



BEST PLACE TO WATCH THE SUNSET
The Bell Tower Bar at La Fonda on the Plaza hotel offers spectacular city and mountain views. At five stories, it's one of the highest points in town.
 ▶ lafonda.santafe.com

LA FONDA ON THE PLAZA

BEST OF THE WEST

Experience Santa Fe by hitting all the hot spots

By Weldon B. Johnson

SANTA FE PRIDES ITSELF on celebrating all its rich history. The city recognizes its roots in Pueblo Indian culture, the Spanish colonial period, and its position today as New Mexico's state capital and a haven for artists, writers and other creative types. Santa Fe,

which means "holy faith" in Spanish, also celebrates its spiritual heritage as home to some of the country's oldest churches. With its intriguing mix of galleries, restaurants, museums and outdoor recreation opportunities, Santa Fe and the surrounding area have experiences for everyone. Here's a snapshot of things to do when visiting:



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HIDDEN GEMS
 Secret gardens are sprinkled throughout the downtown area if you are patient enough to seek them out. They offer quiet places to contemplate the sights you've taken in or plan your next adventure. Hint: A secret garden can be found adjacent to the **St. Francis Cathedral**.
 ▶ cbsfa.org

GET YOUR BEARINGS

The **historic downtown plaza** is a good place to meet up with people or get the lay of the land. Many of Santa Fe's top attractions are within easy walking distance of the square.
 ▶ santafe.org



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BEST PLACE TO EXPLORE ANCIENT RUINS

Bandelier National Monument is near Los Alamos, about 35 miles northwest of Santa Fe. Take the short hike from the visitor center to Frijoles Canyon, where you can view reconstructions or remnants of ancient buildings and cliff dwellings.
 ▶ nps.gov/band



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BEST GROWN-UP ACTIVITY

If you enjoy a good margarita, pick up a **Santa Fe Margarita Trail passport** and check out the 31 stops around the city. Collect stamps from each stop and earn prizes, but don't try to hit them all in one day. The passport also contains recipes and tips for getting around town without getting behind the wheel.
 ▶ santafe.org/margaritatrail

BEST IN-TOWN HIKE

If you want to challenge yourself a bit, make the trek up to see the **Cross of the Martyrs**. It's a fairly easy hike, but it is uphill and can seem more difficult if you aren't used to the altitude (7,198 feet). Signs along the way reveal local history. The hilltop is another good place to check out the sunset.
 ▶ santafem.gov/district_1_parks