

— ROCKY MOUNTAIN BRIDE —

ELOPE NEW MEXICO

A GUIDE TO ELOPING IN THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT

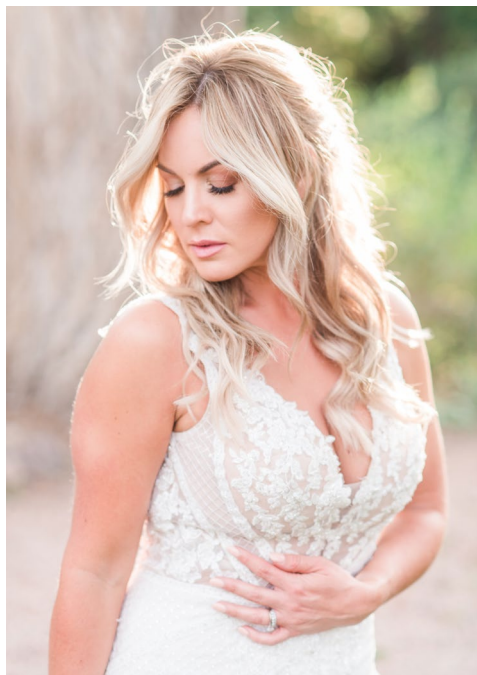




Enchanting NEW MEXICO

There's a reason New Mexico is known as the 'Land of the Enchantment.' Prepare to be enticed by its diverse landscapes and picture-perfect backdrops. "From forest to desert to plains and other worldly-natural rock formations, you'll find a little of everything," Carissa & Ben Photography. New Mexico also prides itself on its culture, represented through its architecture, style of clothing and food - not to mention the most authentic chili you'll find. Eloping in New Mexico creates an opportunity to escape the bustle of reality and become centered with the universe. "From poetic skies and rainbows to cracked red dirt and humble quiet mountains, it's all very romantic and beautiful and most likely unlike anything you have ever known," Renegade Floral. You'll fall in love with the dramatic beauty and authenticity, leaving you with an elopement and experience you'll always remember.

SOUTHWESTERN BOHO



"Just because you are eloping doesn't mean that your day can't be filled with meaningful details. You can still include heartfelt vows written in vow books, a 'we eloped' announcement, florals, champagne, dessert, there are no rules" - Maura Jane Photography

This romantic and rustic elopement styled shoot plays off of a bright color palette and showcases the natural beauty of New Mexico. Maura Jane Photography captured this cozy elopement at Acequia Gardens, a brand new venue in Santa Fe that sits on five acres of lush gardens. The ceremony site sits in front of the historic Acequia Madre House, a home built in 1926 by a grandmother, mother and daughter who built and lived in it for decades. The full pampas grass arch was created by A Beautiful Theme who planned, designed and executed both the florals and the shoots overall design. The arch was a statement piece that seamlessly tied the southwestern theme together! Pops of terracotta, orange and blush, and LOTS of pampas grass also helped add a boho edge. Wooden benches lined the aisle, helping add to the rustic feel. The color palette was inspired by fall weather and stationery designed by Andy Mejia & Co. Just because elopements are small, doesn't mean you can't do something fun!

"There are no rules! This is your day and you can include whatever you want to make it feel just that more special."
- Maura Jane Photography







UNIQUE TOUCHES

Seating charts offer a unique and exciting welcome for guests, especially elopements! This unique escort display provided by A Beautiful Theme was the inspiration behind the shoot. Andi Mejia & Co created the individual assignments as a nod to the natural beauty of the state by using bright colors seen in the tassels, adding a New Mexican twist.

More pampas grass and blush-colored floral helped make this piece pop even more.

"Incorporate a stylish lounge full of striking rich wooden furniture and velvet pillows. It's the perfect place to lounge with a drink from the bar." - Maura Jane Photography



SWEET ENDINGS

The couple indulged in sushi and champagne from Walter Burke Catering before cutting into the cake. The two-tiered blush creme cake topped with delicate roses from Three Baby Birds Baking, tied in perfectly to the garden atmosphere.



CREATIVE TEAM

Venue: Acequia Gardens | acequiagardens.com

Wedding Planner & Florist: A Beautiful Theme | abeautifultheme.com

Photographer: Maura Jane Photography | maurajanephotography.com

Caterer & Sweets: Three Baby Birds Baking | 3babybirds baking.com

Catering: Walter Burke Catering | walterburkecatering.com

Invites & Calligraphy: Andi Mejia & Co | andimejia.com

Bridal Boutique: Bridal Elegance by Darlene | bridalelegancenm.com

Gown Designer: Maggie Sottero | maggiesottero.com

Bride's Shoes: Badgley Mischka | badgleymischka.com

Hairstylist: Jewel Hair Design | jewelhd.com

Makeup Artist: Betty Rose by Alanna | bettyrose.com

Rentals: Colorado Party Rentals | cpartyrentals.com

Lounge Set: Darling Details | darlingdetailsrentals.com

Elopements.

What makes New Mexico a special place to elope!

Why elope? New Mexico is so much more than a destination, it's an experience. There's something about the wide open spaces, desert sun and air, that shouts forever. You'll truly feel as though you're alone with your partner and can completely take in the moment. The best part? There are so many secluded and intimate places to say 'I Do.' From exchanging vows in the middle of the desert at White Sands National Park to opting for a fall feel at Albuquerque Mosque - there's a little of something for everyone.

"It's very rare that within a 100-mile radius one can go from the most stark, barren desert land into lush green mountain range and then all sorts of uniqueness in between," - Shutterfreak. Bonus - you can almost guarantee pictureperfect weather. New Mexico offers sunshine 300 days of the year. You'll also find that vendors here are creative, passionate people who thrive on authenticity and their planning plays into the culture of New Mexico. "The culture is very different compared to the rest of the country. We have lots of indigenous, Hispanic and Mexican influences which showcase in our architecture, colors and food." - Carissa & Ben Photography. You truly experience culture and style in every corner of the state. From the iconic Native American dwellings to the rich Hispanic heritage that flows throughout.

Just because your celebration is small, doesn't mean it has to be short. Why not turn it into a 3-day or weeklong adventure? So many vendors have shifted into offering signature elopement services. "These signature elopement experiences begin with locations that have taken us years to find, unsurpassed in beauty, privacy and wonder," - Shutterfreak. The glamping destination, KitFox, offers overnight packages in the high desert just outside of Santa Fe with scenic ceremony backdrops, farm-to-table dining, fireside hangs, star watching, and miles of trails to explore. Or if you're inviting close family, Los Poblanos Historic Inn & Organic Farm offers packages that include coordination, food and more on their 25-acre property. If you're looking for a place to get lost in the moment and appreciate its beauty and culture, New Mexico offers that and so much more.

Julie + Jake



Julie and Jake were working together before they started dating. They were also both in nursing school, and after completing a semester they wanted to celebrate with friends. No one showed up to the celebration except for them, it worked in their favor. The duo hit it off and both knew they wanted 'forever' with each other. A year and a half later Jake proposed, they planned an intimate desert wedding in just two months.

ADVICE TO FUTURE COUPLES

"Be with someone who understands and loves you for all your quirks."



DESERT OASIS

Secluded in the Desert: Julie and Jake chose Desert Harbor Retreat for its intimacy and breathtaking view. They offer lodging and elopement packages and pride themselves on deafening silence and endless starry skies. The couple opted for a desert-mountain vibe and incorporated stunning mountain-cut arches into their ceremony. They were married on the side of a cliff with their closest family by their side. The red landscape and desert sand helped bring this couples elopement vision to life, along with colorful pops of rust and light orange floral from Floral Fetish. Julie's favorite moment was at the beginning of the ceremony when everything went quiet and she was able to take in the view and completely be present in the moment.

*"The New Mexico open skies are also unique to the world painted in an ever changing array of color, shape and movement.
Eloping in New Mexico creates an opportunity to escape the bustle of reality and become centered with the universe."
- Shutterfreak*



- VENDORS -

Venue: Desert Harbor Retreat | desertharborretreat.com

Wedding Planner: Raymond Linam | desertharborretreat.com

Photographer: Shutterfreak | shutterfreak.com

Caterer & Sweets: The Local Baker | thelocalbaker.com

Florist: Floral Fetish | floralfetishabq.com

Bridal Boutique: Facchianos Bridal | facchianos.com

Gown Designer: Rebecca Ingram | pinterest.com/facchianos/rebecca-ingram

Bride's Shoes: Dingo | dingo1969.com

Bride's Ring: Modern Gents Trading Company | modgents.com

Beauty: Genica Lee | genicalee.love

Officiant: Raymond Linam | desertharborretreat.com

Lodging: Desert Harbor Retreat | desertharborretreat.com



OLD-SCHOOL GETAWAY

As soon as the celebrations wrapped up, Julia and Jake took off in an old-school Land Rover to settle under the stars at their cottage at Desert Harbor Retreat.

Elopement Tips + Advice

Elopements allow you to be more creative and truly take in the moment! We're sharing some tips to make it a smooth and memorable experience:

Get inspired! Are you looking for a desert vibe or mountainous views? Do some research 4-6 months ahead.

Pick your spot. After deciding what vibe you are going for, make sure you nail down the location first.

Book your vendors. Even if it's just the two of you or family too, hiring vendors will ensure your day is detailed and stress-free.

Get creative. Think of things that you and your couple love and incorporate those details into your elopement. Do one of your favorite recipes? Add your favorite drink, whiskey? Do an intimate whiskey tasting with just the two of you. Create memorable experiences.

Plan an after party. After the ceremony, plan something special - either your own intimate dinner party or plan a getaway across the desert using one of the many Jeep rentals in town.

Adventure. You're in the Land of the Enchantment so make the most of it! Extend your stay and visit the White Sands National Park or visit the Manitou Cliff Dwellings.

Breathe. Make sure you go with the flow! Elopements are typically easier to plan than a full-blown wedding so use that to your advantage. Don't sweat over the small stuff like weather, go with the flow and let it play into your adventure of eloping.

Alaina + Jack

Alaina and Jack met at a mutual friends baby shower and were briefly introduced but never exchanged a true conversation. Little did Alaina know, her friends encouraged Jack to make a move later on, and he did! The two went on their first date at a local whiskey bar and fell in love while sipping on an Old Fashioned and a Manhattan. Three years later, Jack knew it was time. He sneakily found the ring designer of Alaina's dream (thanks to Instagram) and bought it! On their planned trip to Morocco that year, Jack wanted to create the perfect moment for the proposal. He drove to multiple cliffs and beachfronts, little did Alaina know he was trying to find the perfect proposal spot. Hours later, sitting on the beach he took the ring out of his pocket and finally asked!





FINDING THE PERFECT LOCATION

After being engaged for six months, they eloped at Ghost Ranch, a 21,000 acre retreat nestled near the village of Abiquiu in northern New Mexico. The couple wanted to go somewhere that was far from home and provided a beautiful backdrop. Carissa & Ben Photography captured their natural elopement filled with beautiful red rock backgrounds and canyons. Their arch was a focal point for the ceremony and served as a reminder of their family. Jack's parents drove all the way to New Mexico from California to drop off the custom arch his father made by hand in his shop. The bright orange and red flowers designed by Renegade Floral played into their southwestern and boho vibe. They also incorporated a cow skull from Santa Fe and lanterns from Morocco (where they got engaged). After the ceremony they built a fire-pit, and drank Champagne under the stars.

TIPS FROM THE COUPLE

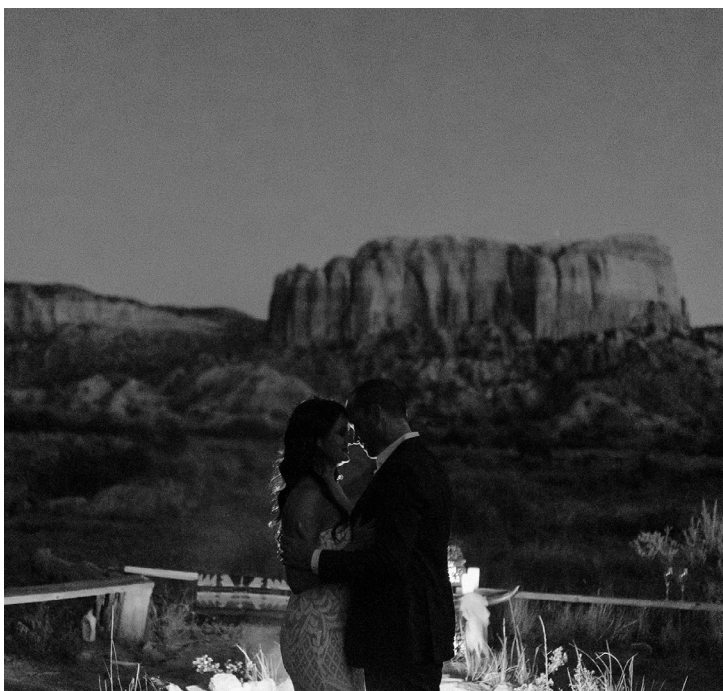
"I truly believe if there is a day to be "selfish" and focus on only you and your partner, it should be your wedding day." Although the ceremony was just the two of them, Alaina and Jack still found ways to include their family, like taking them dress shopping and throwing a small bridal shower. When they returned back home they had a celebration with their immediate families.





ADVICE TO FUTURE COUPLES

“Our lives are so busy and we’re constantly being pulled in so many directions that having a few days to disconnect and just focus on each other and the commitment we’re making to each other was exactly what we needed.”



- VENDORS -

Venue: Ghost Ranch | ghost ranch.org
Photographer: Carissa & Ben Photography | carissaandben.com
Florist: Renegade Floral | renegade floral.com
Bridal Boutique: Lulus | lulus.com
Bride's Shoes: Steve Madden | steve madden.com
Bride's Ring: Erika Winters | erika winters.com
Bride's Jewelry: Ferkos Fine Jewelry | ferkos fine jewelry.com
Groom's Suit: Suit Supply | suit supply.com
Groom's Shoes: Allen Edmunds | allenedmonds.com
Hair: Four Seasons Resort Santa Fe | four seasons.com/santafe
Makeup: Genica Lee | genica lee love
Officiant: De Novo Concierge | theconciergepastors.com
Lodging: Four Seasons Resort Santa Fe | four seasons.com/santafe

Top Places to Elope

Overwhelmed with the amount of places New Mexico offers? We've narrowed it down to some of the top places to elope!

Acequia Gardens: Santa Fe | acequiagardens.com

Desert Harbor Retreat: Sandia Park | desertharborretreat.com

Jemez Pueblo: Sandocal County | jemezpuablo.org

Hacienda Dona Andrea: Santa Fe | haciendadonaandrea.com

Laguna Vista: Eagle Nest | lagunavistalodge.com

Los Poblanos: Albuquerque | lospoblanos.com

Ghost Ranch: Abiquiu | ghostranch.org

Randall Davey Audubon Center & Sanctuary: Santa Fe | randalldavey.audubon.org

Sandia Mountains: Bernalillo | fs.usda.gov

Sandia Crest: Albuquerque | fs.fed.us/wildflowers/regions/southwestern/SandiaCrest

KitFox: Santa Fe | staykitfox.com

Pecos National Forest: Pecos | nps.gov/peco

The Desert Compass: Albuquerque | thedesertcompass.com

The Stakeout: Taos | stakeouttaos.com

The Modern Taos House: Taos | moderntaoshouse.com

White Sands National Park: Southern New Mexico | nps.gov/whsa/planyourvisit/weddings



Samantha + Zach

Samantha and Zach were both living in New York City when they met on the dating app, 'The League.' After going on their first date at a restaurant, they knew it wouldn't be the last. Nearly two years later, Zach proposed inside the Met museum. He got down on one knee inside the hall of Greek and Roman art, filled with high ceilings and white statues. He even hired a photographer to act as a fake friend. Zach pulled off the perfect surprise proposal that Samantha is still so impressed by to this day!



PRIVATE MOMENTS

Samantha and Zach were initially planning a 150+ person wedding, and when they decided to downsize to an elopement, it made the process a lot less stressful and simple. They set up their ceremony at Modern Taos House, a remote and picturesque Airbnb in Taos. They enlisted the help of their dog Nellie to act as their officiant, paw print and all! Lavel Marie Photography captured their intimate elopement in the desert. The couple said saying their vows alone, to just each other, was one of the most romantic and private moment they'll never forget.



PERSONAL TOUCHES

Using candles made from old wine bottles, they created a pathway to their ceremony, along with plants and cacti. A big bright and white bouquet designed by Enchanted Florist Taos added a soft and romantic feel to their day. Zach loves to cook so he put together their menu for the entire weekend featuring many of their favorite dishes and special bottles of wine and champagne they have been saving. Samantha did her own hair and makeup and even threw together their own Spotify playlist. “I think what makes an elopement special is bringing in those classic elements to your wedding day. Exchange special vows and have the photographer there to take special pictures, have a toast, eat that cake, take time to have that first dance and sign that marriage license.”

ADVICE TO FUTURE COUPLES

“Being a ‘corona bride’ or a COVID couple was not easy, and I’d never want to downplay the stress, difficult decision-making and sadness that does come with changing one of most important days of your life around and the realization it simply isn’t safe to celebrate that day with alongside all the family and friends you had originally planned to. But amid a global pandemic, racial unrest and the most tumultuous time of many of our lives, a lavish wedding really just didn’t feel important anymore. We’re grateful for that perspective and hope it’s something that carries on long after this pandemic ends.”

- VENDORS -

Venue: Modern Taos House - Taos, NM
moderntaoshouse.com

Photographer: Lavel Marie Photography
lavelmariephotography.com

Brides' Dress Shop: ASOS | asos.com

Bride's Accessories: BlueSkyHorizons Etsy Shop | etsy.com

Bride's Jewelry: Diamond Foundry + Vrai and Pro

Bride's Ring Designer: Sarah O Jewelry | sarahojewelry.com

Groom's Suit: Suit Supply | suitsupply.com

Groom's Accessories: Converse Sneakers

Officiant: Couple's dog Nellie

Floral: Enchanted Florist Taos | taosflorist.com

Lodging: Modern Taos House



*Where to stay the night
of your elopement.*

Adobe & Pines Inn: Taos | adobepines.com

El Monte Sagrado: Taos | elmontesagrado.com

Four Seasons Resort Rancho Encantado: Santa Fe | fourseasons.com/santafe

Hotel Luna Mystica: El Prado | hotellunamystica.com

La Fonda on the Plaza: Santa Fe | lafondasantafe.com

Los Poblanos Historic Inn & Organic Farm: Albuquerque | lospoblanos.com

Rosewood Inn of the Anasazi: Santa Fe | rosewoodhotels.com/anasazi

The Desert Compass: Albuquerque | thedesertcompass.com

The Inn of The Five Graces: Santa Fe | fivegraces.com



CONTRIBUTING VENDORS

Carissa + Ben Photography | carissaandben.com

KitFox | staykitfox.com

Lavel Marie Photography | lavelmariephotography.com

Los Poblanos Historic Inn & Organic Farm | lospoblanos.com

Maura Jane Photography | maurajanephotography.com

Renegade Floral | renegadefloral.com

Shutterfreak | shutterfreak.com