



Sunset

Travel Guide

Best of Santa Fe:
Restaurants, Galleries, Hotels, and More 2011



Sunset Travel Guide



Escape to New Mexico

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COVER: PUROTTICORICO (ON FLICKR CREATIVE COMMONS). CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: DAVID FENTON, SCARY TOY CLOWN (ON FLICKR CREATIVE COMMONS), DAVID FENTON



Vinaigrette's light and airy decor

Santa Fe dining

Savor Southwestern fare and more in this culinary hotspot

Lunchtime delights

Locals can't get enough of **Back Street Bistro's** soup-sandwich-salad combos. Try the butternut squash and apple-walnut soup, which sings with the half-Reuben. \$, cash only; closed Sun; 513 Camino de los Marquez; 505/982-3500.

Better with brew

Corn and chipotle soup and the tortilla

burger are the staff and diners' favorites at **Blue Corn Cafe & Brewery**, especially when chased with an Atomic Blonde ale. A brewery atmosphere cross-pollinates with Southwest charm for a reviving—and kid-friendly—stop. \$\$; 133 Water St.; 505/984-1800.

Perfect burger

Bobcat Bite Restaurant's green-chile cheeseburger is the best burger for 100 miles,

Be a curious epicurean

At the **Santa Fe School of Cooking**—the best cooking school in a town where food rules—you could spend a day learning to make sweet anise-seed tamales (*Tamales*, \$98), red chile mole (*Cuisines of Mexico*, \$74), or blue-corn gnocchi arrowheads with guajillo chile sauce (*Native American*, \$80). santafe.schoolofcooking.com or 505/983-4511.

period: hand-sculpted ground chuck cooked on the griddle and topped with spicy house-made chile. \$; closed Sun–Mon; 420 Old Las Vegas Hwy.; 505/983-5319.

Elegant fare

Take respite from Canyon Road gallery hopping at **The Compound**. Chef Mark Kiffin pairs earthy with ethereal in his seasonally inspired dishes such as Bourbon- and peach-glazed pork tenderloin with fire-roasted poblano mac and cheese. \$\$\$; 653 Canyon Rd.; 505/982-4353.

Morning (and afternoon) treats

Huge—and delicious—cinnamon rolls, fritatas, and hearty sandwiches and salads make the bustling **Counter Culture Cafe** a great spot for breakfast or lunch. \$\$; Tue–Sat.; 930 Baca St.; 505/995-1105.

Cheap 'n' cheerful eats

We're all looking for bargains these days, and the **Flying Star Cafe**—a riff on the traditional diner—delivers. Yes, you can get burgers and breakfast all day (we like the French toast), but the menu branches out into spicier territory with Middle Eastern and Asian dishes (try the Buddha Bowl stir-fry). And, unlike your typical greasy spoon, the restaurant emphasizes organic and locally sourced food. The sweetest surprise is the in-house bakery: Look for trays of free samples or order the Key lime pie, a perfect balance of sweet and tart filling with a graham cracker crust. We thought they didn't make 'em like that anymore. \$; 500 Market St.; 505/216-3939.

Chocolate heaven

Satisfy your chocolate craving at **Kakawa Chocolate House**, a shop drawing its name from the Olmec (pre-Mayan) word for cacao. Manned by owner Mark Sciscenti, a self-



Whole Hog's amazing pulled-pork sandwich

proclaimed chocolate historian, Kakawa serves up decadent drinks blending superb dark chocolate with spices, flower blossoms, and other divine ingredients. Sip the Mayan Full Spice Chocolate Elixir, sweetened with agave nectar and flavored with Mexican vanilla, or choose from 50 truffle flavors, including orange blossom and pomegranate. You may find yourself bowing down and honoring Sciscenti as a Chocolate God. *Closed Sun*; 847 Ninita St.; 505/982-0388.

Southwestern perfection

La Plazuela offers specialties with regional flavors, like pork ribs with fire-roasted pineapple salsa and roasted chile poblano stuffed with broccolini, leeks, wild mushrooms, and sweet corn, as well as New Mexican standards (enchiladas, tacos, and more) with gourmet twists. \$\$\$; *In La Fonda hotel, 100 E. San Francisco St.*; 505/982-5511.

Hidden feast

The plain wooden door you walk through at **Milagro 139** doesn't prepare you for what's inside—a two-story wrought-iron-and-glass atrium that feels more New Orleans French Quarter than downtown Santa Fe. The food, though, is unmistakably Latin, with dishes like linguine in a creamy manchego cheese and green chile sauce or breaded calamari with smoked jalapeño aioli. We're also partial to the happy hour: margaritas (with homemade sour mix) and a heaping bowl of guacamole, mixed right at your table. \$\$; 505/995-0139.

Chili and more

Dave Chasen of L.A.'s famed and shuttered Chasen's restaurant entrusted **Saveur's** owner with his recipe for chili and beans. Chef Matthew Lynn breathes new life into the soup in a cozy space just a crouton's throw from the Plaza. But soup's not all there

is to rave about here—the salads and build-your-own sandwiches are divine. \$; 204 Montezuma Ave.; 505/989-4200.

Farm-to-table goodness

Go organic at the vegetarian **Tree House Pastry Shop and Café**. Owner Maria Bustamante-Bernal and her staff look for farmers to surprise them each season with locally grown ingredients. Dishes change weekly, but if you're lucky, you can warm up with a bowl of Devil's Stock Soup—a brew of pinto beans, black beans, roasted green chile, and cheese—and favorites such as the Swiss chard and oyster mushroom quiche. Be sure to save room for one of the signature pastries, too. \$-\$\$; *closed Sun–Mon*; 1600 Lena St., Ste. A2; 505/474-5543.

Salad days

At **Vinaigrette**, the airy bistro housed in an old adobe off Cerillos Road, owner (and disciple of food writer Michael Pollan) Erin Wade makes eating your vegetables fun. Her 10 classic and 12 original salads have names like Eat Your Peas (a mix of baby lettuce, green peas, sautéed mushrooms, and asiago cheese) and the Nutty Pear-fessor, a fresh take on the old pear-and-blue-cheese standby. Much of the produce is sourced from her 10-acre organic farm in nearby Nambé (meat is on the menu too). The restaurant gets hopping at lunch, so go for dinner if you prefer a quiet meal. \$\$; *closed Sun*; 505/820-9205.

Luscious BBQ

It's not the dead-simple decor or the inauspicious location on the most mundane street in the Southwest's loveliest city; Bo Barnwell's **Whole Hog Café** attracts a steady stream of locals—plus tourists—strictly for its meats and accompaniments. Pay attention to the restaurant's name when you order—go for the pork ribs or a pulled-pork and coleslaw sandwich. You also gotta try Bo's potato salad, laced with sour cream and bacon. \$; 3006 Cerrillos Rd.; 505/474-3375.



Friendly faces at the Teahouse

Check out ToCa

Shops and galleries galore within a five-block radius

THE COORDINATES Cross Camino del Monte Sol on Canyon Road, and you've unofficially entered the hidden micro-hood of ToCa (Top of Canyon), an alternate universe within the city's arts community.

STOP ON THE WAY Before reaching ToCa, you'll pass Santa Fe's big-time galleries, including **Waxlander Gallery and Sculpture Garden** (622 Canyon; 505/984-2202) and **Deloney Newkirk Galleries** (634 and 669 Canyon; 505/992-2850).

PEOPLE-WATCHING It doesn't get any better than sangria and tapas on the front porch at **El Farol** (\$\$\$; 808 Canyon; 505/983-9912), Santa Fe's oldest watering hole.

SPEND THE NIGHT **Dunshoe's B&B and Casita** (from \$140, including breakfast; two-night minimum on weekends; dunshoes.com) is a ToCa oasis, with beamed ceilings and local art.

FUEL UP You wouldn't think that a minimalist tea shop (with more than 100 varieties from

around the world) would also serve Santa Fe's best BLT, but there you have it. Grab a shaded table in the Zen gravel garden at the **Teahouse**, and order the Usual—made with perfectly crispy Canadian bacon and tangy chipotle dressing, and served with a generous side salad. \$\$; 821 Canyon Rd.; 505/992-0972.

HOOF IT Just east of ToCa, Canyon Road crosses Camino Cabra and becomes Upper Canyon Road, a residential street that dead-ends in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. There you can access the **Dale Ball Trails**, more than 30 miles of single-track hiking and biking trails. Explore the Santa Fe Canyon Preserve, or tackle the steep but popular 4-mile hike to the summit of Picacho Peak for stellar views. 505/955-2103.

MEET THE ARTIST Every square inch of space is spoken for at the **Ed Larson Studio**, the ramshackle epicenter of Santa Fe's folk art scene. Cowboy oil paintings crowd the walls; toothy wooden fish dangle from the ceiling; and whittled horses seem to fly through the air. Even the artist is on display, carving creations in the sawdusty back room. 821 Canyon Rd.; edlarsonart.com

EAT ALFRESCO Johnnie Armijo was 16 when his father opened **Johnnie's Cash Store**. 64 years later, this mom-and-pop grocery is a local institution, stocked with no-frills staples and, in a warming oven beside the register, the best homemade green-chile tamales in town (\$2). Buy a couple and head two blocks north to Monsignor Patrick Smith Park, right on the Santa Fe River, for a picnic. Closed Sun; 420 Camino Don Miguel; 505/982-9506.

TOOL AROUND TOWN ToCa's a small slice of Santa Fe that's easily—and more enjoyably—seen by bike or foot. Rent a city cruiser at **Mellow Velo** to savor the local color. Closed Sun; from \$20 per day, \$4 helmet; 638 Old Santa Fe Trail; mellowvelo.com

GET HEALED If you're in town on a weekday, drop by **El Milagro Herbs** (closed Sat–Sun; 1020 Canyon Rd.; milagroherbs.com)—a tiny old-time mercantile run by master herbalist Tomas Enos. On Saturdays, he mans a stand at the farmers' market (1607 Paseo de Peralta; santafefarmersmarket.com).

TAKE IT HOME Pick up long, dangly necklaces made with antique glass baubles; handmade journals crafted from paper sourced in India; and vintage-wallpaper picture frames at **Bittersweet Designs**. Most days, designer Laurie Lenfestey is busy in the next room with her latest creation. 901 Canyon Rd.; bittersweetdesigns.com



screens extend the Santa-Fe-meets-Far-East theme. Check out the sake list (Demon Slayer and Only One Daughter are among our favorites) and, for a splurge, order the omakase—the chef's inspiration of the moment. *Closed Sun*; \$\$\$; 321 Johnson St.; 505/982-9708.

HIT THE HOT SPRINGS Shoji and Ichiban are the latest bath experiences (\$45 for 85 minutes and \$49 for 90 minutes, respectively) at **Ten Thousand Waves**, the mountainside onsen, or hot springs, about 20 miles from Santa Fe Plaza. Soak in hand-thrown ceramic tubs (the first of their kind in America), set in an outdoor Japanese garden. *See left.*

CHANGE YOUR ART PERSPECTIVE There are fewer than 100 expert bamboo artists in Japan today, but **TAI Gallery** represents more than 40 of them. Take a break from the Southwest-themed galleries on Canyon Road and contemplate delicate bamboo weaves and undulating sculptures in TAI's soothing space. *Closed Sun*; 1601B Paseo de Peralta at Guadalupe St.; textilearts.com

MORE INSPIRED ART Take in the quiet, delicate sumi-e paintings (created from water and ink) and museum-quality Japanese pottery at **Touching Stone Gallery**, housed in a 250-year-old adobe building. *Closed Sun*; 539 Old Santa Fe Trail; touchingstone.com

GET ZEN Tucked away in the terra-cotta foothills off Cerro Gordo Road, the peaceful Buddhist community at **Upaya Zen Center** offers free daily meditation sessions at 7 a.m., 12:20 p.m., and 5:30 p.m., as well as no-fee meditation instruction and retreats (from \$150). 1404 Cerro Gordo Rd.; upaya.org

TAKE IT HOME At the **Teahouse**, you can order from more than a hundred loose-leaf blends. Savor a cup while you nibble on tea-infused breads and salads in the Zen-like lounge, then buy a bag to go. We like the genmaicha, a green tea fermented and mixed with roasted rice to create a nutty winter brew. *See Check out ToCa, page 5.*

East meets West

Find Japan in Santa Fe

DRESS CODE Colorful, loose clothing (call it dojo chic).

TWIN-CITIES FACT *Tea: A Mirror of Soul*, a contemporary opera about a Japanese monk's heroic quest, had its world premiere in Tokyo (2002) and its American one in Santa Fe (2007).

TRUE FUSION Chef Joel Coleman blends French technique with Asian ingredients at **Mauka** (\$\$\$; 544B Agua Fria; 505/984-1969).

NUMBER OF ART GALLERIES More than 250

WEEKLY JAPANESE FILM NIGHT Arrive early for

the 7:15 p.m. Thursday show at **Ten Thousand Waves** (free; upcoming screenings Oct 15, Nov 19, Dec 17; on Hyde Park Rd., about 20 minutes from Santa Fe Plaza; 505/982-9304).

REASON TO COME BACK The April **Santa Fe Japanese Cultural Festival** will feature martial arts performances, traditional music, and tea ceremonies (free; check santafejin.org for dates).

TRY SUSHI WITH A SOUTHWESTERN KICK **Shohko Café** peppers its sushi menu with dishes like green-chile tempura and shrimp-stuffed jalapeños; viga ceilings and rice-paper



San Miguel Mission
RIGHT Pink Adobe
Restaurant

Barrio de Analco

Cross the river to a district with authentic New Mexico roots

Crowds around Santa Fe's popular Plaza can leave you feeling overwhelmed, but here's a neighborhood that's still a discovery. Closed in by centuries-old adobes, East De Vargas Street is little more than an alley, a passage wide enough for a single vehicle and a couple of pedestrians. Modest as it is, the street is at the heart of Barrio de Analco, an often-overlooked part of Santa Fe. "Analco" means "the other side of the water," and this area south

of the Santa Fe River dates to 1620. While not an imposing barrier, the river has helped the barrio maintain its sense of separateness and authenticity.

EAT The Pink Adobe. A recent renovation and menu update have reinvigorated this 1944 landmark known for its artsy, old Santa Fe atmosphere and Steak Dunigan entrée. Its lounge, the Dragon Room Bar, features paintings by restaurant founder Rosalea Murphy.



\$\$\$; no cover charge; 406 Old Santa Fe Trail; 505/983-7712.

Rio Chama. Grilled specialties and a lively bar are the draws at this spot that blends contemporary and traditional Southwestern touches in both its cuisine and decor. \$\$\$\$; 414 Old Santa Fe Trail; 505/955-0765.

SIP 315 Restaurant & Wine Bar. The popular French restaurant's wine bar offers 20 wines by the glass. 315 Old Santa Fe Trail; 505/986-9190.

GO San Miguel Mission. While its status as the oldest church in the country is a matter of historical debate, there's no denying the appeal of its simple adobe architecture and the beauty of its 18th-century altar screen. \$; 401 Old Santa Fe Trail; 505/983-3974.

Santa Fe Playhouse. Founded by celebrated writer Mary Austin in 1922, its productions include both classics and works by first-time playwrights. Next up is Stephen Lowe's *Empty Bed Blues*, Oct 21 – Nov 6, 2010. \$15; 142 E. De Vargas St.; santafeplayhouse.org or 505/988-4262.

DISCOVER AN ART SECRET Built in 1966 and inspired by the Zia sun symbol, the **New Mexico State Capitol** (call 505/986-4589 for hours) is more reminiscent of a kiva than some classical landmark. Nicknamed the Roundhouse, it's also home to one of Santa Fe's best (and overlooked) collections of works by contemporary New Mexico artists, with pieces displayed on four levels as well as on the grounds and in the new Capitol North building. *Paseo de Peralta and Old Santa Fe Trail.*



Tantalizing tango at Chispa

Viva Santa Fe!

Travel internationally without leaving the Southwest

Vibe: Sultry Madrid noche, with a Buenos Aires flair

Swing open the door of the low-slung adobe **El Mesón** restaurant, just two blocks off the Plaza, and step into Old Spain. Here, you can sample the Madrid-born owner-chef's specialties. Then saunter over to its candlelit **Chispa Tapas Bar**. On Tuesday, the mood is South American sizzle at weekly tango night; on the first Saturday of every month, profes-

sionals take to the floor for flamenco. Settle in and sip sangria. *El Mesón*: \$\$\$; *Chispa*: \$\$\$, \$10 cover on flamenco night; 213 Washington Ave.; 505/983-6756.

Vibe: Kunsthalle in Berlin

Cruise the minimalistic **Site Santa Fe**, a former beer warehouse loosely modeled after a German *Kunsthalle*, or exhibition space. You'll quickly surmise that this is an arena for

Worldly facts

- >> Santa Fe, one of the largest art markets in the world, has 250 art galleries and 16 museums.
- >> Santa Fe is the second-oldest U.S. city, established by the Spanish 400 years ago. Native Americans have lived here even longer.
- >> Ten world premieres of operas have happened here.
- >> La Casa Sena carries wines from around the globe, including Chile, France, New Zealand, and South Africa.
- >> Santa Fe is a walking city, with cobblestone streets near the Plaza and plenty of courtyards to pause in.

bold, new art. *Closed Mon–Tue*; \$10; 1606 Paseo de Peralta; santasafe.org or 505/989-1199.

Vibe: Alpine summer festival in Italian

The folds of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, aspens shouldering up against spruce and fir, and the bare cap of 12,622-foot Santa Fe Baldy rising above—this is the setting for the **Santa Fe Opera**. Join in on the opera tailgate party by calling **Angel Food Catering** (\$32; 505/983-2433), which will deliver dinner to you there. The open-air opera house, with its cantilevered roof, allows stargazing. And each seat has a translation system. *From* \$26; 17053 U.S. 84/285; santafeopera.org or 800/280-4654.

Vibe: Mediterranean sip and stroll

A leisurely late-afternoon walk is de rigueur in Europe's sunniest countries—it's called the *passaggiata* in Italy, *el paseo* in Spain. Santa Fe's **Eastside neighborhood** is perfect for your own wander; you'll feel like you've been transported to a village in Andalusia, Spain. Especially picturesque: the side streets off Acequia Madre, such as Camino Manzano and San Antonio Street. For an intermezzo, seek out the lounge at **La Casa Sena**. Pair the nachitos and duck confit with Bieler Père et Fils "Sabine" rosé. Bar menu: \$\$; 125 E. Palace Ave.; 505/988-9232.

Vibe: Continental shopping spree

Shop for eclectic international treasures at **Poem** (*closed Sun*; 125 E. Palace Ave., Ste. 30; 505/820-7884), a boutique straight out of a Parisian neighborhood.

Buildings bedecked in holiday colors and farolitos



Holiday time in Santa Fe

In December, New Mexico's historic capital glows like its famous farolitos

It's easy to love Santa Fe during the holidays. Visit the historic Plaza on any chilly, clear evening from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, and we defy you not to be entranced by the silvery lights strung on every tree, sparkling against the dusk. In the last glow of the sunset, the adobe buildings lining the Plaza blush like schoolgirls. The farolitos, those luminous little bags of candles and sand that are lit by hand each night, flicker. If the ongoing drought isn't playing killjoy, confectionery

snow will dust the tree branches and grass. The city has a hushed, reverent quality at this time of year, despite the hordes of tourists that show up for the festivities.

What Santa Fe offers these visitors is a deep sense of abiding tradition. As you stroll up Canyon Road on Christmas Eve for the traditional farolito walk, the season sings to you. The frosty nighttime air carries the sweet, sharp tang of burning piñon logs.

Inhale deeply and smile. Around you,

thousands of farolitos pinpricked the darkness, outlining the adobe buildings like sequins. Here and there, bonfires along the roadside create larger coronas. A murmuring, background sound of Christmas carols comes from the people clustered around the bonfires. As you walk, lacy flakes of snow just might begin to fall.

Not much changes in the holiday celebrations here, which is no small thing. Take the decades-old farolito walk in the Historic District, a testament to the power of small lights to broach a greater darkness. It's also a not-half-bad time to practice caroling, since impromptu concerts break out up and down the avenue and participation is democratic, not limited to those who can, say, recall lyrics or carry a tune. You'll hear much wordless humming and feel a convivial, communal pleasure in the simple act of joining in.



The Cathedral adorned with holiday lights

For Santa Feans and visitors, the city answers two other vital seasonal needs: entertaining children during winter break and finding suitably creative Christmas presents. The Santa Fe Southern Railway's holiday trains should beguile most pre-adolescents: The four-hour rides to and from Lamy, through the lovely Galisteo Basin, include caroling and the Big Guy—aka Santa—himself. As for shopping, the city is strong in regional gift possibilities. Along the portal of the Palace of the Governors on the Plaza, Native American artisans display traditional arts and crafts: turquoise rings, earrings, and belt buckles. Or hit the wildly inventive Cruz Gallery: Give your teenage niece the sterling silver sea urchin earrings and happily watch her reassess your cool.

The city remains one of the nation's art capitals. Canyon Road has the greatest concentration of galleries, many showing

traditional Western and Native American works. But a number of trendy, contemporary galleries have moved into the nearby Railyard District. The Railyard also is home to Site Santa Fe, a prestigious contemporary art showcase, which sells excellent art books.

Still, despite the gift-buying possibilities, the mood of Santa Fe this time of year is not primarily commercial but religious—no small part of its charm, whatever your spiritual leanings. The Catholic Church's influence is pervasive and indelible, intertwined as it is with the city's Latino roots and its long, occasionally bloody history of Spanish missionary conquest. Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve at the grand Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi is, we've been told by Catholic friends, is one of the most thrilling, solemn, and aching beautiful remembrances of the child whose birthday this is.

For the not-so-religiously inclined, you

can find less formal sacraments during the holidays in the silence among the pines on the mountains above town. There, especially in deep snow, the quiet has a kind of presence. It is enveloping, forgiving, and divine.

In all of this—the serenity of the mountains, the glories of Mass, the quiet, faithful ritual of lighting the farolitos each night—there's something ineffable. Christmas in Santa Fe has the blood and bones of the earliest Christmases. Some residents and visitors alike complain that the city's traditions are becoming clichéd. And there may be a few too many red-chile wreaths and farolitos about the place. (Some of them now are faux-litos, made of molded plastic and lit by electricity. Please help us discourage this by pointing and sneering. Thank you.) But that's quibbling about the trappings of the celebration, not the substance.

Christmas still has meaning here. Last year, as we walked up Canyon Road on Christmas Eve, we tried to count all of the farolitos. We quit around 160 (which was in the first block). Then we paused beside a bonfire to hum along with a group singing "O Holy Night." People's faces glowed in the guttering light of the fire. The air was brisk, the bonfire welcome, the harmony exquisitely bad, and the spirit of the night ascendant. It was a very merry Christmas, and we expect another this year.

What to do

Farolito walk. Santa Fe's signature seasonal event is always on Christmas Eve. Start at the base of Canyon Rd. at dusk, follow the crowds, sip cider, and ooh at the farolitos.

Las Posadas. In the historic Plaza, a solemn, joyous reenactment of the journey of Mary and Joseph. *Mid-Dec; free.*

Santa Fe Pro Musica at Loretto Chapel. Baroque music and Old English carols by Santa Fe Pro Musica fill the sanctuary and swell the heart at Loretto Chapel. *6 and 8 p.m. Dec 19–24 and 26; from \$15; 207 Santa Fe Trail; santafepromusica.com or 800/960-6680.*

Santa Fe Southern Railway. Four-hour round-trips, including a lunch stop in Lamy (*from \$32, \$18 ages 3–13*) or 2½-hour "Hot Shots" without the Lamy layover (*from \$28, \$14 ages 3–13*). Santa and caroling on trips before Christmas. *thetraininsantafe.com or 888/989-8600.*

Where to shop

ART Nedra Matteucci Galleries is strong in Western artists (*1075 Paseo de Peralta; 505/982-*



On the traditional farolito walk
ABOVE Take in art at Site Santa Fe
LEFT Shopping for holiday gifts at Jackalope

4631). See canyonroadarts.com for **Canyon Road** listings, including gallery specialties. In the Railyard District is **Site Santa Fe** (see *Barrio de Analco*, page 7).

BOOTS Cowboy wannabes wait months and spend thousands for bespoke, handmade boots from **Back at the Ranch Cowboy Boots** (209 E. Marcy St.; backattheranch.com or 888/962-6687), a cheery shop near the Plaza.

JEWELRY The **Native American Artisan Program's marketplace** is in the portal of the Palace of the Governors on the Plaza (pala-ceofthegovernors.org or 505/476-5112). And check out **Cruz Studio Jewelry** (616 Canyon Rd.; 505/986-0644).

HOUSE WARES For the modernists on your gift

list, swing by **Victoria Price Art & Design** in Pacheco Park, where you'll find sleek bone-china tableware from Yuki Murata, utilitarian-cool workbags by Sherry Stein, and silver baubles from Kristin Lora. 1512 Pacheco St., Building B; 505/982-8632.

STOCKING STUFFERS **Jackalope** features imports from China, India, and Mexico, as well as Southwestern items with a sense of humor. 2820 Cerrillos Rd.; 505/471-8539.

Where to eat

La Boca. Just off the Plaza, this bustling eatery trades Southwestern tamales for imaginative Spanish tapas. \$\$\$; 505/982-3433.

Harry's Roadhouse. A locals' favorite, with

More year-round fun in Santa Fe

ARTS & CULTURE **Georgia O'Keeffe Museum.** The museum's permanent collection ranges from the artist's abstract flowers to her beloved local landscapes. 10–5 daily; \$10; 217 Johnson St.; okeeffemuseum.org or 505/946-1000.

Tesuque Pueblo Flea Market. This treasure trove has it all—Kilim rugs, turquoise jewelry, chiles ristras—in more than 350 booths. Bring cash. 8–4 Fri–Sun; open Mar through Dec; 6 miles north of town, exit 171 off U.S. 84; 505/670-2599.

LIVING HISTORY **El Rancho de las Golondrinas.** In the 1700s, the Spanish divide New Mexico into land grants, and Miguel Vega y Coca, the first property owner on record in the area, purchases the Ranch of the Swallows, or El Rancho de las Golondrinas. Explorer Juan Bautista de Anza rests here in 1780 during his expedition to Mexico. Now it's a 200-acre working ranch depicting life in Spanish colonial and territorial New Mexico. Themed weekends feature costumed docents and demonstrations. 10–4 Wed–Sun, Jun–Sep; by appointment only Mar, Apr, and Oct. \$6; 334 Los Pinos Rd.; golondrinas.org or 505/471-2261.

SPA Hedonistic elf-indulgence is even more pleasurable if you know your efforts also aid the Earth. That's one aim of the **Absolute Nirvana Spa**, which uses strictly organic ingredients in its massage oils and facials, reuses water to irrigate the outdoor gardens, and eschews plastic water bottles and bags. Most deluxe treatments end with a rose-petal-strewn bath, during which you can nibble a handmade organic chocolate truffle. *Massages from \$105 for 60 minutes; 106 Faithway St.; absolute.nirvana.com or 505/983-7942.*

the best huevos rancheros in town. \$-\$\$; 96-B Old Las Vegas Hwy.; 505/989-4629.

Tomasita's. The dining room overlooks pavement and the wait is often long, but the blue-corn chicken enchiladas with "Christmas chile" (meaning, in the local patois, red and green) are quintessential Santa Fe. \$; 500 S. Guadalupe St.; 72 W. Marcy St.; 505/983-5721.



Hacienda Doña
Andrea de
Santa Fe

Top lodging

Our seven favorite places to stay in Santa Fe

Bishop's Lodge Resort. Once a retreat where Archbishop Lamy cultivated orchards and flowers, a lovely Sangre de Cristo hillside miles from Santa Fe Plaza is home to this well-known resort and its Shánah Spa. Shánah translates from Navajo as “vigorous, energetic, and healthy”—states of being you might attain through the aromatherapy and hot stone massage available here. Organic treatments are made with local herbs, many grown in the archbishop's beloved gardens. Special spa packages available to guests.

From \$159; www.bishopslodge.com

Don Gaspar Inn. Situated in a historic neighborhood, this cozy B&B feels like a private escape. *From \$165; dongaspar.com*

Hacienda Doña Andrea de Santa Fe. Tucked along the Turquoise Trail, high in the Ortiz Mountains with views all the way to Santa Fe, this inn has Old World style: thick adobe walls and colorful Talavera tile, plus kiva fireplaces, cast-iron canopy beds, and brightly colored folk art. Spend a crisp morning in the umbrella-shaded courtyard, gazing out over

the Galisteo Basin. It's only a short hop down the hill to Cerrillos for a hike or a horseback ride before browsing the art galleries in the tiny town of Madrid. Book the Chávez de Contreras or Carroll rooms for the best views: city lights or piñon-studded mountains. *From \$229; hdasantafe.com*

Hotel St. Francis. This downtown spot has gotten a make-under of sorts. The rooms are a study in gorgeous simplicity with stone walls and unfinished wood furniture, but the place is not all about restraint—just try the signature cachaça and red-chile salt cocktail at the Secreto Bar (\$). *From \$159; hotelstfrancis.com*

Inn of the Five Graces. You wouldn't expect that a place filled with crafts and antiques from Afghanistan, India, and Tibet would feel much like Santa Fe. But somehow the Inn of the Five Graces takes these Eastern elements and creates an experience that is Santa Fe through and through. Arrayed around courtyards and in adobe buildings, the inn is hidden away in one of the city's most historic neighborhoods, the Barrio de Analco. The rooms are rich with the textures of rough woods and the glow of vibrant colors—reds, golds, and deep blues—that suggest exotic locations but offer homey comfort. Here's a spot for anyone looking for a retreat rather than a resort. *From \$425; fivegraces.com or 505/992-0957.*

La Fonda. It may be one of Santa Fe's oldest hotels, but it has a host of modern amenities: a state-of-the-art fitness center, an outdoor pool and indoor spa designed and created by local artisans, luxurious suites built around a private rooftop garden, and a “nuevo Latino” menu in the beautiful La Plazuela restaurant. Plus there's the rooftop Bell Tower Bar, where you can peer over at the narrow, adobe-lined streets of downtown—and the high desert all around you. Tourists and locals arrive in droves to watch the sun set over the Jemez Mountains. Get there early if you want a table. The drink to order: the Silver Coin Margarita on the rocks, with salt, of course. *From \$185; lafondasantafe.com*

Pueblo Bonito Bed and Breakfast Inn. An easy three blocks' walk from the Plaza, this B&B has 18 rooms, most in adobe casitas and all with private entrances and kiva fireplaces. Luxurious but relaxed. *From \$110, including full breakfast; pueblobonitoinn.com*

The Rio Grande weaving through the Sangre de Cristo range



Road trips from Santa Fe

Two routes beyond the city reveal delicious bounty and gorgeous scenery

Drive for food lovers: Follow the River Road from Santa Fe to Taos

Driving from Santa Fe to Taos along the Rio Grande will be one of the highlights of your time in New Mexico. Take U.S. 84/285 from Santa Fe. For the side trip to Chimayo, take State 503 for about 8 miles, then turn left on County Road 98/Juan Medina Road for 3 miles to Chimayo. Return to the River Road by heading west on State 76 for 8 miles to reach State 68.

SANTA FE Cafe Pasqual's. Our go-to place for breakfast in Santa Fe, the vibrant downtown cafe is a favorite of both locals and tourists, so get there early. Great New Mexican classics, but we're partial to the whole-wheat pancakes and the sweet tamal, which comes with a cup of Mexican hot chocolate. Sit at the communal table in the middle of the dining room to catch local gossip. \$\$; 121 Don Gaspar Ave.; 505/983-9340.

Santa Fe Farmers Market. Where locals

commune and shop on Tuesdays (through Nov), Thursdays (through Oct), and Saturdays (year-round): freshly roasted green chiles, local goat cheese, roasted pecans, Native American breads, Japanese eggplants, and heirloom tomatoes are all offered, and there's usually live music and tasty prepared food as well. *DeVargas Center parking lot, near the intersection of N. Guadalupe St. and Paseo de Peralta; 505/983-4098. Visit santafefarmersmarket.com for schedule.*

CHIMAYO Leona's Restaurante. Take a side trip to Chimayo, which has long been a destination for Catholic pilgrims, who make a ritual walk on Good Friday to pray at the town's famous El Santuario de Chimayo. Now it also draws passionate fans of authentic New Mexican cooking. Native Chimayosa Leona Medina-Tiede's rich carne adovada, posole, and fresh tortillas are some of the best



The Plaza's historic facade
ABOVE Chimayo's Santuario
LEFT Chiles at the Santa Fe Farmers Market

around. And her rustic digs next to the Santuario can't be beat: a former food stand now enclosed to create a rambling dining room, with a catalpa tree growing out of its center. \$; closed Tue–Wed; 4 Medina Lane; 888/561-5569.

EMBUDO Embudo Station. On a gorgeous section of highway along the Rio Grande, Embudo Station is located on the site of a former 1880s narrow-gauge railroad station and set right on a stretch of river that's often shallow enough for wading or reclining in one of the restaurant's prized river chairs. House-cured meats and freshly brewed beers. \$\$; closed Tue–Wed; State 68; 800/852-4707.

TAOS Joseph's Table. We first tried chef Joseph Wrede's cooking in the mid-'90s,

when he opened his earlier incarnation of Joseph's Table in a small adobe in Rancho de Taos. Back then, he was earning kudos for the simple clarity of his cooking: no mean feat in someone whose tastes wander over New Mexican, French, Italian, and Asian territory. Now located in the Hotel La Fonda at Historic Taos Plaza, Wrede continues to inspire with dishes like lobster and tamales with roasted corn purée. \$\$\$; 108A South Taos Plaza; 505/751-4512.

Drive for outdoors lovers: Sangre de Cristo Mountains hidden gems

THE LOOP From Santa Fe, take U.S. 285 to State 76 and look for signs for Coyote Creek

State Park, your halfway point. Head back via State 518 and I-25.

OFF THE BEATEN PATH Unlike the scenic but well-traveled Enchanted Circle loop, this road trip takes you on undiscovered backroads and through the high mesas and plains at the southern end of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

TOWN TO BRAKE FOR Las Vegas (no, not that Las Vegas). There are more than 900 historic buildings in this quirky burg.

ROAD FOOD Fuel up on blue-corn enchiladas at **Charlie's Spic & Span Bakery & Café** (\$; 715 Douglas Ave., Las Vegas; 505/426-1921).

STOP FOR A PICNIC At **Storrie Lake State Park**, a 1,100-acre manmade lake. While it clogs up with motorboats in summer, it's quiet throughout the rest of the year. \$5 per vehicle; State 518, 4 miles north of Las Vegas; 505/425-7278.

YOUR OWN PERSONAL PARK **Coyote Creek State Park** (\$5 per vehicle; off State 434, Guadalupita; 575/387-2328) is a little-known 462-acre gem of meadows and conifer forests high up in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Its clear, silt-free creek makes it a hot spot for trout fishing. Hike the steep 1.5-mile loop through the pines at the north end of the park or fish the creek from a field of lupine. If your skills are rusty, book a guide from Taos's Tailwater Gallery & Fly Shop (\$350 for two, including lunch; tailwatergallery.com).

BERRY STOP A trip to the **Salman Ranch Store** feels a bit like wandering into Oleson's general store in Little House on the Prairie. Part of Salman Raspberry Ranch, the store puts those berries in just about everything—fudge bars, chocolate candy, and on the Raspberry Ranch T-shirt (\$15; each year, it sports a new rendering of the ranch by a local artist and has become something of a collector's item). Junction of State 518 and State 442, La Cueva; 866/281-1515.

WANT SOME ART WITH YOUR BURGER? **La Risa Cafe** is worth the side trip to Ribera, an old railroad town turned artists' community. Go for burgers and burritos—the cafe is a favorite of locals like abstract expressionist Eugene Newmann. Afterward, take in the town's Spanish colonial architecture. \$; 200 State 3, Ribera; 575/421-3883.

PULL OFF FOR THE NIGHT If you want to make it a weekend, book a room at the **Plaza Hotel** in Las Vegas. The historic hotel, right on Old Town Plaza, is the grande dame of the town: It starred as a location in *No Country for Old Men*. From \$69, including breakfast; plazahotelnm.com

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See Albuquerque

New Mexico has more than one hotspot for art and dining. Albuquerque's revived downtown is hopping with galleries and cafes. Urban planners have touted this renaissance as the fastest downtown turnaround anywhere in the country—see what locals and visitors are buzzing about.

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