



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

Amber Dodson
Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 18, 2024

Contact: Dolores Martinez
dolores.martinez@nmfilm.com



New Mexico Film Office Announces Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces Top *MovieMaker Magazine's* "Best Places" Rankings

Santa Fe, NM - For the second year in a row, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces have all landed coveted spots on *MovieMaker Magazine's* "Best Places to Live and Work as a Moviemaker." This remarkable trifecta marks a pivotal moment for the Land of Enchantment's booming film industry, solidifying its reputation as a creative oasis for filmmakers of all types.

"New Mexico's fabulous tax incentives, deep crew base, and vast investments from major studios have made it one of the best-represented states in the country in our latest list," *MovieMaker Magazine* Editor-in-Chief Tim Molloy stated. "Obviously, the strikes meant

that almost no location had a great 2023, but Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces are extremely well-positioned for a big 2024 and the years and decades to come.”

“New Mexico's stunning locations — immediately apparent to everyone who has seen ‘Oppenheimer’ — are obvious lures to making films in New Mexico. But they're just the beginning. New Mexico is a thriving film state that keeps getting better for moviemakers who want a sustainable, nurturing lifestyle that frees them up to make movies they love.” Molloy added.

Albuquerque takes the mantle of the second “Best Big City,” up three spots from last year. It has made its mark on the list for *six consecutive years*, a testament to its thriving film, television, and digital media ecosystem. Albuquerque boasts world-class studios and workforce, as well as diverse locations and a supportive community, all fertile ground for film projects to flourish.

“This recognition reaffirms Albuquerque's commitment to the film industry,” Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller stated. “With six years in the top five, including four as number one, our investments have fueled job growth, education, and economic impact. We are a premier destination for filmmakers, and we look forward to building on this success to create even more opportunities for locals to succeed.”

Best Places to Live and Work as a Moviemaker – Big Cities

1. Toronto, Ontario, Canada
2. **Albuquerque, New Mexico**
3. New Orleans, Louisiana
4. Austin, Texas
5. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
6. Atlanta, Georgia
7. Miami, Florida
8. Calgary, Alberta, Canada
9. Chicago, Illinois
10. Montreal, Quebec, Canada

The City Different, otherwise known as Santa Fe, takes the coveted top spot in the Small Cities and Towns category for the second year in a row. Its unique blend of breathtaking landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and burgeoning production infrastructure has captivated filmmakers and audiences alike, making it a true cinematic gem.

“Santa Fe is back in action,” Santa Fe Mayor Alan Webber stated. “Once again, we’ve been named the #1 best place to live and work as a filmmaker in the small cities category. That’s like getting the Oscar two years in a row.”

New Mexico's southern star, Las Cruces, celebrates its second consecutive year on the list, at eighth place in the Small Cities and Towns category. With its charming historic downtown, breathtaking desert and mountain backdrops, and rapidly growing film community, Las Cruces is quickly becoming a draw for producers seeking fresh perspectives and stunning scenery.

“Las Cruces is honored to have once again been recognized as a top destination to live and work as a filmmaker,” Doña Ana County Senator Jeff Steinborn stated. “In addition to the rich southern New Mexico culture and great weather, our exceptional crew, diverse locations, and generous film incentives make us an ideal location to bring a film or series.”

Best Places to Live and Work as a Moviemaker – Small Cities and Towns

1. **Santa Fe, New Mexico**
2. Fort Lauderdale, Florida
3. Savannah, Georgia
4. Wilmington, North Carolina
5. Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada
6. Knoxville, Tennessee
7. Boulder, Colorado
8. **Las Cruces, New Mexico**
9. St. Petersburg, Florida
10. Richmond, Virginia

The state offers a competitive film tax credit program, robust training programs, a seasoned community of local crew and talent, thousands of local film-friendly businesses, in addition to our long-term partnerships with Netflix, NBCUniversal, and 828 Productions, making it a cost-effective and business-friendly haven for filmmakers at all stages of their careers.

"This is a momentous occasion for New Mexico's film industry," Amber Dodson, director of the New Mexico Film Office, said. "To have all three of our major cities recognized by *MovieMaker* for the second consecutive year is a testament to our state's collaborative efforts to create a diverse, relevant, and undisputed filmmaking hub of the future. We are incredibly proud of this achievement and committed to building on this momentum."

Many critically acclaimed New Mexico productions have taken over the box office and awards this season. Los Alamos and Abiquiu-filmed production "Oppenheimer" recently received the most Golden Globe wins this year and eight Critic's Choice Awards, on top of four SAG Awards nominations and five People's Choice Awards nominations. Other notable productions such as Showtime's "The Curse," Peacock's "Poker Face," Netflix's "Stranger Things," and AMC's "Better Call Saul" have also received Golden Globe, Emmy, and Critic's Choice nominations.

The state has particularly shined as a vibrant tapestry of diverse talent in recent years. Native American stories like the AMC television series "Dark Winds" and the upcoming Netflix feature "Rez Ball" lead the charge, showcasing the state's multicultural richness on screen.

For the complete 2023 list of "Best Places to Live and Work as a Moviemaker," visit [MovieMaker.com](https://www.MovieMaker.com).

###

The New Mexico Film Office (NMFO), a division of the Economic Development Department, works to ensure the longevity and progress of New Mexico's film incentive, grow the film, television, and digital media industry, and expand entertainment economic opportunities for New Mexico businesses and residents.

- Named one of [Deadline's Hot Spots](#).
- Three New Mexico cities were selected as "[2023 Best Place to Live and Work as a Moviemaker](#)" by *MovieMaker Magazine*.

To learn more, visit nmfilm.com.