

A Ghost Of A Chance

Little Bear assures us that we have done the correct thing and that the magic will hold so we trudge on through the wet snow. We go around a curve, the road drops and suddenly the world changes. There is blue sky and the road is dry? We are driving through beautiful painted cliffs. We are on the road to Abiquiu and stop at Echo Amphitheater to catch our breath.



Driving on, we see the sign for Ghost Ranch, well known from the paintings of Georgia O'keefe. Susan mentions that in all the times she has driven this road, she has never actually been to Ghost Ranch so we turn up the dirt road.

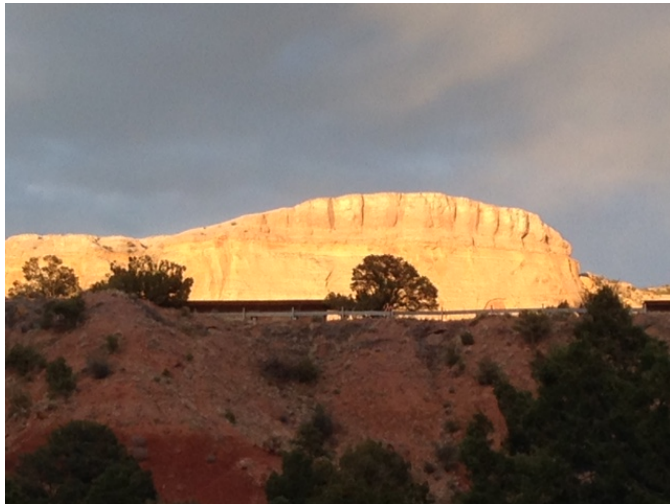


The orchard trees and lilacs are in bloom. The meadow is a flutter with Western Bluebirds, Say's Phoebes and Indigo Buntings. The ranch was founded on the fine old West tradition of cattle rustling; was won and lost in gun fights and poker games; was bought, sold and finally donated by US corporate elite families to the Presbyterian Church who now owns and runs the ranch as a retreat venue, historical site and museum. The story goes that the rustlers named the ranch "ghost" and fostered legends that the canyon was haunted to deter visits from local folks. The staff at the ranch now are mostly volunteers, very enthusiastic and welcoming. We discover that there is a campground on the property and decide to stay the night. Little Bear's magic is apparently still holding.



Beans and tortillas for dinner.
We've gone local.

There are only a couple other campers this early in the season. The Green-tailed Towhees and the canyon light show keep us entertained into the evening.



We have a leisurely morning touring the ranch buildings, chatting with the ranch librarian and the resident paleontologist before setting off down the road for Santa Fe. The weather is closing in again as we leave. We will spend a couple of nights holed up in a motel in Santa Fe waiting out the storm and resting our backs.

From the road,
Jane and Susan