



Santa Fe welcomes a new movie studio

By: JERI CLAUSING | 8 October 2011
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(AP) SANTA FE, N.M. — This historic high-mountain state capital and artistic enclave, long a favorite vacation and second-home destination for celebrities, is expanding its star power this month with the opening of the world's newest movie studio.

But the development on 65 picturesque acres southwest of town is more than a warehouse with a few sound stages. It's also a sophisticated and uniquely Santa Fe-style operation that both its backers and competitors hope will help the state regain its stature as a leading alternative to Hollywood and New York for filmmakers.

Developed to resemble the pueblos of New Mexico's Chaco Canyon, Santa Fe Studios looks from the outside more like a luxury hotel than a traditional warehouse-style movie studio. Its amenities — beyond its 360-degree mountain views and two 19,275 square-foot sound stages — include plush offices and dressing rooms complete with terraces, access to electric cars and a special ultra-high-speed Internet network used by researchers at the nearby Los Alamos and Sandia national laboratories.

It was developed by long-time movie producing and directing brothers Lance and Conrad Hool, along with Lance's son Jason. They describe it as a "boutique" studio — a Four Seasons say, rather than a Marriott — that was made "by filmmakers for filmmakers."

"You just don't get this anywhere else in the world," CEO Lance Hool said on a recent tour of the \$28 million facility, set to open as soon as the final permits are issued in the next week or two.