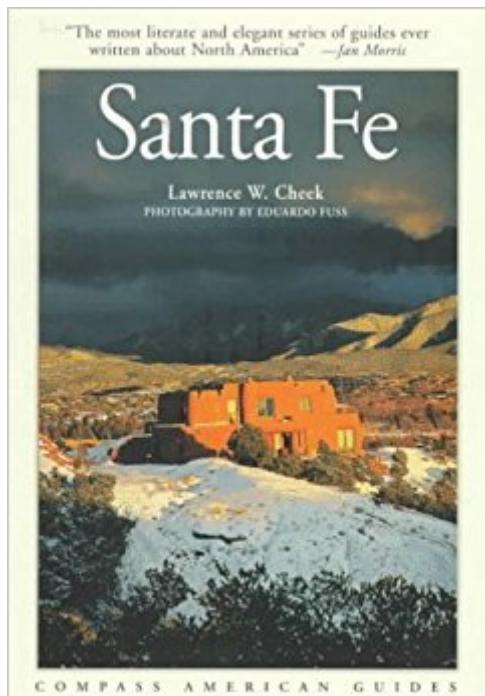


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Compass American Guides : Santa Fe



Synopsis

Created by local writers and photographers, Compass American Guides are the ultimate insider's guides, providing in-depth coverage of the history, culture and character of America's most spectacular destinations. Covering everything there is to see and do as well as choice lodging and dining, these gorgeous full-color guides are perfect for new and longtime residents as well as vacationers who want a deep understanding of the region they're visiting. Outstanding color photography, plus a wealth of archival images. Topical essays and literary extracts. Detailed color maps. Great ideas for things to see and do. Capsule reviews of hotels and restaurants.

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Customer Reviews

Compass Santa Fe 3rd ed. "This guide to Santa Fe is the best, its photos and writing are both so elegant that it's your trip entertainment as well as your guide." -- New York Daily News

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Santa Fe/Fanta SeThree blocks from my \$800-a-month studio apartment is an intriguing sign: Project Tibet. I wander into the courtyard that promises the project's headquarters, wondering what connection Santa Fe might have to Tibet. Inside are three rooms of exotic and lovely Tibetan crafts for sale -- rugs, earrings, teapots, Buddha statues -- and a cluttered office where Paljor Thondup, who fled Chinese-occupied Tibet in 1959, has struggled for the last 15 years to help fellow Tibetan refugees resettle in free countries. "Why Santa Fe?" "I came here 18 years ago to go to the College of Santa Fe. I decided to stay and start this project because Santa Fe is a unique place. It's a multicultural community, and that creates a meeting of minds." "Also," Thondup adds, smiling gently, "we're easy to find here. More people drop in because of our sign on Canyon Road and ask about Tibet than ever would in New York, where there are seven million people who never talk to each other." This is not a conventional guidebook to Santa Fe. This is the work of a visiting journalist who has had a 20-year-long relationship with her, flitting among love, fascination, amazement, aggravation, and exasperation. This is a guidebook in which no subject is out of bounds, one in which Santa Feans talk to each other -- and to me -- about their lives and their histories and their dreams. La Villa de Santa Fe® (its original Spanish name), founded in 1607, claims more history, more fascinating characters, more art, and more multicultural energy than any other city in America with the possible exception of New York, which is more than 100 times Santa Fe's size. Santa Fe sports an unusual climate: two basic seasons, summer and winter, neither too extreme, with an interlude of autumn color that almost rivals New England's. It has three colleges, including a thoroughly unconventional one whose president unashamedly proclaims: "We don't know much about the twentieth century." It is the most concentrated art center in the world: retail sales by galleries and artists in 1993 rang up \$212 million -- pretty decent for a town of 60,000. In the decade past, Santa Fe style (for better or worse) captured the imagination of the whole nation, inspiring crafts, furniture, and architecture designed in an "antiqued" eighteenth-century Spanish Colonial dress. It is one of the culinary capitals of America, perhaps the only one save New Orleans that has evolved a broad and distinctive regional menu of its own. Anyone for crab and mango on tortilla spaghetti with habanero chile sour cream? (I did not, could not, make this up.) Sweep into Santa Fe on I-25 from Albuquerque (stay on the freeway until the Old Pecos Trail exit; avoid Cerrillos Road) and you'll see the last city in North America that truly embraces its natural environment. Almost nothing man-made save the cathedral and neighboring Loretto Chapel rises more than three stories to scrape the sapphire New Mexico sky. Houses and even commercial buildings snore under a quieting blanket of foliage. Even where the adobe is faked, the muted brown colors help connect the

architecture to mother earth. Or is it the other way around? As Susan Hazen-Hammond observes in her delightfully wry book *Only in Santa Fe*, this is the only city in America where the more money you have, the more likely you are to live on a dirt road. Santa Feans love to indulge in simulated rusticity. (A common gibe, even among locals, is to call the city "Fanta Se.") Some critics deride its pretensions, but there is also a deep and honest desire to perpetuate the city's unique qualities. This is an irrepressibly friendly city. Strangers out for morning walks routinely offer greetings to each other. On one of my walks, a light drizzle had started, and a stranger in a car -- a woman, amazingly offered a ride. The young family that owned my apartment, correctly suspecting that I might be lonely 500 miles away from my own family at Thanksgiving, invited me to spend the holiday with them. This is the cultural landscape of Santa Fe. That landscape comprises many different cultures including Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo. This is even more important to the textural richness of the city than its architecture and art. The cultures all depend on each other, and interact where they need to, but remain to a large extent distinct. Santa Feans fight furiously over their city's present and past, and it frequently plays like theater of the absurd. City Hall operates like a third-world government, rife with nepotism and creaky bureaucracy. One homeowner was denied a permit to demolish a chicken coop on his property; the city deemed it a "historic structure." A telling local joke: How many Santa Feans does it take to change a light bulb? Six: One to screw it in and five to mill around and bitch about how much better they liked the old one. They have their point, the cranky conservatives. Santa Fe was more charming 30 years ago. But in compensation, it is vastly more sophisticated today, and has much more to offer the visitor. Whatever you do, don't plan on spending just two or three days here. The city, the surrounding Indian pueblos, Spanish colonial towns, Taos, Anasazi ruins, mountains, canyons, gorges, skiing, fishing, hiking, river rafting, grazing those habanero sour cream sauces -- Santa Fe asks for a month. A month at Santa Fe's prices? Well, my one-room apartment sounded exorbitant indeed at \$800, but that works out to \$26.66 a night, it was a 15-minute walk from the Plaza, and it had a TV and foot-thick honest adobe walls. I was living near the heart of the most fascinating small city in America, working hours long enough that it might as well have been three jobs, and having a pretty damned good time.

We just got back from Santa Fe. This book was wonderful! It has history, what to see (museums, ruins, architecture), where to eat (an interesting list -- we didn't particularly use it because we had personal referrals). It had great tips -- like buy the 5-museum pass for slightly more than a one-museum, one-day pass. I was very pleased I'd read it BEFORE I went and it was very useful while we were there.

I used this guide for a recent visit to Santa Fe, the most interesting and artsy/craftsy city of 60,000 people in the U.S. The photography and the maps in the guide are outstanding. Hotels and restaurants are described in helpful and interesting detail. The guide covers not only Santa Fe but also a good sized chunk of surrounding territory, including Taos, smaller and even more literary and artistic than Santa Fe; the atomic city of Los Alamos; scenic, old Hispanic mountain towns; and even Chaco Canyon, the prehistoric ruin hidden in the desert now inhabited by the Navajo. Nearby Albuquerque, however, is not covered in the book -- an omission that probably should be remedied as Albuquerque has attractions of its own -- excellent museums and a walk through the bosques of the Rio Grande, for example. Nor did I find directions to the grave of author D.H. Lawrence near Taos so I made my way there unguided. Another criticism is that the author's brief essays about Chaco Canyon and Taos' most famous resident, Kit Carson, were eccentric and perhaps not to the point. The Indian/Hispanic/Anglo culture of New Mexico is probably the most unique and colorful regional culture of the United States and is celebrated in enough art galleries and literature to last a lifetime. My favorite places to visit: a tie between the Bradbury Museum of Science in Los Alamos, which has a mock-up of the first atomic bomb, and remote Chaco Canyon. All in all, this is an attractive and reliable guide to the attractions of Santa Fe and its region. Smallchief

I am going to visit Santa Fe for a few days and to do a job interview there. I wanted a book that would give me all the information I needed about Santa Fe and the surroundings so that I could come up with a list of places I wanted to visit, restaurants I wanted to eat at, and so on. I definitely recommend this book for those who want to be able to have a clear picture of where they want to go once they reach Santa Fe!

I love Santa Fe and have been there numerous times. I'm always looking for new aspects of the city to see. I like this guide book because it is not merely a list of places to stay and eat. I agree with the places recommended as some of the highlights of the city. I look forward to my next trip to enjoy some of the new things I've read to do in Santa Fe and the surrounding areas.

We found this book to be very, very informative on where to go in Santa Fe as well as fun side trips complete with a "how to find the onion lady" on the road from Taos. Fabulous photography. Great historical and cultural detail as well. Highly recommend the Compass American Guides.

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