



The skull's the limit at one of Taos's many rustic trading posts.

CITY GUIDE

# DOING TAOS

Perhaps the true draw of Taos, New Mexico (which provides the backdrop for the fashion portfolio “Coming into Taos,” page 180), is that, in a constantly changing world, it has managed to preserve the same eclectic lifestyle and natural beauty that first beckoned a wave of East Coast painters and society defectors in the early 1900s. Bewitched by those same things, I moved here from New York eight years ago. The site of both Indian wars and hippie occupations, Taos has a unique blend of cultures—equal parts cowboy, bohemian, Spanish and Native American—that sets it apart from every other Southwest destination. “Why has no one ever told me about this?” gasped Standard Oil heiress Millicent Rogers—the subject of my biography, *Searching for Beauty: The Life of Millicent Rogers* (St. Martins Press)—when she first laid eyes on the town in 1946. Present-day visitors continue to share her reaction. —CHERIE BURNS



**THE TAOS INN**

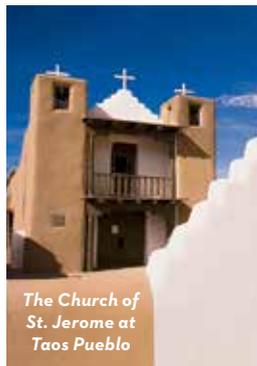
The historic property's 41 rooms and three suites (rooms, from \$75; 125 Paseo del Pueblo Norte; 575-758-2233; taosinn.com) adjoin Doc Martin's Restaurant, famous for its chile rellenos and blue-corn enchiladas,

and the Adobe Bar, where patrons can choose from 14 varieties of margaritas (the Platinum Buddha is a personal favorite). Nightly musical performances in a lobby full of comfy leather couches have earned it the nickname “the living room of Taos.”

**MABEL DODGE LUHAN HOUSE**

The former home of the arts patroness and banking heiress hasn't changed much since she moved to Taos from Buffalo, New York, in 1917. Guests of its rooms or cottages today (rooms, from \$105; 240 Morada Ln.; 575-751-9686; mabeldodge

luhan.com) join the company of notable past visitors, like the writer D. H. Lawrence, whose hand-painted designs on a second-floor bathroom window are one of the inn's few preserved details.



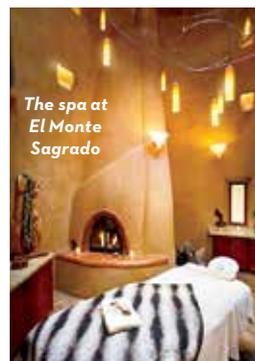
The Church of St. Jerome at Taos Pueblo

**EL MONTE SAGRADO**

The suites and casitas at this lavish resort and spa (below) are decorated in New Mexican style with Native American flourishes such as kiva-like fireplaces and woven blankets (rooms, from \$170; 317 Kit Carson Rd.; 575-758-3502; elmonte-sagrado.com). The property's Sacred Circle garden is a serene retreat surrounded by waterfalls and cottonwoods.

**EL RINCON**

The stuffed antelope, cow skulls and beaded bolos on the walls of this jewelry and curio store harken back to its days as a former trading post (114 Kit Carson Rd.; 575-758-9188). Vintage items and pieces crafted by local jewelers are supplemented by concho belts and other accessories made by the Meyers family, who has run the place since 1903.



The spa at El Monte Sagrado

**TAOS PUEBLO**

Beneath the grandeur of Taos Mountain, the adobe buildings (below left) of the country's longest continually inhabited Indian pueblo stand both majestic and primitive (taospueblo.com). Late September brings San Geronimo Day, a highlight of the tribal calendar that's celebrated by traditional pole climbing.

**LAMBERT'S OF TAOS**

After relocating in April, the beloved restaurant (123 Bent St.; 575-758-1009; lamberts-of-taos.com) introduced its Treehouse Lounge—now a nightlife staple—and a new courtyard allows guests to enjoy dishes like lamb tacos and red-chile-dusted rock shrimp al fresco.



Grilled asparagus with chickpeas and fried egg from The Love Apple

**THE LOVE APPLE**

The 13-table candlelit restaurant occupies a former chapel (803 Paseo Del Pueblo Norte; 575-751-0050; theloveapple.net) and offers a menu of northern New Mexico specialties like antelope steak, and grilled asparagus with chickpeas and fried egg (above).

**THE HARWOOD MUSEUM OF ART**

No more than a half hour is needed to take in the well-curated, comprehensive collection of modern and New Mexican art here (238 Ledoux St.; 575-758-9826; harwoodmuseum.org). This fall, paintings by founders Burt and Lucy Harwood will be shown in exhibits celebrating its 90th anniversary.

**MILLICENT ROGERS MUSEUM**

I was inspired to write my recent biography by a 1947 photo of the heiress modeling for *Harper's Bazaar*. It was hanging among the museum's collection of her personal items, Southwest textiles, jewelry (below) and pottery (1504 Millicent Rogers Rd.; millicentrogers.org). Its store—a hive of vintage pawn jewelry and silversmithing—is a magnet for collectors.

A 1930s Navajo/Zuni bracelet at the Millicent Rogers Museum

