



Santa Fe's Rooftop Hot Spots

Pink Geisha, Watermelon Martini w/Lychee Foam and a sprig of mint

Up on the roof, the real world slips away, expanding the wide sky above, transforming the city below. From a rooftop bar, the sunsets seem more dramatic and the stars look brighter—nearly close enough to touch. Your cares slip away, too, as you admire the view with a craft cocktail in hand and a plateful of acclaimed fare in front of you. Now that the weather is perfect for rooftop revelry, here's a look at some of the hottest elevated spots in Santa Fe, where you can impress out-of-town guests with dizzying views or relax and watch the sunset with that special someone.

COYOTE ROOFTOP CANTINA

The Coyote Rooftop Cantina is one of Santa Fe's most popular high-altitude spots—it feels like you've joined a fun party anytime you're here. The Coyote is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, so the party should be extra fun at this adjacent rooftop spot overlooking downtown. Take a seat along the balcony bar with views of Water Street or at the bar beneath the covered patio. Colorful oil cloth-covered metal tables and turquoise-pillowed chairs fill the space, along with umbrellas and festive lights. A picture of the Coyote's famous mascot—a merrymaking flute-playing coyote—hangs above the inner bar like a happy host, overseeing the party each night. The cantina's food matches its exuberant décor, bursting with flavors and creativity. Try the Tradito, one of the specialties from the Ceviche Bar, featuring yellowtail, radishes and mango lemongrass salsa and

served with sweet potato chips. The Pink Geisha will quench your thirst, a lovely and refreshing watermelon martini topped with lychee foam and a sprig of mint. Linger to watch the sun set and catch the action as the party heats up. Owner Quinn Stephenson (*the* master mixologist in these parts) has brought new energy and passion to the Coyote—and its evident the moment you step in.

132 W. Water St. 505.983.1615, coyotecafe.com



Coyote's Tiradito, Yellowtail, Radishes, Mango Lemongrass Salsa, Sweet Potato Chips

story by LYNN CLINE
photos by STEPHEN LANG

BELL TOWER BAR

Perched on high like an eagle's aerie, the Bell Tower Bar at the historic La Fonda on the Plaza may be Santa Fe's most beloved rooftop spot. Located on the hotel's fifth floor, in what was once a belfry, the bar boasts stunning panoramic views of the city as well as the surrounding Sangre de Cristo and Sandia mountains. Savor light bites including an assortment of quesadillas, such as pork carnitas and Mexican cheese, or honey ham with roasted green chile and Swiss cheese. Try the signature Bell Ringer Margarita, a refreshing combo of Tanteo Jalapeño Tequila and Patron Citrónge, garnished with a fresh jalapeño. From here, it's easy to forget about the world below as you lazily watch the clouds roll across the endless sky. (Open seasonally, the Bell Tower Bar closes at sunset.)

100 East San Francisco St., 505.982.5511,
lafondasantafe.com/dining-entertainment/bell-tower-bar

BAR ALTO

Perched atop the Drury Hotel, Bar Alto is "Santa Fe's sexiest sunset-viewing spot," according to Travel + Leisure, with rooftop views overlooking the city and surrounding mountains. The bar itself is located in a solarium-style room with a wraparound bar, but when the weather's nice, take your drinks to the outdoor patio, where giant plush sofas and chairs offer fantastic vistas of the sunset, the city lights, the Cross of the Martyrs and beyond. Relax over refreshing craft cocktails—the Alma Reposado features Tequila, cinnamon and Chinotto—and savor small plates like Duck Confit Pozole and chicken nachos loaded with melted cheese, jalapenos, sour cream, black beans and scallions. As night descends, the fire pit and heat lamps will keep you warm and cozy.

228 E. Palace Ave., 505.982.0883, eloisasantafe.com

ESTEVAN RESTAURANTE

Feast on the flavors of Northern New Mexico as well as the views of downtown from the romantic second-story patio at the Chimayo Hotel's Estevan Restaurante. Every table overlooks Washington Avenue—from here, it's easy to imagine what early Santa Fe was like, when social and political life centered around the Plaza and Santa Feans dined on dishes similar to those on Estevan's menu, which features locally sourced ingredients in dishes inspired by regional cuisine. The poblano chile—filled with asadero cheese and onions, lightly battered and fried and served with an aromatic tomato sauce—is one of the restaurant's bestsellers, along with organic goat's milk flan with caramel sauce. The restaurant also offers a robust wine and beer menu as well as sherry, port and sangria. From this vantage point, you can watch the sunset wash the city in shades of red and gold then admire the stars as they start to twinkle at twilight.

125 Washington Ave., 505.930.5363, estevanrestaurante.com

THUNDERBIRD BAR & GRILL

A mainstay on the Plaza, with views from a second-story patio that are perfect for people-watching, the Thunderbird Grill occupies a time-honored spot. Seated one story above the historic town gathering center, you can relax over the ultimate cocktail, choosing from more than 100 varieties of tequila, or order one of the 40 different beer options, including 20 on tap. Savor contemporary Southwestern cuisine, including the Plaza Steak Tacos, with bistro steak, tomato, cilantro, sour cream and lime. Meanwhile, watch the world go by below you. If your timing's right, take in the live music from the Santa Fe Bandstand's summer concert series, featuring local and touring bands and musicians, or the Plaza action during Santa Fe Indian Market, Spanish Market and other annual events. The patio is open year-round, so you can enjoy the Plaza's dazzling holiday lights, too.

50 Lincoln Ave. 505.490.6550, thunderbirdsantafe.com

DRAFT STATION

If you're a fan of craft beer, the rooftop spot for you is Draft Station, a bustling bar overlooking the Plaza. Here, you'll find 14 tap handles pouring New Mexico's finest artisan ales. Sample house beers from Blue Corn Brewery and Chama River Brewing Company along with seasonal and specialty brews from La Cumbre Brewing Company, Marble Brewing and others. This popular spot offers more than beer, too. Fierce ping-pong tournaments take place on the last Tuesday of every month, and the patio is a great place to see summer concerts and events on the Plaza from above the crowds. When hunger strikes, order from nearby Rooftop Pizzeria, perhaps the House Specialty No. 3, with roast chicken, green chile, toasted piñon nuts, cotija and asadero cheese and Alfredo sauce. Every bite pairs well with a pint of Marble Brewery's Double White, a light-medium Belgian-style Wheat Ale with notes of coriander and orange peel.

60 E. San Francisco St., Ste. 313, 505.983.6443, draft-station.com