

## 12. Continental Divide, Rocky Canyon Trail #700.

This segment of the Continental Divide Trail goes up Rocky Canyon for a few miles before ascending a plateau. A great destination is the meadow at Brannon Park, about 7 miles. Continuing up through the chasm of Rocky Canyon is an interesting hike but be cautious during the rainy season. An unseen rain storm in the mountains can cause Rocky to flash flood.

**Location:** On NM 35 east of Lake Roberts. The parking area for this trail head is across from the turn off to the Sapillo Group Area.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 20 min.

**Facilities:** None

## 13. Allie Canyon Trail #100.

A pleasant hike over a ridge into Allie Canyon.

**Location:** On NM 35 south of the Mimbres Ranger Station.

**Travel time one way:** 50 min.

**Facilities:** Restrooms at the Ranger Station.

## Hiking East of Silver City

### 14. Fort Bayard Wildlife Refuge.

The National Recreation Trails in the refuge are also used by equestrian and mountain bikes. A favorite destination is a 4 mile round-trip hike to the Big Tree, a 600 year old Alligator Juniper. Trail signs direct you to the Big Tree.

**Location:** East on Hwy 180, left to Fort Bayard. Follow the signs for Forest Road 536 and go about 3 miles to the parking area at the end of the road.

**Travel time one way:** 30 min. **Facilities:** None.

### 15. Rabb Park Trail #747.

It's about a 4 mile hike into this interesting area. The "park" is a gently sloping area of volcanic tuff formations, terraces, and shallow drainages that you can wander through. Since there are no trail signs it's best to at least have the Gila National Forest map to find your way.

**Location:** East on NM 152 in the Black Range.

**Travel time one way:** 45 min. **Facilities:** None

### 16. Gallinas Canyon Trail #129 and Railroad Canyon Trail #128.

Both trails begin from the same trailhead and are excellent hikes through canyons with pleasant

mountain streams. There are numerous stream crossings in the first 1.5 miles. At 1.5 miles the trail divides. Trail #129 switchbacks up a slope to the left and goes to upper Gallinas Canyon. It is 4.5 miles from this junction to the crest of the mountain. Trail #128 continues up Railroad Canyon and is about 3.5 miles to the crest.

**Loop Trip:** For strong hikers a 11-mile loop can be done by going up one canyon, across the crest on Crest Trail #79 and down the other canyon.

**Location:** East on NM 152 in the Black Range.

**Travel time one way:** 50 min. **Facilities:** Pit toilet.

### 17. Black Range, Crest Trail #79, Emory Pass.

**Crest Trail #79 (south from Emory Pass).** A gentle hike along the crest of the Black Range through cool spruce, fir and aspen forests.

**Crest Trail #79 (north from Emory Pass).** This trail offers some excellent vistas. An excellent day hike destination is the 5-mile hike to the lookout tower on Hillsboro Peak at 10,011 feet.

**Location:** East on NM 152 in the Black Range.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour.

**Facilities:** Pit toilet at Emory Pass Vista.

## Hiking West of Silver City

### 18. Little Dry Trail #180.

This trail takes you on a 4.5 mile hike up Little Dry Creek to Windy Gap. There are interesting rock formations along the creek and views if you follow the trail to the east from the saddle.

**Location:** West on Hwy 180. Right on Forest Road 147 about a mile after the Aldo Leopold Historical Monument. Go about 3.5 miles then left on Forest Road 196. It's about 4 miles to the trail head.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour. **Facilities:** None

### 19. Holt Apache Trail #181.

This is a beautiful hike up Sheridan Gulch. The first 3 miles of trail are gradual but become steep as it climbs up Holt Mountain. The stream is intermittent in the drainage. A good day hike destination Holt Spring about 5 miles from the trailhead.

**Location:** West on Hwy 180. Look for the trail sign on the right side of the road. It's 4 miles to trail head.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour. **Facilities:** None.

### 20. Little Whitewater Trail #214.

This is for strong hikers. You'll gain about 3,000 ft. on this 5 mile climb up to the saddle on the south side of Nabours Mountain. The first 2 miles are easy, last three miles are often steep and rocky. A rewarding hike with great views.

**Location:** West on Hwy 180 to Glenwood. Turn right onto Whitewater Road. In about a mile and a half look for the trail sign on the right side of road. It's about 4 miles of dirt road to get to the trail head.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 20 min.

**Facilities:** None

### 21. Catwalk National Recreation Trail / Whitewater Trail #207.

The Catwalk National Recreation Trail is 1.1 miles of suspended metal walk ways, stairs, bridges, and hiking trails. You can get a guide to the Catwalk at the Glenwood Ranger Station. The suspension bridge and waterfall at end of the Catwalk Trail is the turnaround point for most hikers. Trail #207 continues on up the canyon if you want to hike further.

**Location:** West on Hwy 180 to Glenwood. Turn right onto Whitewater Road and go 5 miles to the end of the road.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 20 min.

**Facilities:** Picnic area and toilets. Fee use area.

## Hiking South of Silver City

### 22. Continental Divide Trail, Burro Mts..

This is a segment of the Continental Divide National Recreation Trail. From this trail head you can go south through beautiful high-desert foothills or north and climb up into the pines at the top of Jacks Peak for an impressive view of the surrounding mountains

**Location:** South on Hwy 90. Look for trail head on the right about a quarter mile after the Gila National Forest boundary sign.

**Travel time one way:** 20 min. **Facilities:** None.

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Jackie and Jim Blurton  
Silver City KOA  
11824 Hwy 180 E.,  
Silver City, NM 88061  
(575) 388-3351



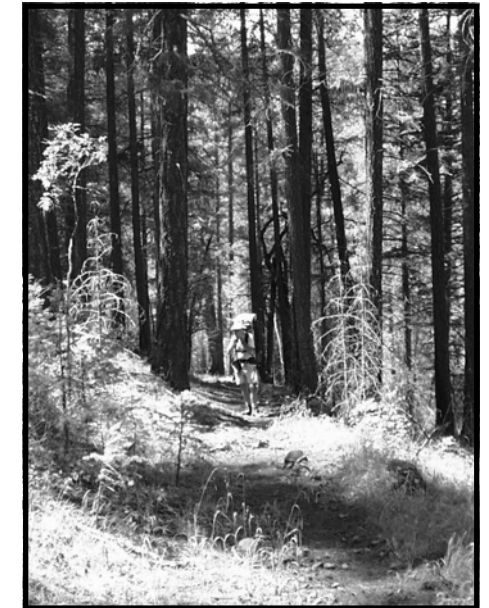
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# Hiking the Gila

A Silver City KOA guide  
to the best day hikes.

By Jackie Blurton



Kampgrounds of America  
Silver City KOA

11824 Hwy 180 E.

Silver City, NM 88061

(575) 388-3351

www.silvercitykoa.com

www.campsilvercity.com

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Jim & Jackie Blurton

# Hiking the Gila

By Jackie Blurton

The Gila National Forest will beckon you with its lofty spaces of light, secret canyons, and aspen covered mountains. The forest includes the 558,065-acre Gila Wilderness, and the 202,016-acre Aldo Leopold Wilderness. An extensive system of trails offers pleasant hikes in quiet solitude through cool forested mountains or along shady streams. This is a summary of a few of our favorite day hikes.

Location of trails and approximate travel times to the trailheads in the following descriptions are from Silver City. All hiking locations are easy to drive to and are on public lands. Most roads are paved but there are a few dirt roads that can be muddy if there has been recent precipitation. At certain times of year weather conditions can change quickly. Always carry adequate clothing and water. *Always treat or filter water from streams before drinking.*

We don't give mileages or destinations for most of these trails because they are part of an extensive trail system. Each one has its special attractions so it's up to you to determine how far you want to hike.

**Maps:** Gila National Forest and Wilderness maps are available at the Gila National Forest office, 3005 E. Camino Del Bosque, Silver City, NM 88061, and at District Ranger Stations.

## Hiking near Silver City

### 1. Little Walnut Picnic Area.

A short, easy drive north from Silver City. Signed recreation trails lead from the picnic area. These trails are also used for mountain bikes.

**Location:** North on Little Walnut Road. Little Walnut Picnic Area is on the left about a half mile after you cross into the Gila National Forest.

**Travel time one way:** 15 min.

**Facilities:** Toilets, picnic tables.

## Hiking North of Silver City

### 2. Continental Divide Trail #74.

The Continental Divide Trail crosses NM 15 north of Pinos Altos. West of the road the trail winds

through the hills. On the east side of the road the trail climbs up Black Peak.

**Location:** North on NM 15 about a half mile north of Pinos Altos. Park at the Arrastra Site and follow the trails marked with 3.5 inch blue and white Continental Divide Trail markers.

**Travel time one way:** 15 min. **Facilities:** None.

### 3. Signal Peak Trail #742.

This is a nice half-day hike. It's 2.5 miles through Ponderosa Pines to the Signal Peak Lookout at the top of the mountain.

**Location:** North on NM 15 in Cherry Creek about 14 miles from Silver City. Look for the trailhead sign on the right and parking pull-offs on the left.

**Travel time one way:** 20 min. **Facilities:** None.

### 4. Military Trail #97.

This section of the Military Trail follows a ridge line with nice mountain vistas.

**Location:** North on NM 15 a half mile past the Senator Clinton P. Anderson Wilderness Overlook.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 15 min.

**Facilities:** None.

### 5. Gila River, Alum Camp Trail #788

This trail descends steeply into the Gila River Valley. It's about 1 mile from the trailhead to the river and then you can hike up or down the river but be prepared to wade. In summer there is little shade and hiking in the afternoon is hot.

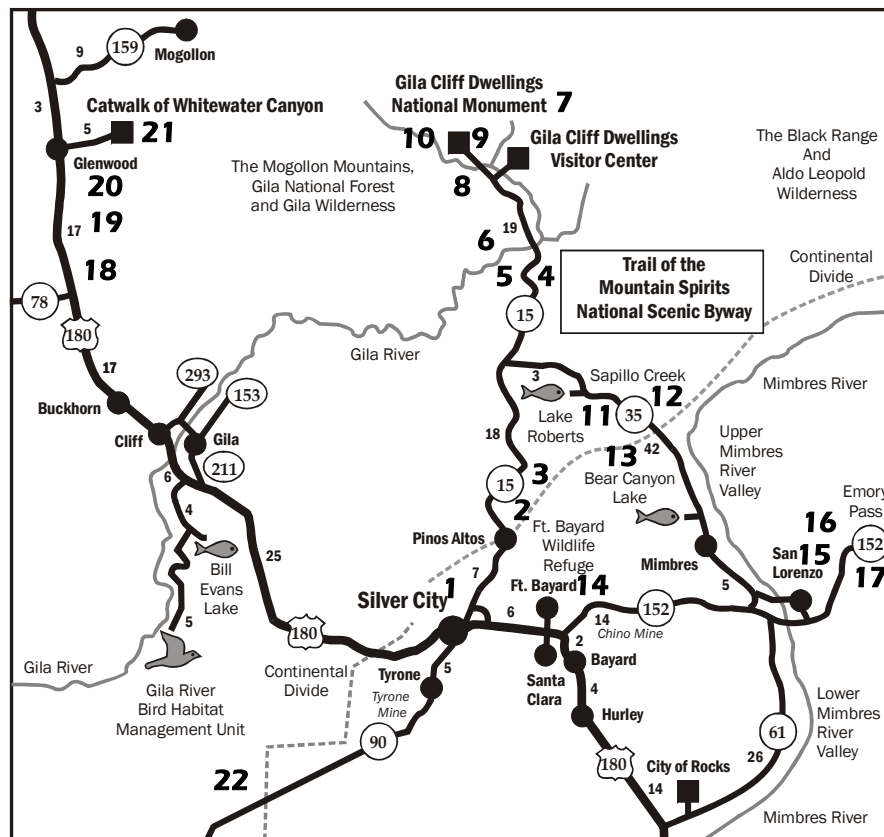
**Location:** North on NM 15. Look for this trail sign on the left as you descend into the Gila River Valley from the Senator Clinton P. Anderson Wilderness Overlook.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 20 min.

**Facilities:** None.

### 6. Gila River Trail #724.

This trail goes down the Gila River Valley and has numerous river crossings. A pleasant hike. Appropri-



ate footwear is recommended for wading the river. Don't hike this trail when river is at flood stage.

**Location:** North on NM 15. Turn into Grapevine Campground on the right before crossing the bridge over the Gila River.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 30 min.

**Facilities:** Picnic table, pit toilet.

### 7. Gila River, Middle Fork Trail #157

There are numerous river crossings as you hike up the narrow, winding canyon of the Middle Fork. Strong hikers can make a loop by hiking up the Middle Fork about 6 miles to Little Bear Canyon and taking Trail #729 back to NM 15 and the Visitor Center. This would be about a 12 mile loop. Appropriate footwear is recommended for wading the river. Don't hike this trail when river is at flood stage.

**Location:** North on NM 15 at the Gila Cliff Dwellings Visitor Center.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 45 min.

**Facilities:** Restrooms at the Visitor Center.

### 8. Little Creek Trail #160 and #162.

Trail #160 climbs steadily up to a ridge line then drops into Little Creek. Trail #162 continues to follow the ridge. There are nice views as the trail traverses the rock formations that are typical of the Gila. Water is intermittent in Little Creek and there is no water along Trail #162.

**Location:** On NM15, left side of road before the Gila Cliff Dwellings Entry Station.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 45 min.

**Facilities:** Pit toilet.

### 9. Little Bear Canyon Trail #729.

This trail has a lot of variety and a sense of adventure. It is about 4.25 miles from the trail head at TJ Corral to the Middle Fork of the Gila River. The first two thirds of the trail is a gradual up hill with nice mountain vistas. The last section winds its way down from a low saddle into the scenic narrows of Little Bear Canyon to the Middle Fork of the Gila River. There is flash flood danger in Little Bear during rain storms.

**Location:** North on NM 15, right side of road before the Gila Cliff Dwellings Entry Station.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 45 min.

**Facilities:** Pit toilet.

### 10. Gila River, West Fork Trail #151.

This hike is similar to the Middle Fork Trail #157 but the canyon is wider for the first 5 miles and fewer river crossings. Appropriate footwear is recommended for wading the river. Don't hike this trail when river is at flood stage.

**Location:** North on NM 15 at the Gila Cliff Dwellings Entry Station.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 45 min.

**Facilities:** Pit toilet.

### 11. Continental Divide Trail, Skates Canyon Trail #700.

This recently completed section of the Continental Divide Trail has some outstanding views of the Black Range, Mogollon Mountains, and the bluffs in Skates Canyon.

**Location:** On NM 35 east of Lake Roberts. Turn south at the sign to the Sapillo Group Area, a primitive forest campground.

**Travel time one way:** 1 hour 20 min.

**Facilities:** None