort. Imagine a hundred year old lodge high up in the mountains at 9000 feet. Complete with swimming pool, spa, lounge, restaurant and golf course. A retreat frequented by celebrities. The Lodge Resort and Spa in Cloudcroft.*



*In a casually elegant atmosphere, The Lodge Resort offers modern conveniences in a charmingly unique historical setting. Pamper yourself in the spa, challenge your game at one of the world's highest golf courses, and dine on Southwestern and Continental cuisine prepared by an award-winning chef. Your package includes room and breakfast.*



*Judy Garland and Clark Gable etched their names on the wall in the tower.*

**ALTITUDE NOTE:** *Cloudcroft is at 9000 feet. The air is thinner. Take this into consideration if you may have a health problem in the thin air.*



*The tours include a visit to the White Sands Missile Museum. Three Rivers Petroglyph Park and Lincoln can be arranged to visit also. If you have a group of friends, organization or club, we will customize a tour just for your group, tailored to specific interests, number of days and budget.*

## **On the Trail of Billy the Kid**



*Follow the trail of Billy the Kid. Visit the ghost town of Lincoln, preserved as it looked in the 1880's when Billy and Pat Garrett called this place home. Lincoln was site of the famous Lincoln County Wars and we will see the actual location where Billy made his daring escape from jail (with bullet hole still in the wall).*

## **Three Rivers Petroglyph Park**

*Located just north of Alamogordo is one of the largest prehistoric rock carving sites in the southwest. The park contains over 21,000 petroglyphs carved over 1000 years ago. After you walk amongst the petroglyphs, we have planned a short lecture on how the ancient native peoples of the area observed the night skies.*



## **White Sands Missile Museum**

*We head west from Alamogordo across the White Sands Missile Test Range and visit the Missile Museum. The Missile Park contains many examples in the history of rocket (including the V2) and missile testing performed at White Sands Missile Test Range. NOTE: The museum is located on the missile test range, PHOTO ID is required for access.*





## **Cloudcroft**

*Our itinerary also includes a free day for you to relax and explore the area on your own. The city and businesses of Cloudcroft invite you to explore their town, walk its boardwalks and shop in its many stores. Each participant will receive a welcome package from Cloudcroft. You may also wish to visit the local museum or play a round of golf.*

*All of our week-long vacations provide you with a free day to explore on your own. With a rental car, there are many places of interest to see within a short drive of Alamogordo.*

*In addition to the activities previously mentioned in the Cloudcroft and Alamogordo area there are also a number of other activities and attractions. Cloudcroft offers everything for the outdoor enthusiast from hiking to mountain biking and horseback riding. Alamogordo has golfing, a zoo, a toy train depot, historical museum, pistachio farms and more.*

*Every September the White Sands Balloon Festival is held around the third weekend of the month.*

**Smoky Bear says:  
“Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires”**

*The kids will love a visit to Smoky Bear National Park, the spot where Smoky was first found and his final resting place.*



## **Ruidoso**

*To the north of Cloudcroft is the Mescalero Apache Reservation where you can try your luck at the Inn of the Mountain God’s casino. The town of Ruidoso has many shops and boutiques. Visit Ruidoso Downs and take in a horse race.*

## **Radio Astronomy**

*Want to see another famous and important astronomy site? The Very Large Array radio telescope field is about a three hour drive from Alamogordo.*

## 2013 Vacations

*Standard vacation packages are priced at \$1599.00 per person double occupancy. All vacations include a lecture by Dr. Alan Hale, stargazing at the Earthrise site, exclusive tour of NM Museum of Space History, visits to Apache Point and Sunspot observatories, Roswell (UFO museum and Robert Goddard museum), Carlsbad Caverns, White Sands, entrance fees, guides, tours, lectures, 7 nights accommodations at the Lodge Resort, ground transportation to itinerary sites, some lunches and farewell BBQ or dinner.\**



### 2013 Dates

*These are the best weeks for dark sky viewing in 2013 in Southern New Mexico.*

*Four or more people are required to allow a tour take place.*

**Sept 30-Oct 5**

**Oct 28-Nov 2**

**(New Moon Oct 5, Nov 3)**

*Itineraries for Southern NM tours include:*

*White Sands National Monument*

*White Sands Missile Museum*

*NM Museum of Space History*

*Sunspot and Apache Point*

*Carlsbad Caverns National Park*

*Roswell*

*Free Day (can use for Lincoln or Three Rivers if desired)*



## **Custom Vacations**

***Bring your club or organization - or a group of friends. We will be happy to work with you and arrange a special vacation custom made to your interests and budget.***

***Custom packages can be arranged for four to seven days to fit your schedule.***

***Choose what sites you want to visit and what activities you want to do. Contact us today for details. We will provide you with a quote based on your requirements. Tours are available in spring and fall - not all dates are available - please inquire.***



## **Astronomy Workshops**

***We are excited to offer astronomy workshops. These three day workshops combine tours and lectures on astronomy and space. They are great for student groups and amateur astronomy groups. The workshop includes lectures from people who currently work in or have previously worked in the astronomy and space fields providing both current science as well as an historical perspective. An evening of stargazing at the 7300' elevation Earthrise dark sky site with Dr. Hale is included in the workshop. Workshops are \$450.00 per person and do not include transportation, meals or accommodations. A minimum of 6 people is required. E-mail for information.***

***Workshops include:***

- Lectures and tour of New Mexico Museum of Space History***
- Lecture on latest solar science at Sunspot Solar Observatory***
- Tours of Sunspot and Apache Point Observatories***
- Lecture by astronomer Dr. Alan Hale***
- Stargazing with Dr. Hale at Earthrise site***

## **What level astronomer do I have to be to enjoy the trip?**

**Any level, or even no level at all. If you have an interest in astronomy and space, you will enjoy and learn on this trip. If you are a serious astronomer, you will have the opportunity for incredible clear night viewing and get to talk to several astronomers currently working in the field. If you are just learning astronomy, you will be able to learn from some of the best.**

## **I am into astronomy but my spouse isn't.**

**No problem. We have many non-astronomy activities planned as a group and there are many things to do in the area should your spouse not want to attend a certain tour event.**

## **Do I need my own telescope?**

**No. You are welcome to bring your own gear but if you do not want to transport it or do not own a scope, we will have scopes available at the Earthrise site to use. You will have to share these scopes, but there should only be about 4 to 6 people at the most sharing any one scope. Currently we have an 8 inch Celestron and 10 inch Meade available.**

## **What does the vacation package cost?**

**The cost of a package is \$1599.00 per person based on double occupancy. Due to increased hotel costs for a single in a room, there is a single supplement cost for singles traveling alone. Two friends are always welcome to share a room to save the additional cost. Custom vacation prices vary. Workshops are \$450.00 per person and do not include accommodations.**

## **Do you have a family plan?**

**Yes. Children traveling with their parents and staying in the same hotel room can save up to \$500.00 each.**

## **What is included in the cost?**

**The cost includes accommodations, breakfast every day, some lunches and some dinners, all lectures, all tours and guides, all entrance fees, and local transportation to daytime events. Workshops include ONLY lectures, tours and entrance fees.**

## **What is not included in the cost?**

**Airfare, travel to/from your home, any transportation and accommodation costs prior to or after the tour dates, some lunches and dinners, alcoholic beverages, entrance fees or costs for sites and activities not included in the vacation itinerary, medical costs, personal items, extra costs incurred at hotel (internet, phone, movies, laundry, spa), baggage or travel insurance.**

## **What is your cancellation policy?**

**If you cancel more than 60 days prior to the start you will receive a full refund less deposit. If you cancel less than 60 but more than 30 days prior to the start you will receive a 50% refund of all costs. If you cancel less than 30 days prior to the start you will forfeit the total cost. If we cancel the vacation for any reason, you will receive a full refund within 14 days of the cancellation. We are not responsible for any additional expenses incurred by you, including but not limited to, airfare, etc. We strongly suggest you purchase separate travel insurance.**

## ***Do I need to rent a car?***

***It is recommended. A car gives you the freedom to go to dinner where you like and move about on your free time. Plus, having your own car at the evening stargazing allows you to leave or stay on your own schedule.***

## ***How do I get there?***

***The closest city with a commercial airport is El Paso, Texas (ELP). The airport is served by many major airlines with easy connections from anywhere. It is a small and easy to get around in airport with all major rental car companies. El Paso is 83 miles from Alamogordo and is an easy scenic drive.***

## ***What kind of weather can I expect?***

***Even though we are in the desert southwest, Alamogordo is at 4500 feet elevation and Cloudcroft is at 9000 feet. Expect a wide range of temperatures from day to night with hot sunny days (80-90F) and clear cool nights (40-60F). Plus, there is often wind that comes up so a wind breaker would be recommended, especially at night. Carlsbad Caverns is 56F at all times.***

## ***How many people will be on a tour?***

***We will keep the tours small to provide personal attention to everyone. Typically tours will have no more than 14 people.***

## ***How do I book a vacation?***

***Go online to [www.tedcookproductions.com](http://www.tedcookproductions.com) or email us to get a reservation form. A \$300.00 deposit is required to hold a spot and the total balance is due 60 days prior to the tour. The deposit is refundable for 14 days after we receive it, after which it becomes non-refundable.***

## ***Who are you?***

***Ted Cook, owner of Ted Cook Productions, grew up in the space program as his father worked at the Kennedy Space Center on the Apollo launch facilities and others. Ted got his degree in Aerospace Engineering from Georgia Tech and went on to work on advanced aircraft. He later formed his own production company for graphics, photography and video creating a series of educational programs for children about space and astronomy. Ted is a member of the Planetary Society and Squak Mountain Telescope Gang. Dr. Alan Hale, who will be giving a lecture to the group, worked at JPL and has a PhD in astronomy. Dr. Hale co-discovered the comet Hale-Bopp and is the founder of the Earthrise Institute. Personnel conducting tours and giving talks at the NM Museum of Space History, Apache Point and Sunspot are all professional astronomers.***

## ***I have more questions, how do I get more information?***

***Simply drop us an email at [info@tedcookproductions.com](mailto:info@tedcookproductions.com)***



## **Important Information - Please Read Carefully**

**You must agree to the following when booking a vacation package.**

**What is included in the price: Accommodations for the length of the package; Breakfast each morning provided by the hotel; Selected lunches and dinners; Transportation to/from scheduled daytime events; Lectures; entrance fees; Tours and guides. Workshops price includes ONLY lectures, tours and entrance fees.**

**Prices do NOT include: Airfare and transportation to/from Cloudcroft; Personal car rental; Personal activities.**

**What to pack: Bring clothing for both warm/hot days and cool breezy nights; Hiking boots or good sturdy walking shoes and a small pack to carry water are recommended if you take the hike through Three Rivers Petroglyph Park; Telescope (optional) - a scope will be available on site to share if you do not own or do not wish to transport your own; Binoculars - great for stargazing when not using the scope. For the White Sands Star Party trip only: you will need to bring your own scope and camping gear for the two nights camping in the park.**

**Physical Requirements: Please note that Cloudcroft is located at over 9000 feet elevation. The air is thinner at that altitude and may cause a problem if you have a breathing condition. Except for normal walking, there are no physically demanding activities on the vacation with the exception of the hike at Three Rivers Petroglyph Park - a moderate climb in hot desert conditions. If you feel that the hike would be too much for you, you can decide to not take it.**

**Environment: As noted above, Cloudcroft is at over 9000 feet elevation. The area is forested and the weather at night can be cool; Alamogordo and its surrounding area is located in a desert environment. Daytime temperatures can be hot. As in any desert area, care should be taken when walking outdoors as some plants and animals can be dangerous, such as cactus, scorpions and snakes (especially in Three Rivers Petroglyph Park). Do not step on or touch the cactus as the thorns are very sharp. If you encounter a snake, back away and do not disturb it. BE ALERT!**

**Itineraries are subject to change: Even though we have scheduled these tours at the statistically best times of the year for clear skies, we cannot guarantee the weather. We have scheduled in four days of stargazing to optimize our chance of clear skies, but the possibility always exists for an uncommon week of cloudy weather; The same applies to the viewing from Australia, we cannot guarantee clear skies; There is also the possibility of windy conditions at the viewing site; Apache Point is a private facility and reserves the right to cancel a tour if it interferes with critical work; We may also move activities around during the week in order to accommodate the observatory and weather in order to provide all the activities we have planned; Uncompleted portions of the itinerary, however, are not subject to refund.**

## *Tour Conditions (continued)*

**Tour Payments:** We cannot accept credit or debit cards for payment. Your tour must be paid by check, money order or bank draft. A deposit of \$300 per person is required to hold a reservation. The deposit is refundable for 14 days. After 14 days the deposit becomes non-refundable. Balance is due 60 days prior to the start of the tour. If you make your reservation less than 60 days prior to the tour, full payment is due immediately. You must also agree to and sign a release and waiver agreement.

**Cancellations:** If you cancel your trip prior to 60 days before the tour, you will receive a full refund, less your deposit. If you cancel less than 60 days but more than 30 days prior to the tour, you will receive an 50% refund, less your deposit. If you cancel less than 30 days prior to the start of the tour you will forfeit all payments. If you start a tour but do not complete it, no refund will be given. We encourage all participants to purchase separate travel insurance to cover any lost costs.

**Tour Cancellation:** If we have to cancel the tour for any reason, you will receive a full refund within 14 days of the tour's cancellation.