1,000 Years to the Atomic Age
Los Alamos is located on the Pajarito Plateau of the Jemez Mountains, formed by eruptions of a supervolcano more than a million years ago. Pueblo ancestors, and later homesteaders, used the plateau for seasonal farming and grazing. In 1917, H.H. Brook's Los Alamos Ranch was purchased by Ashley Pond Jr. to start Los Alamos Ranch School, a boys school which combined academics and a physical curriculum. During World War II, the U.S. Government took over the plateau and sealed it for a secret mission to end the war: the Manhattan Project.

From 1943-1947, the Ashley Pond was surrounded by the Manhattan Project base of operations.

Manhattan Project National Historical Park
This National Park site tells the stories of the more than 6,000 scientists and personnel who came with their families to Los Alamos to work on the Manhattan Project. Learn about the science and events of this controversial project at the MAPR Visitor Center.

Bradbury Science Museum & Shop
Named for Norris E. Bradbury, second director of the Los Alamos Laboratory, the Bradbury features two films and 60 interactive exhibits interpreting the Lab's contributions to modern science, research and technology, including its role in the Manhattan Project and current national security mission.

Los Alamos History Museum & Shop
Built as an infirmary in 1918 and later used as the guest cottage for Los Alamos Ranch School, the museum is in the oldest continuously occupied structure in town. During the Manhattan Project (1943-1947), the cottage continued to serve as guest quarters, notably for General Leslie R. Groves, commander of the Manhattan Engineer District, whose office and residence were in Washington, D.C. Today, it serves as a comprehensive historical museum which presents the world-changing and varied history.

Mesa Public Library & Art Gallery
Originally located in government surplus buildings and then in a former cafeteria, the library is an important institution in this highly educated community. The 1993 award-winning design is by architect Antoine Predock. Make sure to stop by the Third-Rear Art Gallery for unique rotating exhibits year-round.

Historic Sculptures
Life-size sculptures of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer and Gen. Leslie R. Groves are located south of Fuller Lodge.

Other Historic Tours
Docent-Guided Historic District Tour - Los Alamos History Museum Self-Guided Homestead Tour - visitlosalamos.org Self-Guided Atomic City Spy Tour - visitlosalamos.org
In 1947, Los Alamos did not have a cemetery, so the Los Alamos Garden Club began planting rose bushes in memory of Los Alamos residents who died during the Manhattan Project and the early days of the townsite. In 1948, Los Alamos History Museum Guided Tours provide an opportunity to see inside for a glimpse of life as a homesteader.

2 Memorial Rose Garden
In 1947, Los Alamos did not have a cemetery, so the Los Alamos Garden Club began planting rose bushes in memory of Los Alamos residents who died during the Manhattan Project and the early days of the townsite. This site is also a Blue Star Memorial Byway site, and a Los Alamos National Laboratory memorial to those killed in the line of duty.

3 Romero Homestead Cabin
Homesteading began on the Pajarito Plateau in the late 1800s. The Romero family built this cabin in 1913 on a nearby mesa. Like all homesteads on the plateau, it was acquired by the U.S. government for homesteads on the plateau, it was acquired by the U.S. government for

4 Ancestral Pueblo Dwellings
In roughly 1225 CE, this site was home to a group of Tewa-speaking people, ancestors of Pueblo groups now living along the Rio Grande. They built with blocks of tuff, the welded volcanic ash common in this area, creating separate rooms for cooking, sleeping and storage.

5 Bathtub Row
These cottages were built for the Ranch School as residences and classrooms. Having the only bathtubs in town, these homes quickly acquired the name “Bathtub Row.” J. Robert Oppenheimer lived in the house at the corner of Bathtub Row and Peach Street. Today, this home is on its way to becoming a new stop on the Historic Walking Tour, as it undergoes historic preservation, renovation, and exhibit development. The house next to the Oppenheimer house, now known as the Hans Bethe House, displays Cold War exhibits as part of the History Museum Campus. Don’t miss the Victory Garden planted out back!

6 Performing Arts Center
Built in 1943 as the Manhattan Project East Cafeteria or “Mess Hall,” this building was destined to be an entertainment center. One of the few GI* buildings left from WWII, it was used by the growing post-war community as a recreation hall for 25 years. In 1971, it was converted to a full-time playhouse operated by the Los Alamos Little Theater, a non-profit drama troupe formed by the civilian scientists, their families and military personnel in 1943. The troupe performed a variety of shows, including a community production of the play “Amarie & Old Lye,” featuring Manhattan Project Director J. Robert Oppenheimer in a cameo role as “the corpse.”

*GI (Government or General Issue) is a term for a U.S. soldier

7 Power House
The building housing the diesel generators for the Los Alamos Ranch School was built in the early 1930s. In 1944, explosives expert George Kistiakowsky and his new bride moved into it. As a joke, his friends carved a half-moon in the door of the attached shed the Army built. It is now used as the NMSU Cooperative Extension offices.

8 Hopper Fireplace
These rocks were part of the fireplace in the homestead cabin of William Mackwood “Mack” Hopper, who settled here in 1908. Originally constructed of Ancestral Pueblo stones and mud/clay mortar, the chimney was rebuilt in 2016 for the Los Alamos Historical Society as an Eagle Scout Project.

9 Touch the Sky Sculpture
In May 2000, Los Alamos County and adjacent lands were devastated by the 48,000-acre Cerro Grande wildfire. Nearly 400 Los Alamos homes were destroyed. This sculpture was erected a year later, commemorating the fire and community rebuilding.

10 Ashley Pond Park
The pond began as a natural depression in the landscape. The Ranch School ensured its water supply by constructing a pipeline from a dam in Los Alamos Canyon. It was named for Ashley Pond Jr., the founder of the Los Alamos Ranch School, whose students could not resist the geographical pun. The boys used it for summer and winter sports. Blocks of ice were cut from the pond in the winter and stored in the Ice House. Ashley Pond Park contains a number of sculptures that are part of the County art collection, curated by the Art in Public Places Board.

11 Ice House Memorial
This memorial marks a unique spot in history. First, it was the site of a simple ice house erected to store ice cut from Ashley Pond by Ranch School boys during the winters. During WWII, it was repurposed as a temporary laboratory area located near the core of the "Gadget" (the prototype atomic bomb) was assembled—the same Gadget that was later tested at the Trinity Site, the successfully detonated on July 16, 1945.

12 Historic U.S. Post Office
During WWII, mail to Los Alamos residents was simply addressed to P.O. Box 1663, Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Los Alamos Post Office, designed and built as part of the Community Center, opened at this location in 1948 on the site of the Ranch School Trading Post. Recently the Post Office was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is still the main working U.S. Post Office for Los Alamos County.

13 Hopping House
Designed and built as part of the Community Center, opened at this location in 1948 on the site of the Ranch School Trading Post, the Hopping House was the New Mexico Post Office. It is on its way to becoming a new stop on the Historic Walking Tour, as it undergoes historic preservation, renovation, and exhibit development. The house next to the Oppenheimer house, now known as the Hans Bethe House, displays Cold War exhibits as part of the History Museum Campus. Don’t miss the Victory Garden planted out back!