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BY THE EDITORS OF D TRAVEL

## Santa Fe

*With its high-desert beauty, the Land of Enchantment is the ultimate spa lover's escape.*

As the sun sets over the foothills of the **Sangre de Cristo Mountains**, soft, languid clouds put on a technicolored show. Purple folds into gold, and the moment feels private, an intimate performance just for me, the scrub brush, and a mournful coyote in the distance. I sip my **Gruet Blanc de Blanc**—a lovely New Mexican sparkling wine—and sink into the blissful isolation. That is, until I feel a tap on my shoulder. “Sir, your massage is ready,” says my masseur. Ah, that’s right. I forgot. I came to Santa Fe for a spa getaway. The Land of Enchantment is already working her magic long before my first salt scrub. Well done. **WEEKEND DELIGHT:** Santa Fe might be only 600 miles from Dallas, but it feels wonderfully foreign in so many ways. Its high-desert terrain, snow-capped mountains, and moderate summers (the average high is a mere 86 degrees) are far different from scenery-challenged, balmy Dallas. Yet the natural beauty is only part of Santa Fe’s appeal. A mecca for both fine art connoisseurs and foodies alike, Santa Fe is both indulgent and wonderfully laid-back. Birkenstocks supplant Manolos. Rustic casitas outweigh



McMansions. And though you won’t want for fine dining options, the hottest table in town is **Santa Fe’s Farmers Market** in the historic rail yard district, where each Saturday you’ll find food artisans and hungry throngs serenaded by a string quartet. **THE RIGHT TOUCH:** But I’ve come to Santa Fe first and foremost for its famous spas, some of the best in the United States. One of the finest and newest is **The Spa at Encantado** (198 State Rd. 592, 877-262-4666, [encantadoresort.com](http://encantadoresort.com)), an Auberge resort only 10 minutes north of Santa Fe. This oasis of privacy and luxury practices the **Ojo Caliente purification ritual**, steeped in New Mexico’s

indigenous healing traditions. Each spa service—whether a sacred stone massage or blue corn and honey renewal wrap—begins with this five-step ritual, which includes a cactus-fiber-cloth exfoliation, eucalyptus steam, outdoor rain-water rinse, and restorative wrap. Long a favorite with Santa Fe guests for its adobe-style architecture, the **RockResorts Spa at La Posada** (330 East Palace Ave., 866-331-7625, [laposada.rockresorts.com](http://laposada.rockresorts.com)) has recently undergone a \$6 million, resort-wide restoration. One of its more popular signature spa treatments is the **Spirit of Santa Fe**, a journey through the four directions of the Native American medicine

wheel, featuring a blue cornmeal and tobacco scrub, cedar wood oil massage, sweet grass tea herbal wrap, and ceremonial sage tea. Those with a foot fetish can indulge in the **Raw Earth Pedicure**, with its fizzing mineral foot soak, raw sugar scrub, and volcanic clay foot mask. I have a thing for chocolate and can never pass up La Posada’s famous **chocolate-chile wrap**. This decadent treatment is almost good enough to eat—emphasis on the “almost.” Yet Santa Fe’s most celebrated spa is its least indigenous. **Ten Thousand Waves** (3451 Hyde Park Rd., 505-992-5025, [tenthousandwaves.com](http://tenthousandwaves.com)) exudes a Japanese sense of serenity and is one of the city’s oldest day spas. It eschews treatments that the spa claims are “more suited for the dinner table” and instead focuses on traditional Asian therapeutic treatments, including Yasuragi head and neck massages, Indo-Asian hot oil treatment, Japanese organic facials, and both private and public hot baths. One 106-degree soak under the crisp, star-filled Santa Fe sky and you’ll be planning your next visit. That is, if you can tear yourself away. —TODD JOHNSON



**NATIVE BEAUTY:**  
(clockwise from top left) Mountain Spirit purification; Encantado's casitas; eucalyptus steam bath; the spa warming room; a facial; (opposite page) Encantado's welcome center.

