

TRAVEL

You're always on the go in Santa Fe

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[First of a two-part series on northern New Mexico.]

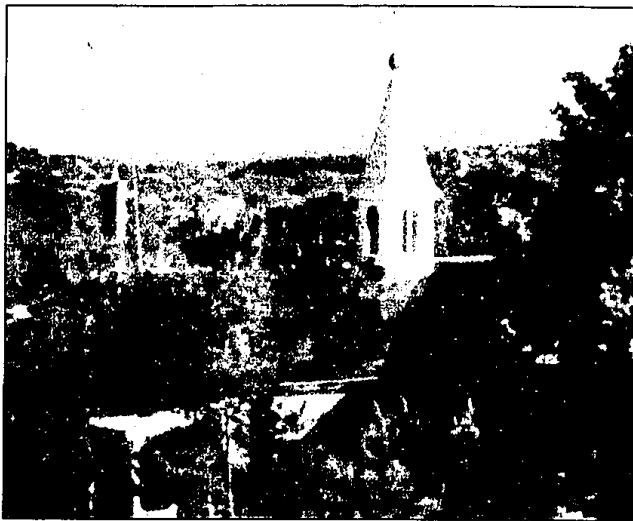
Red or green? That's the official state question of New Mexico, asking whether or not one prefers red or green chilies. But, after spending a week in Santa Fe, I see that it applies to more than peppers.

Is it the red clay soil or the scrub greenery that gets under your skin? Is it the shades of red or the gray-green ruin clo formations that make the evening skies so arresting? Do you hike or horseback ride in the green, pineclad foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains or head for the red adobe buildings that form Santa Fe's historic plaza? And, the most important question of all: Is it the salsa or the guacamole into which you dip that tortilla chip?

Celebration

My husband and I had spent three days in Santa Fe a few years back and knew that it was n't enough. We were captivated by its high-desert geography; its Indian pueblo architecture and its unique Native American-Hispanic-Anglo heritage. So when we decided to gather our family together for a week-long celebration, it was a chance to expose our children and grandchildren to this gateway to Northern New Mexico - and to fill in the gaps for ourselves.

We headquartered at the historic Bishop's Lodge, where hiking and riding trails were right out our back door. Even so, we were just a three mile drive from Santa Fe's central plaza. It originally was the country home of Archbishop Lamy, who arrived in Santa Fe in 1861 from France by way of Cincinnati. Willa Cather made him famous in her book, *Death Comes to the Archbishop*. His small chapel was used for a wedding ceremony while we were there and is on the National Historic Register.



View of the Arch Bishop: The panorama of Bishop's Lodge includes this historic chapel.

These days this full-service resort has your choice of historic rooms or brand new digs. It has horseback riding, tennis and a stocked fishing pond, as well as an inviting swimming pool. It also has a children's program featuring horses and hiking, tennis and crafts that our 6-year-old granddaughter loved.

Something for everyone

Santa Fe has something for everyone - history, art, culture, diversity, outdoor sports, great food, incredible scenery.

It has day trips to places such as the Bandelier National Monu-

ment where by ladder you can climb into the caves carved into the Frijoles Canyon where the ancestors of the San Ildefonso Indians are thought to have lived between 1250 and 1500.

The area boasts eight Indian Pueblos, some more interesting than others. We visited three - San Ildefonso, Santa Clara and Nambe - on the way to Bandelier on our first trip. This time, Taos Pueblo captivated us.

My husband, son and son-in-law went white water-rafting on the Rio Grande River, a whole day's journey. They loved the scenery as the sheer walls of the

box canyon rose above them. Each day the desert-dry weather ranged between 85 and 90 degrees and dropped down to 65 at night. Through some quick they experienced a half-hour of hail.

But these trips must be weighed, since they are time taken away from Santa Fe itself.

For me, the best days were spent hiking the trails that begin with the cactus and scrub foliage of the high desert and lead into the higher pine forests; returning for lunch by the pool; then heading into Santa Fe to explore its museums, galleries, historic

buildings, churches and residential streets for the afternoon.

Art museums and galleries

Art - contemporary and traditional - is everywhere. Reportedly, one of every six people in Santa Fe works in the art business. The town has more than 200 galleries, many of them housed in historic buildings, and probably more museums than you will take time to tour.

If you only visit one museum, it should be The International Museum of Folk Art, which not only houses the largest collection of folk art in the world, but is an example of superb museumship. It has a playroom for your baby or toddler and colorful, innovative exhibits of folk art from around the world that will enchant everyone else.

The highly-touted Georgia O'Keeffe Museum was a bit of a disappointment. I would have liked to have seen more of her works. I enjoyed the Institute of American Indian Arts Museum, home of the National Collection for Contemporary American Indian Art that features changing exhibits and a sculpture garden.

Our June trip was slightly ahead of the opening of most of the summer-long performing arts season. The famous Santa Fe Opera runs June 29-Aug. 25; the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, July 13-Aug. 11; and Shakespeare in Santa Fe is June 22-Aug. 19.

So what did we do at night? Well, for one thing we ate very well. The food at Bishop's Lodge is as good as any in town. My favorites were the tortilla soup at lunch and the lamb chops (from Colorado, they told me) at dinner. We also loved Santa Fe's its ambience and sophisticated blend of southwest and Asian fusion fare. Maria's New Mexican Kitchen has authentic dishes and a choice of more than 100 margaritas to wash them down.



You got to have art: Art in Santa Fe often reflects the city's native American-Hispanic-Anglo heritage.

There's even one named after my cousin and his wife, Roger and Jill Goldhammer, who have never regretted leaving New York City for Santa Fe. If you order *The Gold Hammer*, according to the menu, "be careful...you could get 'hammered'."

But the best nights were those we spent sitting on our patio watching the sun set off bands of color in those huge skies with the mountains as backdrop. As I explained, art is everywhere.

Judith Doner Berne, a West Bloomfield resident, is a former managing editor and current columnist for *The Eccentric Newspapers*. Your comments and questions are welcome by calling (734) 953-2047 or e-mailing berne@att.net

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