

A sandy white sea

WHITE SANDS NATIONAL PARK | **ALAMOGORDO** | **NEW MEXICO**

WORDS AND PHOTO BY CAJSA LANDIN

Climb over an enormous sand dune to find the landscape spread out before you: cool, white desert waves as far as the eye can see, wrapped in New Mexican mountains and punctuated by one lone sumac tower, just a stone's throw from the Trinity atomic bomb testing site. As the sun sets in fiery orange and pink, and the ground melts into the wispy white clouds above the horizon, the ridged dunes look like they could be the bottom of the ocean, the snowy expanse of Antarctica, or the moon. The park is dotted with visitors, but you wouldn't know it from the silence. The experience is overwhelming, like a reminder of your own insignificance but in a way that makes you think, alright then.

If you're looking for the ends of the Earth, then White Sands National Park is for you. Short and long hikes across the dunes, sand-sledding for the kids, and outdoor concerts on full moon nights. But as soon as the sun has set behind the ridge, hurry back to your car, because the middle of nowhere gets real dark in no time at all, and the wind will sweep away any trace of a trail.

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