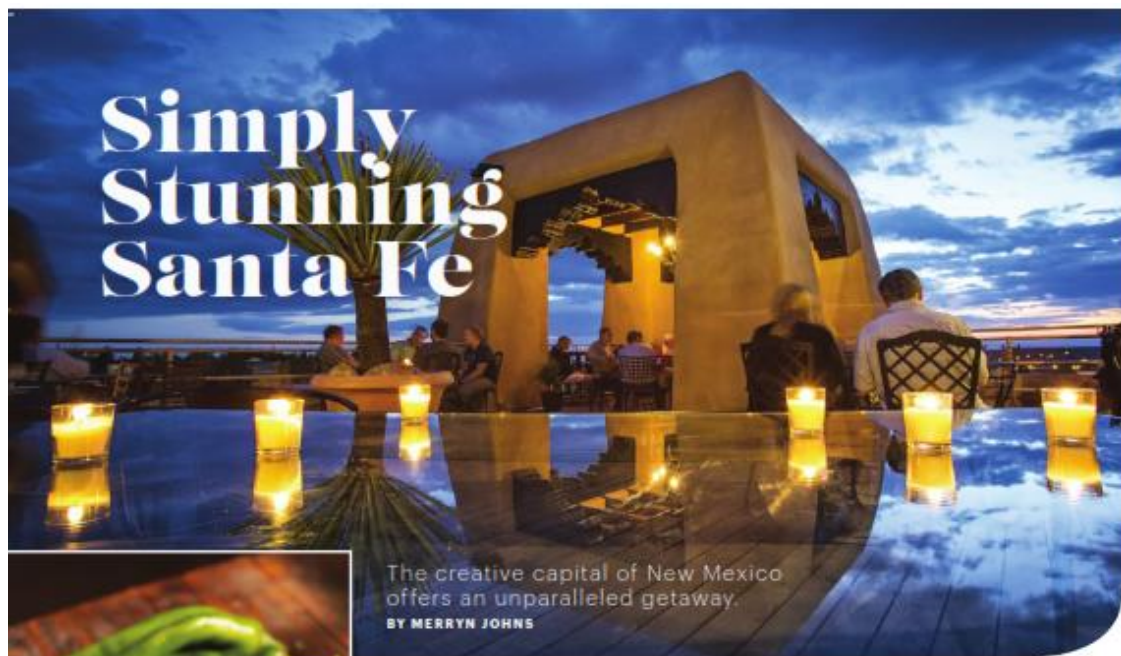


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THE BEST-SELLING LESBIAN MAGAZINE



Simply Stunning Santa Fe

The creative capital of New Mexico offers an unparalleled getaway.

BY MERRYN JOHNS



Santa Fe's tagline is "The City Different" and, sure enough, it's not like anywhere I've ever been. It holds strong appeal for lesbians, being a place that respects the unconventional while preserving its historic roots. It's also a font of creativity; it's the second-largest art market in the US and many artists choose to live here, including brilliant abstract painter Rose Masterpol. Popular standup comic and activist Dana Goldberg is a New Mexico native, starting the Annual Southwest Funnyfest in nearby Albuquerque over ten years ago.

The cultural capital of The Land of Enchantment, Santa Fe has galleries, gift shops, gourmet restaurants, iconic architecture, landmark properties, and high-end and budget retail, as well as a mesmerizing history and rich indigenous culture. A world capital of silver, turquoise and Native American ceramics, UNESCO honored Santa Fe by naming it one of only 19 crafts and folk art Creative Cities in the world. Satisfy your inner collector and check out the Museum of Indian Art and Culture and its unique collection of pottery, jewelry, textiles, and paintings; or just browse the 250 galleries in town. But really, the

whole city is a work of art: landscape and streetscape form a uniqueness that was embraced when New Mexico gained statehood in 1912.

Where to stay? The centrally-located La Fonda On the Plaza (lafondasantafe.com) is a palatial adobe hotel built in the Spanish-Pueblo Revival style and since 1922 it's been the social pulse of the town. This romantic property makes the perfect location for an anniversary or a wedding; it boasts the city's largest ballroom and the event spaces are decorated with fireplaces, chandeliers, and original Southwest art. It's also conveniently located to the galleries of Canyon Road and the nearby market square where you can bargain for authentic, handmade Native American Indian goods. And it's an easy walk to the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum (gokm.org), which pays tribute to an artist who lived life and created art on her own terms. An iconic American, O'Keeffe's works and her image have always held great appeal for lesbians. She considered New Mexico to be her spiritual home, "the most wonderful place you can imagine."

Anywhere in Santa Fe will mix you a delish margarita, but have one and some scrumptious bar bites at La Fiesta Lounge, the lobby bar of la Fonda, which has been restored to its "desert deco" glory. Santa Fe is thought to be the first export destination of Mexican tequila and, to honor this, the local tourism folks have created a Margarita Trail so that you can discover the town's unique mixology. Pick up your "passport" from the Downtown Visitor Center and get ready to enjoy 31 margaritas made with 100% agave tequila from participating restaurants. But be careful: Santa Fe is 7200 feet above sea level and alcohol metabolizes differently at high altitudes. So drink slowly! And eat. The food is distinctive and delicious, from appetizers such as grilled corn, tamales, or fried peppers to heartier fare. A source of local pride is the influence of pueblo Indian cooking, such as breads freshly baked in beehive-shaped outdoor ovens. And of course red and green chile; you'll soon be requesting a side of green chile with everything you order! There's an unofficial Santa Fe Chocolate Trail showcasing the region's finest chocolatiers.

A day trip out of town puts you in New Mexico wine country. The first vines were planted there in 1628 by two monks, that's about 150 years ahead of California. There are currently over 60 wineries and tasting rooms in New Mexico for you to enjoy, but beer drinkers have not been overlooked: pick up the local beer map produced by the New Mexico Brewers Guild and find some new brews. Work off those calories by taking an outdoor hike in O'Keeffe country, or wander the Foothill Trails, which can also be experienced by bike or on horseback. For something totally different explore the new immersive art museum Meow

Wolf (meowwolf.com), which is backed by *Game of Thrones* creator and Santa Fe resident George R.R. Martin and will spark many deep conversations about what it all means.

Winter can be a great time to visit, with acres of ski-worthy terrain that receive an average of 225 inches of snow. Or visit in summer for Pride, which is held in late June. Hosted by the Santa Fe Human Rights Alliance (santafehra.org) enjoy the parade and a vibrant street festival including information and networking booths, live entertainment and an art show featuring artwork by the local LGBT community. (santafe.org)

A TASTE OF SANTA FE



RED CHILE SAUCE

Red Chile is one of the staple components of many recipes in New Mexican Cuisine and can be used on lots of different dishes including meat and vegetables. Hearty, spicy, mellow in flavor and deliciously warm, especially in winter, it goes particularly well with chicken enchiladas. This recipe comes courtesy of the Santa Fe School of Cooking.

Method:

Heat the oil in a medium saucepan and sauté the onion for 3 to 4 minutes, until softened. Add the garlic and sauté 2 minutes more. Stir in the flour, the chile, and slowly add the water, whisking to break up any lumps in the chile. Add the oregano and the cumin, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 20 minutes, or until the mixture has thickened slightly. Season with salt to taste. Enjoy!

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup finely diced onion
- 2-3 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tbs all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup pure ground New Mexican red chile powder
- 2 1/2 cups water or chicken stock
- 1 tsp Mexican oregano
- 1/2 tbs freshly ground cumin seed
- salt to taste