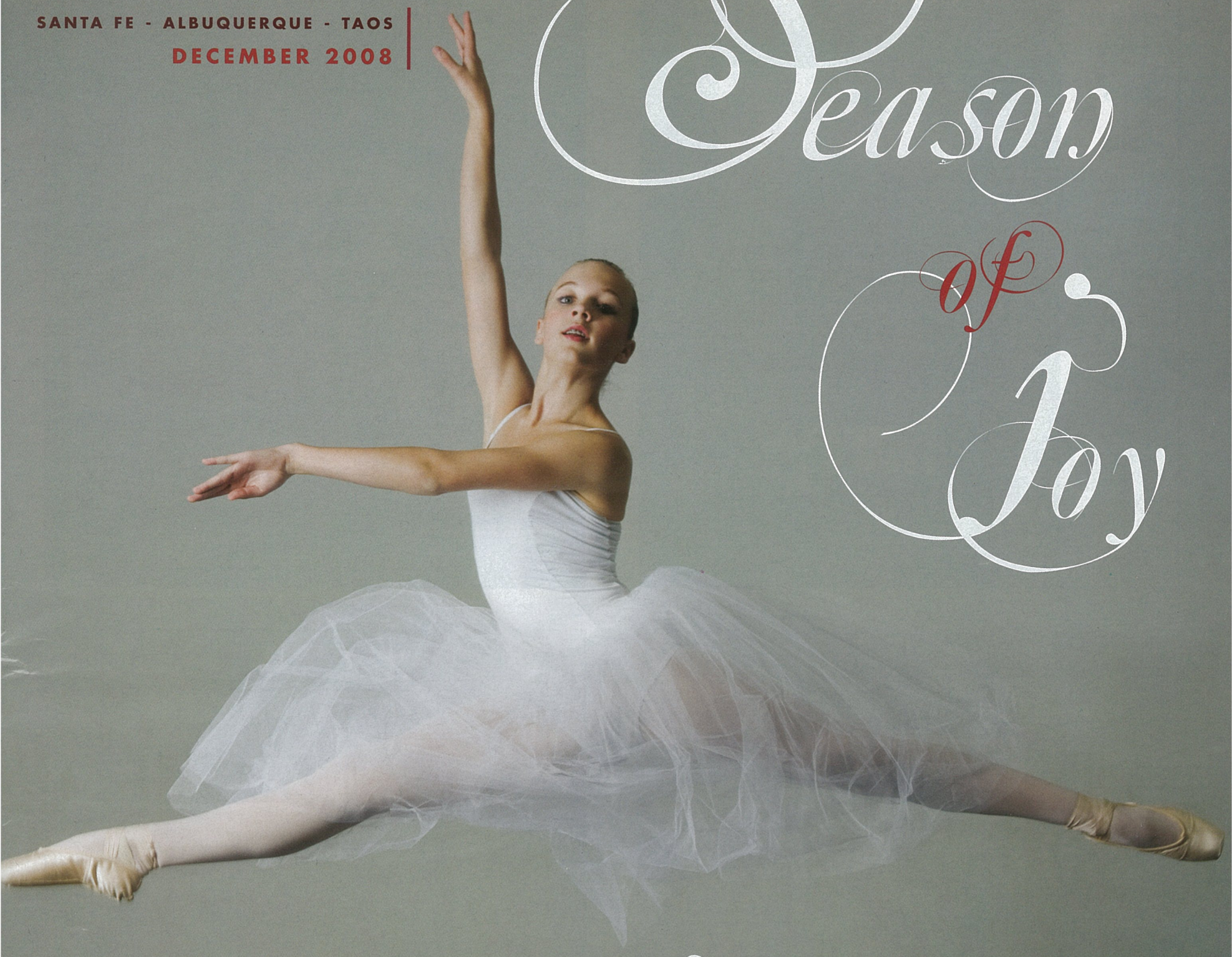


SANTA FE - ALBUQUERQUE - TAOS  
DECEMBER 2008

# Season *of* Joy



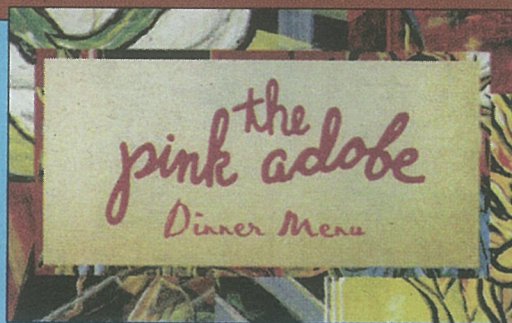
# local hangouts

story by KATIE MEHRER

We've seen French-Asian fusion. We've seen molecular cuisine. Around these parts, you don't have to go far for gourmet game or chipotle caviar. But Santa Fe is still a town of local hangouts that serve the stick-to-your-ribs New Mexican standards that we all live on. Places like The Shed, Tia Sophia's, and Tomasita's. These long-lived Santa Fe landmarks offer home cooking at its best — just like your *abuela* would make, if she felt like cooking tonight.

Much is made of the tourist trade in Santa Fe, and how visitors can't wait to pay top dollar for the latest creations of our celebrity chefs. But there is another foodie tourist as well. They come just for New Mexican food, for our everyday fare. They cherish their annual or bi-annual trips to Santa Fe when they can sink their teeth into the tamales at Pink Adobe, the tacos at Plaza Café, and a good old green chile cheeseburger at Bert's Burger Bowl. This is the food we all happily take for granted until we have to go out of town and suddenly discover that "out there" they think corn tortillas are supposed to taste like recycled newspaper, and if you say chilaquiles, somebody says "bless you!"

So whether you are in the mood for a breakfast burrito on-the-go, have a hankering to sit down and sink your teeth into some hearty green chile stew, or want to explore how other cultures have fused elegantly with New Mexican cuisine, you have plenty of choices among Santa Fe's well-loved, family-owned, local hangouts.



## The Pink Adobe

The Pink Adobe is a restaurant whose historic location creates a certain ambiance. With 300 years of history emanating from its thick earthen walls, the place is a true landmark, but the story of the Pink Adobe is that of Rosalea Murphy, a Louisiana chef who created an unlikely fusion of Cajun and New Mexican styles. Since 1944, the Pink has been serving delicacies such as lobster, crab, and shrimp blue corn enchiladas with Spanish rice. Another favorite is "Steak Donegan," a New York strip steak on a bed of green chile. "We have kept a lot of Rosalea's concepts and improved on them over the years," states Jim Stalder, a manager at the Pink Adobe. The establishment's fusion techniques are well-known around town, as is the bar food at its Dragon Room bar. There, gypsy stew, green chile stew, cheese enchiladas and buffalo nachos bring home the New Mexican flavor for any patrons who need to taste those hometown roots.

## The Shed

113 1/2 East Palace, Santa Fe  
Monday - Saturday  
Lunch 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
First come, first served  
Dinner 5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Reservations Recommended  
982.9030

## Tia Sophia's

210 W. San Francisco  
Near Municipal Parking Ramp  
Monday - Saturday  
7 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
983.9880



## Tia Sophia's

Famous for its breakfast burrito, Tia Sophia's has received the Santa Fe Reporter's "Best of Santa Fe" distinction numerous times. Presenting a simple recipe of good consistent food, attentive service, low prices and a friendly atmosphere, this Santa Fe landmark just keeps them coming back. "It's nothing earth shattering,

I'm sure, but this has worked for the 35 years we've been in business," says Nick Maryol, who owns the restaurant with his wife, Vada. True New Mexican combinations abound at Tia Sophia's, including the *atrisco* dish, which includes green chile stew, smothered rolled enchiladas, posole, and pinto beans — a little bit of each thing you're craving. The chalupas and sopaipillas at Tia Maria's are also well known, as they should be. The establishment still mixes the masa and forms its sopaipillas by hand. "I would imagine a pretty low number of other restaurants still do that. I'm sure I could count them on my hand," muses Maryol. Other specialties include the restaurant's chorizo, which is made from scratch for the Saturday breakfast special. Diners often say its dozen ingredients make it both spicy and savory at once. Green chile stew is another favorite and it sells year-round at this old-world hangout.

# THE SHED

## The Shed

Among the oldest and best-loved New Mexican restaurants around, The Shed has always been family-owned and operated by the Carswells. Since 1960, it has been located off Palace Avenue in a hacienda that dates back to 1692, so diners get to enjoy an authentic old-world environment as they eat traditional New Mexican foods. But the history of the Carswell family is one of immigrants from Illinois, via Carmel, California. Free-spirit artists, the founders of The Shed moved to the Santa Fe area in the fifties and learned how to cook local fare from their Hispanic neighbors. Courtney Carswell, son of the original founders, says, "We tried to duplicate what we tasted in peoples' homes, but on a larger scale. That's hard to do, but that's what our family has done for years. It's a major part of our life." Specialties include their breakfast #4: an enchilada smothered with red chile, onions, and cheddar cheese, and topped with an egg any style. Says Carswell, "This breakfast, for a lot of people, is an extraordinary combination of flavors that takes you home. It makes you say, 'oh yeah . . . I'm home now.'"



## The Plaza Café

Trumping fancier places in more secluded locations, the Plaza Café is Santa Fe's oldest restaurant. This diner on the

Plaza has been serving New Mexican dishes since 1918. In 1947, Greek immigrant Dionysi Razatos bought the place, and by the eighties he had added Greek cuisine to the menu. A restaurant that is a mix of everything, just like most of us Santa Feans, it still exudes 1950s diner charm, is decorated in artistic Santa Fe style, serves the best moussaka this side of the Atlantic, and doesn't skimp on the cheese in its blue-corn, green-chile carne asada enchiladas. With the Plaza Café's extensive menu offerings, the truly adventurous diner can combine comfort foods like chicken fried steak and mashed potatoes with a poufy sopaipilla and an authentic Greek salad, then finish it off with their all-American, award-winning, Apple Carmel Pie. Another attraction of the Plaza Café is the fact that its chile and beans are 100% vegetarian. Owner Daniel Razatos states, "You can get anything you want here. We serve a huge variety of food. That's the attraction of the Plaza Café."

### Tomasita's

500 S Guadalupe  
Monday - Saturday  
11 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
983-5721

### Pink Adobe

406 Old Santa Fe Trail  
Open daily  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Dinner 5:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.  
Bar noon - 9 p.m.  
983.7712

### Plaza Café

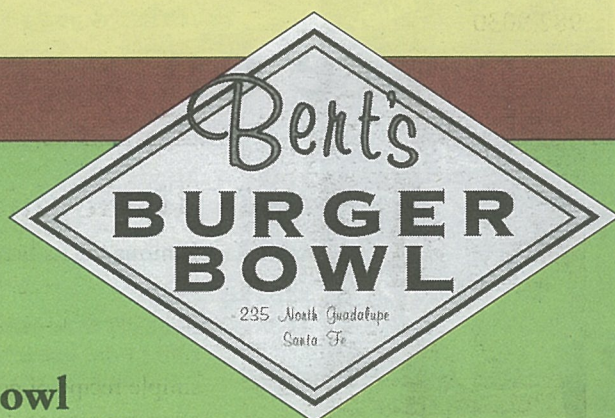
54 Lincoln Avenue  
Open daily  
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.  
982.1664

### Southside Café

(the Plaza Café's little brother)  
3011 Cerrillos  
Open daily  
7 a.m. - 9 p.m.  
424.0755

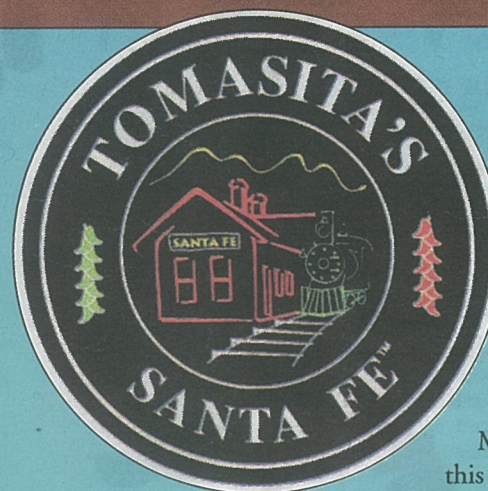
### Bert's Burger Bowl

235 N Guadalupe  
Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Saturday 10:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
Sunday Noon - 5 p.m.  
982.0215



## Bert's Burger Bowl

Bert's is not going to win any awards for its charming location or historic building, but when it comes to green chile cheeseburgers, everyone else can get out of the way. In business for more than a half-century, since 1954, the t-shirts on its staff proudly announce: "One Location Worldwide." Bert's claims to have invented the green chile cheeseburger and no one has publicly contradicted them. For just \$3.50, it is the most accessible true culinary experience in town. Bert's manager, Carla Sanchez, states that Lota' Burger, across the street, will never offer the Bert's Burger Bowl experience. She explains, "We use the old-fashioned (flame) grill and we make our own homemade patties. Over there, it's made on the flat grill." In recent years, Bert's has expanded its half-pound and quarter-pound burger offerings to include bison, Kobe beef, ostrich, pork and lamb, and the establishment still piles high every sandwich with mustard, pickle, lettuce, onion and tomato. Ultra-casual outdoor tables keep it real at Bert's where true burger aficionados flock for that eat-it-with-your-hands downtown experience.



## Tomasita's

Tomasita's, since 1973, is famous for serving incredible "homestyle" New Mexican fare. Never to be confused with Mexican food, or Mexican-American food, this establishment's truly New Mexican style depends on loads of green chile. Ignatios Patsalis, the current owner of the family establishment, is cousin to Georgia Maryol, its founder. "Everything here is draped in Hatch green chile," he says of the restaurant's spicy claim to fame, adding that Tomasita's is also famous for its generosity. Plates are huge and full of pinto beans and posole. Also well-known for its chile rellenos, Tomasita's serves about 1,500 each week to loyal locals and tourists alike.