

FIND YOUR ZEN

VISIT SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

| BY TRACY BEARD

Santa Fe, New Mexico, rests in the shadows of the Sangre de Cristo Foothills. This magical city, situated 7,000 feet above sea level, was once home to Pueblo Indians and Spanish Conquistadors. Today this uniquely spiritual place boasts modern-day shops, tasty restaurants, resplendent accommodations and transforming spas. The Inn of The Five Graces and Sunrise Springs, an Ojo Spa Resort, offers two distinct oases where guests can escape and leave their angst behind. Visit these two spas and discover a renewed sense of calm, tranquility and rejuvenation.

[The Inn of The Five Graces](#) is in the historic Barrio de Analco neighborhood near the center of Santa Fe. Owners Ira and Sylvia Seret share a passion for art and design that began in their youth. This fascination grew during their years together in Afghanistan, Pakistan and along the Silk Road. Today the fruits of their passion are displayed at The Inn of The Five Graces.

The Inn boasts an incredible array of vibrant rugs and textiles, beautiful furnishings, and ancient architectural design elements. The public spaces and guest suites are all individually aimed at assisting guests to step back in time and reimagine when all goods were crafted by hand revealing the inner soul of the creator.

In 2019 the Serets opened the [Spa at The Five Graces](#). This resplendent spa features elaborate mosaics, exposed adobe walls, serene statues and exceptionally hand-picked pieces of art from around the world. The embellished fabrics, luscious sheets, flickering candles and bubbling fountains help to fashion an ambiance ripe for nurturing transformation. The luxurious setting paired with well-trained professional therapists results in a restorative experience for the mind, body and soul. Skylights, kiva fireplaces and hand-tiled fountains add to the spa's intrinsic beauty.

The highlight of my visit to The Inn of The Five Graces was my Himalayan Salt Stone Massage. The treatment began with an herbal heat pack filled with cinnamon, cloves, allspice, orange, cayenne and rice. The herbs not only release a pleasant aroma, but they help to soothe and relax tense muscles. The therapist then used hand-carved, heated Himalayan salt stones in conjunction with fluid

massage strokes to ease my tension. The heat from the rocks allowed for more profound muscle relaxation and I learned that they activate the parasympathetic nervous system, one part of the sympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system controls our “fight or flight” response, and the Parasympathetic Nervous System is the “rest and digest” response, which is why the added heat helps to relax the customer.

Himalayan salt stones contain 84 naturally occurring minerals, and they give off negative ions. These minerals provide gentle exfoliation, and they assist in the detoxification process. The negative ions help to decrease inflammation, and the salt helps to replenish the body's lost minerals and uplift the spirit. I thoroughly enjoyed my salt stone treatment. The Inn of The Five Graces Spa offers several other spa options for guests to enjoy, and each one emphasizes restoration and the healing power of touch.

[Sunrise Springs, an Ojo Spa Resort](#), rests on the outskirts of Santa Fe. It is the perfect place for inner healing. Visitors can simultaneously lose and find themselves by letting go of the things in life that don't serve them well and by consciously inviting in things, people and thoughts that inspire and enrich them. This peaceful, inviting resort offers a multitude of different yoga sessions, spa treatments, informative classes, hikes and exciting activities. Guests can visit for a few hours or stay for weeks. Sunrise Springs Resort spans 70 acres of thoughtfully designed spaces showcasing the beauty of the high desert created by the legendary waters found beneath the surface. The artisanal springs are cold and untouched. The waters are free from contaminants after purging their way through the protected layers of rock to reach the surface. The spring waters irrigate the gardens, fill the soaking pools, tubs, and tranquil ponds and replenish the resort's two wells.

Guests can opt for a variety of spa treatments, spend time in one of the three repose pools, book a private soaking tub or use the steam room and steam showers. They can take a dip in the saltwater pool, enjoy a cooking class, play with puppies or take part in a reflective and informative session around the medicine wheel. The heated saltwater, junior Olympic-size pool is open







SIMONE PHOTOGRAPHY



from May to October, and the sweat lodge is available on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

I found the medicine wheel experience to be contemplative and a fabulous place to leave the negative aspects or worries of my life by the wayside. The leader guided the group through the different sections of the wheel and explained how each one interfaced with specific areas of our lives. It was a friendly, supportive group, and the class bolstered a positive environment.

The resort offers a multitude of spa treatments, and I indulged in two. The first was the Ancient Echoes massage where the masseuse uses a variety of massage and energy balancing techniques. The therapist gave me an overall massage and finished with detailed work on my feet. I felt relaxed and calm when she finished.

The second treatment was the Cannabidiol or CBD massage. Honestly, I was skeptical at first. The CBD Massage Therapy Treatment is a full body massage designed to release tension in sore muscles and reduce

inflammation in the joints. The masseuse uses CBD oils and CBD products all made in a medical lab in Tennessee, USA. My therapist used three different types and recommended that I leave the oils on as long as possible. I felt relaxed after my treatment, but I didn't realize the full effect until an hour after finishing. My feet had ached for days before my trip, and an hour after my treatment I realized I had no pain. I have had other massages that did not render my feet pain free like the CBD massage.



Sunrise Springs has numerous options to help guests recharge their minds, bodies and souls. I would highly recommend a private soak in one of the [Ojitos](#). These open-air soaking tubs are phenomenal. Surrounded by trees, overlooking the pond and warmed by the flames in the fireplace, this outdoor experience is both exhilarating and relaxing.

The Inn at The Five Graces and Sunrise Springs Resort offer visitors exceptional experiences, relaxation, and a chance to leave their angst behind and find their zen. Treat yourself to a visit to Santa Fe and indulge in a stay at one or both fabulous places. ♦

