

# TAOS

**NORTHERN NEW MEXICO:  
TAKE A ROAD TRIP TO  
THE ENCHANTED CIRCLE**



Photos: Geraint Smith

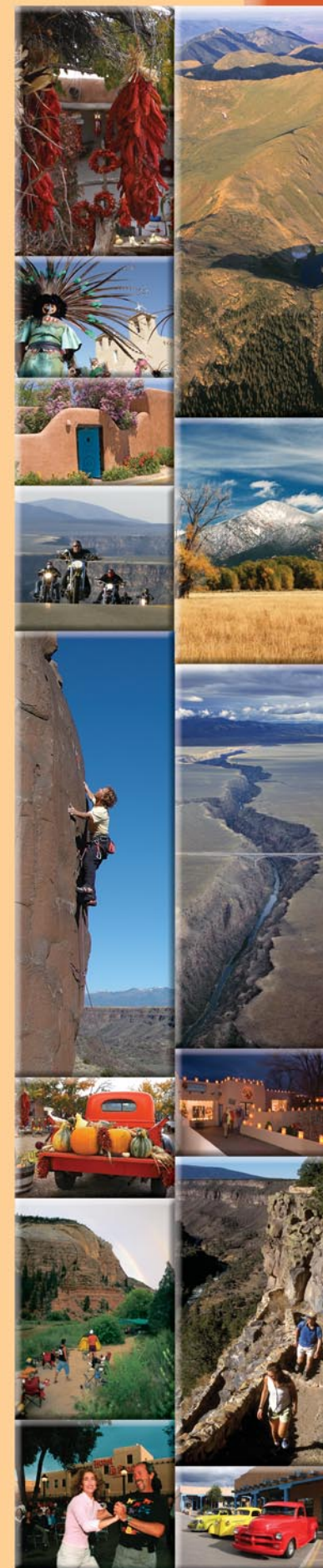
The Enchanted Circle of northern New Mexico officially includes Taos, Red River, Angel Fire, Eagle Nest, Questa, Taos Ski Valley and Taos Pueblo. Driving there from here includes more. You can take the gorgeous drive through Payson and on through Springerville AZ to Socorro NM on US 60 (past the Very Large Array deep space satellite dish cluster, placed here because of the exceedingly clear air). Or you can take the I-40 route through Gallup (either via Flagstaff or across open country via Payson to Holbrook). Either route brings you through Albuquerque and Santa Fe.

"The Taos area has been a multicultural visitor destination for over 1,000 years," says Rebecca Latham, Red River Tourism and Economic Development Director, "and Taos Pueblo is the only UNESCO Living World Heritage site in the US.

The greater Taos area is known internationally and continues to be a popular destination for exploring fine art, southwest history, culture, wild outdoor beauty and what they call inner life surprises. "We're a spiritual place that speaks to what's authentic. And it's all wrapped around our Enchanted Circle offerings—world-class food, natural beauty, entertainment and accommodations for every price range," said Cathy Connelly, Town of Taos PR Director and member of the Enchanted Circle Intergovernmental Council.

This summer, May through September, is the Taos 2009: Summer of Love, appropriate for the 40th anniversary of the movie *Easy Rider*. Dennis Hopper, director and co-star of the film and oft-resident of Taos, has two exhibits curated by him at the University of New Mexico Harwood Museum of Art. A summer full of events, art, film, and music are slated, and visitors are "invited to ride away to Taos and flash back to a freer time, find peace and love (and a little fun) in Taos this summer," Connelly said.

If you live in Arizona and haven't been to Taos, it's a must-visit. And high in the upper mountain desert, it has a great summer getaway climate. Information about the Enchanted Circle can be found at [www.enchantedcircle.org](http://www.enchantedcircle.org). Information on this summer's events, plus a chance to enter a four-day Summer of Love Sweepstakes worth \$4,000, can be found at [www.TaosSummerofLove.com](http://www.TaosSummerofLove.com). ■



## Actor Dennis Hopper celebrates the turbulence and exuberance of the '60s



Doug Magnus' photo of Dennis Hopper (above) was shot at the Mabel Lujan House in Taos. Photographs by Doug Magnus—"The Edge of Innocence," documenting Taos in the 1960s—runs from June 12 through July 31, 2009, with an artist's reception on Friday June 12, at RB Ravens Gallery, 4146 State Highway 68, Ranchos de Taos NM 87557, 575-758-8322. [www.rbavens.com](http://www.rbavens.com)

The Hopper exhibitions at the Harwood Museum run from May 8 through September 20. The Harwood Museum is just off Taos Plaza, at 238 Ledoux Street, Taos NM 87571, 575-758-9826. [www.harwoodmuseum.org](http://www.harwoodmuseum.org)

Taos is an unusual little town that occupies an unusually large niche in the nation's subconscious. Despite its remoteness and population of a mere 6,000, the town has an outsized reputation, due in part to Taos Pueblo (a World Heritage site), as well as its history as an art colony, home of Kit Carson, and one of the great hippie havens of the 1960s. And if the spirit of rebellion and creative fire that characterized Taos in the '60s could be summed up in one person, it would be Dennis Hopper.

This year is the 40th anniversary of the release of Hopper's ground-breaking film *Easy Rider*, some of which was filmed in and around Taos. To mark the occasion and the lasting influence of the '60s in general, Taos has declared this the Summer of Love. From May through September, museums, galleries, theaters and other civic institutions will be presenting art exhibitions, festivals, films, concerts, seminars and other events inspired by what was perhaps the most exuberant decade in Taos's long and unruly history.

Headlining the events is "Dennis Hopper at the Harwood," actually two exhibitions at the Harwood Museum of Art, that pay tribute to the "other" Dennis Hopper—the painter, photographer, curator and collector. It's not as well known, but Hopper's fine art has been exhibited in recent years at museums around the world. Last year, the Cinematheque Francaise mounted a massive retrospective of his work as artist, actor and filmmaker. He was the first living American to exhibit at the famed Hermitage Gallery in St. Petersburg, Russia.

"I think that we were all drawn to the sacred mountain, to the Pueblo," Hopper says, "and to the way of life in Taos. You either get it or you don't, and these people got it and that is why they live here. There are fewer than one million people who live above 7,000 feet, and the Pueblo is the oldest inhabited structure in the continent of North America. It is one of the seven sacred mountains of the Tibetans. Those things are important to us." ■