



In search of literary Taos

Text by Steve Fuhlendorf

BACKGROUND FOR YOUR TOUR

Over the last century Taos has become known as a haven for those with an artistic flair. The combination of pristine blue skies, spectacularly varied landscape and diverse cultures have drawn visual artists who are anxious to capture the scenery and people on canvas, clay or other media. What is not as widely known is the influence of many literary giants who have used these same attributes to capture a unique lifestyle on

the printed page. Come with us as we journey back through a sometimes raucous century of literature-Taos style.

For more information on events that highlight the literary arts in Taos, go to www.taoschamber.com and click the Calendar page.

1. MABEL DODGE LUHAN HOUSE

240 MORADA LANE
(ONE BLOCK EAST OF TAOS PLAZA)

It is fitting that a tour of Taos literary figures begins with the matriarch of the Taos literary scene. Mabel Dodge was an

intellectual, an heiress and an accomplished writer in her own right. Once she had experienced Taos she wanted to share its magic with her eastern friends. She set upon a quest to gather her “geniuses” at her home and in the adobe residences that surround it. Such literary legends as D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley and Willa Cather enlivened the Taos social scene during the 1920’s and ‘30’s. These three also figure prominently in other stops on our tour. (30 min.)

Information: 505-751-9686

2. TAOS PUEBLO

LOCATED TWO MILES EAST OF TAOS PLAZA

The historic Taos Pueblo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has been continuously inhabited for more than a thousand years. It is the scene for several literary works that have defined their genre, including Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World*, written in 1932, set on a New Mexico Pueblo, which Huxley experienced during his time in Taos. Frank Waters, whose many books on the southwest have covered diverse topics from the legend of Wyatt Earp to Native American life, set “*The Man Who Killed a Deer*” on Taos Pueblo. Of course, the list of Taos Pueblo related literature does not stop with these two works. Literally hundreds of books and articles have been written about this historic place. A visit here will bring you the opportunity to feel what these writers felt as they tread in the footsteps first created hundreds of years ago. (One hour)

Information: 505-758-1028

3. D.H. LAWRENCE RANCH

Head north from Taos about 15 miles from the Taos Plaza on State Road 522, then another 6 miles east into the forested Sangre

de Cristo Range via a well-marked dirt road

D.H. Lawrence, author of “*Lady Chatterley’s Lover*,” among many other works, is said to have had his ashes mixed with the cement of the shrine that was built in his honor on the 16-acre ranch that bears his name. The University of New Mexico owns the ranch now and it is as fascinating for its history as for the beauty in which you will find yourself surrounded. (One hour)

4. LA HACIENDA DE LOS MARTÍNEZ

TWO MILES SOUTHWEST OF TAOS PLAZA ON LOWER RANCHITOS ROAD

Willa Cather wrote “*Death Comes for the Archbishop*” in 1927 about life on the early New Mexican frontier. Padre Jose Martínez, who was raised at the residence, is the Padre who was characterized in the book. Padre Martínez was also credited with bringing the first printing press to New Mexico. The hacienda, built in 1804 by Severino Martínez, was the final stop on the Camino Real. (One hour.)

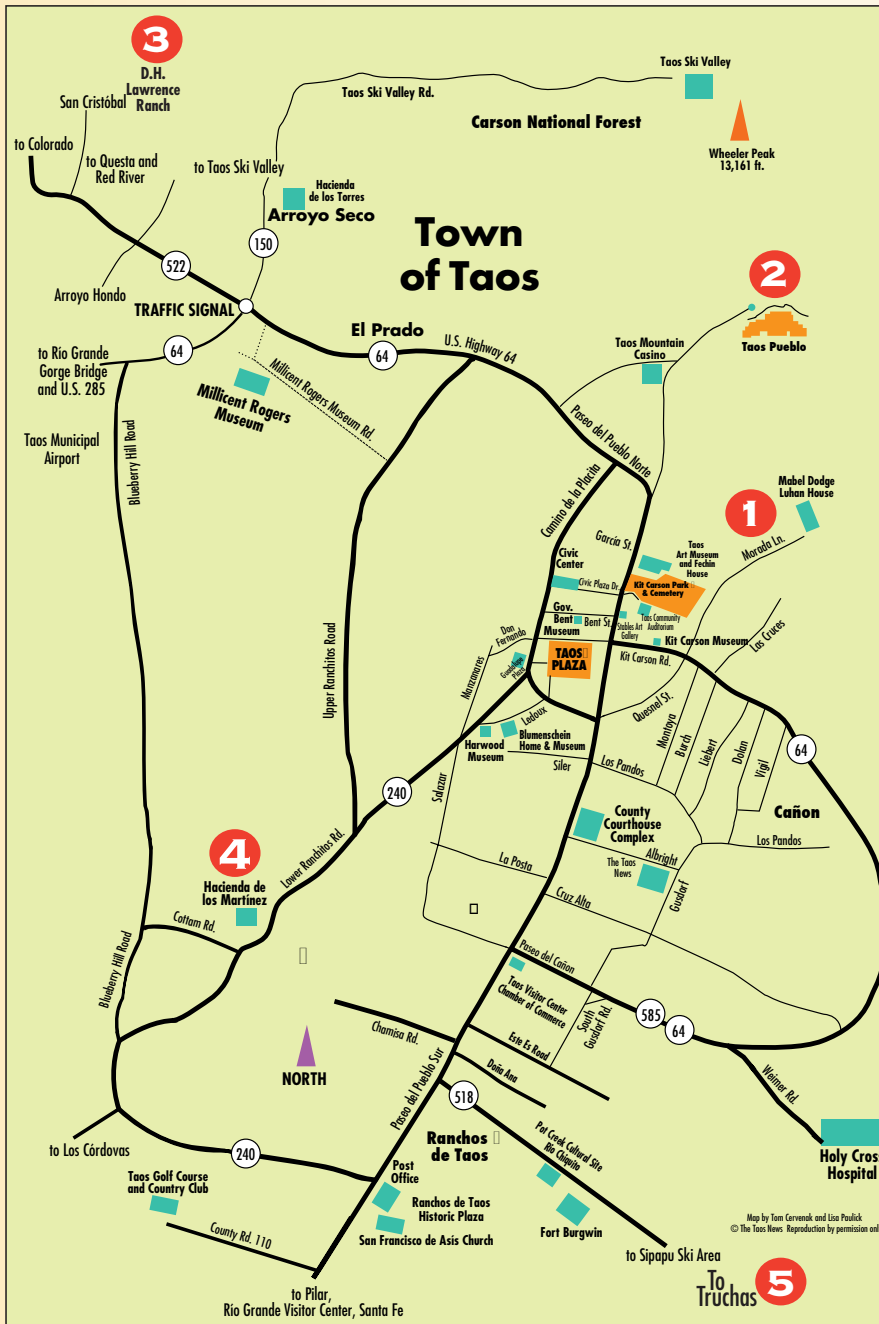
5. TRUCHAS

30 MILES SOUTH OF THE TAOS PLAZA ON HWY 76, ALONG THE HIGH ROAD TO TAOS

In 1988 “*The Milagro Beanfield War*,” directed by Robert Redford, came to theaters with a funny, yet tender portrayal of small town northern New Mexican culture. Much of the movie was filmed in Truchas, along the scenic High Road to Taos. Much has remained the same about the town nearly 20 years after the film. The novel from which the movie was derived was written by John Nichols, whose socially and environ-

mentally conscious works of fiction and non-fiction have made him an icon on the Taos literary scene. (30 min.)

FOR SUMMER/FALL EVENTS GO TO www.taoschamber.com



Greg Kreller