

Special Shape Balloons Are One Of Many Different Types of Balloons To Fly During The 2024 Balloon Fiesta

Guests will see standard, racing, special shape, home-built, and remote-control hot air balloons at the 52nd event

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Albuquerque, NM – The 52nd Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, powered by ExxonMobil, is set to launch on October 5-13, 2024, as the largest gathering of hot air balloons in the world. As the 500+ hot air balloons launch into Albuquerque's turquoise skies, guests will see a variety of hot air balloon envelopes including: standard, racing, special shape, home-built, and remote-control hot air balloons.

Standard Balloons

The most popular balloon at Balloon Fiesta is the standard hot air balloon. Standard-shaped balloons can be 65 feet wide and 10 stories tall, using close to 3000 square yards of nylon fabric, 9 miles of thread, and a 3/4 mile of reinforced nylon webbing. Commercial hot air balloons range in size from 150,000 cubic feet to more than 300,000 cubic feet, to accommodate larger baskets and additional guests. Small hot air balloons carry 2-4 passengers, whereas larger gondolas can carry more than 10 passengers. Standard balloons typically carry 30 to 40 gallons of propane in stainless steel fuel tanks in their gondolas and use about 15-25 gallons during an hour-long flight.

At the 2024 Balloon Fiesta, the mass ascension events will feature over 400 standard hot air balloons. Learn more about mass ascension at <https://balloonfiesta.com/Mass-Ascension>.

Racer Balloons / Competition Balloons

Competitive pilots will showcase their skills in sleek 'racer' balloons. These modern balloons are designed for national and world-class competitions, featuring a taller, thinner profile compared to the standard balloon shape. This shape enables them to climb and descend more quickly, helping the pilots to react quickly to changing conditions. A competition-sized balloon usually has a volume of between 64,000 to 78,000 cubic feet (1800 and 2200 cubic meters) and can cost up to \$40,000. Rapid ascents and descents in the range of 1400-1800 feet per minute are typical for these balloons during competitions. Competitions take place at national, regional, and international levels.

NOTE: Pilots using standard balloon envelopes can also compete in balloon competitions, and with the right pilot, they can win! Ballooning competitions at Balloon Fiesta will test pilots' skills and strategy during the morning sessions on October 7, 8, 10, and 11. Learn more about the competition tasks at <https://balloonfiesta.com/Competition>.

Special Shape Balloons

This year's Balloon Fiesta will host the largest gathering of special shape balloons, featuring 106 in total. Special shape balloons are unique and creatively designed balloons that deviate from the traditional round shape. They can take on various forms, including characters, products, and whimsical creatures. Special shapes balloons can be up to 160ft tall and can cost anywhere from \$25,000 to \$250,000 depending on their size and complexity.

Learn more about the special shape balloons that will be at the 2024 event at <https://balloonfiesta.com/Post/Albuquerque-International-Balloon-Fiesta-Announces-All-Special-Shapes-Attending-the-52nd-Event>.

Home-Built Balloons

A group of "home-built" / experimental hot air balloon envelopes will be used to launch from one area on the field at Balloon Fiesta. These balloon pilots have purchased template patterns from longtime balloon pilot Alan Baird of Canada. When they received the template, many of them began sewing their balloons in their basements and garages. The completed balloons have been properly tested in flight, passing all requirements to allow participation in the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

Learn more about Alain Baird and his ballooning background in his interview in the Balloon Fiesta newsletter, here: <https://balloonfiesta.com/Pin-Post/Inside-the-Basket-Alain-Bard-Balloon-Pilot>.

Remote Control Balloons / "Globitos":

Remote control (RC) balloons are scale model balloons that are about ¼ size of a standard hot air balloon -- about 20 feet tall. These "globitos" are miniature marvels, with 14 special shapes of their own. Balloon Fiesta's third annual remote-control balloon rally will feature at least 57 tethered balloons controlled by remote control by trained operators. The Fiesta de los Globitos will launch at 7:30 am during morning mass ascensions on October 6, 9, 11, and during the Night Magic Glow on October 12.

For more information about the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, visit <https://balloonfiesta.com/>.

About the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta powered by ExxonMobil is a festival of hot air balloons that takes place in October in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. It is the largest gathering of balloons and balloonists in the world. For details on events, schedule, entertainment and photographs visit our website www.balloonfiesta.com and follow us on X/Twitter @BalloonFiesta and Facebook.

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