

The logo for the Sunshine Festival 2025 is centered on a background with a vertical color gradient from purple at the top to orange at the bottom. The word "Sunshine" is written in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font. A white, multi-pointed starburst icon is positioned above the letter "i". Below "Sunshine", the word "FESTIVAL" is written in a smaller, white, all-caps, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the text block, the year "2025" is displayed in a large, white, outlined, sans-serif font.

Sunshine

FESTIVAL

2025

Root Year Debrief



What we heard

Our review combined on-site notes and structured feedback from volunteers, workshop leaders, musicians, and attendees. People loved the hands-on workshops! And all workshops (adobe, compost, cyanotypes, marketing and branding, and rainwater demos) sparked a genuine sense of community. Artists and facilitators felt welcomed and supported. We also saw that after early performances, energy thinned; without food on site, stronger signage, or an evening draw, folks didn't linger. Accessibility, shade, and several core infrastructure pieces (safe stage access, smoother surfaces, fewer stickers) emerged as essential tasks for the coming year.

Wins for Our Root Year



Foundational Wins

- Launched the organization and produced the festival's Root Year event.
- Secured a land partnership at no cost to the festival, opening the door to invest limited dollars in safety, access, and guest comfort.
- Awarded \$2,500 from the Questa Economic Development Fund, validating the concept and helping cover early needs.
- Donated our 2025 gate revenue to NM CASA, underscoring our community values and giving back.
- Built a starter audience and contact list to grow from.

What We Learned



We Did the Thing!

- The festival's heart is participation: making, learning, and doing together.
- The site must invite people to stay: food, shade, seating, and wayfinding make a long day feel easy.
- Safety and access are the foundation for everything else.
- A gentle arc to the programming will matter vitally: evenings for music, stargazing, and shared celebration; mornings & afternoons for workshops and gathering.
- Authentic visibility: clear signage, a bit of spectacle, and simple place-based storytelling, will help new visitors find us and feel oriented immediately.

What We're Building

We're designing a weekend that feels welcoming, effortless, and memorable—the kind of experience people talk about on the drive home and plan to return to.



Arrival & Wayfinding

Friendly, obvious signage from the highway to the gate; easy check-in; volunteers who feel like hosts; a visible “you’re here” moment that sets the tone and makes the site make sense.



Comfort & Care

Food vendors, shade and seating clusters, improved restroom access, water and info points, and a site you can traverse comfortably in addition to safer stage access, smoother walkways where it counts, fewer stickers, and thoughtful placement of high-traffic areas.



Program Flow

Workshops anchored early in the day when curiosity is high; music and shared evening moments (bonfire glow, stargazing, dance energy) that invite folks to stay. Smart staggering so two good things don’t compete.



Accessibility & Inclusion

Clear contact path for questions or needs; practical, person-to-person support for mobility, sensory, and camping considerations. Quiet nooks, obvious resting spots, and an overall design that says you belong here.



Community & Partnerships

Continue to weave local makers, nonprofits, and outdoor partners throughout the site & lineup to reflect the festival’s character. Acknowledging land and water, celebrating craft, and inviting neighbors to co-create.

2026

Bottom line: in 2026, we want people to leave feeling connected, cared for, inspired, and grounded in place: with dust on their shoes, a new skill in their hands, a song in their head, and the quiet sense that they were part of something spectacularly special.

