

## Winter Reading, Reflections, and Resolutions



Winter Landscape-New Mexico 1923 Randall Davey / NM Museum of Art

The nights are getting colder and staying inside with a book, blanket, and hot cocoa sounds better by the minute. People tend to make new resolutions during December and give up by March. At the Rio Rancho Library we have a different approach for 2021: try a new author or a new series by a familiar author instead of, say, giving up carbohydrates.

Winter can be a time of reflection inside, or activities outside, or even vice-versa. Possibly a change in home décor is on your New Year's resolution list? Check out [Winter Living Style](#) by Selina Lake to browse through for ideas or [Make Life Beautiful](#) by interior designers Shea and Syd McGee for their philosophy and home décor advice. Another choice is [Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times](#) by Katherine May, who shares in her personal narrative the joy to be found in the hushed beauty of winter and in the cyclical nature of "wintering" through life.

Step outside during December to see the Jupiter and Saturn conjunction. These conjunctions in the night sky occur every twenty years, but this year is special. The two planets have gradually moved closer to each other and this year on December 21<sup>st</sup> the two will be at their closest since 1623, even while they are still hundreds of millions of miles apart. So mark your calendar! Shortly after sunset, step outside, look to the western horizon and you can see them at their closest in the night sky. Look at [earthsky.org](http://earthsky.org) for more information.

December 21<sup>st</sup> is also the date of the winter solstice. Check out [A Year with Nature: An Almanac](#), written by Marty Crump with charming illustrations by Bronwyn McIvor, for other fun facts about December and the rest of the calendar. For example, December 15<sup>th</sup> is traditionally the first of the halcyon days, a period of placid weather around the winter solstice. The ancient Greek myth, coming down through the ages through the Roman poet Ovid, goes something like this: King Ceyx drowned during a violent storm and his wife, Halcyone, threw herself into the

waves in grief. Taking pity on them, the Gods transformed them into kingfishers and promised they would live forever. Now Halcyone's father, Aeolus, calms the winds each year so waves will not disturb the kingfisher nests for about 2 weeks. Halcyon days are still considered a safer time for sailors to travel between storms. So whatever you do, here's wishing our library users halcyon days.