

1500+ WINES
REVIEWED

SPECIAL BEST OF YEAR DOUBLE ISSUE

WINE ENTHUSIAST

DECEMBER 31, 2015

TOP
100
WINES
of 2015

ANNUAL
WINE STAR
AWARDS
WINNERS
REVEALED

PLUS
100 SPIRITS
25 BEERS



#1
WINE
OF THE
YEAR



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the crush
DESERT DINING

SPICE UP YOUR NEXT TRIP

Sante Fe's colorful dining scene ably marries chilies and wine.

When you touch down in the creative enclave of Santa Fe, New Mexico, you're immediately struck by the purple mountains, earthy red adobe and golden chamisa. But it's not just the landscape that's colorful in this mountain-ringed town.

Santa Fe is charged by a vibrant culinary scene, which blends big-city technique with a northern New Mexican tradition that calls upon its varied Spanish, Mediterranean, Mexican and Pueblo roots. The spicy backbone of its dishes—driven by the pride of the region, its red and green chilies—is the origin of the Santa Fe saying, “You come for the green, but you stay for the red.”

The best time to take it all in is during the **Santa Fe Wine & Chile Fiesta**, when 90 wineries descend on the city with a population of just under 70,000. Local chefs create inimitable wine experiences, like last year's Tablas Creek wine luncheon at the Allan Houser Studio and Sculpture Garden. One of the nation's most influential Apache artists, Houser is just one of the many creative stand-outs who call Santa Fe home.

Works from others like Georgia O'Keeffe and Gustave Baumann can be found at the **New Mexico Museum of Art**. Fans of O'Keeffe's bold colors and organic shapes can also visit the **Georgia O'Keeffe Museum**, as well as her home and studio in Abiquiú by appointment.

FIESTA-TIME

During the Wine and Chile Fiesta's Grand Tasting, 75 Santa Fe restaurants pair up with producers like Gruet, Stoller Family Estate and Ruinart, perched above the city at the Santa Fe Opera House. The five-day festival hosts a live auction and several wine seminars, like perennial favorite “The Perfect Cheese Plate with Port, Sherry and Madeira,” led by cheese whisperer Laura Werlin and Master Sommelier Tim Galser. It features eight cheeses with eight pours, including the likes of Graham's 20-Year-Old Tawny Port with Rogue Creamery's Smokey Blue. Tickets for the 2016 Fiesta (scheduled for September 21–25) go on sale July 5.

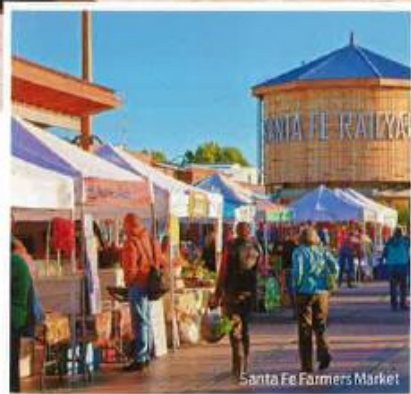
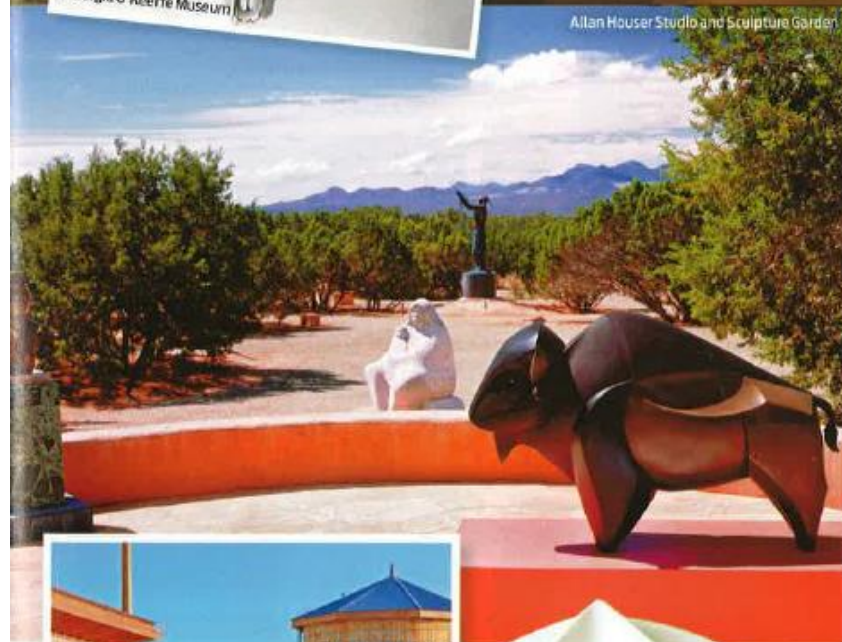
New Mexico Museum of Art



Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

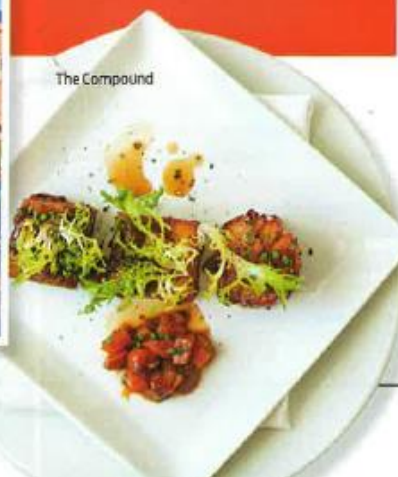
Allan Houser Studio and Sculpture Garden

Rosewood Inn of the Anasazi



Santa Fe Farmers Market

The Compound



Food in Santa Fe is equally unforgettable done up or dressed down. At **The Compound Restaurant**, Chef and owner Mark Kiffin plays with modern presentations of ingredients introduced to the region by the Spanish. During last year's Fiesta, he served South Texas venison alongside a vertical of Heitz Cellar's Martha's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon from Napa Valley.

The city's many inviting, upscale hotels are usually a safe bet for dinner too. At **Julia**, Chef Todd Hall serves up a steakhouse-inspired menu at the charmingly "haunted" La Posada de Santa Fe. His creamy foie gras appetizer pairs beautifully with Cakebread's Napa Valley Chardonnay.

Argentine expat Chef Juan Bochenski of the **Rosewood Inn of the Anasazi** reimagines traditional Southwestern ingredients with whimsy, as in caprese (tomato and mozzarella) and buffalo-meat empanadas paired with Belle Glos Las Alturas Pinot Noir. **La Plazuela at La Fonda** serves a dish of wild boar with green Hatch chile-apple chutney that's hearty enough to match a top-shelf California Cabernet Sauvignon.

You can buy fresh or roasted chilies at the **Santa Fe Farmers Market** in the Railyard District, but Tia Sofia's is the locals' favorite destination for the famed chilies. You'll want to order your burrito or huevos rancheros smothered in chilies and "Christmas style." If you're like me, you'll find that both the green and the red are convincing enough to make you stay. —Christina Pellegrini