

Bed & Board; cozy alternative to hotels

Brass and lace give cottage personality

After months of separation, Walter and Freda are flying all the way from Gnowbone, Wisconsin, to visit the offspring that insisted on being sent to the University.

Mom, who reminds you that she has postponed her triple-bypass surgery to save money for the trip, calls weeks in advance to ask you to please make a reservation at an establishment worthy of the occasion.

Of course, you don't get around to making the arrangements until the last possible moment, when you discover the National Orthopedic Foundation is having its annual convention at the Hilton. The only vacant room in town rents by the hour and has strange devices on the bedstand.

In the panic that ensues, an apparition appears that strangely resembles Karl Malden. "What will you do?" it insists. "WHAT WILL YOU DO?"

Fortunately you remember this article and make a reservation at the Campus Cottage, a newly and tastefully executed "bed and breakfast" hostel just a few blocks from the University.

According to the Ursula Bates, proprietress, it is the first such establishment in the Eugene area.

It's a simple idea and one that has been popular in Europe and on the East Coast for many years.



Antiques give the moderately priced rooms a turn-of-the-century flair. The "suite" rents for \$53 per night.



Owner Ursula Bates relaxes on the front stoop of the Campus Cottage Inn, which she says is the first bed-and-breakfast inn in Eugene.

You take a home, make some modifications, rent out the rooms on a day-to-day basis and serve your guests breakfast in the morning — all with a personal touch that larger hotels rarely seem to achieve.

"A neighbor said I took a dump and turned it into a wonderful cottage," says Bates, a professional decorator whose dream of being a general contractor has been daunted by the economy. "We try to make it a special experience for our guests."

Despite the location, Bates is not aiming for the amorous college crowd.

Instead, she hopes to lure customers away from the Hilton Hotel and other stylish digs of the upper-middle class, especially visiting parents and college speakers. Early indications are that she may succeed.

The Campus Cottage offers comparable or lower prices and presumably better service than its rivals.

"I think my rooms are nicer," says Bates. "But we're priced below the Hilton for this type of room, and we throw in breakfast. There's a need for a really nice place to stay close to the campus."

"They (the hotels) know this bed-and-breakfast thing is really starting to happen — more and more of them are starting to offer package deals."

According to Bates, hotel and motel owners pressured the state board of health to restrict bed-and-breakfast operations because they are severely siphoning customers from them in the Ashland area, where nine entrepreneurs have set up business.

Consequently, a bed-and-breakfast hotel cannot have more than two rooms or six guests without making costly renovations.

The "suite" rents for \$53 per couple per night, while the "guestroom" is \$47.

While the Campus Cottage may be a small operation, the single-story home is decorated with an intriguing array of relics that blend well with the contemporary furnishings, creating a welcome respite from the

repetition of chain hotels.

A 120-year old prayer book sits on the mantelpiece, guarded by the pince-nez spectacles of the man that owned it. In a corner of the living room an antique "banjo box" now serves as a china closet.

Wood-paneled showers, 19th-century hairbrush sets, brass door handles, and lace curtains go a long way towards validating a brochure that claims the 1912-vintage domicile achieves the "original character of the home while enhancing a country atmosphere."

Guests have the run of the house during their stay, excluding the kitchen and an apartment occupied by the hostess, Fran Adams.

To pass time between engagements, guests are invited to read a paper before a crackling fire, lounge on a screened deck or in the secluded and painstakingly manicured backyard or tour Eugene on bicycles provided free of charge.

Visitors are greeted with wine, juice, coffee, or if Bates can guess beforehand, their favorite beverage.

Breakfast in the morning consists of various fruit juices and fruits, English muffins, bran muffins and a variety of breads, all served on antique china with turn-of-the-century silverware.

"We don't do the bacon and eggs bit," says Bates.

The house, located at 1136 East 19th Avenue, is surrounded by three Greek houses, but Bates insists they have been pleasant and relatively quiet neighbors.

Despite her proximity to the campus, Bates says she hasn't considered the possibility of renting rooms to students.

"Other than jokes from friends about whether I'm going to rent the place to students by the hour, I really haven't thought about it," says Bates. "But it would be a nice place for a guy to take a girl."

Story by Sean Meyers

Photos by Bob Baker

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