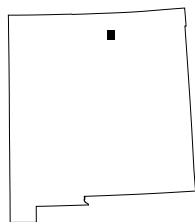


Taos



You can almost hear the tugging of your own heartstrings when you lay eyes on Taos; your senses register sage in the air, silver conch decorating belts and saddles, that sweep of mesa as it rises suddenly to crest at Taos Mountain. The same wayward wind that tousles your hair has been stirring souls for centuries as it sifts through canyons and down dusty byways.

A lucky breakdown stranded a couple of artists here on the cusp of the 20th century, giving rise to an artists' enclave. Eons of wanderers and explorers have fallen under the spell of the place as well. Taos has gathered the most remarkable collection of people to its scenic breast and nurtured them to magnificence far beyond what one would expect from a small mountain village. It's a haven where refugees from the modern world – whether the 16th or 21st century – have collected themselves and made homes.

Tourists come here, most certainly, to challenge themselves at one of the nation's top ski resorts, just the tip of a mountain of attractions. Art collectors, movie stars and the merely curious wander galleries and museums, but Taos doesn't consciously cater to them – which is a bit shocking after a few days in Santa Fe. Then it's a relief.

Taos is its own world, welcoming those willing to accept its own strange terms.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Revitalize your soul at the deeply spiritual **Taos Pueblo** (p156)
- Indulge your taste for the arts at the **Millicent Rogers Museum** (p139)
- Visit the historic adobe church **San Francisco de Asis** (p141)
- Saddle up for horseback tours in the **Blue Lakes Wilderness** (p157)
- Exercise your wallet and your eyes at the shops and galleries on **Ledoux St** (p154)
- Savor the **Taos Ski Valley** (p158), remarkable in any season
- Drive behind the scenes on the **back roads** (p160)
- Fight off vertigo at **Rio Grande Gorge Bridge** (p141) as you take in the rising and setting sun
- Get off the grid at **Earthships** (p142)
- Feast your eyes on the art at the **Harwood Foundation Museum** (p139)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 505

■ POPULATION: 4700

■ ELEVATION: 6950FT

TAOS IN...**ONE DAY**

Get up early in Santa Fe and take the **Low Road to Taos** (p128), making a quick detour to **San Francisco de Asis** (p141). In Taos, chow down at **Mante's Chow Cart** (p151) or **Caffe Tazza** (p151). Pop into galleries and shops on **Ledoux St** before visiting the **Harwood Foundation Museum** (p139). Visit **La Fonda** (p151) for a peek at **DH Lawrence's Forbidden Art** before heading to **Taos Pueblo** (p156). Enjoy an early dinner at **Lambert's** (p153), leaving time to watch the sunset at **Rio Grande Gorge Bridge** (p141). Listen to some music and down a margarita (just one!) at **Adobe Bar** (p153) before returning to Santa Fe.

TWO DAYS

Take the **Low Road to Taos**, stopping at **Embudo Station** (p129) on the way and then **San Francisco de Asis**. Check into your hotel and make a bee-line for **Taos Pueblo**. Visit the **Blumenschein** (p140) today and the **Harwood** tomorrow. Drink margaritas. Watch the sunrise over the **Rio Grande Gorge** and tour an **earthship** (p142). Return via the **Millicent Rogers Museum** (p139) and have a lunchtime burrito at **Orlando's** (p152). Then it's the **High Road** (p125) south, with stops at **La Chiripada Winery** (p131), galleries in **Truchas** (p127) and the **Santuario de Chimayó** (p127). Relax at **Rancho de Chimayó** (p126) for dinner before heading back to Santa Fe.

FIVE DAYS

Follow the two-day itinerary, but instead of taking the High Road, stop into **La Hacienda Martínez** (p140) then head north, lunching in **Arroyo Seco** (p157) and hiking at **Taos Ski Valley** (p158). Watch the sun set, have a late dinner, then relax in hot springs or a hot tub. Wake early to drive the **Enchanted Circle** (p160), paying respects at the **DH Lawrence Memorial** (p161) and hiking or driving the **Wild Rivers Recreation Area** (p163). Sleep in **Red River** (p163). Continue in the morning with more hiking or fishing and visit the **Vietnam Veterans Memorial** (p167). After a long shower in your Taos hotel room, scope out the live music scene – at **Eske's** (p154)? The **Alley Cantina** (p154)? The Adobe Bar again? Wake up late, grab some breakfast and poke around the galleries before hitting the High Road back to Santa Fe.

ORIENTATION

Downtown Taos is at the northern terminus of NM 68, called Paseo del Pueblo Sur (roughly, 'South Pueblo Rd') as it enters the village, and is centered on the intersection of US 64 (called Kit Carson Rd as it heads southeast toward Angel Fire) and Paseo del Pueblo Norte ('North Pueblo Rd'). Together, the paseos are often referred to as Main St.

As you hit Taos coming north from Santa Fe on NM 68, Paseo del Pueblo Sur is lined with budget hotels, chain stores and restaurants. Continue north a couple more increasingly gridlocked miles on Paseo del Pueblo Sur into downtown.

One mile north of town, Paseo del Pueblo Norte forks: to the northeast it becomes Camino del Pueblo and heads toward Taos Pueblo; to the northwest, US 64 continues to the intersection of Taos Ski Valley Rd (NM 150), NM 522 to Questa and, after making a hard left at the stoplight, to the

Rio Grande Gorge Bridge. Though just a normal stoplight now, this intersection was once marked by the 'blinking light' and is still sometimes referred to as such.

Maps

Taos is small enough to navigate using the maps provided in this book, but Rand McNally's *Santa Fe/Taos Local Street Detail* folding map, available at most gas stations, has more detail. Real wanderers will want to pick up a copy of the *New Mexico Road & Recreation Atlas*. Native Sons Adventures (p142) and Cottam's (p144) both carry large selections of maps, including USGS topos.

INFORMATION
Bookshops

Taos is still served well by a lively enclave of independent booksellers.

Brodsky Bookshop (Map p138; ☎ 758-9468; 226B Paseo del Pueblo Norte; 10am-6pm Mon-Sat) A treasure