



Leanne in New Mexico



Leanne in New Mexico:  
Photos of and by Leanne Yanabu  
2002-2012



I've lived in Albuquerque since 1997. Here are some pictures of places I've been, my friends, and things we like to do here.

Top: LaLena Wilderness, March 2011. Next page, clockwise from top left: Tent Rocks, Guadalupe Mesa, Southern New Mexico highway, El Rancho de los Golondrinas.





Annapurna is a popular chai house one block from the University. John Simmons plays music once a month at Sunday Brunch, and I drink tea and write letters. March 2009



A cup of tea and a coconut macaroon. Perfect for a chilly day at a coffee house. March 2009



Funny Times in the sunroom and a cup of cocoa -- it doesn't get any better than this. Feb 2009



John likes to play music when he is at home. July 2010



In the summer he sometimes sings on the front porch.



Pitch likes to hang out with John. He seems to enjoy the music.



My buddy Brian Schwartz and I hiked Mount Taylor, about 100 miles west of Albuquerque. I like to get out into the wilderness areas of New Mexico on the weekends.

August 18, 2012





John at Ragin' Shrimp, a cajun restaurant on Central Avenue. In the background, Ginger and Debbie Crowe, and Brooks Albrecht. May 2011



I joined Lobo Toastmasters in 2010, to improve my leadership and speaking skills. Clockwise from top left: Harido Teets, Devonte Watson, Leoneto Elizario, Mark Worthy, Vladimir L'Ouverture, Yuen Chen, Miles Bullock, me, Jason Fuller. May 2012



This was an abandoned cabin on the east side of South Mountain, 30 miles east of Albuquerque. Great views, but a lonely outpost. July 2012



Summers in New Mexico seem to last from mid-May to late September. They have the reputation for being hot and dry, but actually they are the wettest months, averaging over one inch in July, August, and September.



Summer means flowers, and gardening, and laundry drying in a snap. Summer means sun and beautiful blue skies, with massive thunderstorms piling up in the afternoons. Sometimes I have visitors in summer.







John and his friend David Wilt played music for children dancing in the Albuquerque Uptown shopping mall fountains. July 2011



I invited some friends for music and a picnic at Hidden Park, a local gem. L-R: Joseph Garcia, Mark Worthy, and Hassan Abassary. Summer Solstice 2011



Villanueva State Park is two hours east and north of Albuquerque. It is peaceful and serene. John played his guitar while Christine Abassary and I hiked the red cliffs above the Pecos River. 2011



Holy Ghost campsite in the Pecos Wilderness. It was so rainy there was mud everywhere and mushrooms in the mountains. September 2011

Opposite page top: Wheeler Peak, 2012.

Opposite page bottom: Southern New Mexico skies and weed heads illuminated by late autumn sunlight, 2008.







The annual "Marigold Parade", also known as Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead is held the Sunday after Halloween.

It is a neighborhood parade and party, honoring those who have passed on, but it also features political commentary in the form of skeletons chiding the rich and powerful who do not defend the needs of the poor.



This is one of the cultural events in New Mexico that feels real, and is supported by the people.

Old and young paint their faces like skulls and sport colorful dresses and formal wear -- top hats, gowns, colorful pompoms - - that reference Jose Guadalupe Posada, who originated the look.

November 2012





## Why I Live in New Mexico

My friend Putnay says it best: "Living here is so easy."

It reminds me of California, where I was born. New Mexico now is how I imagine southern California was, before the smog and congestion.

I like the culture. Like Hawaii and California, New Mexico is a majority-minority state; no ethnic group enjoys a majority. The local culture values Hispanic and Native American influences.

It reminds me of the Peace Corps. New Mexico adobe looked like Mali. And the attitudes, the whole "mañana" approach -- I grew up with that in Hawaii; and it was endemic to Mali. Why hurry? Life is worth savoring from day to day.

I like the four seasons. New Mexico has hot, sunny summers and long autumn evenings with the smell of piñon, snowy winters that give way to warm spring weather with flowers galore. The altitude gives the light a fantastic clarity.

I like the outdoors. In New Mexico you can hike nearly year-round, and you will have the trails mostly to yourself, because most people have family here, and they spend their weekends with their families.



I moved here in 1997, over fifteen years ago. I have lived here longer than I've lived anywhere else, including Hawaii.

That makes me sad, yet, I want to hold on to the life I have made here. I made this book to show what I like about living in New Mexico.

Albuquerque, New Mexico  
January 2013



Jemez, November 2012