

Santa Fe Opera, Georgia O’Keeffe and Walks in the Southwest

<http://www.kudutravel.com/tours/santafe-walking-tour>

8 – 20 August 2020

Join us as we take you to the Land of Enchantment. Experience the landscapes that inspired Georgia O’Keeffe, the subject of a Tate Modern retrospective in 2016 and rightly dubbed ‘America’s artist’. Visit the locations of her iconic works and walk through the studio that provided the settings for her major paintings.

See opera as you never have in the covered, but open, Santa Fe opera. We will attend **Puccini’s Madam Butterfly** and **Rossini’s Barber of Seville**. If we are lucky, the vistas of New Mexico will produce complimentary sunsets or even storm and drang thunder and lightning.

There will be time for optional walks along the Rio Grande and in canyons roamed by the folklore cowboys of the Wild West with a gentle climb to a lake at 11,000 feet. Summer temperatures are moderated by high altitude and a lack of humidity. New Mexican food will be accompanied by great U.S. wines and a stay at a genuine Western saloon where cowboy hats and spurs are still the order of dress.

HIGHLIGHTS of the tour include:

- 2 opera performances (Puccini’s Madam Butterfly & Rossini’s Barber of Seville) in the remarkable - covered but open - Santa Fe opera theatre in the countryside and a chamber music festival concert in a concert hall in the historic centre of Santa Fe
- 9 walks of 1 to 3 hrs in an impressive range of wilderness areas of New Mexico and Colorado
- visits to locations that inspired the painter Georgia O’Keeffe, including Ghost Ranch and her Abiquiu home and studio
- discovering New Mexican cuisine with its emphasis on native plants including corn, beans and squash accompanied by flavourful (but not too hot) chile sauces
- a Cog Railway trip to the top of the 14,000 feet Pikes Peak in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado

Itinerary

DAY 1

D included

After a late afternoon arrival at the Mile-High airport of Denver on a direct flight from London, we have a 45-minute transfer to our conveniently located small modern hotel.

DAY 2

B, L, D included

Fortified by our first breakfast burrito, we head south into the wide-open spaces of the Colorado plains with the Rocky Mountains rising to the west. A morning’s circular walk (2 hrs) takes us through Ponderosa Pine and Douglas Fir forest on a gently rising trail. We reach a viewpoint offering the first glimpses of some of Colorado’s fifty-four Fourteeners (14,000 feet peaks). After lunch, we continue into New Mexico where our destination is Taos, the artists’ colony established by a fortuitous accident. We dine in a restaurant known for its excellent New Mexican cooking with a twist and a cosy ochre-coloured dining room with local art on the walls.

DAY 3

B, L, D included

After waking in our adobe-built boutique bed and breakfast, we drive to the steel arch bridge across the Rio Grande Gorge where we walk (1 hr) along the West Rim. Next, we visit the oldest continually inhabited community in the USA, the Taos Pueblo, with multi-story buildings originating from the 13th century. These homes are repaired and recoated annually with mud by the Pueblo Indians, who live here year-round without electricity or running water. A short drive south brings us to Ranchos de Taos and the 18th century San Francisco de Asis Church, the subject of Georgia O’Keeffe’s paintings and Ansel Adams’ photographs. The rest of the afternoon is free for individual explorations. There are galleries and art museums as well as a museum dedicated to the legendary (notorious) scout Kit Carson.

DAY 4

B, L, D included

A fairly energetic and optional walk (3 hrs) on the forested slopes of New Mexico’s highest mountain, the Wheeler Peak, takes us 300 m/900 feet up to a remote lake at 11,000 feet where the clouds are beneath our feet. We return to Taos for lunch before driving cross country (1.5 hrs) to Abiquiu, our base for the next two nights and the home of Georgia O’Keeffe for over thirty years. We stay in the spacious and comfortable rooms of the village inn which also functions as the area’s visitor centre.

DAY 5

B, L, D included

In the morning, we follow the Rio Chama valley through striking scenery of countless shades of red to Ghost Ranch, the scene of many of Ms. O’Keeffe’s paintings. We walk for two hours in a picturesque river canyon as we anticipate the tour of her Abiquiu home. We see the studio, kitchen and living room, maintained as they were when she left for Santa Fe towards the end of her life. In the garden, we admire the fully functional *acequia*, the traditional Spanish irrigation system, built by Georgia in order to bring running water to her home and to her neighbours.

DAY 6

B, L, D included

The cliff and cave homes at Puye Cliffs were occupied by Native Americans until the early 17th century and we walk through the awe-inspiring area guided by a well-informed descendant of the cliffs’ inhabitants. We follow the local advice and take a short detour to Chimayo to enjoy a traditional New Mexican lunch (perhaps Chile Relleno, fried stuffed green chilli peppers, or Tamales with black beans and zucchini) at a famous country restaurant. Finally, we drive to the New Mexican state capital, Santa Fe, where we stay for 5 nights in a small hotel built in adobe style, situated on a tree lined street a brief walk from the Plaza, the heart and traditional gathering place of the city. We orientate ourselves on an introductory walk through the historic streets and alleyways of the oldest capital in North America led by our knowledgeable guide.

DAY 7

B, L, D included

We continue our exploration of Santa Fe’s heritage on Museum Hill where we have a choice of four museums covering American Indian, Spanish colonial and international folk art. After lunch in the Museum Café, we wander through the recently established botanical garden consisting of a fruit orchard bordered by a meadow garden and a dry garden and, optionally, follow the 2-mile leisure trail connecting Museum Hill with the city centre. The

evening starts early with a preview dinner at the Santa Fe Opera, followed by our first performance: **Puccini's Madam Butterfly**.

DAY 8

B, D included

The morning sees us back at the opera house for a special backstage tour with our own guide, while preparations for tonight's performance are in full swing. The rest of the day is free to pursue individual interests in this jewel of a city until we reconvene for an early dinner where the only decision we make is our choice of chile to accompany the dish – green, red or a combination of both, known as Christmas. The opera tonight is **Rossini's Barber of Seville**.

DAY 9

B, L, D included

A morning's walk in the Santa Fe National Forest (3 hrs) takes us along a mountain stream and we also follow a trail used by shepherds bringing sheep to Santa Fe market. We enjoy a simple picnic in a meadow before completing the 4-mile circle. We meet again at the complimentary wine and cheese reception offered by our hotel daily and perhaps sample their signature Turquoise Margarita. Tonight, we attend the Apprentice Scenes which provide opportunities for young singers and theatre technicians to showcase their talents in a relaxed but public setting, following a three-month programme of coaching, rehearsals and master classes.

DAY 10

B, L, D included

An hour's drive away from Santa Fe is Bandelier National Monument, an atmospheric ancient site set in 23,000 acres of wilderness. We take the Frey Trail (1.5 mile) to descend into the Frijoles Canyon where the Ancestral Pueblo people lived between 1150 and 1550 AD in houses carved from volcanic tuff. This evening we attend a concert of the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival featuring Beethoven's Archduke Piano Trio, dedicated by the composer to Archduke Rudolph of Austria. At dinner, we have a further opportunity to sort out the difference between tacos, burritos, quesadillas, enchilladas, chimichangas and sopaipillas.

DAY 11

B, L, D included

Reluctantly, we say farewell to Santa Fe and head east on the old Santa Fe trail for the small city of Las Vegas which has an archetypal central tree-shaded square and many historic buildings preserved in the adjacent streets. In the old-fashioned Santa Fe Trail interpretive centre, we learn about the importance and the decline of the 900-mile 19th century trading route. At the nearby Fort Union National Monument, we see the remains of the short-lived military depot, located strategically as protection above the Santa Fe Trail. We continue to Cimarron where we spend the night in a famous historic building renowned in the past for gunfights and lawlessness. We arrive in time for an exploratory walk through the village. Our rooms are decorated in the style of the Western era and dinner is served in the original saloon bar: cowboy hats are not obligatory.

DAY 12

B, L, D included

The nearby Cimarron Canyon State Park is known for its dramatic granite palisades and clear rivers and creeks. We walk (2 hrs) on a trail along one of the creeks through an aspen wood and pass a few small waterfalls en route. We travel north and re-enter Colorado, where we stay in Colorado Springs at a charming bed and breakfast presided over by a

brother and sister team. We sample the best of new Southwest food at one of the city's many fine restaurants.

DAY 13

B, L included

Our final day sees us board a cog railway train for a spectacular journey to the top of the 14,000 feet Pikes Peak. After a light lunch, we transfer (2 hrs) to Denver Airport for flights home.

Activity Level Standard

9 walking days (1 – 3 hours), on forest trails and river canyons. Lightweight walking boots which give good ankle support are best for the longer walks and walking poles are recommended if you regularly use them.

Temperatures

The climate of the areas of New Mexico and Colorado we will visit is determined more by their altitude than the southerly latitude. The altitude ranges between 1,600 m/5,500 feet in Denver and 2,100 m/7,000 feet in Taos and Santa Fe. Daily highs range from 25°C to 30°C (77°F – 86°F) but the evenings are cool (12°C - 14°C/54°F - 57°F). August is the monsoon season and there may be short showers in the afternoon. The humidity remains low.

Accommodation

- 1 night in a small modern hotel conveniently located near Denver airport
- 2 nights in Taos, in an adobe-built boutique bed and breakfast
- 2 nights in Abiquiu, in a village inn with spacious and comfortable rooms
- 5 nights in Santa Fe, in a small hotel built in adobe style, situated on a tree lined street a brief walk from the Plaza
- 1 night in Cimarron, in an historic hotel with rooms decorated in the style of the Western era
- 1 night in Colorado Springs, in a charming bed and breakfast in the city centre

Trip Price, per person sharing:

£6,003.25 until 7th November 2019 **£6,165.50** until 7th February 2020

£6,327.75 until 7th May 2020 **£6,490** after 7th May 2020

<https://www.kudutravel.com/faq#discounts>

£1,390 double for single supplement

£1,500 deposit per person

Please note that the double room for single use supplement is imposed by the hotel and not by Kudu Travel. If you are willing to share but no other suitable guest books on the trip, we regret that the supplement will be payable.

Price Includes

- Accommodation for Days 1 through 13, on a twin shared basis
- Top category tickets for 2 opera performances and a chamber concert as described (costing approx. £500)
- Meals (with beer or soft drinks at lunches and wine at dinners) as listed in the daily notation
- Land transportation in a private vehicle, as described, except during free periods

- Cog railway trip as described
- Entrance, National Park and sightseeing fees, except during free periods
- Gratuities for hotel and restaurant staff and local guides (appreciation for tour leaders is discretionary)

Price does not Include

- Flights to and from to and from Denver International Airport
- Trip cancellation, medical or other insurance
- Immunisations, prescriptions or other medical requirements
- Passport, visa and health documentation
- Personal expenses (laundry, alcohol other than wine/beer with group lunches and dinners, free time activities, etc.)
- Meals noted as excepted in the daily notation
- Transport and transfer of excess baggage

VALUE FOR MONEY - SO MUCH IS INCLUDED

On Kudu trips, you will only need money for postcards, presents to take home, the odd G & T or an irresistible ice cream. Festival and opera tickets, museum and gallery entrances, National Park fees, all meals (with a very few exceptions specified in individual itineraries), wine with lunch and dinner, access to specialist books carried by the guides, gratuities for porters and hotel and restaurant staff, boat rides, train trips, internal flights, wine tastings, 4WDs with drivers, the services of skilled local guides and trackers etc. are ALL INCLUDED in the cost of your holiday.

We are confident that, like previous very satisfied guests, you will discover that our tours give you excellent value for money.

Visa and Health Requirements

Visitors from EU countries currently require a valid passport and a prior authorisation to enter the United States, either through a visa or the Visa Waiver Programme. Please see <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en.html> for the latest information. If you are a national of any other country, please check visa regulations with your nearest Embassy of the USA.

At present, there are no specific and compulsory health requirements for entry to the USA. You may also wish to check the advice given to travellers by the Department of Health (<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/healthcare-when-travelling-abroad/>) and the FCO (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>).

Insurance

It is essential and a condition of booking that you protect yourself with a suitable travel insurance policy as soon as you book a trip. We can help arrange comprehensive cover for UK residents. For further details, please see the brochure or ask our office.

Size of Party

This trip will run with a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 14 guests.