



A scenic drive and a  
guide to

# The Davis Mountains



# A Little about the Davis Mountains

The Davis Mountains are a sky island, meaning they are an isolated mountain range surrounded by desert. The mountains were formed from volcanic strata during eruptions of the Trans-Pecos Texas volcanic field, 35 million years ago.

Fort Davis is located at the foot of the Davis mountains, around 4,900 ft above sea level. The highest peak in the Davis Mountains is just over 8,000 ft above sea level. The Davis mountains have several different ecoregions that change with the increase in elevation.

The land of the Davis mountains originally belonged to the Jumanos, Lipan Apache, Warm Springs Apache, Mescalero Apache, and Comanche Native Americans.



# A little about our guide

You can use this guide in multiple ways!

You can follow the route on Google, and see all the stops on one day to just get a glimpse of everything. You can use the guide for a weekend of exploring the Davis Mountains, going to different areas or stops every day. Or, you can drive the route on Google, and stop to camp at the three different areas with camping along the way, while checking out all the other stops.

There is no right or wrong way to explore!

Happy Trails!  
~Team Trailey

P.S. This route follows the Davis Mountains' Scenic Loop and has additional stops along the loop. The scenic loop has been around for years, and we did not create it.



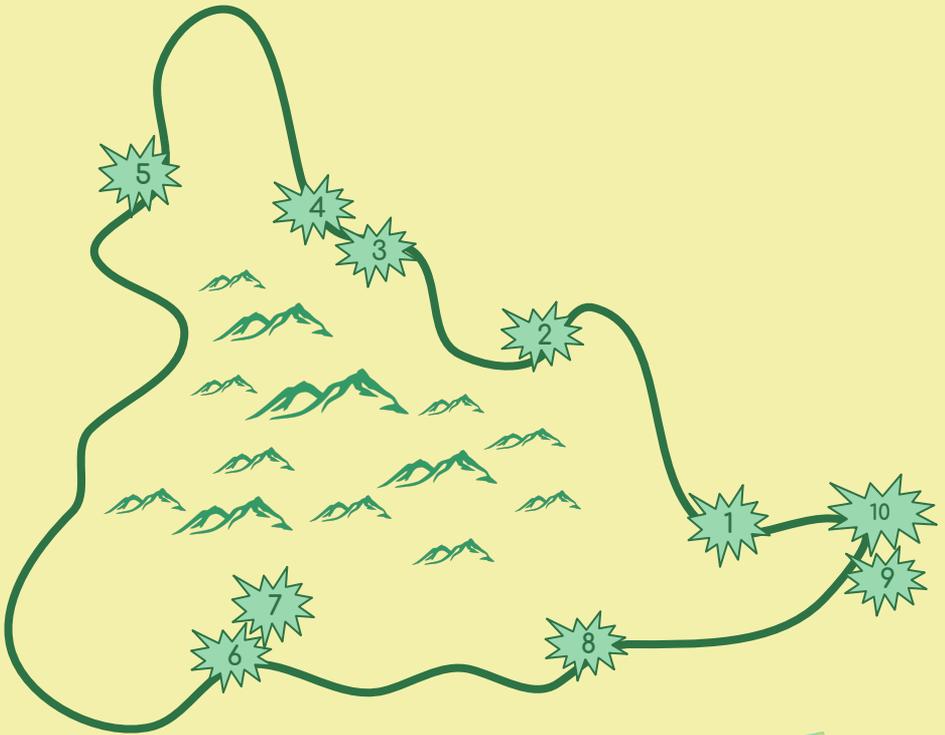
# Points of Interest



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# Here's a Map!



Scan or click here for a drive-able route on Google Maps!



# 1. Davis Mountains State Park

The Davis Mountains State Park is situated in the foothills of the great Davis Mountains. The park is home to oaks, junipers, pinyon pines, and a variety of grasses. Some animals that inhabit the area are canyon treefrogs, black-tailed rattlesnakes, mule deer, mountain lions, Montezuma quail, common black-hawk, and Bell's Vireo

The park boasts over 13 miles of trail, campsites for tents and trailers, bird blinds, many great views, and the Indian Lodge!

Throughout the guide, you can click or scan any of these QR codes for more information!



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## 2. McDonald Observatory

The McDonald Observatory is an astronomical observatory in the Davis Mountains. It is a part of the University of Texas at Austin and a organized research unit of the College of Natural Sciences.

You can visit the observatory by purchasing a day pass in advance, or you can sign up to attend a “Star Party” on certain days.

They also offer some livestream programs and other educational materials, so you can experience the observatory from your own home!

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## 3. Madera Canyon Trailhead

This area of the Davis Mountains is higher elevation, around 7,000ft about sea level, and you'll notice the flora has changed. There are large ponderosas, grey oaks, and southwestern white pines.

The Madera Canyon Trail is a lovely 2.5 mile loop. There are picnic areas around the trailhead that allow overnight parking (a.k.a. car camping). No reservations are required.

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# 4. Davis Mountains Preserve

The Davis Mountains Preserve is owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy. The Madera Canyon Trail (the previous spot) is part of the preserve. The rest of the preserve is closed to the public most of the time, but they do have some public access days. Check their website for updated information!

The preserve itself is over 33,000 acres and also encompasses Mt. Livermore, which is the highest peak of the Davis Mountains at 8,378 ft above sea level.



If you are able to visit on one of the public access days, the preserve does have a trail that goes to the peak of Mt. Livermore!

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## 5. Pile Of Rocks

Just as the name suggests, this is a pile of rocks. On the side of the road.

The rock pile is actually on private property, so you cannot access them, but there is a pull out, so you can get out and admire the rock pile from the road.

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# 6. Old Spanish Trail Gallery and Museum

Check out some mountain art and a little bit of Texas history at this gallery!

You must have an appointment in advance. They also offer some workshops and other events. You can make an appointment at 432.249.1968.



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# 7. Crow's Nest Ranch

The Crow's Nest Ranch is a private ranch that is open to the public for camping. They offer tent camping, RV spots, and cabins. If you stay at the ranch, you will have access to showers and laundry.

In addition, you can do A LOT of exploration on the ranch. There are no official trails, but you can follow dirt roads or game trails. The only rule is you cannot cross any fences to go on neighboring properties.



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# 8. Point of Rocks Roadside Park

This is another pile of rocks! But, this one is on public land, so you can scramble around and work your way up to a view!

The park is surrounded by private land, so please be respectful of the neighbors

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# 9. Downtown Fort Davis

Fort Davis has a very cute downtown area! You will pass through the square on the way to the historic site, and we would definitely suggest getting out to stretch your legs.

If you have time, also check out Grand Companions, a local thrift store that sends its benefits to homeless animals. They are open Monday to Saturday from 10:30am to 5:30pm.

If you're in need of any healthy snacks, morning coffee, or a sandwich, go to Stone Village Market. They have a great selection of gluten free, vegan, and vegetarian friendly options. They also have a great selection of brewed coffee and coffee beans from Big Bend Coffee Roasters. Oh, they also have compostable paper plates and cups, in case you forgot anything like that. And, they have lodging available if you're not into camping!

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# 10. Fort Davis Historic Site



The Fort Davis Historic Site is part of the NPS system. Entrance fees are \$10/person or \$20/car. Fort Davis was a frontier post in the 1850's. Here you can explore what life was like back in those years.



The historic site also has about 6 miles of nature trails, that offer some great views of downtown Fort Davis, and actually connect to the trail system in the neighboring Davis Mountains State Park.

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We hope you enjoyed the Davis Mountains!!

Feel free to reach out to us with any feedback, positive or negative, and tag us on your journey.



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