

There are several attractions in and near Deming...



The **Luna County Courthouse** should be on every visitor's sightseeing list. (In fact, it is the final attraction on the [Historic Walking Tour of Deming](#) .)

The contract for this graceful building was let in 1909 for a two story brick structure and completed in 1910.

The architecture reflects the style common to the area with it's columned entrance, high arched windows, high-vaulted ceilings, and a cupola atop the main building.

Although there have been additions to the structure, the main building remains today.



The [Deming-Luna Mimbres Museum](#) was originally the National Guard Armory. The museum's unique story began early in the century when military troops slept in the unfinished building as recruitment proceeded for U.S. defense of the U.S./Mexico border. It was completed two months after the infamous Pancho Villa Raid on March 9, 1916, at Columbus. It later served both as a community center and USO activity center for military personnel stationed in the area. Today, the Museum has a huge collection of exhibits, including:

- quilts dating back to 1847
- Native American artifacts
- arts
- military artifacts and exhibits
- over 1200 historic liquor decanters
- an exhibit containing over 2500 bells

- a doll room



Across the street from the museum is the **old Custom House** which has been designated as a National Historic Site. Take a glimpse into history and see how things were back in the early 1800's. New Mexico did not exist, nor did Deming, but the war between Mexico and the United States did. It ended in 1848, and a dispute ensued over a strip of land called the Mesilla Strip. It is believed that a small, one room home, built by a Mexican ranchero, was the first building on the site. Frank Thurmond, a famous gambler of the time, bought the property in the early 1800s, then sold it to R.S. Field on May 5, 1885. Three years later, R.S. sold the property to his father Seaman Field. During Grover Cleveland's two terms as president, Seaman Field was named as Collector of Customs, with the Field home as the Customs office. On August 6, 1900, the U.S. Customs Service moved to its present location South of Columbus, N.M. On April 22, 1989 the Old Deming New Mexico Custom House was dedicated, along with the 200th Anniversary of the [U.S. Customs Service](#) . The [U.](#)

[S. Border Patrol](#)

Headquarters is located just South of Deming in their new building on Columbus Rd.



Don't forget to stop by the [Marshall Memorial Library](#) . The beginning of the Deming Public Library dates back to January 1917, when the Deming Women's Club formed a Library Association housed in a room at City Hall. The first librarian received the huge salary of \$15.00 a month and the first large purchase of books was 162 volumes of fiction bought for \$25.00. The library has come a long way in its almost 80 year history. There are talking books, books in large print, and an impressive Spanish collection including Adult and Juvenile fiction, non-fiction, dictionaries, encyclopedias, magazines and tapes. You will find the shelves loaded with New Mexico history from the beginning of Deming's start in 1881 to the present day. The history of New Mexico makes fascinating reading because it starts with the original inhabitants of this

area, the Native Americans, and moves on to stories about the settling of New Mexico by the Americans in the early 1800's. Read the account of

[Pancho Villa's raid](#)

on the little town of Columbus, NM in 1916 and General Pershing's expedition into Mexico attempting to capture and return Pancho Villa to New Mexico. On Saturday mornings, a movie is shown, which everyone is invited to attend. There is no better place to spend some leisure time than in the Deming library.



Want to take a step back into history? South of Lordsburg, NM, 50 miles West of Deming, is the **Shakespeare Ghost Town**

<http://www.shakespeareghosttown.com/>

, all that remains of a pioneer, southwestern town. In 1870, a silver strike caused Shakespeare, once a small settlement on the stage line to California, to grow into a town named Ralston with a population of around 3,000. Shakespeare is now owned by the Hill family. Nothing is for sale except a few books on the history of the area, but there is a two hour walk in the atmosphere of the past which includes 28 points of interest and eight buildings. Four times a year, there are re-enactments and special events. For dates and times, write to **Shakespeare Ghost Town**

P.O. Box 253, Lordsburg, N.M. 88045, or call 505-542-9034.



Twelve miles to the southeast of Deming is **Rockhound State Park** http://www.stateparks.com/rock_hound.html

There are camping/picknicking units, a water system, a playground and sanitary facilities. Rocks and semiprecious gem stones are yours for the taking, such as quartz crystals, translucent chalcedony of white, bluish-grey, orange, and red hues. And you may even find a precious gemstone for your very own. There is a beautiful Panoramic View from the highest Northeast

shelter.



North of Deming is the **City of Rocks State Park** <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/prd/cityrocks.htm>. What you will see there today measures its existence in millions of years. Over the last 30 million years, these mysterious rocks were wind-carved and rain worn, sculpted into outlandish streets and houses, temples and towers, some so improbable they could as well be the figments of an exploding dream. Man has been there also. Shards of pottery and arrowheads have been found there (and continue to be found today). Spanish Conquistadores carved mysterious crosses on the rocks, signs, some say, which may point to a long buried treasure. Every city has its legends. Explore her streets at will. Have fun! Rejoice in the park's severe, relentless beauty.



Originally established in 1891 near the border, **Columbus** <http://www.city-data.com/city/Columbus-New-Mexico.html>

is now three miles north of Palomas, Mexico and 32 miles south of Deming. This most recent site was established in 1902 when the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad built the depot. Later, Camp Furlong was established.

The village grew to include two hotels and many merchants.

Area Attractions

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Peace mostly prevailed until March 9, 1916 when the Mexican revolutionary bandit, General Francisco (Pancho) Villa and his estimated 1,000 banditos crossed the border and raided the quiet village around 4 a.m. Much of the town was burned and sacked. Before the attack was over, 18 residents and U.S. soldiers were killed. However, more than 100 of Villa's men lay dead in the streets before the raiders fled back across the border. General John "Black Jack" Pershing pursued Villa with his U.S. punitive expeditionary force from Camp Furlong. This was the first time in American history that motorized vehicles and aircraft were used in warfare. Pershing's pursuit failed. In 1923 Pancho Villa was assassinated in Parral, Mexico.

A film on the Pancho Villa Raid is shown at the old U.S. Customs building in Columbus.

Each year on March 9, a memorial service is held atop Cootes Hill (part of old Camp Furlong) to honor the Americans killed.

At an altitude of 4,050 feet in the high desert, Columbus has over 6000 population (not including winter visitors) a historic downtown area, an active theatrical group, a community center, and Anapra Road which runs from Columbus to El Paso.



A national monument since 1907, the **Gila Cliff Dwellings** http://www.americansouthwest.net/new_mexico/gila-cliff-dwellings/national-monument.html

are located in the Gila National Wilderness, the nation's first designated wilderness area. The earliest inhabitants date back to 100-400 A.D. as evidenced by the earliest ruin found -- a pithouse-type structure within the monument. People of this period are referred to as the Mogollon. Remains of later structures can also be seen that were in the area until about 1000 A.D.

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"Cliff dwellers" are Pueblo people who built their homes in natural caves. The cliff dwellings date to the late 1200s and include seven natural caves of which five contain ruins of dwellings with 42 rooms built of stone and mud. These most recent Indian dwellers were hunters and farmers, planting fields along the river and on mesa tops. By the early 1300s, this group migrated on, perhaps due to a prolonged drought. Where they went is unknown.

Later, Nomadic bands of Apache Indians called the dwellings home. And later still, Spanish colonists settled in the area of the monument. The region was acquired by the U.S. from Mexico in 1953 under the Gadsden Purchase which became a part of the New Mexico and Arizona territories.

There are walking paths and marked trails through the caves and in the surrounding wilderness. A visitors' center contains displays and artifacts.

To reach the cliff dwellings, travel north of Silver City on NM 15 about 44 miles; or, from Deming, take US 180 north 24 miles to the City of Rocks turnoff and continue northeast on NM 61 another 72 miles. Picnicking and camping facilities are available.



The often-steel, mile-long **Catwalk** http://www.takemytrip.com/06newmex/06_13a.htm in the Gila meanders into Whitewater Canyon and over Whitewater River. The Catwalk name came from miners in 1889 who constructed a 4-inch pipeline between sheer rock walls to carry water three miles from a mining site to the mill and town of Graham. Picnic sites are available but not overnight camping. Take US180 north from Deming to Silver City and continue to Glenwood. Turn right at NM 174 and drive five miles to entrance.



Spring Canyon State Park

Shortly before reaching Rockhound State Park, turn south at the sign posted. Continuing into the foothills, motorists will encounter a steep incline and decline leading into the park. Once in the boxed enclosure, visitors will realize a serene beauty and complete sense of isolation. Picnicking facilities available, but not camping. Ibex, wild goats originally shipped from Iran, may be encountered.



About 90 miles northeast of Deming is **Elephant Butte Lake State Park** <http://www.emnrd.state.nm.us/PRD/elephant.htm>

which offers a marina, water sports, boating, camping, picnicking and fishing. Take State Highway 26 exit, just north of Deming, drive northeast to Hatch and connect on to I-25 north to Truth or Consequences. Take last exit north to T or C and follow signs to Elephant Butte Lake. Also, a few miles south of this lake is Caballo Lake State Park offering the same facilities.

Along the Border...



The Aerostat

Seen for miles, one might think this U.S. Customs surveillance radar balloon is a blimp.



U.S. Customs Port of Entry

This U.S. Customs award-winning \$2.6 million building serves as the international border port of entry and crossing into Palomas, Chihuahua, Mexico, and is open 24 hours a day.



Tres Hermanas Mountains

The Tres Hermanas (Three Sisters) mountains are just north of Columbus.



Pancho Villa State Park

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Artifacts and exhibits about the 1916 raid can be found in the all-new Pancho Villa State Park Visitor Center and interpretive museum. Visitors to the museum will get a first hand look at period military vehicles, weapons and a replica "Jenny" biplane.

This is only a small portion of the many interesting sights available in Deming, New Mexico. To learn more about the Deming area and its many attractions, contact:

Deming-Luna County Chamber of Commerce

P.O. Box 8

800 E. Pine

Deming, N.M. 88031

Phone: 1-800-848-4955