



Santa Fe is packed with historic landmarks, such as the Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi

SANTA FE, NM

The third-largest art market in the U.S. continues to inspire groups

— BY ANDREA DOYLE —

New Mexico has long attracted artistic and literary luminaries to work and live against a backdrop carved out by nature, history, and culture. Today, groups are following suit.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Santa Fe's designation as a creative city by UNESCO, and the destination continues to celebrate its creativity with new culinary offerings, hotel updates, and a host of incoming art exhibits.

SAs a long-time center for arts and culture, Santa Fe ranks as the country's third-largest art market. There are nearly 300 galleries and dealers. Many are also surprised to learn that Santa Fe has the third-largest state museum system in the country featuring culture and history.

With the backdrop of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Santa Fe embodies a rich history, melding Hispanic, Anglo, and Native American cultures whose influences are apparent in everything from the architecture to the food and art. Then there is the weather — at an elevation of 7,000 feet, Santa Fe boasts 320 sunny days per year.

Sheilah Jewart, CMP, executive director of the National Neurotrauma Society, planned the organi-

zation's 2015 symposium in Santa Fe from June 28 to July 1. The group of 635 stayed in three hotels: La Fonda on the Plaza, Inn and Spa at Loretto, and Eldorado Hotel and Spa.

"Santa Fe is a great destination for a meeting," says Jewart. "It seems to be on everyone's bucket list. It's very unique. Our international attendees especially loved it as there are Native Americans lined up along the Santa Fe Plaza selling silver and other arts and crafts. It feels like you have stepped back in time. It's also an amazing place to go for shopping and art."

Highlights of the program included a networking reception held in the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum, the only museum in the U.S. dedicated to this internationally known artist. "An Evening in the Land of Enchantment," took place in the Palace of the Governors/New Mexico History Museum where the group had the opportunity to learn about the state's past and its native people while enjoying cocktails and tapas as local musicians, singers, and Flamenco dancers performed in the museum's open-air plaza under a full moon.

"Not only did my group love Santa Fe, but so do

WHERE TO



PLAY

Santa Fe School of Cooking

For 25 years, this recreational culinary school has celebrated the foods of New Mexico, offering Southwestern cooking classes as well as Santa Fe restaurant walking tours. During the National Neurotrauma Society's stay in Santa Fe, the group hosted a board of directors lunch at the cooking school.



DINE

The Anasazi Restaurant and Bar

This restaurant recently unveiled a full renovation and introduced new menus, including innovative cocktail concepts. It now features standout details from local artisans that showcase the area's thriving art scene. New menus include strong, regional Latin influences, and Executive Chef Juan Buchenski finds inspiration in Santa Fe's culinary history as well as in local fresh ingredients.



STAY

La Fonda on the Plaza

Santa Fe's premier hotel has a long history as the social center of the town. Opened in 1922, La Fonda on the Plaza sits at the terminus of the Santa Fe Trail and is the only hotel on the historic Santa Fe Plaza. There are 180 guest rooms and suites, including 15 luxury rooms built around a rooftop terrace.

ESSENTIAL Tool Box

CONVENTION CENTERS & FACILITIES

Santa Fe Convention Center (72,000 sf)

ROOM TAX

15.31 percent

I," says Jewart. "I just proposed it for another meeting in 2018 for 600 people."

Hotel Updates

In Santa Fe hotel news, the 219-room Eldorado Hotel & Spa, located in the heart of the city, has undergone extensive updates, including the addition of a new 7,000-square-foot ballroom — the largest in Santa Fe.

Santa Fe recently welcomed the opening of The Drury Plaza Hotel located in the heart of the city. This five-acre property, which has undergone extensive renovations, occupies

the building that was formerly St. Vincent Hospital. The hotel has 182 guest rooms, a heated rooftop pool with picturesque views of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, gallery space, and an outdoor sculpture park. ELOISA is its new restaurant, featuring Southwestern Latin fusion cuisine developed by award-winning chef John Rivera Sedlar. The Drury offers a variety of meeting rooms including the 3,760-square-foot Palace Ballroom, 343-square-foot Boardroom, and mid-sized spaces in the Riviera Room and Boiler Building, as well as a 5,880-square-foot Garden and 3,472-square-foot Rooftop Terrace.

The Rosewood Inn of the Anasazi recently debuted a full guest-room re-imagination, its first major initiative since opening 22 years ago. The guest rooms still showcase the hotel's Southwestern spirit and adobe architecture, but now feature custom, handcrafted wooden furniture, brand-new carpeting and wooden floors.

A multimillion-dollar refurbishment project

has recently been completed at historic La Posada de Santa Fe Resort & Spa, now affiliated with Starwood Hotels & Resorts. The property is now included among the Starwood Luxury Collection. It features a new restaurant — Julia, a Spirited Restaurant & Bar with award-winning chef Todd Hall — and the addition of an entirely new bar in Vega.

The 72,000-square-foot Santa Fe Convention Center offers 40,000 square feet of indoor flexible meeting space and state-of-the-art A/V capabilities. The center recently replaced all existing Cisco Wi-Fi hot spots throughout the building with high-density Meraki cloud-based Wi-Fi hot spots. This update allows the facility to handle more than 100 people connecting per spot. The venue has upgraded the bandwidth that feeds the building to accommodate larger groups and grant online access to up to 960 people in the ballroom. *SM Questions or comments? Email adoyle@ntmlc.com*