

EMERGENCIES

Call 911 for emergencies. The nearest ER is at Presbyterian Hospital, Española. Volunteer fire departments & EMS respond to 911 calls.

Las Clinicas del Norte: Three locations, federally qualified health center: Abiquiú, 505-685-4479, M-F 8-6:30; El Rito, 575-581-4728, M-F 8-5, Sa 7:30-4; Ojo Caliente, 505-583-2191, Tu-F 8-6:30.

El Centro Family Health/Coyote Medical Clinic: 3396 NM 96, Coyote. 575-638-5487. Hours: M, W, F 8-12, 1-5.

Mental Health Crisis NM Hotline: Advice & referrals. 1-855-662-7474. Hours: 24/7.

NurseAdvice NM: Helps evaluate health situations; Spanish & English speakers. 1-877-725-2552. Hours: 24/7. www.nurseadvice.org

Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center of Santa Fe: 505-984-0625. Hours: M-F 5pm-8am; Sa, Su, holidays 24 hours.

The Wildlife Center: Advice about wild animals needing help. 505-753-9505. Hours: Daily 9-4. www.thewildlifecenter.org

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To request additional copies of this Visitors Guide & to offer suggestions for the next edition, contact info@lucientecorp.com

*We remind visitors to respect those who live here—
their property and their privacy—and remember the land is fragile.
Leave no trace of your visit except your smiles.*

THE ABIQUIÚ AREA

Visitors Guide & Map



INCLUDING
THE RIO CHAMA CORRIDOR,
THE VILLAGES OF ABIQUIÚ, COYOTE,
EL RITO, GALLINA,
MEDANALES, YOUNGSMVILLE
& GHOST RANCH

HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT

Major geological, economic and cultural conflicts continue to form the Rio Chama Valley, leaving many markers and stories.

Visible geological layers tell of oceans, multicolor sandstone formations, crosscutting upthrusts and faults, as well as dinosaur and fossil remains more than 300 million years old. Prehistoric peoples left evidence of their presence as far back as the Paleo-Indian period, more than 12,000 years ago.

By the 11th and 12th centuries other prehistoric communities thrived here, using irrigation to water their fields. Historic Tewa people and bands of Ute, Navaho, Jicarilla Apache and Comanche nomads made their livelihood hunting, trading (including horses and human captives) and farming in this area.

Another wave started as the Spanish empire sent *conquistadores* and priests in search of wealth and converts. Coronado's 1540 expedition and Onate's in 1598 brought settlers and horses to south of here. By the 18th century, this area was middle ground between colonial invaders from the south and open warfare to the north and east.

In 1724 some families received land grants from Spanish authorities. Using water channeled by ditches (*acequias*), they farmed and raised sheep for family use and trade. These settlers were buffers, placed in the "middle ground" here in the Rio Chama corridor.

During the next 50-plus years many land grants were created including one in 1754 to the Genízaros (detribalized, Hispanized Indians) living in Abiquiú at the site of a Tewa pueblo ruin. Communities of farmers in Cañones, Youngsville, Coyote, El Rito and other areas of the Rio Chama watershed also received land grants. As the US took over this area from Mexico in 1848, these land grants and land rights became subject to speculators' manipulations and, later, contests in the courts with unfortunate results for some locals.

Trade also defined this area as networks of footpaths, horse & mule trails made up early trade routes that established Abiquiú as an important market for many decades. In 1829 the first successful round-trip caravan to Los Angeles from Abiquiú marked the start of the Old Spanish Trail.

FESTIVALS & ANNUAL EVENTS

January

Eagle Count: This annual bald eagle survey documents the number of seasonal bald & golden eagles at Abiquiú Lake. Volunteers observe & document eagle sightings from fixed land points & watercraft. *First or second Saturday*, Abiquiú Dam. 505-685-4371.

June

Rio Arriba County Rodeo: Individual & team events: bull riding, barrel racing & team roping with the best rodeo athletes in the state, sanctioned by the NM Rodeo Association. www.nmrodeo.org - Special events for local young people. Managed by Rio Arriba County Fair Association, usually the last weekend. Rural Events Center. 505-685-4523. www.raefa.net

Abiquiú Chamber Music Festival: June through August. Renowned artists, finest classical music & an incomparable setting on the Rio Chama. Ticket information: 505-685-0076. www.abiquiúmusic.org

August

Rio Arriba County 4-H & FFA Fair: Contests of locally grown vegetables, fruits, salsa; open livestock shows. Fun activities for all ages; local food & craft vendors. A livestock auction is held Saturday evening. Sponsored by the Rio Arriba County Fair Association, the first weekend. Rural Events Center. 505-685-4523. www.raefa.net

Fiesta de Santa Rosa de Lima: Celebrated with Mass in the chapel ruins at the white cross along US 84. *Last Sunday*: Spiritual leaders on horseback, carrying traditional *bulos*, lead a procession walking in prayer up to the Pueblo de Abiquiú. Food booths, music & games on the plaza. Festivities end with a dance in the gym. No pets, please. Commercial photographs must be cleared in advance by Parish of Santo Tomás. 505-685-4462.

Abiquiú was the edge of the western frontier well into the mid-1860s. The short-lived San Juan gold rush moved the frontier northward beyond Abiquiú. In the 1880s railroads arrived in what is now Chama, leading entrepreneurs to discover the earning potential in catering to eastern tourists. Others, recognizing the danger of losing ancient cultures, began to preserve cultural artifacts and knowledge of old ways.

Before and after WWI, Taos and Santa Fe attracted creative adventurers drawn to the dynamic, rugged beauty and freedom here. Environmentalist Arthur Pack built a home nearby in 1933. He started Ghost Ranch as a soil and wildlife conservation area and dude ranch. His visitors included Anglo expatriates from the east such as Georgia O'Keeffe. Some stayed, creating employment for local people who offered services geared to these "outsiders."

About the same time, the Dust Bowl, compounded by the Great Depression, decimated subsistence farming villages. Depression-era programs created some jobs, but many people left the area to find work. Some went to the NM oil fields, others to Los Alamos. Some stayed to eke out a living on family lands, working part-time jobs to help pay the bills.

Numerous spiritual practitioners were, and still are, drawn here. Two monasteries are tucked in nearby canyons. A community of American Muslims built the Dar al Islam mosque and madrasa across from Abiquiú, with the aid of visionary Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy. In our villages, Catholic churches draw parishioners regularly. In nearby pueblos, annual dances and ceremonies keep traditions alive.

Throughout the history of this region, movement of people in and out has been a constant, creating a multicultural community of entrepreneurs, farmers, ranchers, artists and crafts people. Strong family-centered lives formed and continue to shape this area. Regardless of the path residents take in this region, together we seek to sustain our beautiful, natural lands.

September

National Public Lands Day: Volunteers help revitalize public recreation areas with shoreline cleanup, native landscaping & trail maintenance. *The last Saturday* at Abiquiú Lake. Abiquiú Dam, 505-685-4371.

October

The Annual El Rito Studio Tour & Village Arts Festival: See the art & meet the artists in this traditional northern NM village on NM 554. Experience the beauty of open skies & autumn colors while you explore studios of world-renowned & emerging artists. Hungry? Treat yourself to "Death by Chocolate." *First full weekend*. www.elritostudiotor.org

Abiquiú Studio Tour: Enjoy spectacular fall landscapes, local food & well-marked artists studios displaying for purchase: painting, pottery, jewelry, masks, weaving, wearable art & Spanish colonial arts such as *retablos* & furniture. Free maps for self-guided tour around US 84 & the Rio Chama Valley. *Columbus Day weekend*. www.abiquiústudiotour.org

November

Fiesta de Santo Tomás el Apostol: Genízaro ceremonial songs, prayers & dances by youth & elders wearing traditional attire, celebrating their indigenous Native American heritage. *Sat after Thanksgiving, about 10am, Pueblo de Abiquiú*. No pets. Commercial photographs must be cleared in advance by Parish of Santo Tomás. 505-685-4462.

For weekly events check local newspapers: *The Rio Grande SUN Arts Section and the Santa Fe New Mexican Friday Pasatiempo.*



LEGEND

- Attraction
- Amenities
- Food and Beverages
- Lodging
- Arts and Culture
- Community, Health and Services
- Recreation
- Major Highway
- County Road
- Unpaved Road
- River
- Acequia
- Approximate Scale

- 1) Abiquiú Lake & Dam:** Panoramic views surround the 5,200-acre lake. Its Riana Campground offers RV & tent sites, playground, well-marked hiking trails, picnic areas, boat ramp & swimming area. Managed by Army Corps of Engineers. Visitors Center, west of US 84 on NM 96. 505-685-4371. Hours: M-F 8-4.
- 2) Carson National Forest:** El Rito, gateway to forest, is a ranching, farming & artistic community. Wide vistas, open meadows, forests, waterfalls & dramatic red bluffs including Copper Canyon & the Rim Vista Trail. Fishing, hiking, hunting, rock climbing & primitive camping. US Forest Service camping with facilities by El Rito Creek. 575-581-4554. www.fs.usda.gov/carson
- 3) Cerro Pedernal:** This distinctive flat-top mesa, south of Abiquiú Lake off NM 96, rises 9,862 feet. Forest Service roads climb through spectacular red cliffs, aspen forests & open meadows, providing fantastic views of the Rio Chama valley & surrounding areas. Ruins of the ancient pueblo Tspit-in-owinge, circa 1275-1450, are only accessible by difficult trails. Hikers must obtain permits from the Coyote Ranger District, 575-638-5526. www.geoinfo.nm.edu/tour/landmarks
- 4) Chama River Canyon Wilderness:** The Rio Chama provided sustenance to puebloan ancestors, Spanish settlers & modern-day farmers. This remote area is a special place of beauty & ecological importance. The lower section, along Forest

- 5) Continental Divide National Scenic Trail:** Stretches 3,100 miles between Canada & Mexico. Some 770 miles meander through parts of NM's most spectacular natural & historic landscapes. The trail passes through Santa Fe National Forest. Much of the 87-mile section in the Carson National Forest is still under construction by volunteers. While the route is flagged, hikers must use GPS so they won't get lost. Coyote Ranger District, SFNF, 575-638-5526. www.continentaldividetrail.org - www.fs.fed.us/cdt
- 6) Echo Amphitheater:** A natural walled arena of sandstone creates an echo chamber. Includes a paved hiking trail, picnic area, group shelter & campsites. North of Ghost Ranch 3 miles on US 84. Canjilon Ranger District, 575-684-2489.
- 7) Ghost Ranch Education & Retreat Center:** 21,000 acres of dramatic cliffs, red hill & rock formations that inspired Georgia O'Keeffe, Ansel Adams & continue to ignite our creative spirit. Tours: O'Keeffe landscape, archeology & paleontology museums, movie sites. Horseback riding, labyrinth, hiking trails, lodging, camping, transformational workshops & gift shop. Northwest of Abiquiú 13 miles on US 84. 505-685-1000. www.ghost ranch.org
- 8) Monastery of Christ in the Desert:** A remote Benedictine monastery in Chama River Canyon Wilderness. George Nakashima, Japanese-American architect,

- 9) Northern New Mexico College, El Rito Campus:** Established in 1909 as a Spanish-American normal school & teacher training center for Spanish-speakers. Today the campus is dedicated to preserving the rich cultural & linguistic heritage of northern NM & training students in skills that provide meaningful careers. Courses in fiber arts, weaving, Spanish colonial furniture, *busto* & *retablo* carving, tinmithing & a unique Spanish Immersion Institute. Year-round space for group meetings, retreats, workshops & conferences; lodging in residence halls & meals. 575-581-4100. Site Coordinator, 575-581-4145. Hours: M-F 8-5.
- 10) Georgia O'Keeffe Home & Studio:** Small group tours of the famous artist's home that has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1998. Starting at Tour Office beside Abiquiú Inn on US 84. Mid-March through late November. *By Reservation.* 505-685-4539. www.georgiakoeeffeuseum.org
- 11) Old Spanish Trail:** An important trade route between Santa Fe & Los Angeles since 1829. Antonio Armijo led the first of many commercial caravans from Abiquiú westward following a route just north of NM 96. Abiquiú was last stop for supplies, trade goods & to receive a priest's blessing. For over 20 years, Mexican & American

- 12) Poshouinge Ruins:** Ancestors of local Teva people built this large pueblo on a mesa above the Rio Chama around 1400. First excavated by archeologists in 1919, the city had two main plazas, a large kiva & about 700 ground-floor rooms, most rising two or three stories. The site is accessible by a steep, scenic half-mile hiking trail. Please remember it is disrespectful & illegal to remove any building stones or artifacts. On US 84, about 2.5 miles south of the Abiquiú post office. Española Ranger District, SFNF, 505-753-7331.
- 13) Pueblo de Abiquiú Library & Cultural Center & Walking History Tours:** In a 100-year-old adobe across the Abiquiú Plaza from Santo Tomas church, this community library sponsors events for all ages. Media center houses a digital repository including timelines & genealogy gathered from youth projects with oral history interviews. Walking history tours offered by local guides through this private village (over 16,000 acres, entered at top of mesa above Abiquiú post office) stress their Genizaro ancestors' contributions as captives, warriors, landowners, farmers & traders. Tours \$20/person. Book reservations through the Library, 505-684-4884. Hours: Su-Th 1-6. www.abiquiupl.org

- 14) Santa Fe National Forest:** Includes the Sangre de Cristo, Jemez & San Pedro Mountains, the Rio Chama & San Pedro Parks Wilderness Areas. Elevations range from 6,000 to 13,000 feet. Wide selection of recreational opportunities from scenic drives to primitive backcountry adventures. Hiking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, swimming, skiing, camping & archeological ruins. Coyote Ranger District, 575-638-5526. www.fs.usda.gov/santafe
- 15) Santa Rosa de Lima Ruin:** Named after the first canonized saint of the Americas. Built about 1735 by early Spanish settlers who, for defensible reasons, later moved up into the Abiquiú Pueblo. Please be observant of cultural & religious values. No pets, please. SE of the Abiquiú post office 2 miles on US 84. All commercial photographs must be cleared in advance by Parish of Santo Tomas, 505-685-4462. 575-638-5526. www.fs.usda.gov/santafe
- 16) Wells Petroglyph Preserve:** The largest petroglyph site in New Mexico. See amazing rock art from 7500 years ago to the present. North of Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo. Docent-led public & private tours. Donations appreciated. Reservations: www.mesaprietapetroglyphs.org, 505-852-1351.

We remind visitors to respect those who live here—their property and their privacy—and remember the land is fragile. Leave no trace of your visit except your smiles.