

TRAVEL


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

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A downtown street in Santa Fe. Photo: Getty Images

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Tucked within the ink-blue mountains of Northern New Mexico, Santa Fe is a uniquely striking place. With a name that translates from Spanish as “holy faith,” the city is small—it has a population of just 88,193—and features adobe buildings, phantasmagoric skies, and strings of Titian red Chile ristras that hang from wooden doors.

It’s also an old city—the oldest state capital in the United States, in fact—and has been inhabited since 1050 by members of Native American pueblos. By 1610, the area had emerged as a fixture on Spanish trade routes, leading to Santa Fe’s colonization. Today, multitudes of creatives, eccentrics, and seekers of beauty and/or desert solitude gravitate to Santa Fe, in a tradition stretching back to the early 20th century, when Los Cinco Pintores—the five painters—became the first group of artists to migrate to Santa Fe and set up an artists’ colony. You can see why they chose this place: The descriptor “magical” is overused, but Santa Fe is magical.

Santa Fe and its surrounding areas—Taos, Abiquiu, and Galisteo—have since attracted many esteemed talents. 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 Sandia Mountains in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Photo: Getty Images

The high-desert town has four seasons. There's a snow-globe-esque winter marked by the Christmas Eve Farolito walk and the salient perfume of cedarwood. Spring is mild and festooned with cherry blossoms; summer, save for a few desert rain-drenched 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 leaves turning on the Aspen tree-covered mountains, a phenomenon that casts the town in a golden glow.

Aside from the busy holiday season, the winter months are quiet here. This makes Santa Fe a meditative retreat from everyday, errand-filled reality. And if you are looking for some action, there's still plenty: Though the town closes early (really, it can be difficult to get a drink after 9 p.m.) Santa Fe offers much to do, eat, and see.





Here, find *Vogue's* guide to the very best of Santa Fe—this winter, and beyond.

## Where to Stay

### Bishop's Lodge



Courtesy of Auberge Resorts Collection

A five-star resort set on 317 sprawling acres in the Sangre de Cristo mountains, Bishop's Lodge laid its foundations in the mid-1800s. The property once belonged to the first archbishop of New Mexico, Bishop Lamy, and was later owned by the Pulitzer Family. A 75 million-dollar renovation by Auberge Resorts recently transformed the property into a luxurious yet unpretentious getaway spot. The spacious guest rooms are detailed with wooden vigas, caramel-colored leather furniture, New Mexican tapestries, and kiva fireplaces. Guests have access to Southwest-specific amenities: an equestrian ranch, fly fishing, hiking trails, a grand patio that overlooks the tree-dotted Tesuque Valley, and an



original 1874 chapel. Book an outdoor dinner reservation at SkyFire to watch a sunset that drips into the mountains as you savor a hatch green chile margarita, Mesa grilled whole fish, viridescent shishitos, and Wagyu.

## Ten Thousand Waves



Courtesy of Ten Thousand Waves

Along the winding, juniper-lined paths of Ten Thousand Waves, nestled on the ski basin mountain, are fourteen Japanese Ryokan-inspired suites called the Houses of the Moon. Each is unique, with amenities ranging from private wildflower fields and sun-filled courtyards to personal hot tubs and art-making rooms. Guests are encouraged to wear kimono robes for the entirety of their stay—to the spa and tubs, around the tranquil grounds, and even for long, scenic lunches at Izanami.

## Inn of the Five Graces





Courtesy of the Inn at the Five Graces

The Inn of The Five Graces is a jewel-like boutique hotel by Ira and Sylvia Seret nestled beside the oldest house and oldest church in the United States. The name “Five Graces” refers to an Eastern concept: The five graces of sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. Each of the hotel’s 24 suites is ornamented with tile mosaics and Afghan and Tibetan artifacts. The Inn recently introduced a set of elaborate experiential programs: Guests can take the Historic High Road to nearby Taos and Chimayo to visit a native weaving studio, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Taos Pueblo, and a 500+ year-old Puebloan home. There’s also an O’Keeffe-inspired outing to the ethereal Plaza Blanca, the white sandstone cliffs immortalized in O’Keeffe’s series “The White Palace”; the trip also includes a visit to the artist's famous residence. Rafting trips on the Rio Grande River take you to Vivác Winery for local wine tasting, and there are also guided cultural bike tours around Santa Fe.

## La Posada