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**September**

Beyond the MetroABQ:  
Daytripping to Las Vegas, New Mexico  
For a tour of 10 National Register Homes



Above is El Campesino, a sculpture in Old Town Plaza Park, an area surrounded by many of Las Vegas New Mexico's numerous historic homes & businesses. Behind the wooden peasant farmer you can see the red-bricked [Plaza Hotel](#), built in 1882 near the beginning of the railroad heyday in the area. The Plaza, a Victorian Italianate style building, is attached via a 1st-floor walkway to the old Great Emporium, a three-story department store, next door to the hotel. The Plaza has since subsumed the former Great Emporium, adding more rooms available at The Plaza, on the famous plaza.



I missed the Las Vegas (New Mexico) historic tour last year & made instant plans when reminded of it this summer. One fantastic [scenic highway](#) & two hours later, we landed in Las Vegas, home of over 900 homes & businesses on the National Register of Historic Places--it's got more historic buildings than any place in the United States.

I'm used to the unique [Victorian homes tours there](#), mostly built from the late 1800's & early last century. They spread out from the center of town in grand fashion; many have been kept up or restored & are now in amazing shape--see the 3-story brick home above & the two images below. Eighth St alone--with it's prominent Victorian

Mansions & Tudor homes, plus a stunning Mission-Style building--is worth the drive up to the small town. Other styles interspersed throughout include [Bungalows](#), more Mission, a style called Victorian Italianate, Mediterranean, Pueblo Revival & other classic historic architectural styles spanning well over 135 years.

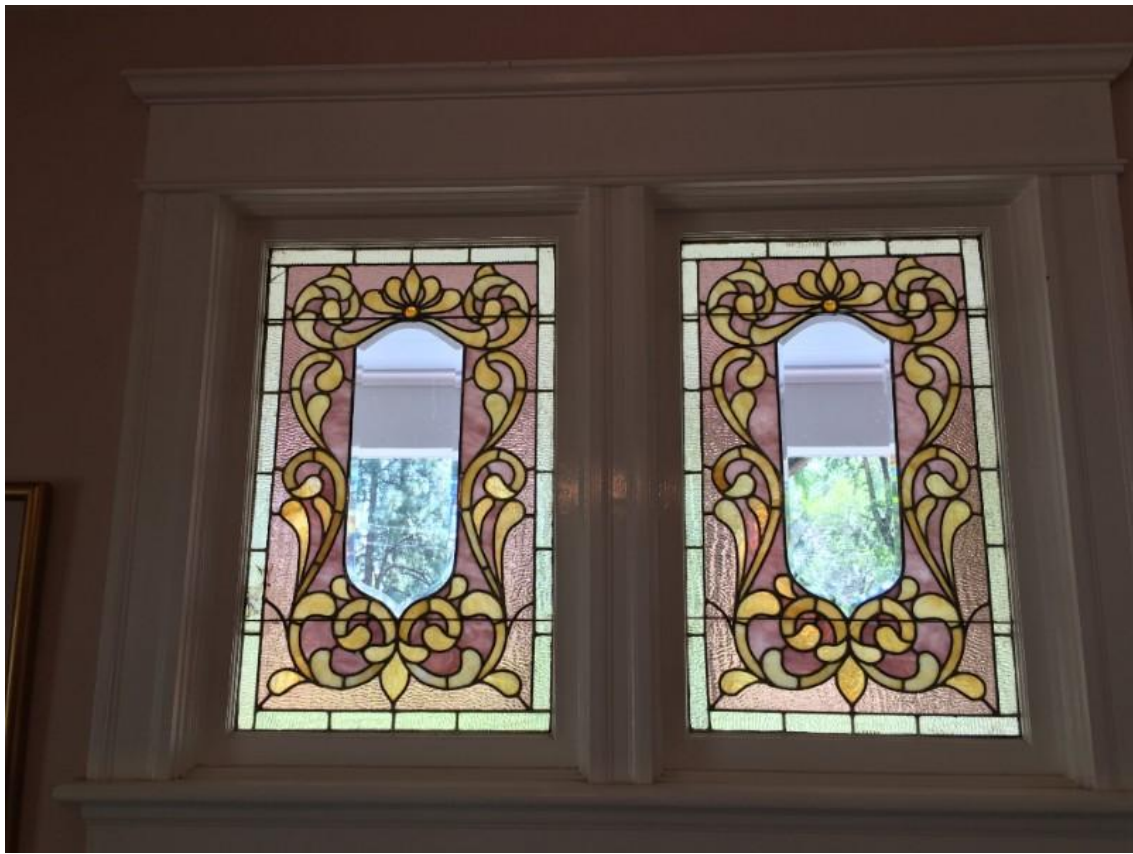
*This year the tour was anything but predictable though. This year, the [Places with a Past](#): Rejuvenation of Las Vegas Historic Homes & Buildings Tour had the theme of recently-completed-or-currently-under-construction. The tour included The Plaza Hotel, above; a major Fred Harvey House hotel--the under-restoration La Castañeda Hotel by the railroad tracks, seen in the last images. There was also an old residence-cum-gallery on the plaza & an old saloon, now a restaurant & bar called The Skillet, nearby; an old Trolley building was also transformed, integrating architectural steel elements into an historic building. There was a rock compound with three rock buildings & amazing gates, & a 'dilapidated' corner home that was stunningly restored inside. Some images below...*



Above & below: Tudor-Style Victorian homes. Notice the metal roof--metal shingles that shunt water down & away. Metal pitched roofs seem to be used quite a bit Las Vegas.







The three-story red-brick Victorian (2nd image from the top) sits on Eighth St & was one of the most prominent Victorians on the tour; it is currently for sale for \$739,000. That's about \$200/sqft...In the Victorian areas of the MetroABQ--mostly the [Fourth Ward](#) & [Huning Highlands](#)--a 100+ year old Victorian home in tip-top restored & updated shape could fetch that amount, but they do not come available very often.

The images above are from the Eighth St home: above are interior details included in the Eighth St home--the original tin ceiling, & one of the hot water radiators sitting on original hardwood flooring. Hot water flows from a basement boiler through pipes to each radiator in a circuit, then back to the boiler to heat up again. The leaded-glass windows looked original, too--one way to tell is that the glass looks a little wavy up close...

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This pristine Mission building, above, with its modern pro-panel metal roof, sits on Eighth St in Las Vegas, New Mexico. It wasn't on the historic places tour, but it is clearly historic & worth a drive by...

Below are images from the McCaffrey Trolley Building, retrofitted & transformed into the Media Arts & Technology Department at NM Highlands University (NMHU). Immediately below is a 7' steel map of the city of Las Vegas that adorns the outside of the trolley building, complete with railroad tracks & highway on-ramps...the McCaffrey Trolley Bldg is on there too. The two middle images below are of the outside & inside of the trolley building, now lab, classrooms, lecture halls & student study areas. Below those is a an example of some of the work being created in the labs.





The private Diamond Street Compound residences enjoy a half acre of land & is discreetly hidden behind gates on a side-street, a few blocks from the Plaza. If you know what you're looking for--beautifully decorated sculptures that act as gates--you'll know when you pass by. Built in the mid 1920's, the three rock houses sit amongst gardens, greenspaces & incredible sculptures across the property. The rock walls are approximately 18" thick & are comprised of random-sized uncut boulders & stones with plaster interiors. You can see the gates & stone houses below.







Las Vegas is special. You don't need to go very far before you discover something else pretty sweet in the town. Below is a street post that may have held oil lamps in an earlier day...the detailed clawfoot metal work has survived the last century & will hopefully be there one hundred years from now...

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For the [Places with a Past](#) Rejuvenation of Las Vegas Historic Homes & Buildings Tour, I was lucky to go into the [Rawlins Building](#), below, & up to the 2nd floor, which was open from above to the first floor, & not yet safe for anyone but contractors--it was a long way down if you mis-stepped the loose plywood draped over beams. Built in 1899, the building was used as the living spaces for the Fred Harvey Girls, who worked in [La Castañeda](#) across the street. The building is based on Italianate designs, made of stone & brick masonry, & has ornamental components that were crafted of pressed metal. Pretty amazing façade...hope to be back when it is finished.



At 120 years old, La Castañeda Hotel has seen better times--for 50+ years it was a Fred Harvey Hotel & considered the "Queen of Las Vegas," New Mexico. Las Vegas is a small town with a stunning number of historic buildings, especially with just 14,000

people. Around mid-century though, the railroad made way for cars & motels, & The Queen, a fantastic Mission Revival example, was left alone & neglected...

Now La Castañeda Hotel is coming back...From the [Santa Fe New Mexican](#):

*"When the Castañeda opened along the tracks in Las Vegas, New Mexico, in 1898 it offered travelers on the Santa Fe Railway an excuse to get off the train and stay in and explore a region of the Southwest few had seen," said Lesley Poling-Kempes, author of the book, The Harvey Girls: Women Who Opened the West.*

*"The high and mighty dined alongside the hoi polloi in the hotel's restaurant and bar, enjoying the famous Harvey House hospitality. The hotel's 40 rooms were invariably filled with politicians, celebrities, soldiers and travelers looking to stop for the night before moving on, be it northeast out of New Mexico or south toward Albuquerque and then points west.*

*"Las Vegas, New Mexico, is the great undiscovered town of the Southwest, with more remarkable history and architecture than Taos or Albuquerque," said entrepreneur Allan Affeldt, who is restoring the long-shuttered hotel to its former glory. "And La Castañeda Hotel, where Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders held their first reunion in 1899 around the corner from Doc Holliday's saloon, is the crown jewel."*

*Affeldt believes that once he reopens La Castañeda — hopefully in the summer of 2019 — it will once again make Las Vegas a "must stop for travelers who love history and design."*

The last stop on the self-guided tour was La Castañeda Hotel by the railroad tracks, currently being restored & redesigned. The belvedere, prominently on the left side of the La Castañeda roof, just below, is "an architectural structure sited to take advantage of a fine or scenic view," according to wikipedia (I had to look belvedere up...). And what a view it will be when it opens next summer!







The La Castañeda Hotel restoration includes reusing the tin ceilings, seen directly above, stripping & refinishing the original door hardware, which has some amazing detail, & refurbishing other original features of the property, including the bar scene mural, which will remain above the restaurant/saloon, seen below.



September Selected Properties:

Active Listings



Parkland Hills  
\$575,000



Santa Fe Village  
\$215,000



Downtown  
\$150,000

Under Contract



Old Town  
\$340,000



West Old Town  
\$200,000



Four Hills  
\$450,000

Just Sold



La Luz del Oeste \$300,000



La Mesa \$156,000

North Campus \$245,000



North Campus  
\$245,000



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I love talking about real estate...

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