

This Weekend, You Can Enjoy a Gourmet Dinner in a Beautiful,
Historic, Hand-Built Adobe Mansion, While Watching
Our Majestic Sandia Mountains Change Colors at
Sunset, From Purple to Peach to Watermelon.

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Welcome to Albuquerque, New Mexico. It's so nice to have you visit. There is plenty to do here and lots of great places to eat. And if you'd like, I can probably hook you up with a hot air balloon ride one of the mornings you're here... if you have time.

What brings you here? Perhaps you're here to consult with clients. Perhaps you're attending a seminar all weekend. Or perhaps you're visiting because you heard it's a great place to relax amongst beautiful desert views.

But for now... I'll bet you're hungry! You've no doubt heard there are lots of good places to eat in Albuquerque. But if you're anything like me, you look at the long list and you have a tough time deciding. Or you just don't know which places are really good.

The last thing you want to do is go someplace a stranger recommends that turns out to be... not so good. Wasted time. Wasted money... and a disappointing experience? Who has time for it?

Since I like you, value your time, and I want you to enjoy your visit, let me recommend a place I love to have a nice dinner.

It's a place I usually save for special occasions, like birthdays and anniversaries. But I'm so excited you are here—I want you to experience the best dinner in the Albuquerque area. Make reservations, while you're here.

The Prairie Star Restaurant is nestled on the sprawling, green, Santa Ana Golf Course, located on the Santa Ana Pueblo. Although it is far removed from the bustle of the city, it's really only minutes north of Downtown Albuquerque, New Mexico, and only a couple of minutes south of the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort & Spa.

When you walk in, you'll notice the relaxing ambiance. You'll be greeted by a warm, pleasant staff member who will seat you promptly at your table. You might notice the soft, soothing background music that's usually just right.

I always request a table by an east window. It's a most breathtaking view to enjoy while you dine on equally exquisite food. As you read the menu and try to decide what to order, you can't help but notice the feast for the eyes, just out the window.

You'll look out over the lush green course and cottonwood trees. Beyond this soothing scene is the river and the rambling Rio Grande Valley. And just past the river, the land sweeps upward into the majestic Sandia Mountains. As sunset approaches, you'll see how the Sandia Mountains got their name. "Sandia" means "watermelon" in Spanish.

As the sun reaches the western horizon, the mountains take on the most beautiful, pink-orange, watermelon color you have ever seen in nature. The surrounding sky changes from our usual bright turquoise, into several hues of peach, pink, rose, and magenta.

In the Southwest Desert, the sunsets go quickly, so be sure to watch. As the sun disappears behind the western horizon, sunset finishes with an indigo-purple sky peppered with stars.

And that's just the spectacular view you can look forward to while you order and dine. But believe it or not, the view does NOT upstage the menu selections.

The menu selections are as unique as they are phenomenal. There are several choices in each menu section, and they change a couple times per season.

One reviewer said this about the various menu items, "...there were several hints of regionally..." and it's true. I find choices at this restaurant which are so unique, that I've never found anything even close anywhere else. The items all sound so wonderful and I always have a hard time choosing.

Here's are past examples from each section of their menu...
You can select from an Array of Appetizers, such as:

- Wild Mushroom Bruschetta
Roasted Garlic, Warm Kataifi Encrusted Chevre, Kalamazoo Olive Trepanned

... and Splendid Salads, like:

- Spinach & Bing Cherry Salad
Lemon-Pecorino Rustico, Pie Spiced Croutons, Toasted Almonds, Citrus Vinaigrette

...and Enticing Entrees, for instance:

- Blackened Atlantic Salmon
New Mexican Cactus Gumbo, on a Bed of Wilted Greens, Avocado Crema.
- Pinon & Local Cheese Ravioli
Spinach, Oven Dried Tomatoes, Spring Vegetables, Herb-Pesto Cream Sauce,
Parmesan Cheese
- Pinon Smoked Beef Tenderloin
Savory {each Corn Pudding, Wilted Spinach & Onions, Emmentaler Cheese, Cracked
Pepper Demi-Glace
- White Marble Farms Pork Chop
Red Wine Apple Butter, Asparagus Horseradish Smashed Potatoes

In every case, the presentation is as artful and inviting as the food is diverse and delectable.

And the desserts? Oh... save room! The Prairie Star desserts are amazing. Every time I go, it seems they have a few new ones. But there are always some favorites which linger, like the four-less chocolate cake. It's so good I can't believe it's legal. Let's just say their desserts are a heavenly climax... eer... um... perfect ending to any of their divine dinners.

And it's not just me—A lot of people love this place. The Prairie Star Restaurant has earned several awards. Patrons reviewing their visits, through sites such as “The Open Table,” “City Search,” and others said this:

“...I would recommend this to out-of-towners as there were several hints of regionality on the menu, including bison and the use of red chili seasonings in the bread and some of the appetizers.”

“...My wife and I would highly recommend the Prairie Star the next time you're looking for a romantic dinner, relaxing atmosphere, and stunning view of the Sandia Mountains which adds to the overall experience that is truly inspirational.”

The Prairie Star Restaurant has also earned awards from various newspapers, travel publications and websites, such as 10Best.com. 10Best.com lists The Prairies Star in the top 10 restaurants of the Albuquerque area, and says this about them:

“Built in the 1940s, this 6,000-square-foot adobe house is now home to an extraordinary fine dining experience. Plenty of standard New Mexican favorites served with a Native American flair. Other entrees include filet mignon, salmon palliard, and grilled ostrich filet. Hand-carved fireplaces and an open view of the mountain further add to the ambiance.”

La Cocinita Magazine's Second Annual Critics' Choice Awards 2002, listed the Prairie Star for: Best Desserts: “The beautifully presented and beautifully prepared desserts at Prairie Star are consistently stellar.”

Best Atmosphere: “The hundred-year old hacienda that makes up most of Prairie Star's dining area kills us with its smooth adobe walls, warming kiva fireplaces, laced vigas and jaw-dropping view of the Sandias. One panelist said, ‘Next time I'm bringing a pillow and staying the night!’”

Best Restaurant if You're Not Paying: “‘Come on, we'll take you anywhere you want to go. What's your favorite restaurant?’ Why is it when people ask you that you can never remember a single one of your favorites where dinner costs more than the \$20 you have in your own pocket? Let us refresh your memory. In Albuquerque, it's best to pass the bill at Prairie Star.”

Best Restaurant Wine List: “The immense cellar and immeasurable depth of knowledge possessed by Prairie Star sommelier Sam McFall make this Wine Spectator award-winner an easy choice for our panel.”

And yes, as just mentioned, The Prairie Star has earned the “Wine Spectator Award of Excellence,” since 1994. The Prairie Star boasts on the 999dine website, “nearly 30 wines by the glass and 450+ selections which currently comprises some 2,000 bottles.”

There were lots more awards, but I’m getting hungry just reading about it. My memories there are so fond. I can hardly wait to go again. How about you?

They are open Tuesday through Sunday, 5:30 pm to 9 pm. So make a reservation while you’re in Albuquerque.

Enjoy the food and the view.

~Paula

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