

# VIDA BONITA PECOS

## *Guest Welcome Guide*

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*Luxury Cabin Rentals in the Heart of the Santa Fe National Forest*

2444 NM HWY 63 · Terrero, New Mexico 87573

[pecosbnb.com](https://pecosbnb.com)

### AT A GLANCE

Check-In: 3:00 PM (Summer) / 2:00 PM (Winter)

Check-Out: 11:00 AM (Summer) / 10:00 AM (Winter)

Door Code: Last 4 digits of your cell phone number

WiFi: High-speed Starlink — available in all cabins

Quiet Hours: 11:00 PM – 8:00 AM

Emergency: Message host through your booking platform

Nearest Town: Village of Pecos — 45 min down the mountain



# Welcome to Vida Bonita Pecos

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Vida Bonita means the beautiful life. And that's exactly what this place is about.

When Erica and I met in Albuquerque and started our family, we eventually made our way to Houston — a city we loved. But after five years through the pandemic, Erica wanted to come home. She grew up in Las Vegas, New Mexico and missed the beauty of Northern New Mexico deeply. We also wanted our daughters to grow up closer to their immediate family.

When this property came up for sale, we made an offer. To our surprise, it was accepted. I left surgery in 2018 after a long and successful career, and after the pandemic I found myself reflecting on what I wanted to do next. The answer was clear: create a place where people could escape the rat race and truly see how beautiful life really is.

When you step onto our property and feel the serenity, the peacefulness, and the power of nature, something shifts. In our hectic modern world, we've lost the essence of what it means to be truly human — connected to this planet, to where we came from and what gives us life.

*Even for the brief moment you're here with us, we want you to recapture that. To rekindle that missing part of the human experience. That's Vida Bonita Pecos. Not just a cabin rental — a reminder of what life can feel like when you slow down enough to actually live it.*

— **Duc & Erica, Hosts**



# Check-In & Check-Out

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## Check-In Times

- Summer / Peak Season: 3:00 PM (recommended arrival by 7:00 PM)
- Winter: 2:00 PM (recommended arrival by 5:00 PM)
- We move check-in earlier in winter because it gets dark in the canyon by 4:30 PM — there are no street lights and navigating the mountain road in darkness is genuinely difficult. Please arrive in daylight whenever possible.

## How to Get In — Self Check-In

Every cabin has a keypad door code programmed to the last 4 digits of your cell phone number. No meeting required! Once you're settled in, send us a quick message through Airbnb or VRBO to let us know you've arrived safely. We're always available if you have any questions.

## Early Check-In & Late Check-Out

Depends on same-day bookings. If the cabin is free before you, we're happy to offer complimentary early check-in. More likely during off-season, less likely during peak season and holidays. Just ask — we'll do our best!

If you arrive before check-in time, park in the guest lot, leave things in your car, and enjoy the river or Cowles Ponds. No luggage drop-off is available during cleaning.











## Check-Out Instructions

- Strip used bed linens and pile on the bathroom floor
- Leave comforters on the beds
- Pile all used towels (including kitchen towels) in the bathroom
- Wash dishes and do a light cleanup
- Return furniture to original positions
- Double-check for personal items — we're remote and returning things is tricky!
- No keys to return — just leave and the door relocks automatically

## Property Rules & Guidelines

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Our goal is for you to have the most amazing, memorable stay. These guidelines help ensure everyone — guests, animals, and neighbors — has a wonderful experience.

-  No smoking indoors. Please smoke outside and dispose of cigarette butts in a container — never on the ground.
-  Shoes-off policy indoors. Please remove shoes when entering the cabins. Bring house slippers or thick cozy socks — the floors can be cool.
-  The trout pond is for gazing and feeding only. No fishing in the pond — save that for the Pecos River and Cowles Ponds!
-  Feed our animals your food scraps. Chickens and turkeys will eat almost anything — toss scraps their way instead of the trash.
-  Quiet hours: 11 PM – 8 AM. Please keep noise levels respectful so everyone enjoys a peaceful night.
-  Trash: Tie all bags tightly before placing in our garbage trailer. Leave no trace — whatever you pack in, pack it out.
-  Parking: Be respectful of the shared guest parking area — make sure everyone can get in and out easily.
-  No surprise parties. If you're planning a gathering, please let us know in advance.
-  Pets must be supervised around our free-roaming chickens, turkeys, and ducks.
-  Ask for anything you need — extra towels, toiletries, firewood. We're here to help!

### Noise & Parties

We love social gatherings! Cornhole, Frisbee, campfires, and outdoor games are absolutely welcome. Music at reasonable levels is fine. What we ask you to avoid: raucous parties, keg stands, or excessive noise that disturbs other guests on the property. If music becomes a disturbance, we'll politely ask you to turn it down.

Day visitors (guests not staying overnight) require advance notice and may involve a small party fee depending on group size.



## Pets & Animals on the Property

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We love and welcome all pets! We understand how important it is for your fur babies to experience this amazing mountain environment with you.

### Our Ranch Dogs — Luna & Max

Luna and her puppy Max are our two large white Great Pyrenees ranch dogs. They roam the property at night to protect against bears and mountain lions. They're super friendly and love belly rubs! However, they are the dominant dogs on the property. If your dog has dominance issues or gets anxious around larger dogs, please let us know.

#### Daily Schedule

Tied up 9 AM – 5 PM (winter) / 9 AM – dusk ~8 PM (summer). We're happy to coordinate timing around your outdoor plans.

One important heads-up: Max has been known to steal food off the grill or picnic table when you're not looking. Keep an eye on those burgers!

### Our Free-Roaming Animals

We have chickens, turkeys, and ducks that roam the property freely. We ask that all pet owners supervise their animals around our flock. Feel free to save food scraps for them — they'll love you for it!

### Pet Fees

Pet fees vary by cabin. Please send us a message through your booking platform for specific pet fee information. We respond within an hour!

## Cell Service & WiFi

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Here's the honest truth: expect to lose cell service once you leave the village of Pecos. We're 20 miles up a winding mountain road — about 45 minutes from town. T-Mobile users tend to have slightly better luck than Verizon, but even that varies by individual phone and location on the property.

### Starlink WiFi — Fast & Reliable

The great news: we have high-speed Starlink internet throughout the property, and it's genuinely fast — often faster than city internet.

- FaceTime, WhatsApp, Zoom, Facebook Messenger — all work great
- YouTube, streaming, social media — no problem
- Remote work and video conferencing — many guests work full days here
- Upload/download speeds often exceed typical city broadband

Staying in touch with family is easy via FaceTime, WhatsApp, or any messaging app over WiFi. Come ready to unplug from your phone — and reconnect through WiFi when you need to.

### Emergencies

We have a responsive volunteer fire and police department serving the mountain area. There is a medical clinic in the village of Pecos for minor issues. Major medical emergencies are transported to Santa Fe or Albuquerque. The Forest Service responds quickly to accidents and medical calls on the mountain.

#### Emergency Contact

Message your host through Airbnb or VRBO messaging. We monitor messages continuously and respond as fast as possible.

## Campfires & Firewood

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We absolutely love fires here — campfires are central to the Vida Bonita Pecos experience. There's nothing better than sitting around a fire, watching the kids make s'mores, and having everyone connect over the day.

### Firewood Policy by Cabin

<b>Free Firewood</b>	Ponderosa Main Lodge, Crestview Cabin, Aspen Elevated Cabin
<b>\$10 Unlimited Option</b>	Twin Pines Duplex, Aspen Outpost, Blue Jay Retro Camper — wood is cured for 1+ year, burns hot and clean. Easily added to your booking.

Our \$10 unlimited option is a genuine deal — gas stations in Pecos charge \$8–10 for just 6 pieces. You'll easily use 15 pieces in a single evening.

### Indoor Fireplaces & Stoves

- Ponderosa Main Lodge — two beautiful wood-burning stoves
- Crestview Cabin — one wood-burning stove
- Aspen Elevated Cabin — a magnificent grand hand-built stone fireplace

### Fire Restrictions

We follow all Santa Fe National Forest guidelines. During dry seasons, strict fire bans can be issued — no open fires or wood grilling. Propane is usually still permitted. We'll always notify you in advance if restrictions are in effect.

Check current fire restrictions: [nmfireinfo.com](http://nmfireinfo.com)

### Campfire Safety

- Keep the fire pit area clear of trash, plastic, food scraps, and lighter fluid containers
- Never leave a fire unattended
- Keep a bucket of water or sand nearby
- Fully extinguish fires before going to bed



## Getting Here & Parking

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Great news — Highway 63 is freshly paved all the way up the mountain from the village of Pecos. The road to our driveway is completely asphalted and easy to drive!

### Our Address

<b>Address</b>	2444 NM HWY 63, Terrero, NM 87573
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<b>From Santa Fe</b>	Take I-25 North to Exit 299 (Glorieta/Pecos). Head through village of Pecos and continue north on NM-63 for approximately 20 miles. About 1 hour total.
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<b>From Albuquerque</b>	Take I-25 North approximately 1 hour 15 minutes to Exit 299. Follow directions above. About 2 hours total.
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View on Google Maps: [Click here for directions](#)

### Vehicle & Road Requirements

<b>Ponderosa, Twin Pines, Blue Jay, Aspen Outpost</b>	Any vehicle — sedans, low-clearance cars all welcome. Flat, easy access.
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<b>Crestview &amp; Aspen Elevated</b>	Rocky mountain roads. Trucks or SUVs with 4WD/AWD recommended year-round. In winter, even 4WD trucks can struggle on ice — parking at the bottom and walking is sometimes the safer choice.
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Guest parking area accommodates approximately 10 vehicles on flat, compacted gravel. If you have a trailer or side-by-side, check the Cowles Ponds parking area (much larger) and consider leaving your trailer there.

4WD/AWD not strictly required in good weather, but strongly recommended for upper cabins in winter and after heavy rain.



## Your Cabin & Amenities

We've thought through what makes a comfortable mountain stay and stocked accordingly. Here's what to expect:

### Provided in All Cabins

- Extra linens, towels, bath cloths, and kitchen towels
- Basic toiletries — shampoo, body wash, toothpaste (ask if you need more)
- Fully equipped kitchen — pots, pans, glassware, silverware, utensils
- Basic spices, salt & pepper (bring your favorite specialty spices)
- Coffee maker + ground coffee (bring your preferred brand)
- Microwave
- High-speed Starlink WiFi
- TV access in most cabins

### Heating & Cooling by Cabin

<b>Ponderosa Main Lodge</b>	Radiant floor heating (ground + main floors) • Two wood-burning stoves • Window AC on top floor • Ceiling fans throughout
<b>Aspen Elevated Cabin</b>	Three mini-split systems • Grand stone fireplace • Portable heaters available • Natural mountain air for cooling
<b>Crestview Cabin</b>	Wood-burning stove • Portable floor heaters • Fan in upstairs suite • Mountain air naturally cool

### Laundry

<b>Ponderosa &amp; Aspen Elevated</b>	Full-size washer & dryer included
<b>Crestview Cabin</b>	No washer/dryer currently (coming soon). We're happy to do laundry for you — just ask!



# Fishing Guide

Fishing is one of the crown jewels of a Vida Bonita Pecos stay. Here's everything you need to know:

## The Pecos River

Just a 5-minute walk across a gorgeous wildflower meadow from our property. Crystal clear, mountain cold, fed by snowmelt year-round. Our stretch is a hidden gem — most visitors drive past to more popular spots, leaving our section beautifully uncrowded even in peak season.

## Cowles Ponds

Just a 10-second car ride or 10-minute walk down the road. The Forest Service stocks both the river and ponds weekly in summer — sometimes twice weekly in July. You're almost guaranteed to catch trout during stocking season!

- Large pond (football-field sized) — perfect for experienced anglers and fly casting
- Kids' pond — for ages 12 & under and 65+, 5-fish limit. Kids almost always catch fish here!

## Fishing Licenses

<b>Ages 12 &amp; Under</b>	FREE — no license required
<b>Ages 13 &amp; Over</b>	License required. Buy online, at Walmart, or at a local gas station in Pecos.

Buy your NM fishing license online: [nmdgf.state.nm.us](http://nmdgf.state.nm.us)

Always carry your license or a photo of it on your phone in case rangers check.

## What's Biting

- Native cutthroat trout and German brown trout
- Live earthworms — especially effective when it's raining
- Live grasshoppers — fantastic in hot weather (very plentiful here in summer)
- Artificial lures and flies — work reliably year-round
- Tip: Use shorter rods — you're making precise short casts between pine trees, not long ocean-style throws

## Catch & Release

Trout are sensitive fish. Most anglers here practice catch and release. Keep fish out of water as briefly as possible. Use barbless hooks for best survivability. Daily limit: 5 fish per person. Verify current rules at [nmdgf.state.nm.us](http://nmdgf.state.nm.us).

## Respect the River

Whatever you pack in, pack out. No trash, cans, plastic, or aluminum left behind. This is strongly encouraged and taken seriously by our entire community.

## Hiking & Outdoor Activities

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You're in the heart of 1.6 million acres of Santa Fe National Forest — your playground. Here's what's available:

### Top Trails Near the Property









#### Windsor Trail

A spectacular trail leading up to a series of freshwater mountain lakes. Search 'Windsor Trail Pecos NM' for breathtaking photos. Lesser-known and truly extraordinary.

#### Panchuela Trail

An easy ~2-mile hike from the Panchuela Campground. The payoff: the river enters and exits caves at the end. A stunning hidden gem. Suitable for most fitness levels.

### More Activities

-  Road Cycling — Highway 63 is freshly paved and excellent for road biking with very little traffic
-  Mountain Biking — Several trails nearby. Google 'mountain bike trails Pecos NM' for current routes
-  Horseback Riding — No local outfitters currently, but we can arrange excursions with local guides with advance notice
-  Sledding — We have sleds on-site! A favorite spot about 8 miles away. Great for kids.
-  Snowshoeing — Windsor Trail has reliable snow most winters
-  Skiing — Santa Fe Ski Resort is about 1 hour away (road winds down the mountain, so plan accordingly)
-  Stargazing — Zero light pollution. The night sky here is absolutely extraordinary.
-  Fishing — See the Fishing Guide section

### Bear Safety on Trails

- Carry bear spray when hiking
- Stay alert and make noise on the trail
- Never approach wildlife
- Store food securely — never leave food out overnight



## Wildlife & Safety

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The wildlife at Vida Bonita Pecos is one of the most spectacular and unexpected parts of the experience. Keep your camera handy!

### What You'll See

- On the drive up: Groups of deer, coyotes, and canyon wildlife are commonly spotted
- On the property: Hummingbirds, Steller's Blue Jays, finches, chipmunks, gray squirrels
- Our flock: Free-roaming chickens, turkeys, and ducks
- Overhead: Eagles, falcons, and hawks soaring above the canyon
- In the area: Elk, deer, mountain lions, black & brown bears, coyotes, bobcats
- Wolves: New Mexico recently reintroduced wolves — I once heard their howling under the moonlight from my deck. Unforgettable.

### Should You Be Worried?

Honestly — no. Predatorial animals have never been spotted on or immediately near our property. The closest mountain lion sighting was about 1 mile up the mountain; the closest bear was about 5 miles away. No grizzlies this far south.

Our Great Pyrenees ranch dogs Luna and Max guard the property every night. Since we've had them, we've had zero predator encounters on the property. They're our unsung heroes!

## Seasonal Guide

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### **Spring — March through May**

Spring is magical here — the world waking up from its winter sleep. Daytime highs 50s–60s°F, nights 30s–40s°F. We've planted over 500 tulip and daffodil bulbs that bloom in waves through April and May. Different flowers bloom at different times, so every date offers something beautiful. Wildlife becomes very active — deer, turkeys, chipmunks, and Blue Jays everywhere. Spring rains wake up the fish for excellent early-season fishing.

Tip: Check weather.com with ZIP code 87573 as your trip approaches.

### **Summer — June through August**

Our busiest season — and for good reason. Daytime highs 70–80°F (rare spikes to 90°F). Nights are a beautiful 50s–60°F — perfect campfire weather. High-altitude UV is intense even at comfortable temperatures — bring sunscreen! Wildflowers bloom continuously all summer. The Forest Service stocks Cowles Ponds weekly (twice weekly in July) — you're almost guaranteed to catch trout. August brings afternoon monsoon rains that are actually great for fishing.

### **Fall — September through November**

Honestly my favorite time of year. After Labor Day, the crowds disappear and you have the wilderness nearly to yourself. The Aspen Elevated Cabin is enveloped in stunning gold aspens around October. A short drive up nearby roads (high-clearance 4WD needed) reveals large hidden aspen forests most visitors never discover. The remaining trout are hungry and bite aggressively in fall — some of the best fishing of the year. Crystal-clear skies make fall the best stargazing season.

Nearby events: Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta (October, ~2 hours away) · Santa Fe Burning of Zozobra (must-see!)

### **Winter — December through February**

Something truly magical happens in winter here. The crowds are gone. The first snowfall usually arrives around November — large, beautiful flakes that cover the pine trees like a movie scene. January lows can dip into the teens, but sunny days reach the mid-40s. The cabins are wonderfully cozy with wood stoves, the grand Aspen fireplace, and radiant floor heating. After a snowfall, stepping out onto the deck reveals a stillness and silence unlike anything in modern life.

If upper cabin roads become icy, park in the guest lot and enjoy a beautiful walk up to your cabin.

## Dining & Groceries

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Most of our guests never leave the property for meals — and that's the point! Someone is always at the grill, kids are running around, fishermen are coming back from the river, and everyone gathers around the fire pit for steaks as the sun goes down.

### Stock Up Before Heading Up

There are no grocery delivery services that reach us on the mountain. We strongly recommend stocking up before arrival:

<b>Santa Fe</b>	1 hour away — full grocery stores, Walmart, Whole Foods. Beautiful drive, worth the trip.
<b>Las Vegas, NM</b>	1 hour 15 min in the opposite direction — full grocery options.
<b>Village of Pecos</b>	45 min back down the mountain — your last stop before the canyon.

### Village of Pecos — Last Stop

- Phillips 66 gas station — nearest place for beer, wine & spirits
- Dollar General & Family Dollar — light groceries and last-minute essentials
- Casanova — local New Mexican cuisine restaurant
- Dairy Queen
- A couple of small local restaurants
- Three food trucks opened recently — very good food!

### Santa Fe Dining

Santa Fe is one of the most unique dining destinations in America. World-class restaurants, New Mexican cuisine unlike anything you've tasted, and a vibrant food culture in a stunning historic setting. Worth at least one dedicated day trip if you've never been.



## Local Attractions & Day Trips

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While most guests find they never want to leave the property, the surrounding region is rich with incredible experiences:

### Santa Fe — 1 Hour Away

- The Santa Fe Plaza — Native American artists, performers, world-class restaurants, great shopping
- The Santa Fe Rail Yards — vibrant local farmers markets and community events
- Meow Wolf — the immersive art experience that started right here. Unlike anything, anywhere. Absolute must-see.
- The Santa Fe Opera House — stunning architecture, world-class performances
- Loreto Chapel & historic cathedrals — breathtaking Spanish colonial architecture

Meow Wolf tickets: [meowwolf.com/visit/santa-fe](https://meowwolf.com/visit/santa-fe)

### On the Drive — Between Santa Fe & Pecos

#### Hot Springs at Cañoncito

Right off I-25. Park and take a short hike down. A hidden gem most tourists miss completely!

#### Glorieta Pass Battlefield

Civil War history — known as the 'Gettysburg of the West.' Historical markers right off the road.

### In & Around the Village of Pecos

#### Pecos National Historical Park

Stunning views and remarkably preserved Native American ruins. Free admission. Open daily.

#### Franciscan Monastery

Beautiful historic monastery just as you leave the village heading up the canyon.

#### New Mexico Fish Hatchery

Open to visitors! See how they raise the trout that stock our river and Cowles Ponds. Fascinating especially for kids.

Pecos National Historical Park: [nps.gov/peco](https://nps.gov/peco)

## Elderly & Accessibility

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We celebrate guests who want to bring aging parents or grandparents to experience the Pecos wilderness. We're honored to help make that happen.

### Important to Know

- We're at 7,700–8,500 ft elevation — thinner air than sea level. Guests from lower altitudes may need time to adjust.
- We're on a remote mountain. We want to be honest about our accessibility limitations.
- We're not fully wheelchair accessible, but we've successfully hosted many elderly and mobility-limited guests.

### Best Cabin for Elderly Guests: Ponderosa Main Lodge

This is our most flexible option. The main floor (front entrance level) has the kitchen, living room, wood stove, and one master bedroom with en-suite bath — no stairs needed for daily life. The ground floor (parking area level) has two bedrooms with private baths and easy access to the outdoor picnic area. Radiant floor heating on both floors is very comfortable.

There is a drop-off driveway at the main entrance allowing guests to unload luggage without climbing stairs.

### Other Options

<b>Twin Pines Duplex</b>	One story, flat terrain — most accessible cabin for those with significant mobility limitations.
<b>Crestview Cabin</b>	Beautiful decks for sitting and enjoying views, but steep mountainside terrain outside.
<b>Aspen Elevated</b>	Lovely deck for sitting, but outdoor terrain is inclined — careful navigation required.

Please contact us before booking if you have mobility concerns. We'll give you honest, specific advice to help you choose the right cabin and plan a wonderful, safe stay.



# What to Bring — Packing List

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## Food & Drinks

- Stock up at Santa Fe (1 hour) or Pecos village (45 min) before heading up
- Groceries, drinks, and snacks for your full stay
- Charcoal for the grill
- Your favorite spices — we stock basics but most guests have go-to seasonings

## Clothing — Layers Are Essential

- Light shirts for warm afternoons
- Light jacket for crisp mornings
- Thicker jacket for cold evenings
- Even in summer, nights can be surprisingly cold
- Winter: insulated boots, gloves, heavy jacket, warm hat

## Don't Forget

- House slippers or thick socks (shoes-off policy indoors)
- Sunscreen — high-altitude UV is intense even on cool days
- Hats for sun protection
- Hiking boots or trail shoes
- Clothes and water shoes for river wading (especially for kids)

## For Fishermen

- Fishing gear and tackle
- Fishing license — buy online at [nmdgf.state.nm.us](http://nmdgf.state.nm.us) before you leave home
- Waders if you have them
- Shorter rods work best in our tree-lined river setting

## For Kids — The Fun Stuff!

- Kids fishing rods and small nets
- Magnifying glasses for nature exploration
- Bug catching kits — hours of entertainment in the wilderness
- Something to collect wildflowers with
- Water shoes for river play
- Clothes that can get dirty — they will!



## Emergency Contacts & Resources

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### Contact Your Host

For any property issues, questions, or emergencies during your stay, please message us directly through your booking platform (Airbnb or VRBO). We monitor messages continuously and respond as fast as humanly possible. This is the fastest and most reliable way to reach us given our mountain location.

### Emergency Services

<b>Police / Fire / Ambulance</b>	911
<b>Pecos Medical Clinic</b>	For minor medical issues. Located in the village of Pecos, 45 minutes down the mountain.
<b>Major Medical</b>	Transported to Santa Fe (1 hour) or Albuquerque (2 hours)
<b>Forest Service</b>	Very responsive to mountain accidents, medical calls, and trail emergencies

### Useful Links

- **Current Fire Restrictions:** <https://nmfireinfo.com>
- **NM Fishing Licenses:** <https://www.wildlife.state.nm.us/fishing/licenses/>
- **Santa Fe National Forest:** <https://www.fs.usda.gov/santafe>
- **Pecos National Historical Park:** <https://www.nps.gov/peco>
- **Weather Forecast (87573):** <https://weather.com/weather/today//87573>
- **Meow Wolf Santa Fe:** <https://meowwolf.com/visit/santa-fe>

# Thank You for Staying With Us

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*We hope your stay at Vida Bonita Pecos is everything you hoped for and more.*

If there's anything we can do to make your experience better, please reach out through your booking platform. We're always here.

**[pecosbnb.com](https://pecosbnb.com)**

2444 NM HWY 63 · Terrero, New Mexico 87573

Airbnb: [airbnb.com/h/vidabonitapecos](https://airbnb.com/h/vidabonitapecos)