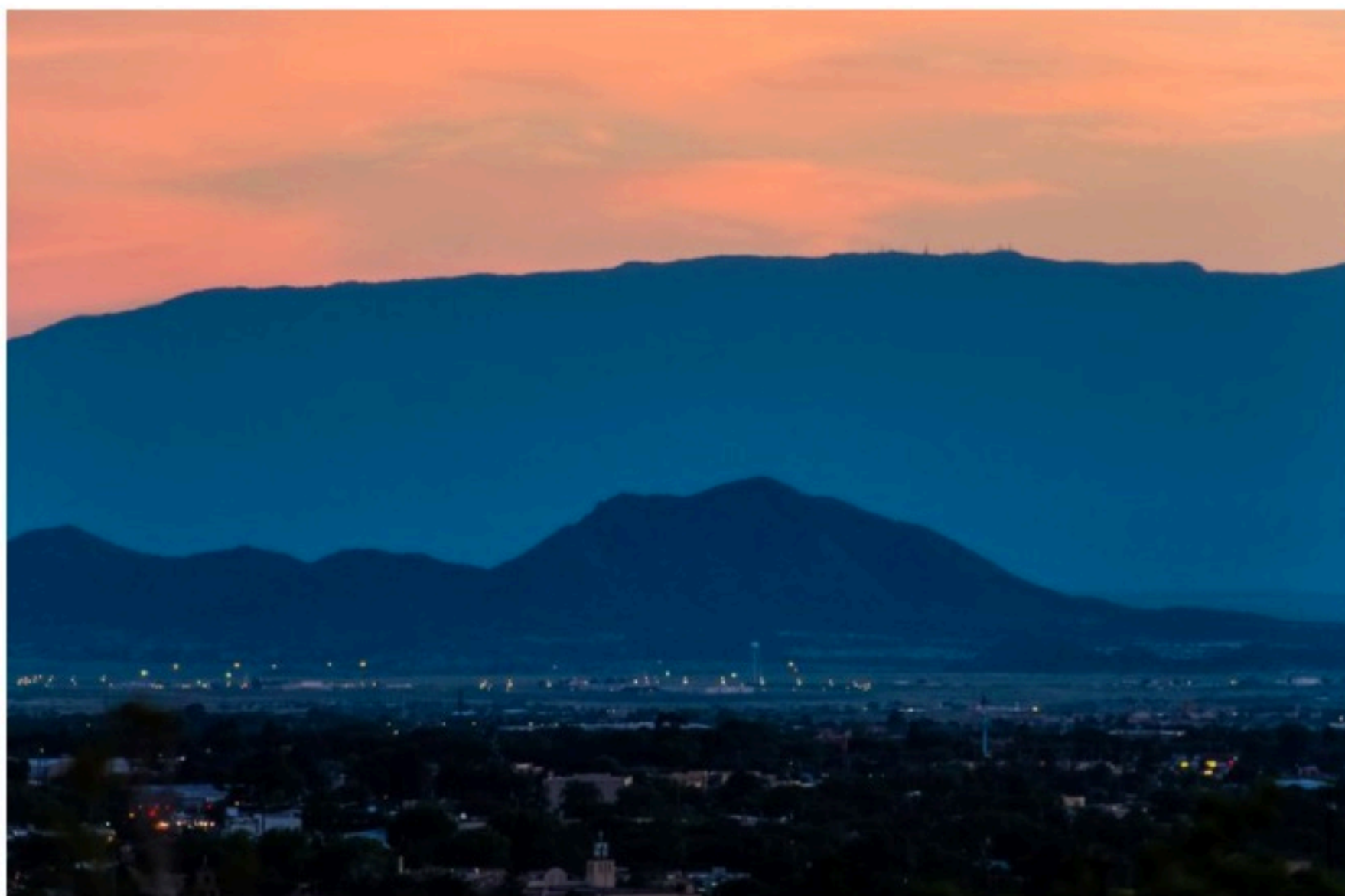


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# Haunted Inns and Desert Dreams: The Seductive Charms of Santa Fe

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Andriy Blokhin / Alamy Stock Photo



Tucked in the ink-blue mountains of Northern New Mexico, Santa Fe is an inimitably striking city. Spanish for Holy Faith, the city is small — just 70,000 — with adobe buildings, phantasmagoric skies, and strings of titian-colored Chile ristras that hang from wooden doors.

It's also an old city — the oldest state capital in the United States — and has been inhabited since 1050 by members of Native American pueblos. It was colonized by Spanish settlements in 1610 when it became a fixture of the trade route.

The descriptor “magical” is often oversued. But, Santa Fe is magical.

By virtue of it's almost-mythical handsomeness, aridity, and eccentricity, it draws a distinguished multitude of people who seek solitude and who gravitate towards



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physical beauty. Los Cinco Pintores — or, the five painters — where the first group of artists in the 20th Century who migrated to Santa Fe to work in an artists colony.

Santa Fe and its surrounding areas — Taos, Abiquiu, and Galisteo — have since attracted many sets of esteemed eyes. Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Julia Roberts, Tom Ford, and (perhaps most famously) Georgia O'Keeffe have all settled down, at least part time, in Northern New Mexico.

The high-desert town has four seasons. There's a snow-globe-esque, tradition-infused winter marked by the Christmas Eve Farolito walk and the salient perfume of cedarwood. There's a mild, cherry blossomed spring, and a summer that, save for a few desert rain-filled monsoon days, is hot with feverishly intense light to match. Santa Fe's autumn is defined by the scent of roasting chile peppers and the sight of Aspen-tree covered mountains: a phenomena that gives the town a golden incandescence.

During the winter months — save for The Holidays — Santa Fe is quiet. It's a strange and utopianical escape, and though the town closes early (really, it can be difficult to get a drink after the hour of nine PM) there is much to do, eat, and see.







The Inn of Five Graces

Photo: Kate Russell, Courtesy of The Inn of Five Graces



## Where to Stay:

Inn of The Five Graces is an embellished, 24-suite boutique hotel by Ira and Sylvia Seret. The name, “Five Graces,” refers to an Eastern concept: The five graces of sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. Each suite is ornamented with tile mosaics and Afghan and Tibetan artifacts. The hotel is next to the oldest house and oldest church in America.

La Posada is one of several allegedly haunted hotels in Santa Fe (La Fonda and St. Francis Hotel are also rumored to be haunted). The resort and spa, rooted in 1880 and located mere blocks from The Plaza, has lots of options — including casita-style two-bedroom suites that overlook the gardens — and a cozy, multi-room library bar.

Inn on the Anasazi has 58 rooms of hand-crafted wooden and leather furnishings, most of which have private patios and fireplaces. The hotel offers in-room massages and aromatherapy sessions and has a sidewalk patio — a rarity in Santa Fe — where you can have a margarita and re-charge. The location is unbeatable.





Landscape near Santa Fe, New Mexico

Photo: © Wim Wenders / Courtesy of Schirmer / Mosel & D.A.P.



## What to Do:

Abiquiu and Ghost Ranch are sixty-three miles north of Santa Fe — and, in effect, feel many decades away from today. In Ghost Ranch, tour Georgia O’Keeffe’s home and studio — a private, meticulously preserved adobe that the artist purchased from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Santa Fe in 1945 — which O’Keeffe lived in until 1984. The house contains artworks by O’Keeffe and Alexander Calder, Mid-Century furniture, and displays of rocks, sculptural works, and objects that O’Keeffe gathered on her walks.

After your tour, drive to Abiquiu Lake — in the winter it may be too cold to swim, of course, but the water gleams. Look to the left and you’ll see Pedernal: a forceful and distinctive mesa (which is essentially a flat-topped mountain), where some of O’Keeffe’s ashes are spread.

Drive four hours south of Santa Fe to White Sands and behold an unearthly landscape: bounds of white sand dunes where you can walk, meditate, camp, and witness pink sunrises and sunsets that are otherworldly.

There’s a room with a dirt floor and a Holy Dirt well at the Santuario Chimayo in Chimayo, built in 1984, forty-five minutes from Santa Fe. The dirt, it’s believed, heals everything from heartbreak to cancer. You can buy small vessels in the surprisingly well-executed gift shops to take dirt to your loved ones.

SITE Santa Fe is the commanding contemporary art museum in Santa Fe. The space runs a great program, having shown artists including Marina Abramović, Louise Bourgeois, Ed Ruscha, Bruce Nauman, and Roni Horn.

Go to the the Farmer’s Market, which takes place at the Railyard on Saturday and Tuesday mornings, for locally raised, free range meats and eggs, organic breads, berries, shishito peppers and greens, and soaps made of goat milk and lavender. For those who live in Santa Fe, trips to the Farmers Market and Whole Foods can be the apex of sociality.

The O’Keeffe Museum obtains the most extensive and cohesive collection of O’Keeffe’s work of anywhere in the world. Works from each of her series — from the New York cityscapes to the paintings of mountains, flowers, and bones — and



are on view.



Georgia O'Keeffe's property on Ghost Ranch

Photo: Rex



The Shed has been owned by the same family since 1953.

Photo: Courtesy of The Shed Santa Fe







## Where to Eat:

The Shed is housed in the original 1692 adobe home and courtyard of the Spanish Royal Family. The prince bought eighteen rooms built around three patios, and established his family here. Since 1953, The Shed has been owned by the same family, and their New Mexican recipes haven't wavered.

Tune Up is a snug, fuschia-walled neighborhood restaurant with a menu that includes El Salvadorian Pupusas, New Mexican Green Chile Stew, lamb tacos, and perfect caesar salads. The counter holds jars of agua frescas and Mexican wedding cookies, while the coffee is refilled almost too quickly making Tune Up Santa Fe's quintessential lazy morning nook.

With its excellent food (mussels bathed in white wine and local red chile, octopus, escargot, and steak tartare) and extensive wine list, smoke-mirrored walls and comfortable leather booths, the cozy French bistro Bouche is ideal for date night.

Izanami, the restaurant at Ten Thousand Waves, is set atop a snowy mountain on the way to the Santa Fe Ski Basin. Panoramic windows, tatami rooms, lanterns, and a waterfall entryway complement the menu, which is comprised of exquisite Japanese dishes — sake braised shimeji mushrooms, Wagyu steak, and housemade tofu with garlic and chive — but, notably, no fish. The Michelin Starred-restaurant uses ingredients that can only be sourced locally — and Santa Fe is over one thousand miles from the closest ocean.

Joseph's is the antidote to a cold night in Santa Fe. The interior is dim and warm. Though the dishes (glazed duck confit and Marlin sashimi with kale chips) may sound overly-considered in their written form are pleasing.

Nearly everything that Vinaigrette serves is grown on its farm just outside of Santa Fe, which can be seen in the incredible flavors of the lettuces and vegetables. The kale caesar salad with marcona almonds and parmesan will, likely, leave you dissatisfied with nearly every other salad in the world.





## Where to Drink:

The bars at [Geronimo](#) and [The Compound](#) — both of which are located on the gallery-lined Canyon Road in the Historic East Side — are elegant Santa Fe stalwarts that serve perfect cocktails.

Georgia at the O’Keeffe Museum has a brick-walled bar and a menu of signature, Southwest-inspired drinks, like the Abiquiu Rose, a blend of Ketel One, St. Germaine, Pama, and lime juice. It also has a great happy hour.

[Secreto](#), in The St. Francis Hotel, makes seasonal cocktails from mostly organic, local produce — order the Smoked Sage Margarita and burning fresh sage will scent the bar.

[The Dragon Room](#) at Pink Adobe is an old-school Santa Fe favorite with a fireplace and fire pit, colorful walls, and bizarre, dragon-themed art.

[Santa Fe Spirits](#) is a distillery in Santa Fe that has a tasting room on the East Side, where they fold their handmade liquors into perfectly-made signature drinks— martinis, gingery scotch drinks, and manhattans.

## Where to Spa:

[10,000 Waves Japanese Spa](#) is without contest the most incredible spa in Santa Fe. The grounds are tranquil and gracious, with private and (semi)-public hot tubs, a restaurant, and spa services that include hot stone massages, Shiatsu, and salt glow treatments.

## Where to Shop:

[Santa Fe Vintage](#) is accessible by appointment only. It’s well worth it though; The warehouse space, which sits on the outskirts of town, holds an incredible collection of vintage denim, perfect, hole-y T-shirts, swathes of indigo-dyed fabric, Western wear, and outerwear. It’s really, really good. If you derive pleasure from sifting through vintage, it’s not to be missed.

[Double Take](#) is a three-wing store: It has one wing for consignment “contemporary” clothing (which can be skipped over), one for Western wear





(which, if you're in the market for leather cowboy boots, suede jackets, and vintage denim, is pretty great) and one for designer and vintage pieces such as furs, beaded bags, and well-priced, un-eccentric clothing from the last few decades.

Doodlet's sells a thoughtful but messy selection of overpriced, precious trinkets: stickers, foil wrapped candies, books on Santa Fe, miniatures, charms. It's a perfect place to buy gifts for children, but you'll likely end up wanting a few things for yourself as well.

Shiprock, located above the Plaza, showcases and sells a succinct, impressive selection of woven textiles, Zuni Fetishes, Native American pottery, and vintage sterling silver and turquoise jewelry. It's expensive, but each piece is remarkable and the space feels almost like a gallery.

Every wall of Keshi is lined with glass cases of Zuni Fetishes — small, carved stone animals and figures that are an integral part of the Zuni Pueblo. Each animal, carved from a semi-precious stone, represents a different virtue or symbol of intention — protection, courage, love, motivation, etc. The store sources their fetishes directly from the Zuni people, which is important.

James Reid, across from The Shed, is a family-owned store that sells Reids' local, made-by-hand leather-and-sterling-silver belts and accessories. Reids' designs are clearly influenced by the Southwest, where he's lived for over thirty years, but the belts are sleek and typically very minimal in form. The designer strives to "stimulate a rapport within a community that includes the maker, the wearer, the giver, and the observer...[to create]...designs [that] are meant to be worn and to show wear, to reflect the character of the wearer, to attain the status of heirlooms."

Seret and Sons, a store by the same family behind Inn of the Five Graces, has an extensive collection of pieces that the family collects while traveling and imports—hand-carved wooden doors from India and Afghanistan, upholstered furniture, tapestries, and colorful woven rugs.

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