

Santa Fe: Tasty Traditions Year-round



If you could choose one city to introduce a foreigner to America through its [food](#), you would likely want to find a place that showcases distinctive, authentic and delicious cuisine imbued with the history and presence of Native American, Mexican and Spanish food. Set your visitor down in [Santa Fe](#) because it all began here in the country's oldest capital city.

Start your “foodie” adventure off at the Santa Fe Farmers’ Market where all products sold-- every bean and brussel sprout, every chicken and all the eggs--are locally grown. In fact, Santa Fe’s Farmers’ Market was the first organic farmers’ market in the country.

Begin your food forage here with a fortifying breakfast burrito at the market’s Café. They are made fresh at Posas, a popular local restaurant. Follow with certified organic coffee from Red Rock Roasters, freshly brewed and served in a “bottomless” bio degradable paper cup, the perfect companion to the Café’s cherry empanadas, delivered fresh that morning from the ovens at the Chocolate Maven Bakery

No impersonal cashier will offend your out-of-towner because the Santa Fe [Farmers Market](#) assures that all products sold by its vendors are always locally grown by the people selling them. A hundred percent of the vegetables, fruits, and nursery plants sold are grown right here in northern [New Mexico](#). Furthermore, except at the Café, no reselling is permitted. Thus, the people doing the growing and producing are the same folks who sell those products to you at Market.

If your guest is from Europe or Asia or Africa, the market experience will feel familiar because this is how the majority of the world’s people still shop for food: locally, organically and directly from the grower. What would be foreign to many outsiders is the plethora of plastic wrapped, fluorescent lit food packages found in U.S. grocery cases in the ineptly named “super” markets that populate our cities.

Santa Fe’s fabulously fresh food scene goes even further with its Farm to Restaurant Project where local chefs of independently owned restaurants – from humble cafes and pizza parlors to high-end, haute cuisine venues—support regional food producers by using local food in their dishes.

Quoted in [Santa Fe’s Green Fire Times](#), Patrick Gharrity, Executive Chef of Santa Fe’s La Casa Sena, said, “Purchasing local food is important to me because it is evident our food chain is out of whack. I hope to reduce our carbon footprint and support and boost the local economy.”

Restaurants either have direct relationships with farmers who deliver to their doors, or the chefs come to the farmers’ market and personally buy the food. The Project has also launched a distribution network. Restaurateurs and producers have agreed to a “value-chain,” a standing order flow chart that tracks food from farm to restaurant.

The goal here is not about lowest price or greatest convenience. It’s about the most embedded value for the food, emphasizing sustainability, quality and fairness. The ultimate goal is to provide healthy food from and for the local community. The Program started out a year ago with 15 restaurants and 15 growers and has received tremendous support. . Customers appreciate seeing the name of the New Mexico farmer or rancher on the menu, knowing the people preparing the meal have a personal relationship with those growing the food.



Here's a recipe from the Farmers' Market website: www.santafefarmersmarket.com

Market Salad with Goat Cheese Disks and Red Chile Croutons

(Thanks to Local Farmer & Chef Matt Romero!)

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups Gourmet greens (Romero Farms)

2 cups Spinach (Santa Cruz Farms)

1 oz. Vinaigrette dressing (Duke's Raspberries)

Kosher salt

Black pepper

1 cup Red chile croutons (Cloud Cliff Bakery)

1 oz. per serving Goat cheese disks**

Black and white sesame seeds

Olive oil

PROCEDURE:

Place spinach and greens in stainless steel or glass bowl. Toss with dressing and salt and pepper. Arrange on plates, garnish with red chile croutons and toasted goat cheese**

**Toasted Goat Cheese Disks: Form 1 oz disks of goat cheese. Gently press into mixture of black and white sesame seeds. Heat non stick skillet and place small amount of olive oil in pan. Place disks in pan and heat until sesame seeds are toasted. Remove from heat and place on salad.

Look for reviews of Santa Fe restaurants serving organic, locally grown and delicious food in the upcoming Santa Fe Tasty Traditions, Part Two.

Contact the Santa Fe Visitors Bureau: (800 777-2489) www.santafe.org.

