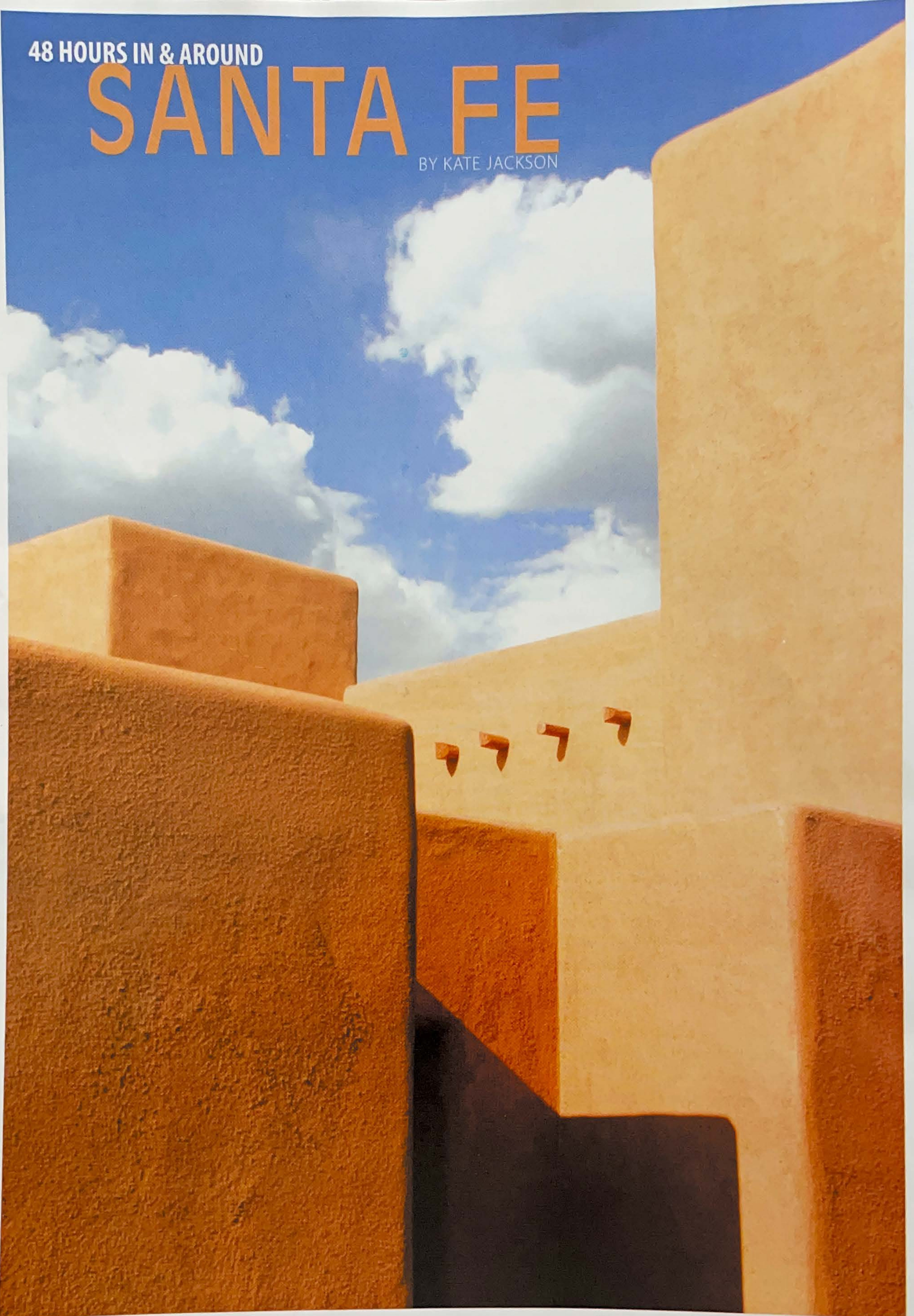


48 HOURS IN & AROUND

# SANTA FE

BY KATE JACKSON



**B**E PREPARED. EVEN AFTER A brief weekend visit, Santa Fe can get under your skin. Maybe it's the cerulean blue skies and the indescribable mingling of pinks and violets that gather over the horizon every evening. Or the rich, deep, earthy colors—the pink adobe, the ecru arroyos, the blood-red mesas in the distance, or the glittering gold of the quaking aspens in the fall.

Perhaps it's because you feel immersed in and surrounded by art—and not just the extraordinary sculpture, painting, crafts, and architecture that are around every corner in this capital city. (Santa Fe is the third largest art market in the world, with alluring museums and some of the country's finest galleries.) The more enticing artfulness is in the everyday and the everywhere: the tableaux of nature, the decorative dress preferred by many of the locals, the aesthetics of the interior design, or the way in which the staple of the local cuisine—the humble chile—is treated as art, strung on *ristras* and hung by doorways. Then again, it could be the food itself—that fiery Northern New Mexican cuisine that at first brings tears to your eyes and seems to stop your heart, but which soon leaves you craving it.

Surely the locals, with their friendly, unhurried manner and their disarming serenity have something to do with it. Or maybe it's merely the shockingly bright sun or the altitude, both of which can leave you dazed, dizzy, and disoriented.

Whatever the source of the spell, you can be sure that Santa Fe isn't called the "City Different" without good reason. Because there's something deeply satisfying about this bewitching Southwestern melting pot, and if it gets under your skin, it may haunt you. It did me. I passed through some years ago on a cross-country trip and couldn't get it out of my mind. So powerful was its pull that I was compelled to pack up and move there. I left after several years, but the image of the city remained stamped in my brain. Still, when we visited on a recent trip after a very long absence, it was clear that I'd forgotten how completely captivating Santa Fe is.

You could easily spend several weeks here without overshooting your interest or seeing half of what the city has to offer. But if you've never been here before, a weekend visit is just right. You'll get the flavor of this enchanting place and still get home before it has a powerful effect on you.

We arrived in Santa Fe at the time when it appears to be most magical: late afternoon bordering on twilight. Plan to do the same—arrive early afternoon on Friday and head straight for the historic Plaza. The lifeblood of this centuries-old pueblo since 1610, it's the perfect place to start a high-desert weekend and get into the spirit of Santa Fe. We found the Plaza well used that afternoon by a crowd composed mostly of



friendly natives—children, seniors, teens, dogs, and even cats. Their familiarity and relaxed, easy-going ways seemed to set the tone for visitors, telling them to slow down, relax, listen to the music, dance with the locals, play with the dogs, and sing with the children. We climbed the stairs of the Ore House and took a table on the balcony overlooking the Plaza and the St. Francis Cathedral. With nachos and margaritas, we watched the festivities in the square below and the motorcycles cruising its perimeter.

Try these suggestions for a 48-hour itinerary that will give you a taste of Santa Fe. It's worth the extra price you'll pay to stay in one of the more interesting and uniquely Santa Fean lodgings in the historic downtown/Plaza area—such as La Fonda, The Inn of the Anasazi, The Inn at Loretto, or Inn on the Alameda—and spend most of your non-riding time on foot.

The best way to divide your weekend? Plan on a day in town and a day riding. On Saturday, explore the city on foot, and on Sunday, head for the hills. Spend the better part of the day on two wheels, riding the stunning high country. No doubt, you'll want to return for a longer trip. There's a lot more city to see, and these are only two of a host of tempting rides in the region. (Look for more about both in future issues.)

## SATURDAY

Start the day with a delicious breakfast at Cafe Pasqual's, a very charming restaurant just south of the Plaza on Don Gaspar. Try the whole

wheat pancakes or, if you're very hungry, the Huevos Motulenos (eggs over easy on corn tortillas with black beans topped with sautéed bananas, feta cheese, and green peas, with green chile or tomatillo salsa. But be sure to get there early. It's the most popular spot in town in the morning, and the line tends to go out far out the door. Another hot spot for breakfast or coffee and a pastry is the French Bakery, next to the landmark hotel, La Fonda, on southeastern corner of the Plaza. Equally good is Tia Sophias on West San Francisco Street, where you're likely to find the local workers enjoying a traditional New Mexican green chile breakfast.

Then wander the Plaza and absorb some local color and culture: Explore the Palace of the Governors—the oldest public building in the United States. Take in an exhibit or two at one of the fascinating museums in and around the square. A good place to start is just around the corner from La Fonda—at the Institute of American Indian Arts Museum. Visit the nearby St. Francis Cathedral before turning back toward Palace Street and walking east to the Museum of Fine Arts. Go farther west, turn right on Grant, and at Johnson Street you'll find the jewel of Santa Fe Museums—the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, where you can easily get lost for several hours.

You'll find dozens of interesting cafes and restaurants for



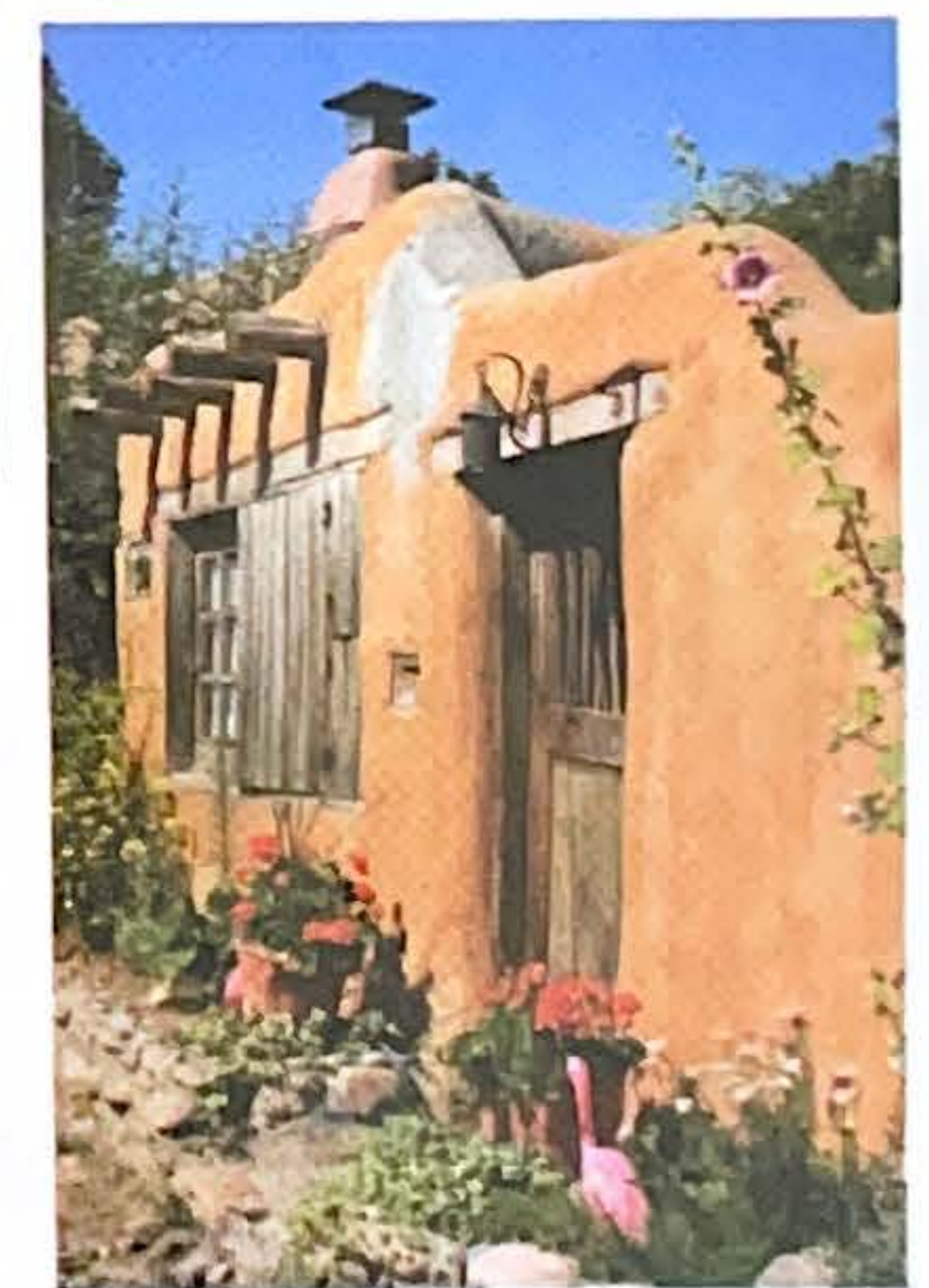
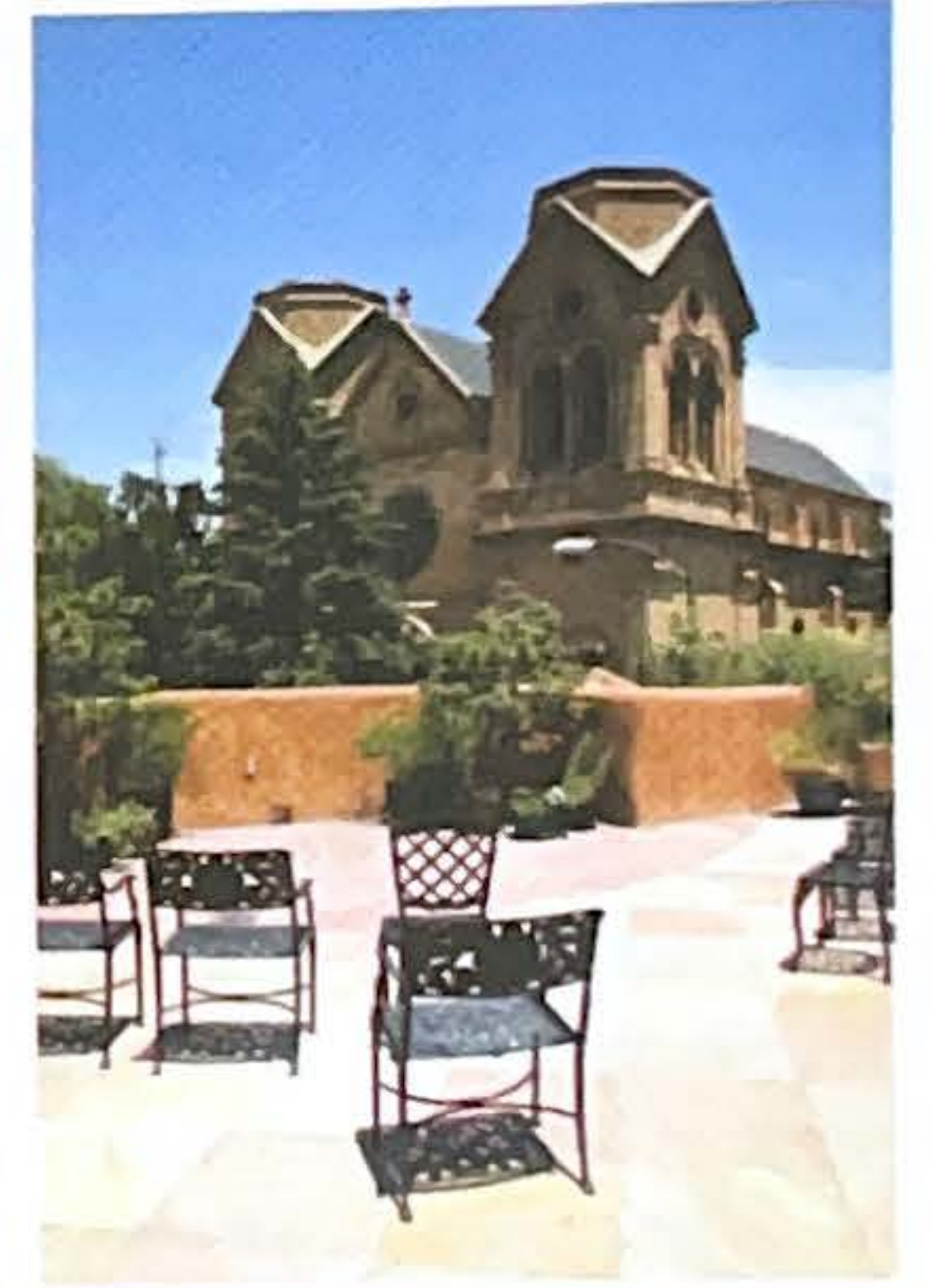
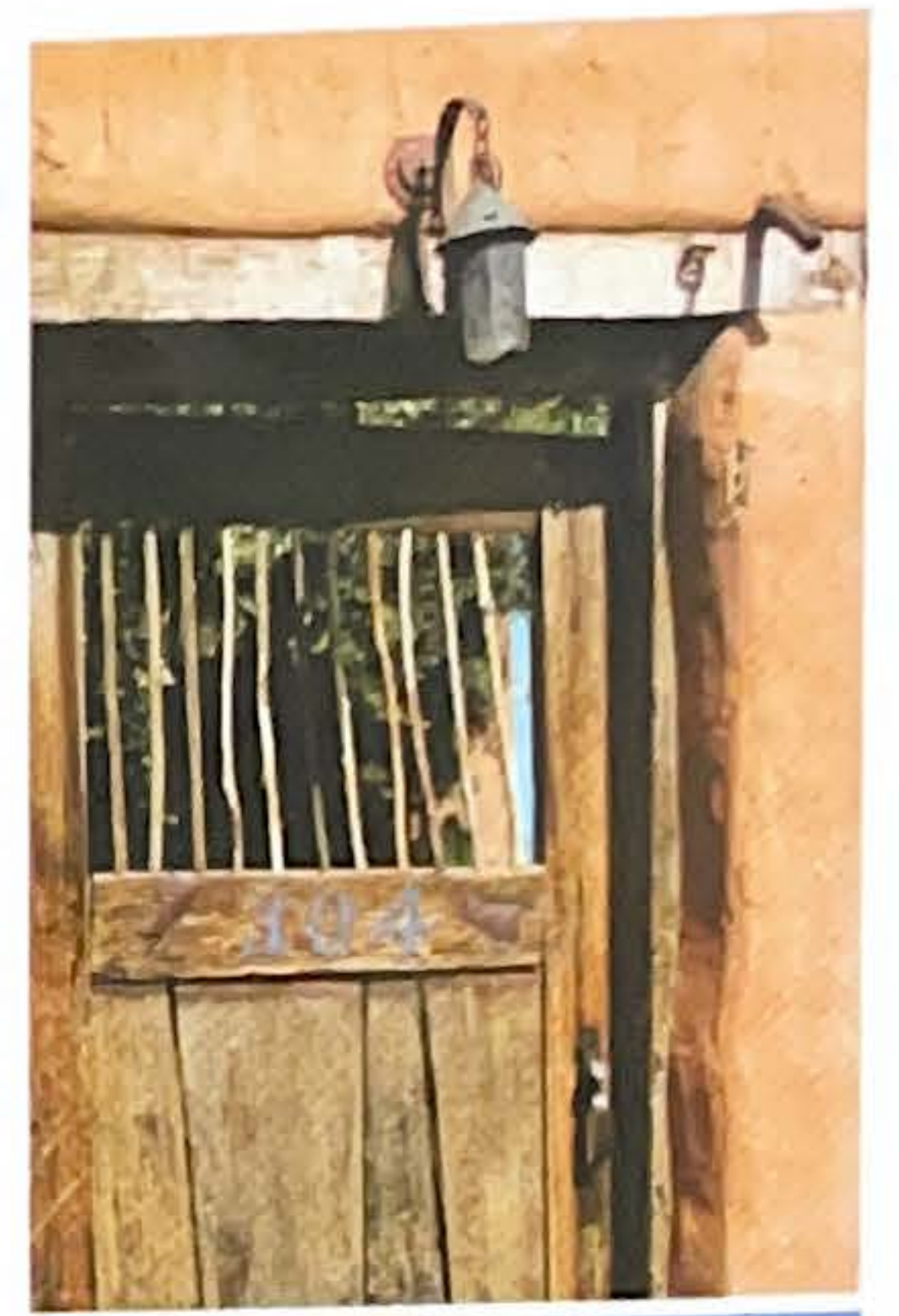
lunch, but sample the spots that locals as well as tourists adore. For some of the best New Mexican food, wander into La Fonda and its colorful, sun-drenched La Plazuela, just off the lobby. Our choices—mango gazpacho and crab cakes—were superb. Another favorite lunch spot is The Shed, tucked into a courtyard off East Palace Avenue. The Cold Red Raspberry Soup is out of the ordinary, and the green chile stew and the posole (a pueblo stew with chile, pork, and Nixtamal corn) are among the best in town. It's a bit more of a hike and you may have to fight the crowds of local workers, but you'll get a great burrito along with a tasty sopaipilla (a puffy, deep-fried pastry served with honey) that you can wash down with a great margarita. (Take it easy on the alcohol, though, if you're adjusting to the altitude. It's a good idea to drink lightly, especially the first day, and be sure to get enough water.)

If you haven't had your fill of art, work off your lunch by walking in the Old Santa Fe Trail area. You'll see what's said to be the oldest house in America; the "miraculous" spiral staircase at the Loretto Chapel; and the Barrio de Analco on and around East De Vargas Street. Settled in the early 1600s, it's a colorful neighborhood lined with historic adobe homes. Then walk or ride up famed Canyon Road and explore the galleries,

stopping to cool your heels and get a coffee or a cold drink at one of several cafes along the way.

As it gets close to twilight, find your way back toward the Plaza and grab a seat at one of the outdoor cafes or cantinas, preferably one that looks down on the city. From one of these pleasant perches you can watch the evening sky take on its colors and cast a glow on the mountains and the architecture. Among the best spots: the Bell Tower at La Fonda, Coyote Cafe & Cantina on West Water Street, and the Ore House on the Plaza.

Locals tend to favor one of two restaurants for a very special dinner: Geronimo on Canyon Road, or Santacafe on Washington Avenue, just a block and half from the Plaza. (Reservations are recommended for both.) More down to earth but equally exquisite is the food at El Farol, Santa Fe's oldest restaurant and cantina near the top of Canyon Road. It's a popular spot with motorcyclists, who come not only to taste Chef James Campbell Caruso's impressive menu of tapas dishes, but also to rub elbows with Santa Feans and listen to live music in an authentically New Mexican night spot. For something a little more romantic, try La Casa Sena, where you can dine on a landscaped patio on Sena Plaza off Palace Avenue.



It's not Broadway, but there's plenty of nightlife in Santa Fe. The Lensic Performing Arts Center, a lavishly restored, historic movie theatre, now offers programs in all the arts. On summer nights, listen to music under the stars at the Paolo Soleri Amphitheater (on the grounds of the Santa Fe Indian School), where there's always a major recording artist on the schedule. For something a little more of the sawdust-and-shells-on-the-floor variety, try Evangelos on East Palace Avenue, where you can shoot pool or talk to motorcyclists at the bar. At the opposite end of the spectrum, for an unforgettable evening, get tickets to the Santa Fe Opera. Even if you don't like opera! The setting is spectacular, and the stage is a window onto the sky and the mountains. At dusk, the performance of lights in nature is as compelling as the opera itself, and you may see the moon rise in the middle of *La Traviata*.

### SUNDAY

For a quick breakfast before your ride, stop at one of the spots less traveled by tourists. You'll have a great breakfast, but you'll get fed and on your way more quickly than you might on or around the Plaza. Head for the Guadalupe District, a few blocks southeast of the Plaza. On one side of Guadalupe Street

EXAMPLES OF SANTA FE ARCHITECTURE: FROM DOWNTOWN AND CANYON ROAD; ST. FRANCIS CATHEDRAL FROM A PATIO AT LA FONDA; AN ADOBE OFF OF CANYON ROAD; THE INN OF THE ANASAZI

is the Zia Diner, a retro-style eatery with good food, and across the street is the Cowgirl Hall of Fame, where you can eat your huevos rancheros outside on the patio. (If you're in the market for Southwestern furniture or decorative art, stop in at the Design Center, one block away between Sandoval and Santa Fe's main street, Cerrillos Road. Another place where locals go for a great breakfast in a homey, unpretentious atmosphere is Tecolote (The Owl), farther west on Cerrillos.

There's unbeatable riding in Northern New Mexico, and once you get a taste of it, you'll certainly want to return for some longer excursions and loop trips. As a preview of those good things to come, try one of these two day-rides from Santa Fe.

The Jemez Mountain Trail is a one-day loop trip that shows off some of the finest scenery in Northern New Mexico, from the dramatic rugged heights of White Rock Overlook to the graceful sweeping fields of a collapsed volcanic crater. It offers a window on history and culture that sees into centuries: You'll see the excavated and partially restored ruins of an ancient civilization and, in contrast, the research laboratory that forever changed the world in 1945. There's much to see on this ride, so get an early start.

From Santa Fe, take U.S. route 285/84 north to Pojoaque, and N.M. 502 west toward Los Alamos to N.M. 4, which takes you through the community of White Rock to the White Rock Overlook—a premier sport climbing area with dramatic views of the Rio Grande below. Then, return to N.M. 4 and continue to Bandelier National Monu-



ment, the second point of interest on the loop. Named for nineteenth-century anthropologist Adolph Bandelier, the park encircles the ancestral ruins of Frijoles Canyon, including the two-storied Tyuonyi Pueblo—an apartment-like arrangement of rooms around a central arena, and

the Ceremonial Cave—an underground hollow made into a religious kiva by the Anasazi. Both sites are accessible by an easy two-mile hike.

Back on N.M. 4, follow the signs to Los Alamos and the Bradbury Science Museum—the home of the Los Alamos National Laboratory. There are three fascinating galleries with information about the lab's research and its role in the defense of the United States, some of which provides insight into the secret Manhattan Project that produced the first atomic bomb.

As you continue on the ride, the Jemez trail begins a steady climb in elevation into a densely forested region before it emerges into one of the world's largest calderas. The third stop on the tour is known as the Valle Grande—a vast, flowing meadow that is the remains of the collapsed crater of a three-million-year-old volcano.

Next is the Jemez Springs, called the “Place of the Boiling Waters” by the ancient Towa people. You can stop for a quick soak at the Jemez Springs Bath House, a Victorian-era establishment now owned and operated by the village of Jemez Springs. It's a great place to take advantage of the hot mineral water, and, perhaps, pamper yourself by getting a massage from a licensed therapist before you get back on the road.

The final stop is Coronado State Monument, named for Spanish Conquistador Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, who was thought to have camped in the vicinity of this site in 1540 while searching for the fabled Seven Cities of Cibola. Although rumors about hidden gold persist to this day, you won't find much evidence of Coronado's stay. What you will find, however, are the partially-reconstructed ruins of the Kuaua Pueblo, abandoned at the end of the sixteenth century. They feature some of the finest examples of pre-contact mural art excavated from the 1930 archeological dig.

From Coronado, you can return to Santa Fe by way of Highway 25. Once back in town, for a change of pace from the hot and spicy New Mexican flavors, relax over a meal at Pranzo Italian Grill near Sanbusco Market Center in the Guadalupe District southwest of the Plaza. Or, if you just can't get enough chile, go straight to Maria's New Mexican Kitchen, off the beaten track on West Cordova Road.

Then, cap off your Santa Fe experience with a visit to one of its most special places—perfect following a day-long ride and satisfying meal. Take a ride toward Santa Fe's Ski Basin to Ten Thousand Waves, a Zen-inspired spa that resembles a Japanese *onsen*. In addition to private and communal hot baths, there are saunas and cold plunges, and you can get different types of massages and soothing spa treatments. Although most people visit Ten Thousand Waves by the day, you can arrange to stay in its luxurious accommodations. It's not just another spa—it's an experience. Don't miss it.

## SANTA FE TRIP TICKET

### HOW TO GET THERE

**BY AIR:** Visitors generally fly into Albuquerque and take Santa Fe Shuttle, [www.santafeshuttle.com](http://www.santafeshuttle.com), or Twin Hearts

Express, [www.twinheartsexpress.com](http://www.twinheartsexpress.com).

**BY GROUND:** You can get to Albuquerque and to a town called Lamy, just outside of Santa Fe, by Amtrak train. [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com) ↻

**MOTORCYCLE RENTAL** Santa Fe: Eaglerider, [www.eaglerider.com/locations/santafe.html](http://www.eaglerider.com/locations/santafe.html) • Albuquerque Thunderbird Harley-Davidson, [www.thunderbirdhd.com](http://www.thunderbirdhd.com) ↻

**BEST TIME TO GO** It's beautiful in any season, although be prepared for snow anytime from October to April. Christmas in Santa Fe is worth braving the weather for. ↻

**DON'T MISS** Museum of Fine Arts, [www.museumofnewmexico.org](http://www.museumofnewmexico.org) • The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, [www.okeeffemuseum.org](http://www.okeeffemuseum.org) • The Santa Fe Opera, [www.santafeopera.org](http://www.santafeopera.org) ↻

**OTHER ATTRACTIONS** The St. Francis Cathedral, 505.982.5619 • The Institute of American Indian Arts Museum, [www.iaia.edu](http://www.iaia.edu)

• The Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, [www.wheelwright.org](http://www.wheelwright.org) • El Rancho de Las Golondrinas, a Spanish Colonial living history museum, [www.golondrinas.org](http://www.golondrinas.org) • Bradbury Science Museum, [www.lanl.gov/museum](http://www.lanl.gov/museum) • Bandelier National Park, [www.nps.gov/band/](http://www.nps.gov/band/) • Jemez Springs Bath House, [www.jemezspringsbathhouse.com](http://www.jemezspringsbathhouse.com) • Coronado State Monument, [www.nps.gov/coro/](http://www.nps.gov/coro/) ↻

**INDULGENCES** Ten Thousand Waves, a Japanese spa with private and communal tubs, waterfalls, saunas, and cold plunges, [www.tenthousandwaves.com](http://www.tenthousandwaves.com) ↻

**NIGHTLIFE** Cowgirl Hall of Fame, 505.982.2565 • Evangelo's, 505.982.9014

• El Farol, [www.elfarolsantafe.com](http://www.elfarolsantafe.com) • Lensic Performing Arts Theatre, [www.lensic.com](http://www.lensic.com) • Paolo Soleri (at the Santa Fe Indian School), 505.989.6318 • The Santa Fe Opera, [www.santafeopera.org](http://www.santafeopera.org) ↻

**DINING** Cafe Pasqual's, [www.pasquals.com](http://www.pasquals.com) • Cowgirl Hall of Fame, 505.982.2565 • Coyote Cafe & Rooftop Cantina, [www.coyotecafe.com](http://www.coyotecafe.com) • El Farol, [www.elfarolsantafe.com](http://www.elfarolsantafe.com) • French Pastry Shop, 505.983.6697 • La Case Sena, [www.lacasena.com](http://www.lacasena.com) • La Plazuela, La Fonda, [www.lafondasantafe.com](http://www.lafondasantafe.com) • Maria's New Mexican Kitchen, [www.marias-santafe.com](http://www.marias-santafe.com) • Ore House on the Plaza, [www.orehouseontheplaza.com](http://www.orehouseontheplaza.com)

• Pranzo Italian Grill, [www.pranzo-italiangrill.com](http://www.pranzo-italiangrill.com) • Santa cafe, [www.santacafe.com](http://www.santacafe.com) • The Shed, [www.sfshed.com](http://www.sfshed.com) • Tesuque Village Market, 505.988.8848 • Tia Sophia's, 505.983.9880 • Tomasita's, 505.983.5721 • Geronimo, 505.982.1500 • Tecolote Cafe 505.988.1362 • Zia diner, [www.ziadiner.com](http://www.ziadiner.com) ↻

**LODGING** If you're looking for something exotic and extravagant, try the Inn of the Five Graces, [www.fivegraces.com](http://www.fivegraces.com). Travelers' favorites include Inn on the Alameda, [www.inn-alameda.com](http://www.inn-alameda.com) • Inn of the Anasazi, [www.innoftheanasazi.com](http://www.innoftheanasazi.com) • Inn and Spa at Loretto, [www.innatloretto.com](http://www.innatloretto.com) • La Posada de Santa Fe Resort & Spa, [www.rockresorts.com](http://www.rockresorts.com) • La Fonda, [www.lafondasantafe.com](http://www.lafondasantafe.com) • St. Francis Hotel, [www.hotelstfrancis.com](http://www.hotelstfrancis.com). If you're on a more modest budget, Cerrillos Road has plenty of chain motels and a handful of budget inns such as the Silver Saddle Motel, [www.motelsantafe.com](http://www.motelsantafe.com), or the Santa Fe Budget inn, [www.santafebudgetinn.com](http://www.santafebudgetinn.com) ↻

**SHOPPING** If you're looking for jewelry, Native American Crafts, fine art, furniture, southwestern clothing, and decorative arts, you'll find it throughout the city, especially at the Plaza, Canyon Road, Sanbusco Market, and the Design Center. On Fridays through Sundays, out on Highway 25 near the Santa Fe Opera you'll find one of the best flea markets in the country, The Pueblo of Tesuque Flea Market, (formerly Trader Jack's) open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. If you head out that way, be sure to stop at the Tesuque Village Market for breakfast, lunch or dinner, open 7 days, 7 a.m.-9 p.m. (10 p.m. in summer), 505.988.8848 ↻

**CAMPING** Santa Fe KOA, [www.santafekoa.com](http://www.santafekoa.com) • Santa Fe Skies RV Park, [www.santafeskiesrvpark.com](http://www.santafeskiesrvpark.com) • Santa Fe National Forest, [www.publiclands.org](http://www.publiclands.org) ↻

**TOURS** Access Santa Fe, [www.accessantafe.com](http://www.accessantafe.com) ↻

**TRAVEL INFO** New Mexico Tourism Department, [www.state.nm.us](http://www.state.nm.us) • Santa Fe Convention and Visitors Bureau, [www.santafe.org](http://www.santafe.org)