



## Sunrise Springs Resort Spa Creates Inviting High Desert Eco-oasis

*SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO* — There is something in the quality of the light filtering through the broad green leaves of the cottonwoods that makes Sunrise Springs Resort Spa special. Nestled in a river valley near Santa Fe, this 58-room eco-resort is a lush oasis in the high desert, balm for the travel-weary.



Owner Megan Hill, who has always had a deep affinity for this land, wanted Sunrise Springs to be as self-sustaining and ecologically intact as possible, part of her commitment to realizing peace through land stewardship.

"I believe the body, heart, mind and spirit are vitally interconnected and that the health of one affects all of the others," says Hill, who ran a successful Santa Fe art gallery before opening the resort. "My vision of Sunrise Springs is a place of beauty and retreat that embraces our global village and promotes the celebration of the wisdom and beauty of all peoples and cultures."

With that mission statement, it's no surprise that this 70-acre refuge, with its spring-fed ponds and abundant waterfowl habitat, is also home to organic gardens that provide vegetables and herbs for the guests.

Hill started the process when she asked visionary horticulturists, like Michael Clark and Gabriel



Howearth, founder of Seeds of Change, to plan the organic gardens. Howearth is well known for his devotion to "heirloom" varieties of native plants, which tend to be hardier and more nutritious than their commercially cultivated counterparts.

Today those gardens reflect the principles of biodynamic agriculture, which adds nutrients to the soil and promotes biodiversity by following the cyclical rhythms of nature. Gardeners use crop rotations, organic pest controls and composting to keep the resort's vegetable and herb gardens flourishing.

Under the guidance of general manager Tracy Pikhart Ritter (former executive chef at the Golden Door in southern California) the award-winning Blue Heron Restaurant offers a menu that includes plant varieties that thrive in this high-desert environment, with the gardens providing heirloom ingredients for its natural and organic cuisine (it stopped using trans fats years ago).

Even the restaurant's wine list is organic and certified biodynamic. Biodynamic wines rely exclusively on the grape itself for their flavor. To meet this certification, winemakers are prohibited from adding yeast, enzymes or tannins. Certification standards also forbid oaking and chappalization to manipulate acid and sugar levels.

Organic matter from the restaurant kitchen is composted, helping to enrich the gardens. Virtually everything else used at Sunrise Springs is recycled, including the water.

The buildings themselves are in many cases constructed of adobe, reclaimed wood and straw. Guest rooms feature locally made organic amenities, pressure-reducing showerheads, energy saving light bulbs and eco-friendly paint. The fireplaces in public areas and the restaurant are constructed to minimize smoke and burn firewood gathered from around the property.

Naturally, the resort's Spa Samadhi features organic treatments, made from herbs grown on the property. Meanwhile, the entire property represents a commitment to environmental stewardship as part of a vision for peace. Drought-tolerant native grasses and plants are used in the landscaping, which provides abundant habitat for birds and butterflies. The swimming pool is chlorine-free.





The historic adobe buildings at Sunrise Springs date back to the time hundreds of years ago when this was a stop on the Camino Real, the royal road that led to the territorial capital in Santa Fe.

The Native Americans and Hispanics who lived in these parts had a sacred relationship to the land that is still being honored today in Megan Hill's unique holistic vision.

**For additional information contact:**

Judy Herzl  
Director of Marketing, Sunrise Springs  
505-428-3603



Contact:  
Jennifer Marshall  
[jennifermarshall@ballantinespr.com](mailto:jennifermarshall@ballantinespr.com)  
Tel: 505 2176 0889  
<http://www.ballantinespr.com>