

Santa Fe: Enchantment

Written by Melissa Larsen

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Enjoy a summer of culture, arts and eats that is far from the same old in The City Different: Santa Fe.

Santa Fe has long been a popular travel destination for Arizonans thanks to its amazing arts and cultural attractions, fine dining, cool temperatures and alfresco adventures. Now, with the opening of its first Four Seasons resort and with direct flight access courtesy of Great Lakes Airlines, getting to The City Different has never been more desirable.

Stays

One of the Santa Fe's newest—and most high-end—resorts, Four Seasons Resort Rancho Encantado Santa Fe, might only be a year-old but it has already gained a reputation as one of the town's top stays. Guests enjoy top-notch cozy casitas, accented with warming colors and posh touches, like private patios and kiva fireplaces.

The on-site spa offers just as much sumptuousness. The Mountain Spirit Purification is a signature treatment that combines utter relaxation with elements that are uniquely Santa Fe. During the treatment, guests are slathered in an adobe clay body mask—accompanied by a blissful foot and scalp massage—followed by an alfresco shower (when weather permits) and a juniper-sage hot-stone massage.



Terra, Four Seasons Encantado's restaurant, offers diners a modern interpretation of Southwestern cuisine in mmm-inducing dishes like popcorn-crusted scallops and green chile-braised short ribs. For dessert, Terra's signature sundae, with house-made churros and tequila-caramel sauce, is sure to suit any sweet tooth.

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Though Four Seasons Encantado isn't downtown, near most of the area's attractions, the resort conveniently offers car service until 10 p.m. But to be within walking distance of endless galleries, museums, restaurants and shops, Hotel Santa Fe in downtown offers comfort, luxury and cultural significance as the town's only Native American-owned hotel. Book a Santa Fe suite with a large, private balcony, a cushy living area and lovely natural pine furnishings. Even though Hotel Santa Fe is super-close to the town's many must-sees, the property also offers speedy shuttle service throughout the downtown area.

Eats

Yes, chilies are a way of life in Santa Fe. Whether you go green, prefer red or opt for "Christmas" (a combo of green and red chilies), La Choza is one of Santa Fe's most popular spots to savor them in traditional dishes. A favorite of locals, La Choza is a no-frills eatery dishing out the likes of blue corn burritos, green chile stew and sopapillas.

For a dinner and a show, the intimate Fuego restaurant at La Posada Resort & Spa (which is a super-cool spot to stay with an interesting history and endless sophistication) offers flamenco dancing alongside a three-course Global Latin-inspired feast. (The Thai coconut horchata soup is tops.) Another fine-dining favorite in Santa Fe is the 26-year-old Coyote Café. Locals and visitors settle into large cozy booths for a meal that is both homey and high-end (much like the atmosphere). Here, a side of hatch green chile mac and cheese—or two—is in order. Before or after dinner at Coyote Café, head downstairs to The Den for master mixologist Quinn Stephenson's innovative cocktail concoctions—think margaritas topped with sour foam and shots crowned with cotton candy.

The town has more than just New Mexican fare on its menu; il piatto, an Italian dining destination, is one of the area's foremost farm-to-table restaurants. For the best way to experience il piatto, visit at lunchtime to taste test the wallet-friendly prix fix men—featuring three tempting courses—and grab a seat by a window for some sun and people-watching. BODY of Santa Fe, which comprises a yoga studio, spa, boutique and cafe, is a great way to balance out all the margaritas and sopapillas you are undoubtedly taking in during your stay. Try the vegan raw Thai soup for a refreshingly spicy surprise, and gulp down a fruity mango-and-coconut-cream smoothie for a hearty, healthy sip. For dessert, try one of BODY's house-made truffles, which you get a wonderful whiff of when walking into the cafe.

Arts

One out of every 10 Santa Fe residents is an artist, so it is certainly no surprise that the town is a thriving art destination, with more than 250 galleries and museums to explore. Canyon Road is one of the area's most notable art attractions with more than 100 galleries and studios, all donning the area's historic adobe architecture. The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum (the famous artist lived and worked in Santa Fe for part of her life) and SITE Santa Fe, a contemporary art space featuring revolving exhibitions and programs, are also popular must-sees for those seeking a unique artistic experience.

To get up close and personal with local artisans, visit Palace of the Governors, in the heart of Santa Fe Plaza. On a daily basis, talented artisans line the outside of the Palace to sell their authentic, awe-inspiring goods, from jewelry and pottery to jaw-dropping works of art.

Summer Save-the-Dates

Summertime is high season in Santa Fe, meaning your social calendar is sure to fill up with these don't-miss events and activities.

Santa Fe School of Cooking Learn to make tacos, salsas and more in a hands-on class. Plus, small class sizes mean one-on-one time with the talented, friendly instructors. www.santafeschoolofcooking.com.

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The Santa Fe Opera Visitors from far and wide visit this world-famous open-air opera house—even tailgating prior to the kick-off of the performance. This summer, The Santa Fe Opera welcomes “The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein,” “The Marriage of Figaro,” “La Donna del Lago” and more. www.santafeopera.org.

Summer Markets This month, Santa Fe hosts some of the world’s most renowned markets for art enthusiasts, cultural craft collections and more. A few to note: Santa Fe International Folk Market, July 12-14; Traditional Spanish Market, July 26-28; and Contemporary Hispanic Market Arts & Crafts, July 27-28. Plus, the impressive year-round Santa Fe Farmers’ Market hits its stride come summer. Visit for live music, tasty samples and plenty of local goods from more than 150 vendors. www.santafe.org.

To Learn More

Four Seasons Resort Rancho Encantado Santa Fe | www.fourseasons.com/santafe

Hotel Santa Fe | www.hotelsantafe.com

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