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September 2009

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Santa Fe



If the weather is right, ask for a candle-lit patio table at Luminaria, from which you can see the historic Loretto Chapel.

The year 2010 will be the 400th anniversary of the establishment of Santa Fe, and its citizens are gearing up for a year-long celebration.

This oldest capital city in the U.S. offers visitors a host of memorable experiences reflecting the unique melding of Native American, Spanish and European cultures found here. And while enjoying the city's attractions, you

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can count on comfortable accommodations and delicious food.

Lodging

The iconic [La Fonda](#) is the only hotel located adjacent to Santa Fe's historic Plaza at a point that marked the end of the old Santa Fe Trail. Within the adobe-style building is a virtual museum of art and craftwork created specifically for the hotel. Rooms in the original building are comfortable but small. So if you'd prefer more space, but without the historic ambiance, request booking in La Terraza, a modern addition adjacent to the original hotel. Service throughout is friendly and discreet; there's an outdoor pool and a relaxing spa offering massage treatments. The Belltower Bar on the roof is a locals' favorite for margaritas at sunset.

La Plazuela dining room is dependable, but not up to the finer restaurants in town. Doubles from about \$160. Tel: 800-523-5002. Fax: 505-988-2952. www.lafondasantafe.com.

The [Old Santa Fe Inn](#) is a more modern hotel offering large rooms and suites, many with kiva fireplaces and Jacuzzi tubs. Furnishings are attractive in a traditional southwestern style, and the public rooms are inviting. The complimentary breakfast includes a burrito bar with local salsas. Doubles from about \$150. 320 Galisteo Street. Tel: 800734-9910. Fax: 505-995-0400. www.oldsantafeinn.com

Dining

The excellent [Luminaria](#) restaurant is located at the Inn and Spa at Loretto, where chef Brian Cooper produces superb renditions of contemporary American food with southwestern influences. We enjoyed his expertly grilled scallops and Spanish chorizo with lemon spaetzle, wilted arugula, and sweet corn sauce; and his jicama-citrus salad with micro watercress is outstanding. Many of the fresh, organic ingredients come from the Santa Fe Farmers' Market.

Dinner for two, before wine, about \$100. 211 Old Santa Fe Trail. Tel: 800-727-5531. www.innatloretto.com.

The [Shed](#) restaurant, a tradition since 1954, is likely to be crowded with locals. Try the chicken enchilada verde, rolled in blue corn tortillas, smothered in green sauce and served with hearty beans and posole. Good food, reasonable prices – and frequent lines waiting for a table. Dinner for two, before drinks, about \$45. 113½ E. Palace Avenue. Tel: 505-982-9030.

Music in Santa Fe



The very well regarded Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival takes place each summer within the New Mexico Museum of Art, above.

July and August in Santa Fe have much to offer music lovers. The Santa Fe Opera performs in a partly covered outdoor amphitheater seven miles north of town. And the Santa Fe chamber Music Festival takes place in the St. Francis auditorium of the Museum of Fine Arts on the plaza.

Both series sell out early, so reserve seats well in advance, and for the opera, bring rain gear and cool night wraps. Opera Tel: 800-280-4654. www.santafeopera.org. Chamber music Tel: 505-983-2075. www.sfcmf.org.

www.sfshed.com.

A popular lunch spot, the [Blue Corn Café and Brewery](#), has an eclectic selection of salads, southwestern dishes and handcrafted beers. We doused the fire of the grilled-corn chipotle soup with their house-brewed Rio Chama Amber Ale. Lunch for two, with beer, about \$35. 133 Water Street. Tel: 505-9841800. www.bluecorncafe.com.

Tomasita's is located in a 1904 brick station house in the newly renovated Railyards District. The chile sauces that are served with everything are not for the meek of palate. Combination plates run about \$10 at lunch. Margaritas are a specialty. 500 S. Guadalupe. Tel: 505-983-5721.



*The indoor-outdoor Santa Fe Opera House. See the sidebar (right).
Photo: [Jonathan Caves](#)*

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