

TRAVEL

# 15 new things to do, see and eat in Santa Fe

Galleries, museums, restaurants and revitalized bars for your next trip to Santa Fe

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**Santa Fe** is a city that trades on tradition. It holds on to a millennia of human history — from Indian pueblos to new-age retreats — and somehow manages to make it all coexist. When you go there, you feel the rumble of every cultural revolution that ever happened, from the invasion of Spanish settlers in the 1600s to the **influx of New York artists three centuries later**.

When the city changes — and things are changing there now, quickly — it brings its personality with it. New things still come along, but they mix with the past, instead of conquering it.

And so tacos can take on Asian flavors, and craft beer can mingle with margaritas. Modern architecture can pop up inside adobe palaces and museums can look back at native lore while gazing around themselves at evolving, multicultural customs.

When you look at what's new in Santa Fe, you see what's old. These additions for summer of 2016 — some are recent, others updated landmarks — feel fresh and familiar at the same time.

## ***Eat***

**Sazon:** Santa Fe is enjoying a restaurant revival these days with newcomers like Radish & Rye and Eloisa pulling attention, and awards, to the city. But the don't-miss meal is at the fresh **Sazon**, headed up by chef Fernando Olea, who keeps the menu small, meaningful and rooted in his native Mexican cuisine. Go traditional with the enchiladas or adventurous with the baby grasshopper taquitos, but stop, for a while, at the amazing mole, which is handed out in a sampler platter when you arrive. The small dish sets up big expectations for the meal that follows. (221 Shelby St.; sazón- santafe.com)

**Chili Line Brewery:** The new Chili Line Brewery is a good example of how Santa Fe does things differently, and in the same way, simultaneously. The brewery is located in the popular **Pizzeria da Lino**, so it comes with a built-in familiarity. And while craft beer

makers are new to the scene, this one has a sense of place: Its main draw is called El Jefeweisen. If that goes too far toward the new Santa Fe for you, just order a marg and the house pizza that comes with smoked mozzarella, pepperoni and, of course, green chiles. (204 N. Guadalupe St.; Facebook: Chili Line Brewery)

**Raaga:** Indian may not be the first cuisine a tourist thinks about in New Mexico, but **Raaga** is good enough to be a memorable part of any excursion. Chef Paddy Rawal's extra-flavorful fare is a nice diversion from standard-issue Southwestern, and the place feels like Santa Fe, with bright walls and spicy food on the menu. It's been around for a while, but Raaga has upped its game — and its wine list — lately. (544 Agua Fria Road; **raagacuisine.com**)

**Bonsai:** Bonsai is more of a food trailer than a food truck, and the compact operation has ensconced itself at various locations on the outskirts of town. Now the bright red van is parked securely on St. Francis Drive, raising its profile so it's easy to find as you drive into town. Nothing exemplifies the cultural remix taking place in northern New Mexico better than the beef bulgogi taco, and nothing really tastes better either. The specialty is Asian tacos, but there are burgers, salads and a "Saints & Sinners" oyster sandwich. So Santa Fe. (1599 S. St. Francis Drive; Facebook: The Bonsai Asian Tacos)

## ***Drink***

**The great lobby bar update:** For all that Santa Fe has going for it during the day, the city's night life can be lacking, especially in the offseasons when the plaza area seems to go dark by nine. Enter the hotel bars, which keep long hours to accommodate guests and serve as dependable stops for locals in need.

Three of Santa Fe's best hotels just remade their lobbies and each did a smashing job, turning them into fresh stops for summer travel in 2016.

**The Eldorado Hotel's Cava Lounge** has been remodeled into a hyper-modern marvel, with sleek surfaces and neon accent lights. It's a stark, sterile contrast to the hotel's adobe exterior and a nice boost for the city's design sense. If you are anywhere near this accommodating place, stop in and ask to see the seriously cool new wedding chapel. (309 W. San Francisco St.; [eldoradohotel.com](http://eldoradohotel.com)).

**The Hilton Santa Fe Historic Plaza** spent some serious cash turning its own lobby bar into a comfortable margarita stop. It's airy and open and has a handsome collection of local rugs and pots that give it an old — but not too old — city feel. (100 Sandoval St.; [historicplaza-hotelsantafe.com](http://historicplaza-hotelsantafe.com))

For something right out of the history books, there's **La Fiesta Lounge in the giant La Fonda on the Plaza**. The recent overhaul keeps the Southwestern feel that defines Santa

Fe but updates it with present-day conveniences. For example, the tables are handprinted with traditional Indian **mimbres** patterns, but the bartender serves up local beers. The lounge's new mascot is "Harvey," a 4-foot rabbit statue perched on the back bar. (100 E. San Francisco St.; [lafondasantafe.com](http://lafondasantafe.com))

## **Shop**

**The Hive Market:** The Hive is a new shop specializing in New Mexico goods that's located at Lincoln Avenue and Marcy Street, a corner formerly known for a string of nightclubs that bounced into the early morning. Now, it's a quaint and cozy retail spot that sells high-quality chocolates, nuts, candles and handmade art. Its giant wall of honey jars, golden brown and lit from behind, glows serenely, like a statue in a one of the nearby churches. (101 W. Marcy St.; [thehivemarket.com](http://thehivemarket.com))

**Modern General:** Modern General is high-concept retail: part hardware store and part coffee shop. The combo comes together beautifully though, thanks to an open, trendy interior and a brunch-flavored menu served all day long. Try the daily broth selection, or maybe pick up some grass seed, or a rake or some freshly milled flour. It's like that. (637 Cerrillos Road; [moderngeneralnm.com](http://moderngeneralnm.com))

**Op. Cit. Books.:** Op. Cit. Books. just moved into the DeVargas Shopping Center last year, but its stacks of books and comfy chairs look like they've been in place for a century. The store is a literary center for the city and a welcoming place to hunker down and search for treasures hidden within a large and well-curated selection of new and used goods. The staff knows its stuff. (157 Paseo de Peralta; [opcit.com](http://opcit.com))

## **See**

**Meow Wolf:** Safe to say, you've never seen anything like the new Meow Wolf House of Eternal Return. Or walked through anything like it. Or got creeped out by anything close to it. Located in a former bowling alley, it's an interactive work of art, put together by a co-op of artists, that invites you to explore its secrets. It's full of great painting, sculpture, video and sound installations that come together into a wild psychic ride suitable for all ages. (1352 Rufina Circle; [meowwolf.com](http://meowwolf.com)).

**The Harrell House Bug Museum:** The Harrell House has bounced around a bit, but its recent move to the DeVargas Shopping Center gives it a steady home and the kind of visibility it deserves. It's an odd yet irresistible place where you can get up close and as personal as you can stand with scores of glass cases filled with giant grasshoppers from South America, massive crickets from Madagascar and Malaysia and colorful moths from Papua New Guinea. Don't blow this place off because it sounds creepy; it's a rare site and a good deal at \$6 for adults, \$4 for kids. (552 North Guadalupe St.; [harrellhouse.com](http://harrellhouse.com))

**Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian:** The Wheelwright has been around for decades but recently reinvented itself by establishing the Center for the Study of Southwestern Jewelry and setting up the world's biggest showcase for Navajo and Pueblo handiwork. The collection of metal and stone trinkets is earthy and beautiful, and the permanent exhibit traces the development of Indian jewelry over the ages. The Wheelwright usually has a well-curated, contemporary art exhibit to round out your visit. (704 Camino Lejo or [wheelwright.org](http://wheelwright.org))

**Museum of International Folk Art:** Santa Fe's folk art museum is a world wonder, jam-packed full of arts and crafts created by cultures across the globe. Kids see it as a giant dollhouse full of colorful, miniature figurines, while adults appreciate its anthropological expertise. This summer's special exhibit is "Flamenco: From Spain to New Mexico," offering the back story on a Santa Fe tradition that connects its past and present. Don't miss María Benítez's over-the-top ball gowns or the mesmerizing clip of Carmen Amaya singing in the 1963 movie "Los Tarantos." Oh, and be sure to check out the magical labyrinth in front of the museum. Stand in the middle, make a little noise and hear the angels sing. (706 Camino Lejo; [internationalfolkart.org](http://internationalfolkart.org)).

**New Mexico History Museum:** The state history museum keeps itself interesting by shaking up its galleries and getting locals involved in telling their own stories. "Lowriders, Hoppers and Hot Rods: Car Culture of Northern New Mexico" opens May 1, and it's a great example of how the museum brings dignity and understanding to regional culture with exhibitions that are scholarly and a lot of fun. In addition to a display of over-the-top rides, the exhibit features related shows and special events where artists and hobbyists get to add a personal touch to the tales. (113 Lincoln Ave., [nmhistorymuseum.org](http://nmhistorymuseum.org))

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