

Trying The Inn of the Five Graces: n°1 hotel in US

TRAVEL



Sometimes you discover a location which you would like to share with the whole world, and yet you would secretly love to keep for yourself. 'The Inn of the Five Graces' in Santa Fe – the capital of the American state New Mexico – is such a place. The Relais & Chateaux which we stayed in for a few nights during our Route 66 adventure just got elected by Travel and Leisure 'Number One City Hotel in Continental United States'.

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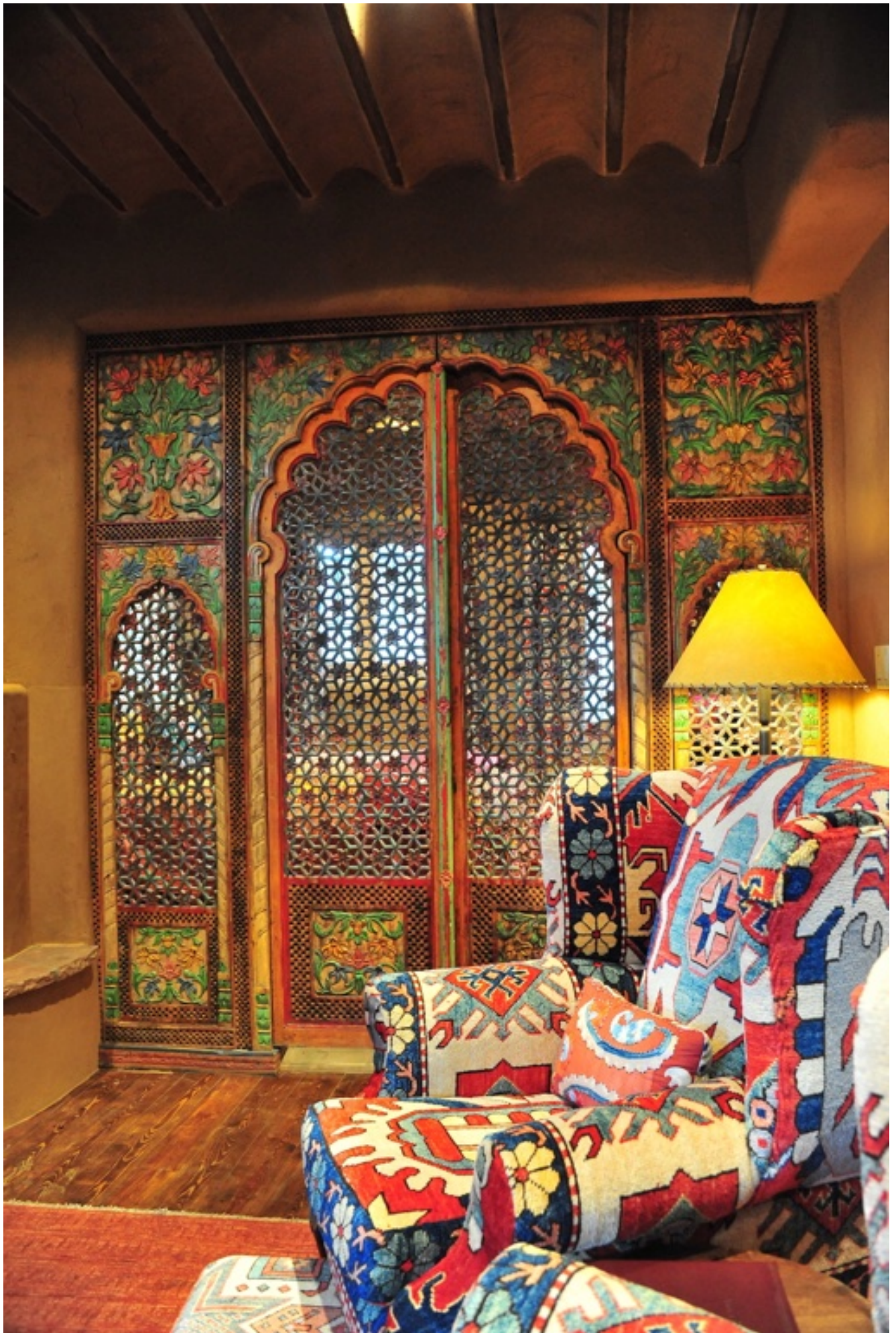


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Buying and designing for Anne Klein, Oscar de la Renta, Angelo Donghia, Bloomingdale's, Stark Carpet, and others, Ira and his wife Sylvia established themselves as a premier resource to the design community.



Original welcome @The Inn of the Five Graces

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Sante Fe is actually not on the route that most tourists take when driving on Route 66 but the city is more than worth taking this other loop. "The City Different," as it is also called, is the oldest continuously inhabited city in the U.S. and some buildings are worth the detour. San Miguel Church eg. is the oldest church of the US, built in the early years of the 17th century by the original Tlaxcalan Indians, and the grounds of the The Inn of the Five Graces comprise also the oldest inhabited house of the US. To get there, take the so-called Santa Fe loop, northwards from Santa Rosa. After Sante Fe Route 66 returns southwards again towards Albuquerque.



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If you have the budget book a stay at The Inn of the Five Graces. The Relais & Chateaux not only recently expanded its spa, it just got elected by Travel and Leisure 'Number One City Hotel in Continental United States' for 2019. Nestled on a quiet side street near Santa Fe River, the Inn's earthy, traditional adobe and stone exterior belies the extraordinary sensual experience awaiting visitors on the inside.



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Today the Serets own the largest collection of antique, Tibetan painted furniture in the world. They borrow it regularly for large exhibitions world wide.



The Inn of The Five Graces mixes East Indian art with Tibetan art.
Wowwatchers.com

Photo

The life of the American founders Ira Seret and his wife Sylvia reads like a tale from thousand and one night. In 1968, Ira discovered a few sheepskin coats which had found their way from Afghanistan to New York City. Soon he sat on a flight to Kaboul searching for best quality sheepskins which would later become iconic fashion items. The demand for sheepskin coats just exploded when they were shown on the covers of Vogue and Life Magazine and also worn by stars like Jimi Hendrickx and the Beatles. This caused Ira to stay in Afghanistan for five years. A few years later he meets on a return flight the German Sylvia who presented herself as a designer of handmade velvet coats. The following years they spent together in Afghanistan and built a business which gave work to hundreds of local inhabitants. But soon enough there was more than just velvet and sheepskin coats. Ira soon developed an eye of quality tissues, embroidery, flat woven, cotton durries, Pakistan wedding tents,... Buying and designing for Anne Klein, Oscar de la Renta, Angelo Donghia, Bloomingdale's, Stark Carpet, and others, Ira and his wife Sylvia established themselves as a premier resource to the design community. In 1979, following the Russian-backed coup in Afghanistan, Ira and Sylvia moved to Santa Fe. In 1981 they opened Seret & Sons, a sales point in Santa Fe (US). The fairy tale now had started to write itself. Today the Serets own the largest collection of antique, Tibetan painted furniture in the world. They borrow it regularly for large exhibitions world wide.

Inspiring silk road

In 1996 the couple opened what is now called 'The Inn of the Five Graces' in Santa Fe. It started as a B & B which basically functioned as a showcase for their exclusive handicraft and their creative talents. But it looks like anything the Serets touch turns into gold. Their eye for luxurious materials combined with their keen nose for hospitality, made them join the ranks of the Relais & Châteaux chain of establishments in 2009. As everyone knows, this is a collection of the nicest hotels and restaurants in the world. A few weeks ago The Inn of the Five Graces got elected 'Number One City Hotel in Continental United States' for 2019. Well deserved, as the wellness treatments are just as unique as the building and its surroundings. 'The Inn of the Five Graces' consists of several buildings in the typical regional adobe style. The grounds are adjacent to the San Miguel Church, the oldest church of the US, built in the early years of the 17th century by the original Tlaxcalan Indians, and comprises also the oldest inhabited building of the US. Inside it is nothing but stunning luxury. From the copper plated ceiling, the Tibetan woodwork and the Indian wooden coffins to the luxurious hand crafted silk cloths from Afganistan to the walls which combine mosaic with precious inserted semi precious stones... the latter done by Sylvia herself. The interior is charged but truly breathtaking. Free birds are the returning theme in the



mosaic and other artifacts. Sylvia is also a mesologist and loves the free character of

birds. "The theme has to evoke with the guests a feeling of quietness and freedom."
This tells us her son Sharif.



Photo wowwatchers.com



Photo wowwatchers.com

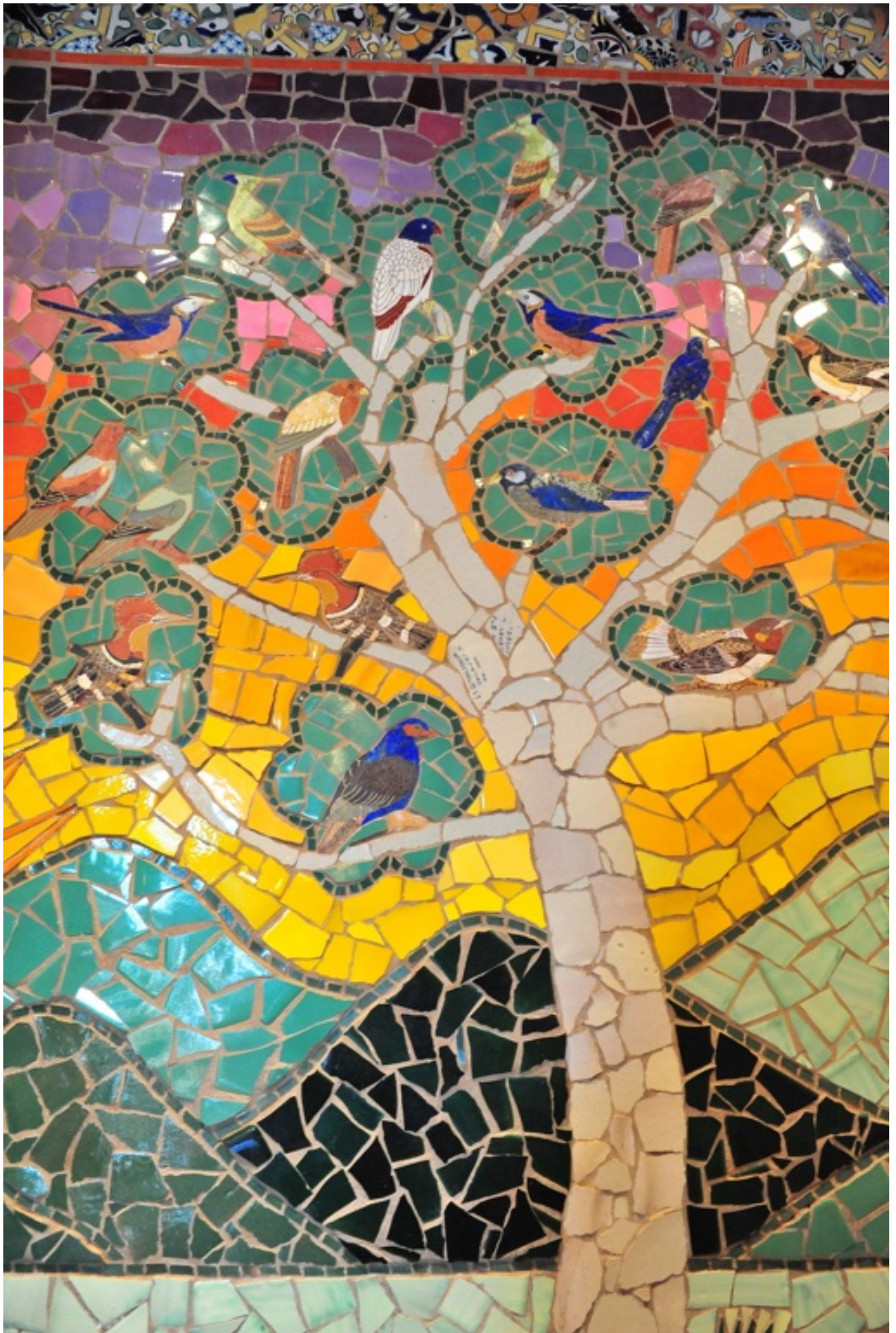




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Tale from thousand and one night

The atmosphere at The Inn of the Five Graces is just wow. The boxspring beds are so comfy you would like to stay in your room for hours but outside there is so much to experience as well. From the delicious à la minute made blueberry pancakes in the morning to some relaxing on a sunbed in the garden or a spa treatment in the recently redone spa.



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The name 'Five Graces' is reminiscent of the Oriental concept of the five senses – to hear, see, feel, smell and taste – which we have to honour every day to experience life to the fullest. With all this in our minds we wander to the spa in a the basement of the building (now the spa is housed in a seperate building on the complex). In tune with the rest of the resort, the treatment room offers a bewildering trip for our senses. Here, old oriental rituals are combined with contemporary luxury. All treatments combine the more than 5.000 year old ayurvedic principles around a long life, rejuvenation and health. Soothing oil infusions of flowers and herbs, rare plant extracts and conscious and considerate hand massages and touches guarantee an exclusive spa experience from the Tales of Thousand and one nights.



© The Inn of the Five Graces

The spa is in the same theme as the hotel. We are surrounded by multi colored stucco with flower and bird designs and walls bathing in gold and carmine red. In winter, the crackling sounds of the open fire creates inviting atmosphere, ideal for relaxing and rejuvenating treatments. The moment to awaken my five senses has arrived to enjoy a world class caring treatment. The 'High Mountain Hydration', the most luxurious treatment of the range, focuses on the hydration of the skin and is a feast for the senses. After a peeling of the entire body follows a dance of aromatized, wet towels on the body, to enhance the effect of soothing oils and the purest flower waters on the skin. It is a heavenly experience.



© The Inn of the Five Graces

The stay in this #33 Hotel in the World is definitely in our top 10 of best hotels we ever stayed in. Though the interior at first sight might seem kitschy, the 'tale from thousand and one night' feel makes up for that. You feel like Aladin who has found his wonder lamp.

For an update about the new spa and new treatments have a look at
: www.fivegraces.com, www.relaischateaux.com



Inn Of The Five Graces, New Mexico, Oldest Church US, San Miguel Church Santa Fe, Santa Fe, Tlaxcalan Indians

By Wowwanja August 3, 2019

