



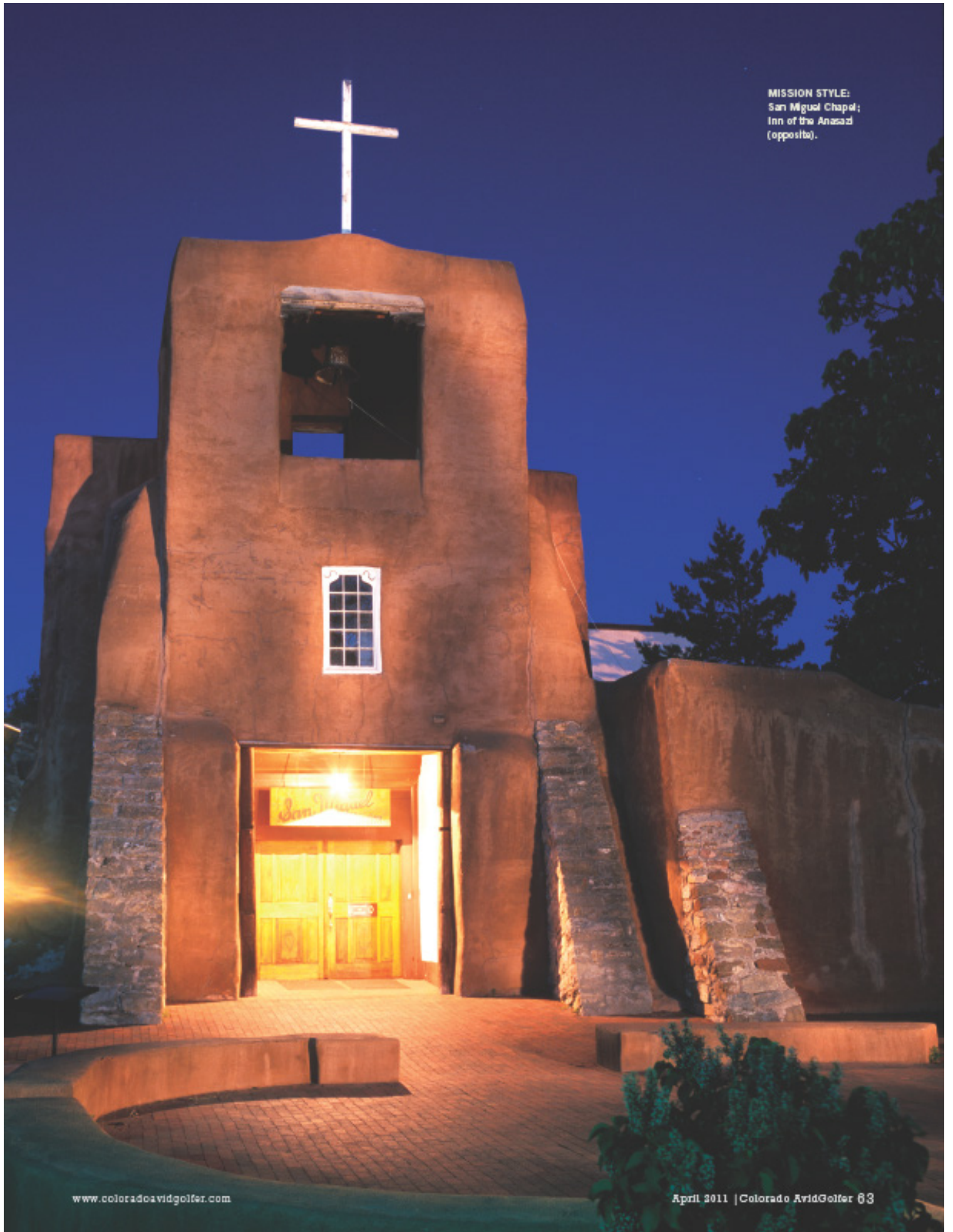
NEW MEXICO'S DUE

THE STATE'S GOLF LANDSCAPE PROVES EVERY BIT
AS ENCHANTING AS ITS HISTORIC CAPITAL CITY.

BY JAKE KUBIÉ

Certain hotels exemplify their respective locations. Denver's Brown Palace embodies Old West luxury. The Waldorf in New York epitomizes Park Avenue elegance. And North Carolina's Pinehurst Resort offers a glimpse of a bygone era of Grand Dame stateliness. Santa Fe has the Inn of the Anasazi, which by itself captures the romance, architecture, art and cuisine that makes Santa Fe the Southwest's cultural beacon.

MISSION STYLE:
San Miguel Chapel;
Inn of the Anasazi
(opposite).



Located just around the corner from where local artisans congregate to peddle fine silver and turquoise jewelry along the city's historic Plaza and walking distance to nearly all of its historic and cultural riches, the Inn of the Anasazi's kiva- and adobe-style architecture pays tribute to the area's rich Spanish and Native American heritage. At first glance, the inn, which dates to 1990, looks like might have hosted dignitaries more than 400 years ago when the capital city was founded.

Inside, the 58-room Anasazi, which translates to "Ancient Ones" in Navajo, maintains a vintage atmosphere. Soft lighting accentuates the décor's copper, russet and sepia tones while spotlights expose paintings crafted with the vibrant colors and bold patterns synonymous with the New Mexican genre. Distressed wood accents, viga beam ceilings, tiled backsplashes and rustic furnishing, demonstrate a fine attention to detail. It's a look and feel that many hotels attempt, but few achieve.

One that does is La Posada de Santa Fe Resort & Spa. Nestled on six beautifully landscaped acres in the heart of Santa Fe, this haven of adobe-style architecture, colorful gardens, and cozy outdoor fireplaces recently refurbished 157 guest rooms to create an intimate Southwestern experience. No two rooms or its 30 suites are the same, yet all radiate an authentic, unmistakably Santa Fean aesthetic and intimacy.

Of course Santa Fe is as well known for dining as just about any other foodie-friendly cities and both La Posada and the Inn of the Anasazi have some of the state's finest examples of haute-Southwestern cuisine. La Posada's Fuego perpetually ranks among the area's top eateries, while Inn of the Anasazi chef Oliver Ridgway, who honed his culinary blades in New York's famous Carlyle Restaurant, turns out satisfying portions of poultry, seafood and prime cuts spiced with New Mexican taste and flare.

For a taste of haute Santa Fe golf, ask Bob Romero, the Anasazi's attentive concierge, nicely enough and he might just be able to arrange a visit to Las Campanas, New Mexico's most exclusive private club and one of the area's most prestigious real estate developments, which offers 36 Jack Nicklaus-designed holes—the 7,626-yard Sunrise Course and 7,517-yard Sunset Course—and an incredible pueblo-inspired clubhouse. Of course if you're not fortunate enough to find your way onto Las Campanas, there are plenty of other fantastic public courses too.



HIGH-DESERT DRAMA:
Black Mesa Golf Club

Black Mesa Golf Club is a must. Situated in the jagged hills of La Mesilla about 30 minutes north of Santa Fe, the Baxter Spann design is the Southwest's answer to Bandon Dunes, Ballyneal and other minimalist designs. The 7,307-yard course spreads out over a distinctly northern New Mexican landscape where the turf bonds with a crusty high desert terrain specked with native brush, piñon and juniper. Its often-narrow fairways, like the one on the dramatic uphill par-five 16th, and undulating greens are akin to those found on classic dunes and links courses. A modest tin-roofed clubhouse, which adds to the feeling of seclusion and serenity, rounds out the experience at Black Mesa, which *Golf Magazine* has consistently rated one of the "Top 100 Courses You Can Play" and *LINKS* selected as "One of the Ten Most Spectacular Courses in the World."

There are numerous similarities between Black Mesa and nearby Marty Sanchez Links de Santa Fe. Also designed by Baxter Spann, the stout 7,435-yard municipal course features a lot of similar design characteristics as its highly acclaimed neighbor. Although it occupies a less-dramatic piece of land, it still has the same sweeping views of the stunning Sangre de Cristo, Jemez and San Juan Mountain Ranges. Located just southwest of the city, it's a great play before heading to Albuquerque.

Before you do, be sure to take in the huge selection of museums and galleries for which the 400-year-old capital city is so renowned. Spend a morning strolling up Canyon Road, where dozens of quaint galleries line the narrow passage and sell an incomparable collection of photography, sculptures, jewelry, furniture and paintings with genres ranging from Native American to Expressionist. And it's virtually mandatory to visit the Georgia O'Keefe Museum, where a vast collection of her vibrant works depicting desert scenes,

colorful flora and her famous horse, cow and deer pates are on display. Another half-day or so perusing the historic area's many shops and boutiques should provide a satisfactory cultural dose.

Instead of taking the straight shot down I-25 in Albuquerque, detour along Highway 14 towards the gently-sloping backside of the Sandia Mountains where you'll find Paa-Ko Ridge Golf Club, one of the first New Mexico golf destinations that proved once and for all that New Mexico had shed its reputation as a poor man's Scottsdale. When it opened in 2000 it was immediately recognized as the "Best New Course in America" by *Golf Digest* and has since received numerous other accolades, all of which are well deserved. Ken Dye designed the 27 holes that tumble through a thick juniper and piñon paradise full of deep gulches, craggy outcroppings and lofty elevation changes.

Back on the west side of the Sandia's are three relatively new resorts that have further enhanced the Land of Enchantment's standing as an exceptional golf destination.

Hard Rock Casino and Resort is the newest of the trio. The contemporary Southwestern style hotel, situated 15 minutes south of downtown Albuquerque, offers up a little Las Vegas flair with chic accommodations and full casino with table games and poker room. Its best amenity, though, Isleta Eagle Golf Club, sits just across the highway. Although it predates the resort by more than a decade, the links-style layout is still considered one of New Mexico's finest. Each of its three nine-hole courses—Mesa, Lakes and Arroyo—is named for its primary geographical feature. Views of the scenic cottonwood-lined Rio Grande River are visible from everywhere on the course.

The other two resorts are just north of the city. Sandia Casino and Resort, situated just beyond the Albuquerque/Sandia


Pueblo border, is a lot different than it was 20 years ago. Originally located on the west side of I-25, Sandia started as an eyesore casino housed in a semi-permanent bubble. Today the resort takes up a swath of hilly high desert territory leading up to the Sandia Mountain's foothills. The sandstone-colored structure, which rises dramatically from the desert floor, provides guests with fine Southwestern accommodations, a Green Reed Spa, large pool complex, 4,000-person amphitheater, casino with huge picture windows looking up towards the rising mountains and a half-dozen dining options.

Sandia Golf Club radiates out from the resort into a hilly expanse of tawny desert brush. Designed by Arizona-based architect Scott Miller, whose other works include We-Ko-Pa, Kierland and the Golf Club at Eagle Mountain, Sandia measures a whopping 7,772 yards and features roomy fairways and pockets and ribbons of native terrain that create force both thought and challenging carries. It's as good as any resort course you'll find in Arizona and with rates peaking at \$71, it's less than half the cost.

Although not quite as affordable at \$120 per round, Twin Warriors Golf Club,

tucked into a secluded valley about 15 minutes north of Sandia in Santa Ana Pueblo, is well worth the price. The 7,284-yard Gary Panks creation tiptoes around more than 20 ancient cultural sites set along dry arroyos and the sacred Tuyuna Mesa. While the golf course is spectacular, it's the views of the Sandia Mountains with the fertile Rio Grande bosque in the foreground that truly define the experience.

The course is part of the Hyatt Regency Tamaya, which is the most authentic resort in the Albuquerque area. It's also the most family-friendly, offering guests a variety of activities and amenities like horseback riding, kids camp, multiple pools and luxury spa. Guests should retire to the Corn Maiden restaurant for one of its many signature rotisserie selections only after taking in a stunning sunset from the back porch that illuminates the Sandias in a fiery pink.

In a lot of ways, northern New Mexico is a different world. And at only six hours due south of Denver, it's the most accessible—not to mention affordable—golf destination for Coloradans. Just one taste of the golf, culture and food Albuquerque and Santa Fe offer and you'll be a repeat visitor. Guaranteed. 

For complete visitor information, visit santafe.org or call 800-777-2489.

BLACK MEJA GOLF CLUB

115 State Rd. 399, La Mesilla
505-747-8946; blackmesagolfclub.com

HARD ROCK CASINO AND REJORT

(Isleta Eagle Golf Club)
11000 Broadway SE, Albuquerque
877-475-3827; hardrockcasinocabq.com

HYATT REGENCY TAMAYA REJORT AND IPA

(Twin Warriors Golf Club)
1300 Tuyuna Trl., Santa Ana Pueblo
505-867-1234; tamaya.hyatt.com

INN OF THE ANAJAZI

113 Washington Ave., Santa Fe
505-988-3030; innotheanasazi.com

LA POSADA DE SANTA FE REJORT AND IPA

330 East Palaca Ave., Santa Fe
505-986-0000; laposada.rockresorts.com

MARTY SANCHEZ LINKS DE SANTA FE

205 Caja del Rio Rd., Santa Fe
505-955-4400; linksdesantafe.com

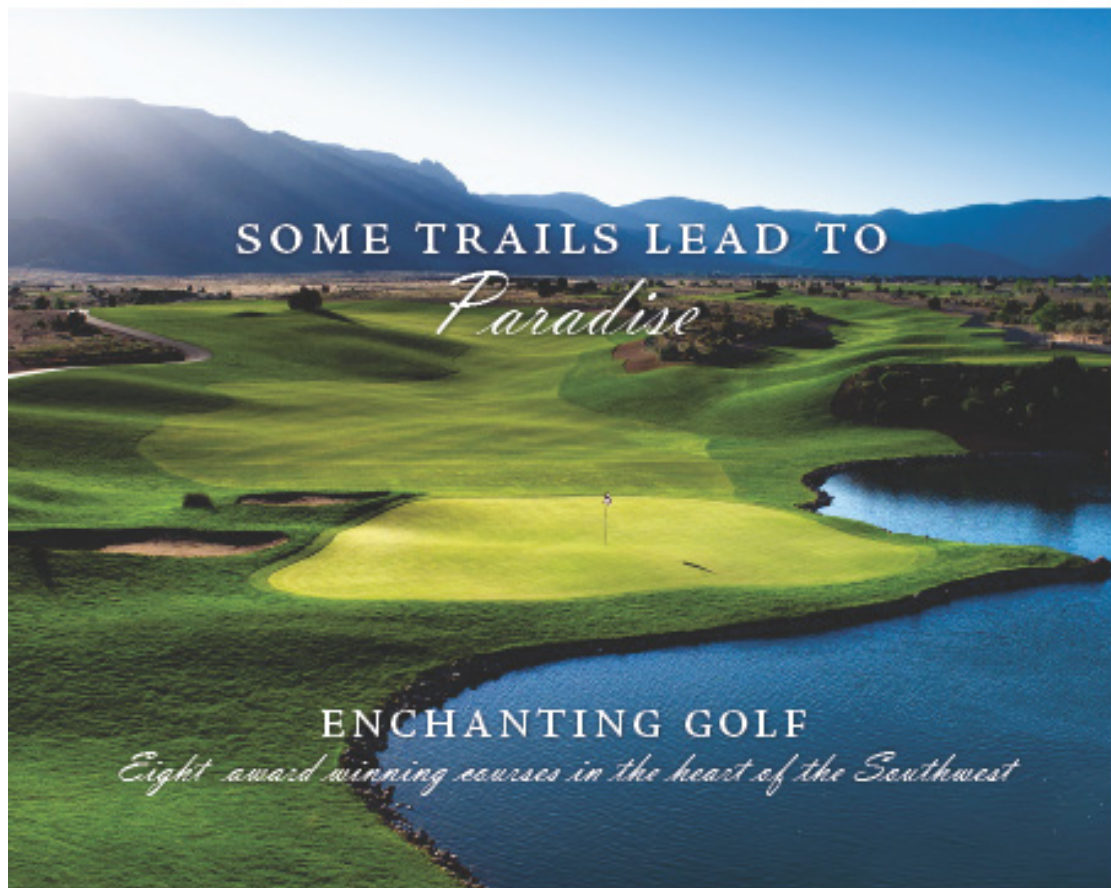
PAA KO RIDGE GOLF CLUB

1 Clubhouse Dr., Sandia Park
866-898-5987; paakoridg.com

SANDIA REJORT AND CASINO

30 Rainbow Rd. NE, Albuquerque
800-526-9366; sandiacasino.com

Jake Kubie is CAG's associate editor/digital manager and an Albuquerque native.

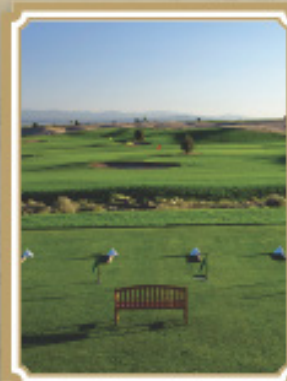


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