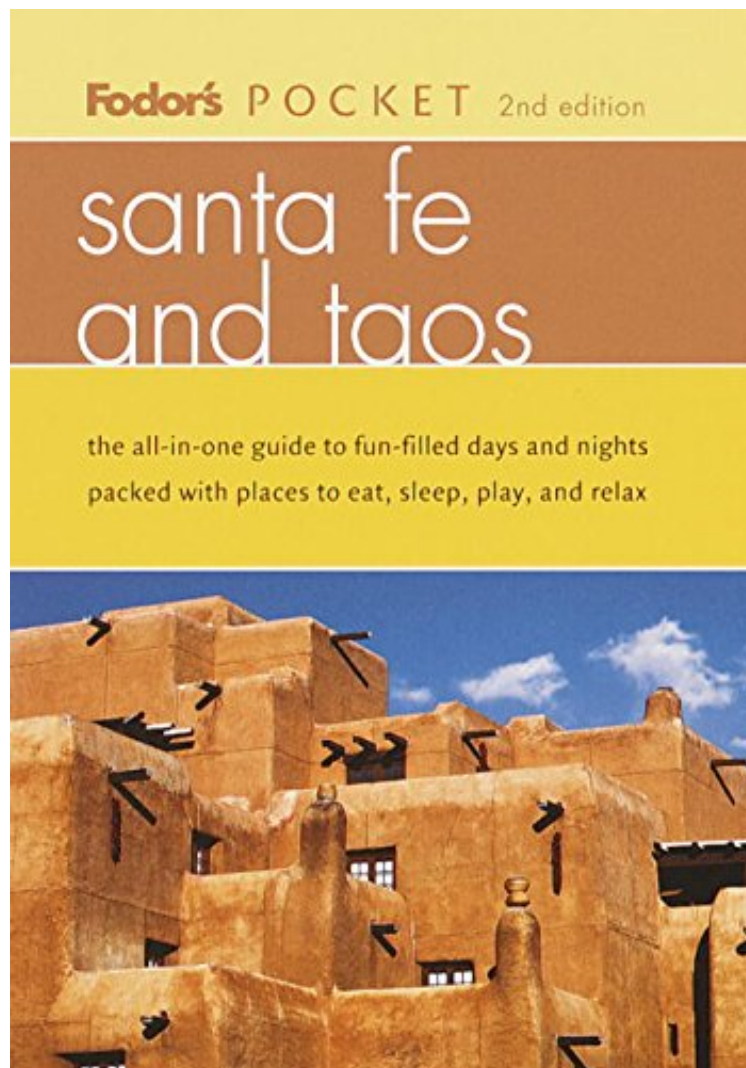


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Introducing Santa Fe and Taos
New Mexico's tagline is more than a marketing cliché. The state is truly a "Land of Enchantment," and Santa Fe is indisputably "the City Different." Surrounded by mind-expanding mountain views and filled with sinuous streets that discourage car traffic but invite leisurely exploration, Santa Fe welcomes with characteristic warmth, if not some trepidation. Despite a surfeit of trendy restaurants, galleries, and boutiques that tout regional fare and wares, both authentic and artificial, Santa Fe remains a special place to visit. Commercialism notwithstanding, its deeply spiritual aura affects even nonreligious types in surprising ways, inspiring a reverence probably not unlike that which inspired the Spanish monks to name it the "City of Holy Faith." If Santa Fe is spiritual, sophisticated, and occasionally superficial, Taos, 65 mi. away, is very much an outpost despite its relative proximity to the capital. Compared with Santa Fe, Taos is smaller, feistier, quirkier, tougher, and very independent. Rustic and delightfully unpretentious, the town contains a handful of upscale restaurants with cuisines and wine lists as innovative as what you might find in New York. First-time visitors discover the unexpected pleasures of a place where time is measured not by linear calculations of hours, days, weeks, and years but in a circular sweep of crop cycles, gestation periods, the rotation of generations, and the changing of the seasons.