

Welcome visitors and Taoseños!

Historic TAOS



A Self-Guided Walking Tour of 22 Historic Taos Landmarks

You are invited to explore the diversity of this region, through a self-guided tour. The two-hundred year old Taos Plaza, and the streets that radiate from it like spokes, form the National Historic District of Taos. It contains a number of national and state landmarks which are testimonials to the rich and complex cultural history of Taos.

The Taos Valley has been a major trade and travel route since human presence was first felt in the area. Archeological evidence suggests that people have been using and moving through the Taos Valley for, at least, the past 9,000 years. The ancestors of the Pueblo people, commonly known as the Anasazi, were the first permanent inhabitants of the Valley. Room blocks and pit houses in the Taos area testify to their presence since 900 AD. Around 1200 AD, they aggregated into small above ground structures of 50-100 rooms. Many believe the Taos Pueblo was constructed around 1450 as a multi-story complex. However, archeologists predominantly place the date of construction of Taos Pueblo in the 14th century on or about 1350. Unfortunately, there is no known recorded date. In any case, the Pueblo Indians depended upon nature for their survival, and therefore treated nature as an organizing and spiritual element in their lives.

At the time of the arrival of the Europeans, all of Taos Valley was in the domain of Taos Pueblo Indians. In 1540, Francisco de Coronado, a Spanish conquistador and explorer, was authorized to explore the area by the king of Spain. Francisco de Coronado led the expedition into New Mexico. After experiencing much resistance from the Pueblos of the region, no further expeditions were authorized until 1598, when Don Juan de Oñate established a colonial Capital at the current San Juan Pueblo. Oñate and his soldier and settlers were awarded titles and believed that they would make their fortunes by finding gold, silver, and mercury (quicksilver). A Captain of Oñate's who was sent out to look for food and clothing made the first contact with the Pueblos of Picuris and Taos Pueblo. The Captain's name was Hernando de Alvarado. During the 1600's, the Spanish strengthened their control in the Taos Valley and settled in large encomiendas (trustees who held a specific number of natives in trust) bordering the Rio Grande River. For many years there was a clash between the two cultures with battles and revolts. The Spanish were driven out of Taos at one point and the resettlement and reestablishment of Spanish civil government in the Taos Valley did not occur again until 1715. After that time, Spanish focus shifted from acquisition and exploitation to permanent settlement.

With this new focus, Hispano settlers interacted extensively with the Pueblo and other Indian neighbors. The three groups engaged in trading, informally and through trade fairs. Hispanos brought many new types of fruits and vegetables into the Taos Valley and introduced livestock to the Pueblos. The Hispanos introduced modern irrigation systems called acequias, an Arabic word meaning irrigation ditch. The Pueblos taught the Hispanos to build with mud and timber. The Pueblos adopted the Hispanos adobe brick molds and "horno" ovens brought from Spain. The land grant system, initiated by the Spanish, blended with the Pueblo tradition and evolved into the current style of the central plaza and the surrounding buildings and churches, for which the Taos Valley is now known.

After the period of Mexican rule, the area was claimed as a territory for the United States in 1846. President Fillmore established New Mexico as an official territory in 1850, and Taos became a County in 1852. The Taos Valley flourished during this period and other cultures found their way into the territory. Taos was a very solid trade center for the region.

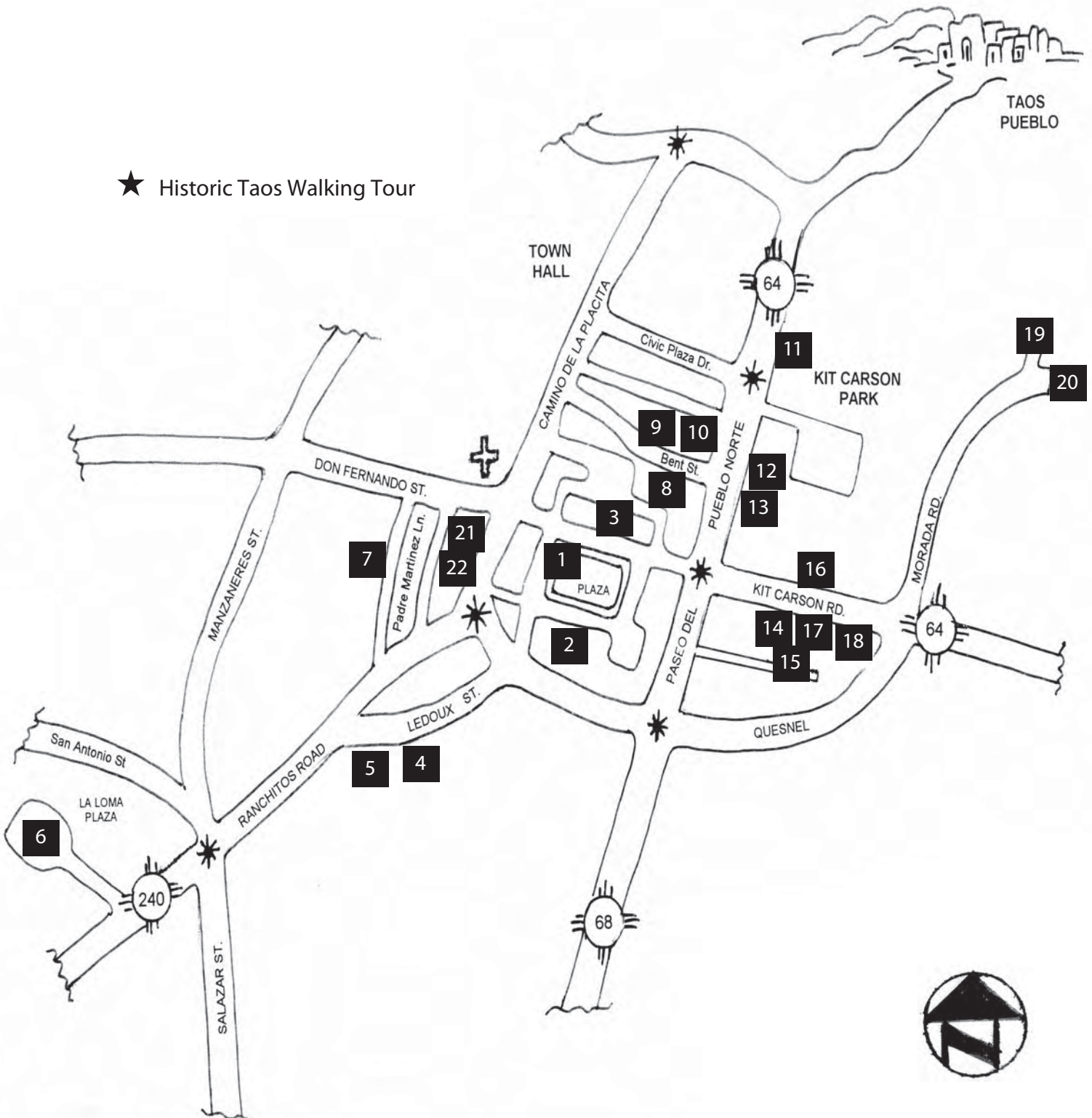
In 1898, two young artists from the East named Ernest Blumenschein and Bert Phillips discovered the Valley after their wagon broke down north of Taos. They decided to stay, captivated by the beauty of the area. As word of their discovery spread throughout the art community, they were joined by other associates. In 1915, six artists formed the Taos Society of Artists. Soon other intellectuals, such as Mabel Dodge Luhan and D.H. Lawrence, joined the Taos scene adding greatly to the social and intellectual life of the community. To date, Taos is known world-wide by artists, art patrons, and inquisitive minds who continue to find it a mecca of inspiration.

The history of Taos is a story of change, adaptation, and the integration of three cultures that both complicates and enriches the reality in which Taosenos live today. You are invited to explore a small part of this rich history and culture with the Taos Historic District self-guided tour. The map and brochures will assist you in your journey.

Welcome to Taos, Bienvenidos,
and Na-Tah-La-Wamah.

Historic TAOS

★ Historic Taos Walking Tour



HISTORIC SITE LISTINGS:

1. TAOS PLAZA
2. HOTEL LA FONDA DE TAOS
3. THE OLD COUNTY COURTHOUSE
4. THE BLUMENSCHNEIDER HOUSE
5. THE HARWOOD MUSEUM
6. LA LOMA PLAZA
7. PADRE MARTINEZ HOUSE
8. LONG JOHN DUNN HOUSE
9. GOVERNOR BENT HOUSE
10. BERT PHILLIPS HOUSE
11. FECHIN HOUSE
12. MANBY HOUSE
13. THE TAOS INN
14. EL RINCON TRADING POST
15. WALTER UFER STUDIO
16. KIT CARSON HOUSE
17. THE LUNA CHAPEL AND SHARP STUDIO
18. THE COUSE HOUSE
19. MABEL DODGE LUHAN HOUSE
20. VICTOR HIGGINS HOUSE
21. OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CHURCH
22. GUADALUPE PLAZA AND SANTISTEVAN HOUSE



1. TAOS PLAZA

The original Spanish settlement of scattered farms evolved in Taos Valley about 1615. But in 1680, the settlers were driven out by the Pueblo Revolt. Spanish authority was not re-established until 1696 with the reconquest by Don Diego de Vargas. The area was firmly resettled by 1710. In 1796 the Don Fernando de Taos Land Grant was given to 63 families by the King of Spain. This resulted in the establishment of the current Taos Plaza and surrounding community.

Don Fernando de Taos became the most important settlement in the area outside of the ancient San Geronimo de Taos Pueblo two miles to the north. Homes were built in large quadrangles, thus offering a fortress-like structure. Hostile raiding Indians were thwarted in their attempts to enter the village. Sentries stationed at the corners of the fortified village kept vigil day and night. A huge gate offered the only means of entry and exit to and from the Plaza. The enclosure served as a refuge for livestock at night, and merchants displayed their wares here during trade fairs.

Over the years, there were many fires within the Plaza and many buildings were lost and rebuilt. Because the buildings were contiguous, a fire in one usually spread to others. The character of the present structures around the Plaza dates from the 1930s. The current Plaza, with its many shops and galleries, is a natural gathering place for locals and visitors alike. The park area and Gazebo are used extensively for festivals and civic events year-round.

Location:
Center of Taos



2. HOTEL LA FONDA DE TAOS

There has been a hotel at this location since 1820. The first establishment, called the St. Vrain Mercantile Store, supplied locals and travelers with everything from tack and seed to rooms and a saloon. While there were numerous fires in the Plaza, the hotel was never affected. In 1880, Aloysius Liebert built the Columbian Hotel and Bar on the site. It was a popular gathering place. In 1900, Robert and Maclovía Poole purchased the hotel and bar and ran it until Robert was shot by a disgruntled customer in 1909. Maclovía Poole's heirs sold the property to the Karavas brothers in 1932. They began a major renovation in 1937, when they expanded and added a second story to the complex. They changed the name to the Hotel la Fonda de Taos. In 1952 Saki Karavas, son of James Karavas, bought out his uncle's share and ran the hotel until his death in 1999. Saki was an admirer of D.H. Lawrence and owned many first editions of his literary works. He also purchased a group of controversial paintings by Lawrence and these currently hang in the hotel gallery. The hotel is now owned by the Sahd family and underwent a complete renovation in 2002.

Location:
108 South Plaza, Taos, NM 87571 • 758-2211



3. THE OLD COUNTY COURTHOUSE

On May 9, 1932, the Taos County Courthouse, along with the other buildings on the north side of the Plaza, was destroyed by one of a series of fires in the early thirties. This led eventually to the incorporation of the Town of Taos and the establishment of a fire department and public water system. The current Spanish-Pueblo style Courthouse was built with partial funding from the WPA in 1934. The two-story, flat-roofed building has a curvilinear parapet, exposed vigas, and an added portal with carved beams, corbels and wooden posts. Between 1934 and 1935, interior murals depicting social justice were commissioned by the Works Progress Administration-Public Works of Art Project for the courtroom on the second floor. Emil Bisttram had studied fresco painting techniques with Diego Rivera in Mexico and enlisted other Taos artists for this project. The four artists were Bert Phillips, Victor Higgins, Emil Bisttram, and Ward Lockwood. The project took 3 months to complete and the artists were paid \$56.00 per month.

The murals were restored in 1995. The county offices moved to new facilities on Paseo del Pueblo Sur in 1972 and the old structure was converted to commercial use. Currently, the second floor houses the Taos Historical Society, the Taos Film Commission, ECO Arts and the famous WPA murals, which are available for viewing.

Location:
Northside of the Plaza, Taos, NM





4. THE BLUMENSCHHEIN HOUSE

In 1919 Ernest Blumenschein, one of the founders of the Taos Art Colony, purchased a four room house on Ledoux Street from fellow artist W. Herbert "Buck" Dunton. Later the Blumenscheins acquired several adjoining rooms and adapted the home to its present layout in 1931. Ernest and his wife, Mary, both European trained, were accomplished painters. Their daughter, Helen, was also an artist.

According to history, in 1898 Blumenschein was traveling through the Southwest with Bert Phillips. The two men were young artists from the East on a sketching trip from Denver to Mexico. While crossing northern New Mexico, a wheel from their surrey slipped into a deep rut and broke. Blumenschein rode 23 miles into Taos to have the wheel repaired. They remained in the area for two months becoming so entranced with the beauty of the Taos Valley that they decided to make it their home. By 1915, Blumenschein and Bert Phillips were joined in Taos by fellow artists Joseph Sharp, Oscar Berninghaus, E. Irving Couse and W. Herbert "Buck" Dunton, and together they created the Taos Society of Artists to promote their work across the country. This original group of artists was instrumental in developing Taos into a significant American art colony.

Location:
222 Ledoux St., Taos, NM
758-0505



The broken wagon wheel incident near Lama, NM



5. THE HARWOOD MUSEUM

The Ledoux Street neighborhood, where the Harwood Museum stands, probably had its first adobe houses built in the early part of the nineteenth century. There were buildings standing on what would later become the Harwood property when Smith H. Simpson acquired it in 1861.

Simpson had come West to serve in a military campaign against the Ute Indians, and later worked as a clerk for the nearly illiterate Kit Carson. After Simpson's death in 1916, his heirs sold their family house to Burritt and Elizabeth Harwood. From 1917 to 1924, the Harwoods acquired three additional parcels on the east side and one more on the west. In 1918, they renovated the buildings and called the complex "El Pueblito," since its design was strongly influenced by the architecture of Taos Pueblo.

In 1923, a year after her husband's death, Elizabeth Harwood, joined by members of the art and business community, Bert Phillips, T.P. Martin, Victor Higgins, William M. Frayne, and B. G. Randall, created what would become one of New Mexico's most enduring art institutions, the Harwood Foundation. In 1929, the Harwood and the University of New Mexico developed a partnership that existed up to 1937, at which time ownership was transferred to the University. Elizabeth retained her residence in the Harwood until her death in 1938. Her vision of turning their home into an art center, cultural center, and library for northern New Mexico had been achieved.

In 1998, after relocation of the town library, the Harwood building was renovated and renamed the Harwood Museum. It has been referred to as the "jewel in the crown" of northern New Mexico.

Location:
238 Ledoux Street, Taos, NM • 758-9826



6. LA LOMA PLAZA

La Loma Plaza was one of the first settlements in the Taos area, established in the 1870's by settlers of the Don Fernando de Taos land grant. This Plaza was built as an enclosure of homes with common walls, creating a defensive style plaza for the inhabitants. Most homes had their own wells and gardens. Teams of horses, cows, pigs and chickens were kept in corrals in back of the houses. The families that settled in this compound were some of the founding fathers and artists of the community. In 1874-75, Gabriel Jeantet (now spelled Jeantete) and his son Filiberto Jeantet (great grandfather and grandfather to Eloy Jeantete) along with members of the community, built the San Antonio Chapel, which is on the north side of the Plaza. Following a written petition by community members, Archbishop Lamy blessed the church in October of 1876.

Today, most of the houses have been restored and the quiet, peaceful character of the Plaza still exists.

Location:

On the north side of Ranchitos Road just past the Salazar intersection, Taos, NM



The San Antonio Chapel on La Loma



7. PADRE MARTINEZ HOUSE

In 1835 Padre Martinez acquired what some historians claim was the first printing press west of the Mississippi. On it, he published the first books and a newspaper. From his home this visionary operated a coeducational school, a seminary, and in anticipation of annexation by the U.S., a law school, drawing students from prominent families throughout the region.

Aside from training a generation of leaders, Martinez himself served regularly in the Mexican territorial assembly. As one of the first New Mexicans to become an American citizen, he was elected president of the initial territorial constitutional conventions and the upper house of the First Legislative Assembly. As a powerful defender of the existing populations, the friction generated by the transition to American rule inevitably led Martinez to clash with certain representatives of the new order, including Governor Bent. In spite of this, Martinez provided refuge to survivors of the revolt of 1847, and permitted the American army to headquarter itself in this house. Conflicts with Archbishop Lamy, of the newly created Archbishop of Santa Fe, led to Martinez' excommunication, which many consider to have been invalid. However, Padre Martinez continued to minister to his people from his private chapel until his death in 1867.

The Padre Martinez home is a private residence, owned by one of his numerous, direct descendants. The grounds are closed to the public, but visitors are invited to tour the virtual museum and library at www.padremartinez.org.

Location:

Padre Martinez Lane • Taos, NM
(Private residence – please do not disturb the occupants)



8. LONG JOHN DUNN HOUSE

In 1887 John Dunn arrived in Taos. He had evaded the law in Texas and was looking for someplace to settle in for awhile. Over the years John Dunn opened up four saloons, a gambling hall, a livery stable, and built a house on Bent Street. He bought the bridge at Taos Junction from a man named Myers and the new bridge at Manby Springs in Arroyo Hondo from Miller and Gusdorf. Both bridges were wiped out by floods. But John Dunn rebuilt the bridges and contracted with the Post Office to run daily mail service from Tres Piedres to Taos. On his mail route, which included Embudo and Taos Junction, much of the parcel post was paintings and painting supplies for the artists who had begun to arrive in the area. To establish his passenger and freight business, he put up \$2,500 of his own money and passed the hat to raise another \$2,500. His toll bridges across the Rio Grande gave Dunn a monopoly on road travel in and out of town. He set up a hotel at the Dunn Bridge and called it "The Bridge Hotel." He owned the first car in Taos – a Ford.

Long John Dunn's lanky six-foot frame, spicy vocabulary, broken nose twang, and diverse range of business interests made him a legend in northern New Mexico. He was one of the people who lived through three phases of the West – the gun fighting days, the cattle working days, and the present modern West. He died in 1955.

Today Long John Dunn's house is the site of the John Dunn Shoppes.

Location: 120 Bent Street, Taos, NM



John Dunn at the Servilleta Railroad Station



9. GOVERNOR BENT HOUSE

Charles Bent was appointed Governor of New Mexico in 1846 when New Mexico became an American territory during the war between the United States and Mexico. On a visit to his home in Taos in January of 1847, he was killed by an angry mob that was protesting American rule. His wife and children survived the attack.

The new Anglo-American government was symbolized by, and embodied in, its first governor, and it is for those very reasons that he was murdered. It was a clash of cultures and a reaction against the upstarts who took over what had been Native American, then Spanish, and then, comparatively briefly, Mexican. Suddenly, it was American. Just as suddenly, that new government's representative lay dead.

Charles Bent was a highly respected, much loved figure of the Old West. He was a trader and owned a number of wagon trains on the Santa Fe Trail. He owned trading posts in Santa Fe and Taos and had many dealings with early mountain men, providing them with supplies and buying their furs and buffalo hides.

Today the Governor Bent House is a museum and open to the public.



Location:
117 Bent St.
Taos, NM
758-2376

Governor Charles Bent



10. BERT PHILLIPS HOUSE

Bert Phillips' house was built in the early 1800s and remodeled by Phillips in 1905 with the addition of a studio and square tower loft to the north end of the building. Bert Geer Phillips (1868-1956) was born in Hudson, New York, and studied art at the Art Students League and the National Academy of Design, then at the Académie Julian in Paris. In 1898, at the age of thirty, he was the first Eastern artist to make his home in Taos, where he would remain until shortly before his death in 1956. He was traveling on a drawing expedition in the southwest region with his friend, Ernest Blumenschein, when their surrey broke down. Repairs were made by the nearest blacksmith, twenty miles to the south in Taos. The two artists stayed in the area for two months, captivated by the beauty of the valley. When it came time to leave, Blumenschein departed for the East, intending eventually to return. Phillips, on the other hand, married Rose Martin, sister of the local doctor, and never left. He settled into his new home and played an aggressive role in promoting Taos as an art mecca.

Until Phillips was able to firmly establish his own reputation as an artist, he supplemented his income by buying and selling Indian artifacts, developing mining interests at Twining, and working as a forest ranger. He was instrumental in the creation of Carson National Forest. He was also instrumental in the establishment of the Taos Society of Artists in 1915. He was a charter member and its first secretary. In 1933-34 he painted one of the WPA murals in the County Courthouse, along with Victor Higgins, Emil Bistram, and Ward Lockwood.

The Phillips house was located on North Pueblo Road, across from the property of his brother-in-law, Dr. Martin, and that of Arthur Manby. Although it has been converted to commercial use, it is readily recognizable by the studio and square tower loft that Phillips added to the north end of the building.

Location: 136 Paseo del Pueblo Norte, Taos, NM



11. FECHIN HOUSE

One of the architectural treasures of Taos is the house of Nicolai Fechin (1881-1955), who was born in Kazan, Russia. Fechin was an established artist, who immigrated to New York City in 1923. After a summer visit to the Mabel Dodge Luhan House in 1926, he moved to Taos the next year. He immediately began constructing his home and studio, which is prized for its interior carvings and hand-crafted furniture. Fechin lived in Taos for just six years with his wife and daughter before a divorce split up his family. Nicholai moved back to New York and then on to Santa Monica, California, where he died in 1955. After her parents' deaths, their daughter, Eya, promoted the preservation of their Taos home, acting as caretaker for 30 years. Following her death in 2002, it was acquired by the Taos Art Museum.

Location:

227 Paseo del Pueblo Norte, Taos, NM • 758-2690





12. MANBY HOUSE

Arthur Rochford Mamby was the second son of English nobility, who came to the United States to make his fortune. Using what were thought to be unscrupulous methods, he acquired major tracts of land in northern New Mexico. In 1898, he bought seven parcels of land, about 23 acres, on Pueblo Road north of the Plaza. He built a nineteen room Spanish-style adobe hacienda, set in a square with three wings, stables, and outer walls. Manby landscaped the hacienda in the English Style, with a lilac garden that extended to what is now Kit Carson Park. At the time, Manby's home was considered the largest and most attractive house in Taos. He was often seen in town wearing his English Riding attire, an unusual sight for the traditional Southwestern cowboy. Due to his many shady dealings, Manby was not a popular man. In 1926, a beheaded body was found in his home. To this day it is uncertain whether this was Manby or whether he had staged his own death and left the area. His grave marker lies outside the fence of Kit Carson Cemetery.

The Manby house passed to Dr. Victor Thorne, a wealthy New York art collector, who held a second mortgage on the property. Thorne had hoped to use the house as a summer home but never did so. When he died suddenly without a will, his caretaker, Helen Williams, turned the property into a community center called the Thorne House. The Taos Art Association, which was founded in 1952, purchased the property and turned it into a museum and artist gallery space. Today, the Manby house includes the Stables Gallery and office space for the newly named Taos Center for the Arts.

Location:
133 Paseo del Norte, Taos, NM • 758-2052



13. TAOS INN

The Taos Inn was opened in 1936 by Helen Martin, after the death of her husband, the much loved town doctor, T.P. Martin. The original building dates back to the early 1800's and was once owned by Arthur Manby, who sold it to the doctor when he arrived from Pennsylvania. The Martins initially purchased one house from a cluster of old adobes around a small plazuela, anchored by a community well. The doctor and his second wife, Helen, eventually acquired all of these houses and named the complex the Martin Apartments. The doctor and his wife lived in the northern part of the complex and Doc set up his practice in what is now Doc Martin's Restaurant. One of the sections of the dining room was the operating room. In exchange for his services, Doc was known to accept goats, chickens, or produce as payment.

The Martins were involved in the emerging art community. Dr. Martin's sister, Rose, married artist Bert Phillips, and in the early days of the colony, the Martins rented studio/apartments to visiting artists, including Oscar Berninghaus and Ernest Blumenschein. In 1915, six artists met in the Martin studio occupied by Berninghaus to form the Taos Society of Artists.

When Doc Martin died in 1933, Helen took advantage of the increasing flow of visitors to the area and the fact that the major hotel in town had burned down earlier that year. She remodeled the Martin Apartments into the Hotel Martin, adding indoor plumbing, electricity, and steam heat. She also roofed over the enclosed plazuela, creating a vaulted lobby. The well was covered and converted into a fountain. Over the years, the hotel lodged many celebrities, including such notables as Greta Garbo, Thornton Wilder, and Anthony Quinn.

Location:
125 Paseo del Norte, Taos, NM • 758-2233



14. EL RINCON TRADING POST

Built in 1809, this was the home of La Doña Luz in the mid-1800's. It later became the home of Ralph and Rowena Meyers, who opened the Mission Shop in 1909. This was the first trading post in Taos that carried Native American Arts and Crafts of the region. Ralph traveled to the surrounding reservations, buying and trading with knowledge and understanding. Few white men were as well loved and accepted by the Taos Pueblo Indians. Ralph Meyers was an artist, trader and a craftsman in his own right. He came to Taos as a photographer, but was soon developing as an artist. He created exquisite carvings and furniture, studied dyes from all over the world, wove magnificent blankets, and made fine jewelry. He even taught Navajos the craft of jewelry making during the WPA days. Ralph Meyers was responsible for adding much to Taos by preserving the costumes and traditions of the time within his collections. He also developed a wonderful photographic archive of Taos history.

Currently the El Rincon Trading Post is a gift shop and museum, which includes La Doña Luz Inn. It is still owned and operated by descendants of Ralph and Rowena Meyers.

Location:

114 Kit Carson Road, Taos, NM • 758-4874



15. WALTER UFER HOUSE (STUDIO)

The studio of Walter Ufer, situated just east of the plaza, was incorporated into the back of the shopping complex known as Cabot Plaza when that building was remodeled into shops. Walter Ufer (1876-1936) made his first trip to New Mexico in 1914 under the sponsorship of a group of art collectors led by Chicago's former mayor, Carter Harrison, Jr. He soon made his home in Taos, living in a lovely Victorian house rented from the Des Georges family, located across the lane from his studio. In 1917, Ufer was elected to the Taos Society of Artists, serving two years as its secretary/treasurer and two years as its president.

Born in 1876, Ufer was raised in Louisville, Kentucky. After studying art for a couple of years at the Royal Academy in Dresden, he settled in Chicago, where he worked as an illustrator. In 1911 he returned to Germany for further study in Munich. After moving to Taos, he received wide acclaim for his paintings depicting the brilliant light of New Mexico. He died of appendicitis in 1936. The studio was next used by Henry Cabot.



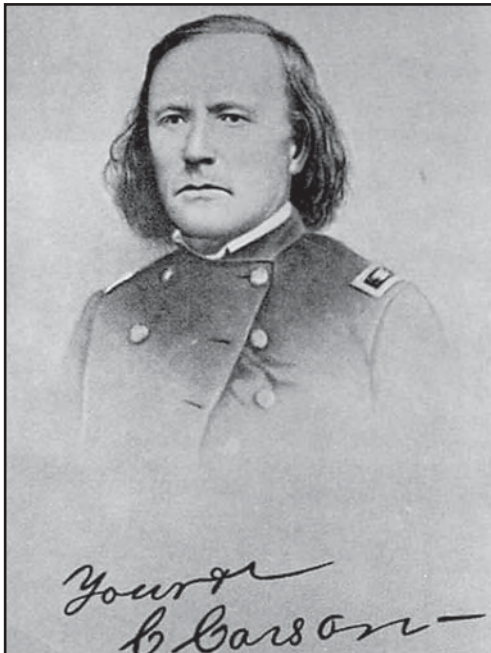
Walter Ufer standing on North Pueblo Road



16. KIT CARSON HOUSE

During the 19th century, a number of the fur trappers or "mountain men," the first Anglo-Americans to explore the American west, settled in Northern New Mexico. Of these mountain men, Kit Carson was perhaps the most famous. Born in Kentucky in 1809, Carson was a trapper, guide, Indian agent, and Army officer. In 1861, Carson began the final stage of his career as a military officer, first in the Civil War and later in the campaigns of the Indian Wars. In 1843, when he married Maria Josefa Jaramillo, daughter of a prominent Taos family, Carson bought a single-story adobe house. At least six of their eight children were born there. After Carson died in Colorado in 1868, his body was brought back to Taos and buried in Kit Carson Park. The Carson house was both his home and a fine example of Spanish Colonial and Territorial architectural features.

Location:
113 Kit Carson Road
Taos, NM
758-4741



17. THE LUNA CHAPEL AND SHARP STUDIO

The Oratorio of San Antonio of Padua, was built by Juan de Luna as a family chapel ca. 1835. Because of its occasional use for Penitente ceremonies, this family chapel is sometimes mistakenly referred to as a Penitente Morada. Its ownership eventually passed to the Diocese of Santa Fe, and it was sold in 1909 to the artist J. H. Sharp. By adding two large windows, Sharp converted the building into a studio, naming it the Studio of the Copper Bell after an old bell that he bought at the Pueblo in 1910. The land to the north of the chapel was Sharp's front garden and his house was located on the site now occupied by the Mission Gallery. After painting in the chapel for six years, Sharp built a larger studio on his property to the south, a building that still exists.

Joseph Henry Sharp (1859-1953) was born in Bridgeport, Ohio. He began his art studies at the McMicken School of Design in Cincinnati and continued his studies in Germany, Holland, and France. Sharp first visited Taos in 1893, where he continued to paint for short periods during the summers, while devoting his major artistic efforts to recording the Plains Indians in Montana. By 1909 the focus of his work had shifted to the Southwest and he purchased a house on Kit Carson Road that was his home until his death. Sharp was a charter member of the Taos Society of Artists.

Location:
146 Kit Carson Road, Taos, NM



18. THE COUSE HOUSE

E.I. Couse bought his home on Kit Carson Road in 1909. The oldest part of the structure was built in 1839 by Pedro Luna, and grew over the years with additions made by later owners, one of whom was James

Quinn, a scout captain serving with Kit Carson in the 1850s. In the 1860s the house was occupied by Gabriel Ussel, the parish priest, who used it as a boys school for several years. After their purchase in 1909, the Couses added a large studio wing and Mrs. Couse began to develop a garden that became famous in the region. No additions to the house have been made since Couse's death in 1936.

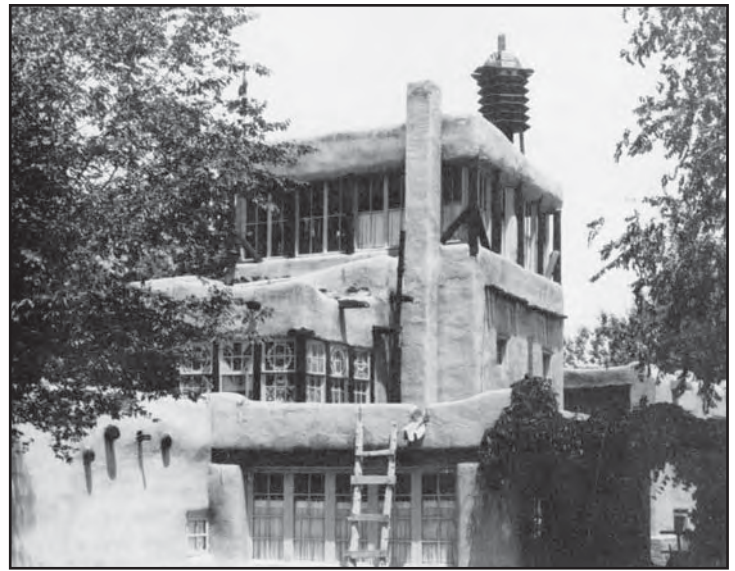
Eanger Irving Couse (1866-1936) came to Taos in 1902 in search of a good location to paint Native American subjects. The setting was ideal for his work and he made Taos his primary residence from that point on. Couse was born in Saginaw, Michigan, in 1866. He studied art at the National Academy of Design in New York and at the Academié Julian in Paris, after which he began his career as a painter of American Indians while living in the state of Washington. In 1902, he was introduced to Taos by Ernest Blumenschein. Here he developed a worldwide reputation for his peaceful depictions of Pueblo life. He was particularly admired for his portrayals of moonlight and firelight, many of which were reproduced on the Santa Fe Railway's annual calendars between 1914 and the artist's death. Couse was a charter member of the Taos Society of Artists and its first president, a position he held for five years.

The Couse house remains today essentially as it was during the artist's lifetime, making it the most significant building to survive from the early days of the Taos Art Colony. It is open to the public by appointment.

Location:
146 Kit Carson
Road, Taos, NM
751-0369



Taos Artists on the
Couse Portal



19. MABEL DODGE LUHAN HOUSE

Mabel Ganson Evans Dodge Sterne Luhan, an author and friend of prominent artists and intellectuals, was born in New York in 1879. She was well-known in the New York art scene, holding salons for artists and writers, before moving to Santa Fe in 1917 to join her third husband, painter Maurice Sterne. After moving to Taos, they divorced and Mabel bought land adjoining the Taos Reservation in 1918. She began to remodel and expand the small buildings, blending Pueblo, Spanish Colonial, and Tuscan styles together. The project was finished in 1922. During construction, she met her next husband, Tony Luhan of Taos Pueblo, who was the construction foreman of the project. She later built five more houses on the property and this complex became a mecca for artists and writers, including D.H. Lawrence and Willa Cather. The house is now an historic inn and conference center.

Location:
240 Morada Lane
Taos, NM
751-9686



Mabel and Her
Husband, Tony Luhan



20. VICTOR HIGGINS HOUSE

Victor Higgins had his first home and studio at the site of Tony Abeyta's Gallery on Kit Carson Road. In 1946, he moved to the property on La Morada Lane – the current location of the Lumina Gallery.

Victor Higgins was born in 1884 in Shelbyville, Indiana. He studied art at the Chicago Academy of Fine Arts and the Art Institute of Chicago. He came to Taos in 1914, where he found the landscape, color and light a refreshing change from the claustrophobic confines of the eastern academies. In 1917, Higgins was elected to full membership in the Taos Society of Artists, but he continued to divide his time between Taos and Chicago, which he still considered his home. In 1934, he was one of four artists employed by the Works Progress Administration Public Works of Art Project to paint murals in the Taos County Courthouse. He also painted a mural under the WPA for the post office in Rocky Ford, Colorado. Higgins was greatly influenced by the artist John Marin, who was in Taos in 1929 and 1930. He was open to new ideas and styles and was considered the most progressive member of the Taos Society of Artists. Many considered him a "painter's painter." His body of work includes landscapes, still-lives, and figure paintings in various styles. He died in Taos in 1949.

Location:
239 La Morada Road, Taos, NM
758-7282

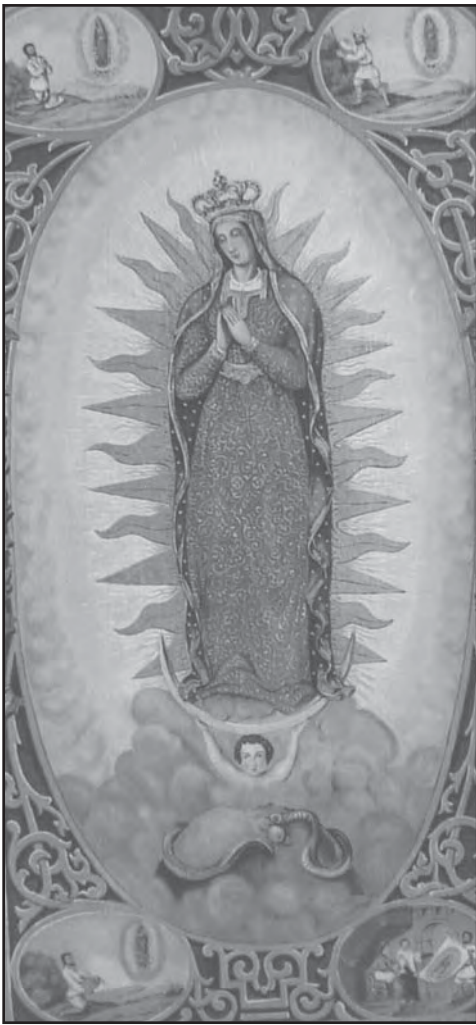


21. OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CHURCH

The Franciscans founded the first mission in the Taos Valley in the late 1500's. This was destroyed during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. After 1693, when the Spanish came back into the area, a mission was re-founded, as San Gerónimo de Taos at the Taos Pueblo. As settlement continued, the first Spanish church was built at Ranchos de Taos around 1776. By the decree of November 1801, Bishop Olivares of Durango gave the people of Taos permission to build a new church in Taos Valley. This new church, named Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Don Fernando de Taos, was built in the early 1800's. Later, by the decree of July 4, 1834, Bishop Zubiria of Durango made Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe of Taos a parish. It then became the head church or a visita for the Pueblo Church - San Gerónimo de Taos, and the Rancho de Taos Church. Padré Martinez was its first pastor and the parish itself is the oldest parish in the United States dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Over the years, there have been three Guadalupe Church buildings. All three churches were built of adobe bricks. The original church was located south of the current Don Fernando





site, in what is now the Guadalupe Plaza parking lot. It was built in Pueblo style with 3-4 foot thick walls. The first structure had a flat roof, but in 1870, a pitched roof was added. In 1911, due to disrepair and limited size, the church was torn down. A new Church was built in gothic style. It served the community for 50 years until it was destroyed by fire in June 1961. After that disaster, the church was moved across the street to its current location, on the north side of Don Fernando Road. Fortunately many elements of the old church were salvaged – the altar screen and several Santos. The painting of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which is on the main altar, was painted by José Santiago in 1674. This was a gift from Mexico to Padre Martinez. A large wooden crucifix, to the side of the altar, was created by José Aragon, one of the pioneers of the Santos makers in Northern New Mexico. All these features have been incorporated into the new church design.

Location:
205 Don Fernando Street • Taos, NM
758-9208



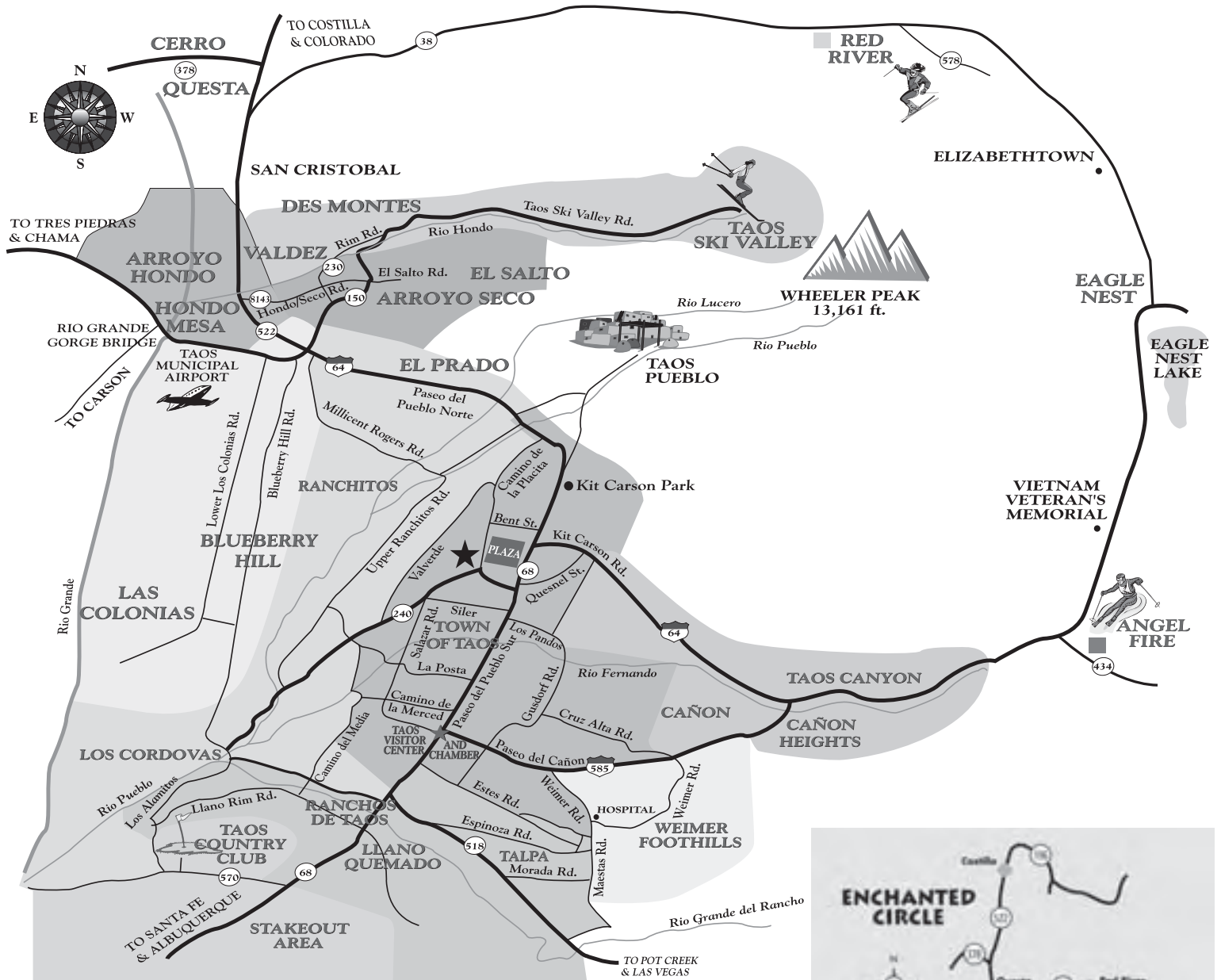
22. GUADALUPE PLAZA AND SANTISTEVAN HOUSE

Guadalupe Plaza was once a thriving village which included the original Guadalupe Church of the 1800's. It extended three blocks to the west to include – Doña Luz Street, Padre Martinez Lane and Manzanares Street. The oldest building on the commercial block of Doña Luz was built in the 1870's and currently includes Toby's "Home Food Store", which was built in the 1870's, and the Blue Moon Art Gallery . John Sanchez used this building for his law practice in the 1930's. Other businesses in this building included a gift shop, artist's studios, and cafés. One of these was the "House of Pizza", which was mentioned in the book "The Hippiess Guide to Taos". The millstones, to the right of Toby's existing structure, came from an old flour mill in the area. The building where Inspirations is now located was once the court house, jail and town garage.

The Santistevan House located at the end of the block may be the oldest residence on the block. It was already built when Don José de la Cruz Santistevan and his wife Dona Maria Gregorita Hernandez de Santistevan, arrived from Spain in the early 1800s. They first settled in Los Colonias and raised 5 children. The estate on Doña Luz eventually became their winter home. Originally, this property had a well in the courtyard and portions of the rooms were once used as a hotel. Other uses included a lawyer's office, a fish market, a clothing store and several restaurants. The building was recently renovated to create Ronnie Lee's Supper Club. Care was taken to restore the building close to the character of the original Santistevan House.

Location:
122 Doña Luz • Taos, NM
737-5112

Taos County and the Enchanted Circle



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★ Historic Taos Walking Tour





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