

Hanukkah in Honduras

Family packs candles and a menorah along with swimsuits and bug repellent for a great holiday getaway

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PHOTOS BY TRACY BARNETT/STAFF

Now sleep the old ones

Bandelier National Monument preserves the Pueblos' traditions

*Now sleep the old ones
The waters run quietly by so not to wake them
The sun climbs high in the sky to warm them
The wind and rain come to clean them
The time of their working is past
Now sleep the old ones*

— from *Songs of the Tewa*

BY TRACY BARNETT
EXPRESS-NEWS TRAVEL EDITOR

BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT, N.M. — These are not ruins that surround us — these toppled stone structures, those smoke-darkened cave dwellings that line the cliffs.

I made that mistake when I first came here, as many visitors do — but thankfully, Cecilia was here to set me straight. I say

thankfully, because otherwise I might have missed the entire point of this place.

I might have missed slowing down long enough to hear the steady drumbeat, the haunting chants that still glide on the wind, half a millennium after the inhabitants of this village moved on.

But many of the ancestral Pueblo people never did move on, park ranger Cecilia Shields tells the group of visitors who have traveled here from far and near: The ones who lived and died here are present in the spirits who stayed on and continue to inhabit these lands. It's not a ruin because, for these ancestors and the descendants who visit them, it's still a home.

"The birds still come to sing to the people here. The sun still comes to warm them, and the rain still brings them water," Shields says. "These places are still

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Valles Caldera lies at the heart of New Mexico's volcanic origin



Valles Caldera National Preserve has served as a storied hunting ground since the days of the Kiowa and Comanche.

BY TRACY BARNETT
EXPRESS-NEWS TRAVEL EDITOR

JEMEZ SPRINGS, N.M. — We're driving north on N.M. 4 toward Los Alamos, headed for Valles Caldera, the vast crater of what was once believed to be the world's largest volcano and one of the nation's newest national preserves.

"Watch for snow plows," warns a sign, and with the chill in the air it's not hard to imagine the snows that will soon come. An hour ago, at 7:45 a.m., we stood on the rickety front porch of Deb's Deli in Jemez Springs, shivering in the frosty air and waiting for Deb to come and open the door — the fire in the fireplace a welcome sight. Now, however, the fiery origins of these lands become visible: A cliff looms before me with fantastic patterns of copper and green minerals swirled into the surface. An exposed rock face on our left reveals starkly

See VALLES/4L

Ceremonial Cave sits high above the Frijoles Valley, and visitors must negotiate a grueling series of log ladders in the way of the Pueblo to arrive at the top. The kiva, or underground worship structure, was used by the village elders for special ceremonies.

At play in the cradle of voodoo

Blood-covered fetishes, piles of sacrificial animal bones, alcohol-soaked offerings, life-size statues in a sacred forest.

The fireworks were missing, but it was a spectacular New Year's celebration nonetheless. Texas photographer Karla Held joined some 10,000 other celebrants last January at the annual Festival of Vodoun in the Republic of Benin, and the images are still burned into her mind. Take a photographic tour of this once-in-a-lifetime experience on Page 6L — and maybe even consider booking your own flight to Benin.



KARLA HELD/SPECIAL TO THE EXPRESS-NEWS

A Vodounsi dances on one leg in front of the sacred forest in Ouidah, Benin, West Africa.

On the bus and off the beaten paths of Paris

BY ALEXANDER MAKSIK
SPECIAL TO THE EXPRESS-NEWS

PARIS — Every year, millions of visitors climb onto this city's tour buses and boats. They wander from the Louvre to the Jardins Luxembourg, sleep in their St. Germain-des-Pres hotels, drink seven-euro *chocolat chaud* at the Café de Flore, wander around the *quartier Latin* and leave having seen very little.

How then might you arrive in Paris and become a traveler rather than a tourist? How might you find parts of Paris where you'll hear no English being spoken, where a *café crème* costs two euros rather than five? How might you sail magically across *la Seine*, anonymous and unnoticed, the city sparkling before you?

Here are two itineraries to help you easily escape the tour groups, the expensive cafés, the grumpy shopkeepers tired of ill-mannered tourists, and instead voyage along two of the most beautiful bus routes in the city.

Both itineraries begin and end in St. Germain-des-Pres.

63 — the warm-up

The 63 is a perfect bus for those made nervous by public transportation. This bus travels almost without exception through the most expen-

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