



THE SOUTHWEST'S NEW SHOPPING MALL

BY T. THORNTON SMITH

● The magic of modern innovation has turned a barren plain into a bustling hub of commerce. □ Typical of the expansion that is taking place in Albuquerque is the new Winrock shopping center. Here, on what was bare mesa and sand only a few years ago, machines and construction know-how have transformed a 122-acre expanse into a wonderland of modern shopping convenience. The suburban development is one of the most modern and carefully planned shopping centers in the Nation. Its covered mall, the first of its kind in this area, is fronted by some forty-two businesses comprising a concentrated shopping extravaganza that is expected to produce gross sales of thirty million dollars the first year. □ Most of the stores are extensions of downtown establishments, though there are some new stores that have just come to New Mexico. Carrying out the theme that pedestrians and automobile traffic do not mix, the giant center has separated the two by providing a four-thousand-car parking lot easily accessible to the covered mall. □ With emphasis on pleasing eye-appeal, landscaping has played an important role in presenting the modern development to the customer. More than two city blocks in length, the 55-foot wide mall is comfortably decorated with wrought iron furniture. A variety of greenery in the form of trees and bushes, line the walks. Three fountains, two of ceramic tile, spout along the 500-foot pedestrian boulevard. The overall effect is that of a patio or court, all pointing toward leisurely enjoyment of the shopping chore. □ Across the top of the mall, ninety-two skylights convey light and air to the pedestrian shoppers who walk from store to store protected from the elements. Pre-cast sculpture by a prominent Los Angeles artist, Gregg Lackapell, decorates the west entrance to the mall. Piped music from concealed loudspeakers emphasizes the general atmosphere of relaxation throughout the entire area. □ But, even in

FACING PAGE: Winrock Center from a helicopter, showing the mall and extensive parking areas. Forty-two businesses front on the mall. Color photo by Bob Talbott.

this atmosphere of modern serenity, more than just a pleasant shopping center is being accomplished. The 122-acre lot on which the center was built is owned by the University of New Mexico. Although the center is now owned by Winrock Enterprises, of which Winthrop Rockefeller is principal stockholder, the Center is expected to be a financial bonanza to the University of New Mexico. □ The land was considered by the University nine years ago for commercial development, but the project was abandoned for lack of available funds. □ Winrock Enterprises became interested in Albuquerque in 1955 upon the advice of its president, George Reynolds, a former publisher of the Santa Fe New Mexican. □ The University had heard that Mr. Reynolds was interested in New Mexico investments, and contacted him regarding the availability of University lands. The result was certainly favorable to the University. The center is leased to Winrock for 99 years. At the end of that time, the entire property reverts to the University. Under the terms of the agreement, the University receives one-third of gross profits from the center, or a flat rental fee — whichever is larger. □ From its receipts, the University pays off mortgages on the buildings and physical structures in the Center. Within 20 years, when the mortgages are paid in full, the University will own all buildings in the center. □ At that time, each payment will become profit. In the meantime the University is acquiring some cash each month and an equity in the buildings. The University share is estimated at \$200,000 a year, including equity. After the buildings are paid for the income to the University will approach \$600,000 a year. □ Winrock Center, located just north of Constitution and Louisiana, along the Coronado Freeway, is in the recently develop-



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A group of models at a Winrock Center style prevue. The Center's calendar will include many community activities. Adjoining land can accommodate further development. Planned are a motel and amusement center.



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The mall at Winrock Center is two blocks long. Handsomely decorated, it is covered to protect pedestrians from the weather. The center cost almost ten million dollars and used enough concrete to build four 15-story buildings.

ed housing project areas of Albuquerque's fast-growing northeast heights. The center was constructed at a cost of over nine and one-half million dollars. A total of fifty thousand tons of concrete was used in the construction — enough concrete to build four fifteen-story buildings, each two hundred feet high. The asphalt in the parking area would pave a 17-mile two-lane highway. An equivalent of a one-hundred-car freight train would have been utilized to bring the two-thousand-eight-hundred tons of steel used in the buildings. □ The shopping center is a sample of American ingenuity and an awareness of a growing community's needs in a particular area. In addition to building the site, an extensive study was made of the area and the people who make up the customers of the area. Their needs and shopping habits were studied to determine exactly what types of stores and merchandise would be advisable in the center. □ Going on the assumption that there were two basic reasons for the popularity and growth of shopping centers throughout the United States, an associated firm first financed two other large centers in Albuquerque to complete their study. Their reasoning proved correct: that the rapid movement of people from rural areas to cosmopolitan centers — and then on to suburbs, created a definite need for such centers. A companion-study showed that with the exception of the sale of automobiles, almost twenty-five per cent of all the nation's retail trade was conducted in shopping centers, and that the future of such an undertaking was almost unlimited. □ In addition to providing one-stop shopping, it will become a center of community life with rooms planned for organizational meetings and recreational facilities that will be developed within the next year. In the adjacent area there are an additional sixty acres yet undeveloped that can be used for expansion. These plans include a large motel, bowling alleys, amusement facilities and service stations. □ The Winrock Center is setting a new and fast pace, but all over the State there is hardly a town of any size that doesn't have its concentrated shopping center. It has become one of the "ways of life" now expected and demanded by a spending public.—T. Thornton Smith.