

AUTUMN GETAWAYS

The Bed & Breakfast Experience

by Myrna Oakley

There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn.
—Samuel Johnson

The warmth of a small inn or turn-of-the-century home, chocolate kisses on the pillow, fresh flowers in antique vases, a glass of wine and stimulating conversation by the evening fire . . . and, finally, resting that travel-worn body beneath a goose-down comforter in a 100-year-old bed . . . who could ask for more?

Travelling the bed & breakfast route is a nostalgic, high-touch sojourn in a fast-paced high-tech world. Twentieth century phrases coined by John Naisbett in his book, *Megatrends* (Warner Books, 1982)—high-tech/high-touch speaks to our need to relate on a personal level with fellow human beings while the computers grind away, the artificial heart transplant beats its mechanical beat, and Discovery shuttles off on another space probe.

Naisbett offers, "The more technology we introduce into society, the more people will aggregate, will want to be with others . . . the more we will want to create high-touch environments with soft edges balancing the hard edges of technology . . . no wonder handmade quilts are so popular."

It's reminiscent of visiting grandmother's country farmhouse with its polished floors, rag rugs, and homemade quilts; or trotting off to wealthy Aunt Jessica's with her priceless antiques and having afternoon tea served on old English china. The bed & breakfast experience reminds us of pleasant yesterdays, "the way things used to be," and old-fashioned hospitality. According to Naisbett, links to the past help us cope with the high-tech of today.

Bed & breakfast innkeepers are extraordinary folks. I've not met one yet who didn't genuinely like people. Many are veteran travelers with unusual hobbies and eclectic interests. They thrive on human contact and they like to create cozy environments for travelers . . . vintage wallpapers and pastel colors, live plants and fresh flowers, scented soaps and soft towels, plump pillows and overstuffed easy chairs, and the crackling fire along with wine and conversation with fellow guests each evening.

Anne Morrow Lindbergh offers in her book *Gift of the Sea* (Vintage Books, 1955), "But evening is for sharing, for communication. Is it the uninterrupted dark expanse of the night after the bright segmented day, that frees us to each other? Or does the infinite space and infinite darkness dwarf and chill us, turning us to seek small human sparks?"

The bed & breakfast experience, because it is intimate and personal, offers peaceful images that help to erase stress . . . the sweetness and charm of a bygone era, cobbled lanes and woodland walks; meadows, mountain streams, walking on driftwood strewn beaches. Places to love and be loved.

Dr. Leo Buscaglia, author, lecturer and inveterate hugger and dispenser of love and wisdom, agrees with the telephone company that everybody ought to reach out and touch somebody. The bed & breakfast experience is like that—being pampered, touched, and spoiled for awhile.

At most bed & breakfast inns brass beds are common but telephones and television are rare. Their absence tends to encourage guests to let worldly cares drop away. For a couple of days, at least. You may have a private bath, but sharing the bath down the hall is also common. No bellman will carry your suitcase or shine your shoes and you probably won't have an ice bucket or a soft drink machine. What you will have is an abundance of personal attention, human contact, and a waist-bulging breakfast.

Speaking of breakfast, at most bed & breakfast inns you'll be treated to fresh ground coffee and herb teas, homemade breads and pastries of all kinds, select jams and jellies, egg and cheese dishes, fluffy omelettes, or even strawberry waffles and seafood crepes on occasion—along with convivial conversation around the breakfast table while savoring that second or third "cuppa." Breakfast aromas coupled with a warm ambiance and the distinct personality of each innkeeper create an environment which invites shared conversation among fellow travelers—be prepared for breakfast to last awhile!

By juggling the calendar and employing a bit of imagination, urbanites can create a special overnight or weekend experience at one of the following bed & breakfast inns discovered on recent sojourns into the Willamette Valley and to the coast. . . .

Out of the Blue Bed & Breakfast
386 Monmouth Street
Independence, OR

Innkeepers: Mona & Morris Barker
Telephone: (503) 838-3636
Rates: \$28-\$35

Relax and curl up in the spacious common room on the second floor where Morris will build a fire on crisp autumn evenings. I couldn't resist poking through the shelf of old books and found several gems such as *Auntie Mame*, *Two Years Before the Mast*, *Mrs. Miniver*, *The Complete Guide to Treasure Hunting* and *Life in a Putty Knife Factory*.

Enjoy Mona's made-to-order breakfast at the round oak table in her homey kitchen while out the nearby window the last autumn-tinged leaves from the grape arbor create bright splotches of color on the patio. Two comfortable rooms with shared bath as well as a plethora of antiques and convivial conversation await guests.

The House in the Woods
814 Lorane Highway
Eugene, OR 97405

Innkeepers: George & Eunice Kjaer
Telephone: (503) 343-3234
Rates: \$38-\$50

I really didn't mind sampling one of Eunice's breakfast treats the afternoon I visited—the strawberry soup was delicious and she was kind enough to give me the recipe as well. The House in the Woods is a turn-of-the-century home nestled in a bower of Douglas fir and fern just a short distance out Lorane Highway.

Music lovers will enjoy the enormous common room with its antique square grand piano. Nature-lovers will enjoy bird watching and catching glimpses of deer and raccoon families who often shyly appear at dawn and twilight. Guests will have little difficulty relaxing in this wooded glen near downtown Eugene.

The Boarding House Bed & Breakfast
208 N. Holladay Drive
Seaside, OR 97138
Innkeepers: Dick & Carole Rees
Telephone: (503) 738-9055
Rates: \$40-\$46

This is the ice cream parlour we always wanted," chuckles Carole as we sit in the large, airy kitchen drinking samples of Coastal Mist rose wine from an Oregon winery near Portland. "We bought this old house in December 1983, remodeled and added about 20 feet to the back of it and opened our doors to guests in early spring 1985."

The winning combination here is the outgoing warmth of innkeepers Carole & Dick Rees, along with the warmth of polished antique furniture covered in soft Victorian prints. Comfort and friendliness exude from every corner, whether it be the dining room and adjoining common room with their cushioned window seats, or any of the six comfortable guest rooms.

Three Capes Bed & Breakfast
1685 Maxwell Mountain Road
Oceanside, OR 97134
Innkeepers: Kathy & Ross Holloway
Telephone: (503) 842-6126
Rates: \$35-\$45

"On weekends we make special breakfast dishes such as scallop and shrimp crepes," explains Kathy. "I usually bake croissants during the week and serve them with homemade jams and jellies, along with assorted fruits and local cheeses."

First-time visitors may have to keep the map handy but it's well worth the effort to find this tiny coastal community nestled at the base of Maxwell Mountain and just south of Tillamook (follow the signs to Netarts). It's a great place to hole up for the weekend—one of the guest rooms has its own private deck overlooking the ocean and large off-shore rocks full of sea birds of all kinds. Enjoy the tide pools at low tide around Maxwell Point, an easy walk from the inn.

The Gilbert House
341 Beach Drive
Seaside, OR 97138
Innkeepers: Patrick & Rosemarie Link
Telephone: (503) 738-9770
Rates: \$40-\$60

Patrick and Rosemarie Link are transplants from Chicago and drop-outs from the urban scene—"I couldn't stand one more meeting," confesses Patrick. The couple fell in love with the three-story circa 1880 Gilbert house with its turret and glassed-in sun porch and huge rooms. They are in the process of completing its decor but are open for business.

Ample enough for small seminars and meetings, the Gilbert House is located near the Seaside Convention Center, the Lewis and Clark salt cairn, and the Necanicum River.

[Myrna Oakley is the author of *Bed and Breakfast Northwest* (Chronicle Books, 1984) and writes regional travel articles always with camera in hand!]

NEW EUGENE BED & BREAKFAST

The historic flavor and attractive landscaping of the small East Skinner Butte neighborhood provides the setting for Country Garden Bed & Breakfast, one of Eugene's growing number of B&B operations.

Country Garden, at 245 Pearl St., is a single apartment—with its own entrance, bedroom, sitting room, bath and fully-equipped kitchenette—attached to the home of Rocky and Lori Warner. The Warners opened their B&B business in January and hope to eventually add more accommodation behind their Swiss bungalow-style 1909 home.

The Country Garden apartment is tastefully decorated in white and pastel colors and furnished with antiques. A double bed and a fold-away futon can provide sleeping for up to four people.

Continental breakfast is brought to the apartment. It typically consists of fresh-ground coffee, juice, and either Lori's homemade cinnamon rolls or tea breads, or croissants from nearby Fifth Street Market served with homemade jam.

Although not yet listed in guidebooks, Country Garden has had referrals from the Eugene-Springfield Visitors & Convention Bureau and other B&B's. Many visitors are parents of U of O students. For more information, call the Warners at 345-7417.



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BED & BREAKFAST



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Eugene, Oregon 97401
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