



This guide is intended to give you our opinion about what to do and what to see. It is simply an opinion.

MUSEUMS

Millicent Rogers Museum has an interesting collection of early American Indian art and crafts, especially pottery, jewelry and Kachina dolls. It also has one of the most beautiful enclosed courtyards in Taos. The small but excellent collection of Kachina dolls and a fine collection of Maria Martinez pottery are well worth seeing. A portion of the museum is devoted to the history of the early Spanish and Native American peoples in the four corners region. The museum store is quite exceptional. (First in the "great ladies of Taos" tour).

The Harwood Museum has a fine collection of paintings by early Taos painters, beautifully displayed. The Museum is within walking distance, on historic Ledoux Street (the Canyon Road of Taos, or so it would like to believe). The Museum also has one gallery devoted to traveling exhibits, another to early Hispanic furniture and tin work, and a third to the white-on-white paintings of Agnes Martin.

The Taos Art Museum located as part of the Fechin Inn is a fascinating 1930's adobe home with Russian overtones, built by Russian painter Nicholi Fechin. Watch for gorgeous carved wood doors and furniture. This is the guy who madly painted all day long and carved all night for six years, until his wife threw him out of the house.

HISTORIC HOUSES

The Mabel Dodge Luhan Estate is a very interesting old adobe home with beautiful grounds. The second story bathroom windows were painted by D. H. Lawrence during his stay at the estate. It is now a B&B, but non-resident visitors are welcome. (Second in the "great ladies of Taos" tour).

The Martinez Hacienda is one of the few remaining examples of an authentic Spanish hacienda, and gives a good feeling for early Spanish life in Taos before the arrival of the Gringos. The hacienda has an excellent small museum collection of carved crucifixions, ancient and contemporary.

The Kit Carson Home & Museum is stuffed with memorabilia from the life and times of Kit Carson, famous frontiersman, hunter, trapper, guide and interpreter. Carson spoke 15 languages (English, French, Spanish, plus 12 Native American languages) but could neither read nor write. His ability to speak to sometimes hostile Indian tribes made him a much sought after guide. The Museum would be interesting to those interested in Kit Carson or the Wild West. Clearly, it is lovingly set up and maintained by the older women of Taos.

Governor Bent Home & Museum: Governor Bent was appointed the first governor of New Mexico after the United States took the territory from Mexico. The mostly Hispanic population did not care for this Anglo governor. One evening an angry crowd of citizens gathered around his house. When he came out to speak with them, they shot him full of arrows and scalped him, to make it look like the Indians did it. Meanwhile, inside the house, his wife, daughters, and Kit Carson's wife escaped by digging a hole through the adobe wall into the adjoining house. The hole in the wall is still to be seen, along with a hair-raising account of the episode written by the daughter.

Blumenschein Home & Museum is a somewhat interesting turn of the century adobe home of a famous Taos painter and his more talented but less well-known wife (isn't it always the case?). If you visit this home walk the full length of Ledoux Street, one of the oldest and most interesting streets in town.

ART GALLERIES

We have a hard time choosing our favorite galleries today. Most of our favorites have closed. Our objection to many of the surviving galleries is the ubiquitous, overly sentimental, representation of the Native American, created by an Anglo artist, for sale to a clueless tourist, with the dominant driving force being the creation of substantial profit. Suitable sentimental subjects include: (1) tired Indian, on tired horse, on rugged mountain peak, cast in bronze; (2) the noble savage (i.e. partial naked male Native American), dour expression, oil on canvas, dark tones. That said, however, a few of our favorite galleries are listed below.

Acuarelas Studio Gallery/Artist: Leandro Rodriguez located on the north side of the Plaza has outstanding Indian art.

Total Arts Gallery offers a cross-section from traditional to contemporary paintings and sculpture by selected national and international artists.

Act One has interesting furniture as well as some old time Taos artists.

The Parks Gallery features contemporary art by local Taos artist Jim Wagner.. The works by Jim Wagner are particularly popular with Taosenos because they capture the color, spirit and temperament of the early Taos environment. Also watch for the finely crafted works of Melissa Zink.

SCENIC WONDERS

Taos Pueblo: These five story adobe "apartment buildings" are considered to be the oldest continuously occupied communities in the United States. Built sometime between 1000 and 1450 AD, the structures are virtually unchanged since then. The guided tour is very informative.

Rio Grande Gorge Bridge offers a breath taking view of the gorge. Drive across the bridge and park in the visitor's space. The walk along the gorge rim is breathtaking and not rigorous.

Taos Ski Valley is a 30-minute drive into the mountains. Good hiking during the summer. You can take the ski lift up and hike down. Stop at Arroyo Seco for lunch on the way or eat at one of the Ski Valley restaurants.

St. Francis of Assisi Church, reportedly the most photo-graphed building in America, is the only known church building to have inspired Georgia O'Keefe with religious feeling.

For the Science Minded: Tour the Earthship community. An "Earthship" is a building, usually a home that collects all it needs from the environment, not from utility companies. It collects water from rain, electricity from solar cells, heating from the sunshine. It cleans and reuses waste water. The earthship is constructed with industrial waste materials (old tires and discarded tin cans).

FUN THINGS TO DO

Taos Farmer's Market is in front of Town Hall on Saturdays from 8-1:00. It is open from May to late October.

Los Rios River Runners.com

Offers half day, full day, and a multi day campout adventures. Our family joined us on a 2-day trip down the Chama. It was a blast. We included inflatable kayaks for us to follow the raft.

Ojo Caliente Mineral Springs Spa
800-222-9162

The legendary waters have been soothing Taosenos for years. It is a full-service spa with private outdoor pools, detoxifying mud pool, hiking and biking trails.

Taos Cyclery

114 Dona Luz Street (across from US Bank)

Full service bike shop. They have maps of local trails and give good advice about safe places to ride.

Geraint Smith offers photography trips and instruction around the Taos area. 575-758-3320

Pat Woodall teaches oil painting every day at

207 Paseo Del Pueblo Sur 575-758-3320

Learn to do BATIK and keep your art piece.

107 Paseo del Pueblo Norte 575-758-3978

Lunch with a Llama: With or without children, the llama trek is grand fun. It is an easy hike, mostly in the shade. The children can lead their llama on a rope.

Wild Earth Llama Adventures

P.O. Box 1298 / Taos, NM 87571

(800) 758-LAMA (5262)

<http://www.LlamaAdventures.com>

LlamaTrek@aol.com

Learn to felt at Taos Fiber Arts across from the Harwood Museum. Interesting example of all things to do with felting.

SHOPS

You will find that the shop owners are more than willing to talk to visitors. Taos is a friendly town.

Country Furnishings of Taos represents many local artisans. Almost everything in the shop is unusual in one way or another. Many of the furnishings in the Guest House come from here.

Dwellings Revisited is a must see. It features old and new art and craft objects, as well as some furniture and building parts such as doors and light fixtures. Nothing in this shop is boring, many objects are irreverent, or worse yet "Beyond the pale of decent society".

FOR CHILDREN

The Youth and Family Center offers roller skating (ice skating in the winter) and a beautiful swimming pool with water slide.

River Rafting (or inner tubing) down the Rio Grande is always fun.

In summer, the ski lift operates to take hikers up to the top of the mountain for an easy hike down. The Ski Valley is beautiful in the summer.

Children (and seniors) are allowed to fish in the fish hatchery. Learning to cast a line borders on the hysterical.

Kit Carson Park is a bit north of the Taos Inn

Twirl is located off the Plaza next to the Alley Cantina. It has fantastic toys, etc. No junk to be seen.

The Taos Ski School is famous. Children love it.

RESTAURANTS

Michael's Kitchen is open for breakfast at 7:00am if you want to walk to town that early. This is a no frills café with hearty, ordinary, cheap meals.

Downtown Bistro has a superb Caesar Salad.

Eske's Brew Pub and Eatery offers home brewed beer, plus a limited selection of hearty basic meals to help wash the beer down, at very reasonable prices. Usually live music is playing (specialty is Celtic music).

Graham's is near the Plaza. Unique choices for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Try the macaroni and cheese .

El Gamal is located south of the Plaza, across from First Community bank. Handmade pita bread, yum.

Love Apple is located north of town not far from Cid's. It is one of the best restaurants with unique dinners.

Ranchos Grill offers true Southwest cooking. Not expensive. Located by the famous church in Ranchos.

The Gorge Bar & Grill is on the Plaza. Nice bar, but mediocre food.

Avoid Antonio's and Stella's across from US Bank on the Plaza. Worst Italian and Mexican food we have ever tasted.

The Trading Post Café is not on our list because the acoustics are the worst in our experience. The noise level is painful. During the summer, you can eat outside.

Byzantium is an odd little restaurant serving very fine and quite expensive food. The restaurant is odd in the sense that it has only five tables, and a staff of two (the cook and the waiter). Expect a leisurely dining experience in a superbly quiet environment.

Relleno's is a small Mexican/Southwest restaurant located at the stop light on the main drag and Placitas. Same chef runs Antonio's across from Plaza. Food not good.

The Dragonfly Café and Bakery is a small, friendly and charming little café located near the downtown Post Office. It is a great place to have breakfast or lunch

Lambert's is one of the finest restaurants in Taos, offering (expensive) contemporary American cuisine. The physical environment is pleasing. The waiters vary from friendly to surly.

Orlando's New Mexican Café offers excellent Mexican and New Mexican dishes at reasonable prices. The restaurant is small and noisy, so enjoy the food, but don't expect to engage in long, quiet conversation. Outdoor dining is offered during the summer. The fish tacos are yummy and the French fries are divine.

The Adobe Bar in the Taos Inn is a popular local bar with live music almost every night. While listening to the music, you can sit and eat a light meal from a limited menu. Our favorite is Nachos Grande, the best nachos in town. The Classic Margarita is nice. We often go before the music starts, making it easier to find a table, and easier to talk.

El Monte Sagrado on Kit Carson has a very nice bar area. The calamari appetizer is excellent. The dining room is a bit upscale for our taste. It wants to be a destination resort and spa catering to the rich and famous. It touts itself as an experiment in being a self-sustaining "organism". The spa has all the services anyone could want.



IF YOU SPEND A DAY IN SANTA FE, OUR FAVORITES ARE:

LewAllen Gallery in the Railyard. Most contemporary galleries have located in the Railyard. It shows exciting contemporary art and sculpture as well as fine glass work.

Patina Gallery is near the Plaza. It shows fine crafts and interesting jewelry.

Jane Sauer Gallery is located about ¾ of the way up Canyon Road on the right (652 Canyon Road). The term "contemporary fiber art" does not do justice to the interesting pieces being shown. The artists are using fiber materials in new ways.

La Mesa is located at the beginning of Canyon Road. It represents New Mexico artisans.

Chiaroscuro also has interesting fine craft. It is farther along Canyon Rd from Jane Sauer 708 Canyon Rd.)

Don't miss the Santa Fe Folk Art Museum. This collection of Folk Art is probably the largest in the world.

Always fun to eat at Pasquals or have green chile cheeseburger at Bob Cat Bite (on Old Las Vegas Highway). It is open from Wed-Sat 11:00 -7:00.

There is a bird sanctuary at the end of Canyon road. Nice walking paths.