

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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News Release

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26th Annual Living Desert Zoo and Gardens Mescal Roast and Mountain Spirit Dances, May 3-6, 2012

CARLSBAD, NM – Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park will host the 26th Annual Mescal Roast and Spirit Dances, May 3-6, 2012. This event honors Native American tradition and culture with colorful ceremonial dress and the Mescalero Apache traditional Dance of the Mountain Spirits around a blazing bonfire. The purpose is to build a better understanding of the multi-cultural history of New Mexico and demonstrate the importance of preserving and protecting the fragile Chihuahuan desert ecosystem.

“This event recognizes the native people who lived off the land in this arid environment,” said Ken Britt, Superintendent of Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park. “I encourage everyone to come out and join in the festivities.”

This event has increased steadily in popularity and today attracts visitors from not only New Mexico and nearby states, but from across the nation. The Mescal Roast has gone from a small, almost private, gathering to the premier example of a multi-cultural event offering traditional Native American ceremonies in the Southwest.

The schedule for this year’s event is as follows:

Thursday, May 3	10:00 a.m.	Prayer Ceremony, Mescal Pit Blessing and Placing of Mescal in Roasting Pit
Friday, May 4 Saturday, May 5	10:00 a.m.	Native Art Exhibit and Sale
Friday, May 4 Saturday, May 5	2:00 p.m.	Interpretive Presentation
Friday, May 4 Saturday, May 5	6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	Feast Dinner Apache War Dance
Friday, May 4 Saturday, May 5	8:30 p.m.	Mountain Spirit Dances
Saturday, May 5	8:30 p.m.	Raffle drawing
Sunday, May 6	11:00 a.m.	Mescal Tasting and Closing Ceremony

There is no charge for admission to Mescal Roast daytime activities held in the visitor center from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission for touring the park will be the usual entrance fees of \$5.00 for adults, \$3.00 for 7-12 year olds, and 6 and under are free.

Tickets for the evening's activities are \$15.00 each and include the feast dinner, the Apache War Dance, and the Mountain Spirit Dances. Tickets are limited by the available seating and should be purchased in advance (300 per evening). Tickets are on sale at the Living Desert Zoo & Gardens State Park (in person, by mail, or by phone).

For additional information contact Living Desert Zoo and Gardens State Park at (575) 887-5516 for additional information about the institution, including special events and activities for visitors and its ongoing commitment to wildlife conservation and science education or visit www.nmparks.com.



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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.

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