



A Simply Super Retreat

Ruidoso, New Mexico

When aviator Larry Hahn finds home in Santa Teresa, NM “just too damn hot,” he and his bride of 50 years, Valentine, with maybe one or two or seven of the grandkids along, fuel up and flee to their idea of New Mexican heaven: Ruidoso Set on the eastern slope of the pine-carpeted Sacramento Mountains and presided over by 12,003-ft Sierra Blanca, this sophisticated year-round retreat draws the Hahns with a host of what Larry raves are “super” things to see and do.

“Ruidoso is a hidden secret,” he says. “Great golf, great trout fishing, great skiing, great theater...” And great balls o’ fire! he might add, it’s great dining and kicking back, too. There’s even the Ruidoso Downs horse racing track, site of Labor Day’s All-American Quarter Horse Futurity, one of the world’s riches races with its \$2.5 million purse. And with all the hiking, camping, biking and delighting nearby in Lincoln National Forest, birthplace of that great American icon Smokey “Only you can prevent forest fires” Bear, Ruidoso has outdoor action galore.

“If you don’t like to ski, just wait until summer,” advises the flyer whose classic Ruidoso day is a morning of downhill schussing at fabulous Ski Apache and an afternoon on the fairways of Links Championship Golf Course, found at the

hotel he recommends, the Hawthorne Suites Golf & Convention Resort (www.ruidosohawthorn.com). “A super place,” Hahn raves. Sup at the Texas Club (“one of the more classy restaurants in Ruidoso”), or cut into a fine New York cut at the Cattle Baron (“a great, great steakhouse”) and you’ll be in super shape, says Hahn, to take advantage of Ruidoso’s intriguing attractions.

First there is the Hubbard Museum of the American West, one of New Mexico’s most respected museums for its incomparable collection of 10,000 artworks and objects related to the horse – paintings, drawings, bronzes, carriages, saddles of the Pony Express, cowboy and Indian clothing, etc. “This is a must!” says Hahn. There’s Dowling’s Historic Old Mill, where Billy the Kid hid out. The chuckwagon dinner and western show of the Flying J. Ranch. Gold panning excursions via the Lincoln Gold Mining Company. Sightseeing the spectacular golf course-side homes of what Hahn calls “the Texas oil people.” “They don’t have a mountain of their own in Texas, so they like Ruidoso’s,” he says, which is certainly okay by him: there’s plenty of his wonderful Ruidoso to go around.

There is also gaming at the casinos of both Ruidoso Downs and the Inn of the Mountain Gods, the luxury golf-fishing-

tennis-equestrian resort run by the local Mescalero Apache tribe; (opening date for the new renovation: April 2005). From summer’s Mountain of Blues blues festival to the theater, dance and music on stage at the Spencer Theatre for the Performing Arts, a modern architectural marvel, Ruidoso indeed is a retreat ideal for dreamers and doers like Hahn, a retired business owner whose many passions and avenues of expertise include flying to and from Baja, Mexico. “Check out my www.bajadreams.com,” he slyly sneaks in a plug. “It’s really super, no kidding!”

“I’ve been dreaming since I was a kid and took my first flying lessons at age 14 in the cropduster area of Imperial, California – \$10 a lesson,” he says. “And what an adventure since then!” When Larry Hahn’s travel dreams deposit him and his family in Ruidoso, it’s a sure bet this is a destination for one and all to take note. After all, “you gotta know,” he laughs, “it’s a fun place!”

For more Ruidoso, NM info, visit www.ruidoso.net. ✕



Larry and Val and the Aztec make three for fun in Ruidoso