

MetroABQ Real Estate Newsletter

Including Rio Rancho, Corrales, Placitas, Atrisco Valley, Los Lunas & the East Mountains.

August

The Stone Houses of Las Vegas, New Mexico

Eyebrow Windows

&

Golden Open Space...



Always glad for an excuse to visit Las Vegas, New Mexico, especially during the often cooler summer months there. New Mexico's Las Vegas--the fun Vegas--boasts among many other things, over 900 buildings on the National Historic Register, many of them rather spectacular. A little over a decade shy of 200 years old, the city was once two competing towns separated by the Gallinas River: [Old Town](#) & New Town. Reconciling their differences, Old & New Las Vegas is now a happily melded community but with very distinct architectural styles. You'll notice that most dramatically walking in the numerous historic areas. Because of this, the film industry continues to return, which can be a huge benefit. Always expect random filming in odd places. A town of 13,000

people notched in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the fun Vegas is a very cool place to spend time.

This trip up north was to show a 1895 Queen Anne "Stone Vernacular" duplex to a client, for sale just steps from New Mexico Highlands University. The owner nicely provided information about the first owner, Dr Rice, & included a lot more about the house: originally a 3000sqft single-family home built for the family of [Dr. Alice H Rice](#), one of the first female doctors to work in New Mexico, it is currently a duplex, with two 1500sqft interlocking tetris-style apartments spanning both floors. Walking around the property, above, you are taken by the grandeur; each locally-quarried lintel must weigh a few hundred pounds. Inside, it didn't disappoint: working transoms, original unpainted moldings, wide hardwood, polychromatic gables, balconies & covered porches, seen below.





403 8th St. Built 1883. "One of New Mexico's finest Italianate Villas: round-arch window moulding stones contract handsomely with precision-cut brownstone walls; a square corner with mansard roof."



717 Jackson St, above. Built 1890-5. "The porch columns represent yet another design variation in the seemingly infinite array of folk Victorian spindle-work common throughout Las Vegas."

725 Jackson St, below. Built 1886. "The railroads provided local lumberyards with pre-cut detailing from distant mills. The builder simply grafted these porch columns onto his elegant stone houses. The house has been a movie set for *Wyatt Earp* & *All the Pretty Horses*."



Nearby to the duplex we saw, there are eleven other Victorian-era Stone Houses, all in the [Lincoln Park Historic District](#). Three fabulous standouts are above...

The three descriptive quotes above are from a brochure that is one of the best ways to begin a journey into old Las Vegas: [Historic Las Vegas, New Mexico: The Story of an Intriguing Town](#). Created by the Las Vegas Citizens Committee for Historic Preservation ([LVCCHP](#)), the booklet brings you to the main historic districts & describes some of the more impressive buildings in each area.

Las Vegas has many dozens of interesting stone buildings. In previous years some of the more [unique stone homes](#) have been on the historic home tours; more are found in the [MetroABQ Newsletter](#).

After the duplex viewing, & still in the mood to see century-old stone houses, we looked to the brochure to point out other unique residences. Two are below: The Vicente Silva House is in the Old Town District; & the Lutz-Bacharach House is one of the first homes built in New Town, back in 1884.



Vicente Silva House 225 Moreno St. Built 1878. "This fascinating house could be called a New Mexican Folk-style, Renaissance Revival residence. The elegant Palladian windows & alternating bands of red & tan sandstone are a surprise here or anywhere." The eyebrow windows are the most expressive around. The Vicente Silva House has [quite a history...](#)



Lutz-Bacharach House 1003 5th St. Built 1884. "This is one of Las Vegas' most imposing

stone mansions...heavy bracketed cornice at the roofline typical of Italianate Villa style; [contrasting quoins](#) & window hoods accent the massive stone construction."



Las Vegas has that *Wild West* feel like no other place in New Mexico. Great example: the overnight accommodations, a short-term upstairs loft apartment rental, above left, could likely be the backdrop for any number of 1880's [western adventures](#). The Baca Building & Estrella's next door (above right) are both on the historic register; I love the colorful arches above the upper windows. The brochure describes those features as "heavy decorative hoods over arched windows."

True. Though, years ago an [appraiser friend](#) told me they were called Eyebrow Windows, & I've been unable to think of them as anything else since...



Above is another angle of the eyebrow windows on the Aniceto Baca Building. The loft apartment was in the perfect location to stay near the Plaza; quiet, in the back & facing away from the activity on the street. Owners Jan & Frank recently bought the building, which was in desperate need of repair & nicely remodeled the upstairs apartment. They kept what original characteristics were salvageable, like the hardwood floors & suspended elevator pulley next to the stairwell, below. The hand-pulled elevator spanned three floors--from the basement to the second floor loft--& keeping the pulley in place creates a cool feature.

Meanwhile, they are working to transform the other upstairs apartment into another short-term rental; they also have plans for the commercial space that takes up the first floor. all quite the ambitious projects...



More eyebrows...

Driving/walking along any street in town, there are dozens upon dozens of buildings featuring eyebrow windows. The building to the left above has one continuous brow over three windows; & the eyebrows above the 1885 Stern & Nahm building are made of pressed & folded sheet metal.

Looking back over the images above, many display that window style. The Vicente Silva House has the most extensive & unique eyebrow windows in the group; the home was built in 1878.

Below, one last look at the stunning Stone Duplex we drove up to see...Going through the images of this Grande Dame of Las Vegas Stone Vernacular residences, I noticed some simple eyebrow window design in the image below: just above the balcony rail, the window below the eaves has a reddish-brown sandstone lintel eyebrow. The paperwork describing the property states that detail as a "pedimented lintel with ears." I will still only see the brows...



If the Las Vegas brochure is the primer for all things historic in town, then the [Connect Las Vegas NM: Mobile Visitors Guide to Historic Sites](#) app is the savvy phone-user's obvious next step.

Using the app, you are guided along numerous walking tours. Or, you can create

your own historic tour by simply walking in any direction & the app will alert you as you pass a house of interest.

Below is a great map of the city, found next to a riverside trail along the lush [Gallinas River Park](#)...



Four miles north of Las Vegas & on a hot afternoon in Northern New Mexico, Storey Lake is a perfect place to go. The lake was created over a hundred years ago by way of a long earthen dam that retains water from the Gallinas River. There were very few people there & Astrid was the only one swimming in the lake. Surrounded by the foothills of the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, the surrounding views from the lake speak for themselves...





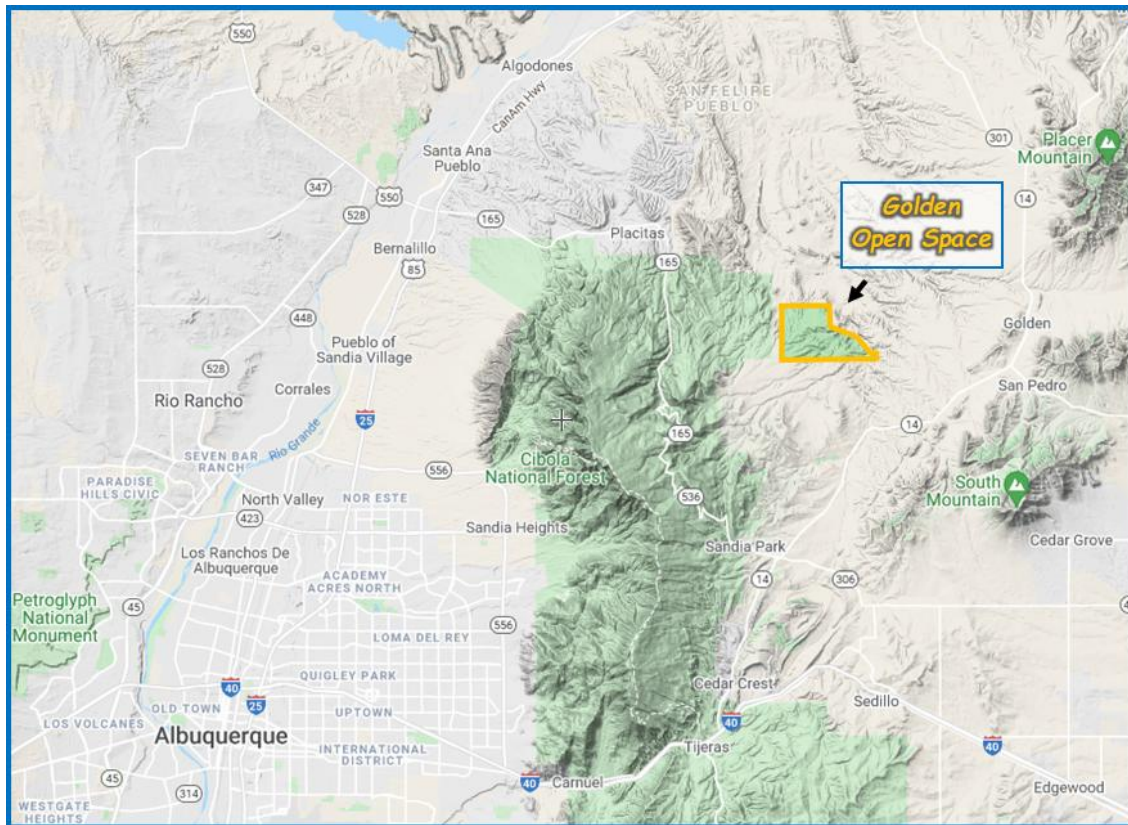
Above, a Desert Horned Lizard was easy to miss along the Los Duendes Trail in the Golden Open Space. The lizard [camouflages well](#) with the local earth-tone terrain around it.

Where is the Golden Open Space?

There are numerous little gems found all around the MetroABQ...sometimes finding them by accident is the best. In the East Mountains at Sandia Park, & just before the Paa-Ko community, La Madera Road starts on North 14 & winds toward the mountains & then along the eastern slope of the Sandias for quite a distance. It's a scenic road to take to the end, which connects back to North 14 south of Madrid. Along the way, La Madera Road provides some fabulous views; it also passes, with little fanfare, the small parking lot for a shoe-shaped preserve consisting of two mesas divided by a rugged & colorful arroyo system:

[Golden Open Space](#). "Acquired in 1964, this 1,200-acre parcel is among some of the first properties set aside by the City of Albuquerque for the preservation of nature. Breathtaking views of mesas & colorful arroyos make this remote & seldom-visited property a great escape from the city."

The hike itself is flat & easy, with great mountain range views along the mesa top & toward the homes that dot the distance. Golden Open Space is one of the closest walking trails to the nearby communities of Paa-ko (Stephanie & Jim!) & San Pedro Estates. It's definitely worth the drive there (& back)...





Unless otherwise indicated,
all photos are by [Rob Thalmann Photography](#) or Chris Lucas.

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