

**FOOD  
WINE  
TRAVEL** **EWWT**  
*Magazine*  
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*the road trips issue*

# letter from the editor

As 2020 comes to its end—and not soon enough for most of us—we all are probably hoping for a return to normal. The COVID-19 vaccine, which should begin its roll-out sometime this week, will hopefully allow us all to return to traveling and eating out and enjoying time with friends and family by mid-2021.

While it seems impossible that we were not able to travel much this year, many of our writers traveled in their own backyards and, in a few cases, beyond. We have all found out that there is beauty all around us. From the beaches and lakes of California to the small towns and Keys of Florida; from the wineries in the midwest to those dotting the west; from the gardens of the Brandywine Valley of Southeastern Pennsylvania and Northern Delaware to towns deep in the heart of Texas; on the Natchez Trace in the south to the Suffragette Trail in the north; from South Dakota to Las Vegas (New Mexico, not Nevada) to Friday Harbor to Montana and more, there is much to enjoy close to home. We're not stopping there, though. Some of our members take us on international road trips to taste wine in Chile, drives through Thailand and South Africa, a trip through Spain, and a boat trip to a pearl farm in Mexico. We'll even share a road-trip playlist to make your car time more enjoyable, and reasons why we should continue traveling even in this difficult time.

We hope that you enjoy the ride with us and that we inspire you to check out the world around you.

The editors and writers of *Food, Wine, Travel Magazine* send you our warmest wishes for all the magic, all the peace, and all the joy of the season. Stay safe!

*Chris*

Christine Cutler  
Executive Editor



**On the cover:**  
*The Road From Segesta*  
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# Road Trip Back to The Wild West

By Joeann Fossland

Road trips beckon, not just as a means to a destination, but as a casually-paced journey. After 50 years of road tripping, having a place to bed down on fresh clean sheets and proximity to good food and interesting surroundings is more my style than camping in the wilderness. Revitalized historic hotels along the trip are my way of appreciating the past, while enjoying all the comforts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Getting To Las Vegas

Have you been to Las Vegas? No, I'm not referring to the casino-filled city in Nevada. I'm referring to the *original* Las Vegas in east New Mexico.

It's an awesome short road trip from Albuquerque. Heading north on I-25, you can stop along the way for some site seeing in Santa Fe. Then get back on I-25 for another hour or so to Las Vegas.

Or, if you're coming from the north, Las Vegas is about 4.5 hours south of Denver. Alternatively, you can arrive by daily train.

## The Wild West

In the late 1800s, when the

Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroads opened up the southwest to adventurous travelers, a savvy businessman named Fred Harvey, realized the need for hotels, not just food stops along the way. After a long ride, a chance to hop off and be indulged was tempting. And, so it was Harvey began to build memorable stops to pamper the tired railroad pioneers.

In 1898, his first hotel, La Castañeda, was designed by Pasadena architect Fred Roehrig in a C-shape with a courtyard facing the tracks welcoming visitors off the trains into bustling Las Vegas, New Mexico.

## La Castañeda, The "Queen of Las Vegas"

A collaborative group headed by Allen Affledt and his artist wife Tina Mion have put life back into La Castañeda after 72 years of sitting vacant. Using local craftsmen, a simple, old-fashioned, quality restoration is reclaiming the hotel's original spirit and grandeur.

Still in the restoration process, La Castañeda, is open with 16 refurbished rooms, all lovingly



appointed with antique furniture. Each room is named for one of the legendary Harvey House Hotels and is being themed with a unique transom, hand-painted by Tina.

Harvey's vision for fresh, quality dining has been embraced at Bar Castañeda and at the soon-to-be-opened restaurant, Kin at Castañeda. Chef Sean Sinclair and his wife Katey are using locally sourced meats and produce to bring fine dining and creativity to Las Vegas. They have already

Photos (L-R): La Castaneda Bar; La Castaneda Antiques, La Castaneda lobby



garnered a 2020 Local Heroes award from Edible New Mexico magazine.

Currently, dining on the outside patios provides safe eating with maximum ambience. It's easy to imagine you are in a time warp that has transported you from a cross country trip into the lap of luxury.

### Historic Plaza Hotel—The Belle of the Southwest

In town, across from the square, the historic Plaza Hotel, opened in 1882, has also been beautifully restored — all part of the plans in revitalizing this historic city. Byron T's Saloon offers a good selection of New Mexican beers and wine. Perhaps you'll even encounter the resident ghost, Byron T, who is said to frequent the hotel, especially in room 310!

The gift shop is filled with Southwestern treasures. Decadent pastries from their coffee shop will tempt you to sit at an outdoor table and people watch as you enjoy your food and drink.

### Eat, Drink, Shop, and Hot Spring It

Plan to spend a couple of days in this charming, historic town to fully appreciate all that it has to offer. The original town square, in

front of the Plaza Hotel, was the location of a famous meeting of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders in 1899. Bands often play in the gazebo while folks relax on the green lawn under tall trees.

Las Vegas teems with history, boasting over 900 buildings in the National Register of Historic Places. Around the square and down the side streets, shops and restaurants provide plenty of variety for shopping and eating.

Do you like HOT food? Authentic New Mexican restaurants will serve their tasty green chiles on practically everything, as you imbibe on their specialty margaritas or mescal.

Antique, craft, and gift shops are filled with things you didn't even know you needed, and won't find

anywhere else. I bought my favorite red cowgirl boots here!

If you like to camp, fish or hike, there are plenty of opportunities within an hour of town.

Montezuma Hot Springs are located six miles northwest of Las Vegas with three public, rustic hot springs pools. Like the local food, the springs are hot—with the highest pool temperature at 122 degrees. Wear your bathing suit and bring a towel, but be aware that the area has no facilities.

Las Vegas At the time of this writing, New Mexico hotels are operating at up to 75 percent capacity and restaurants at 25 percent capacity due to the pandemic. I recommend calling ahead to confirm availability.



Photos (Clockwise from bottom left): Montezuma Hot Springs; New Mexican Lunch Las Vegas; Plaza Gift Shop; Las Vegas Street Art; Plaza Hotel lobby; Plaza Hotel. Las Vegas New Mexico

