

Stay GREEN, Go LOCAL

at Arizona's *bed and breakfasts*

BY BARBI WALKER

Next time you decide to take a vacation or staycation, consider showing your community spirit by staying in one of the state's beautiful Bed and Breakfasts (B&Bs). Many now offer some of the same amenities large hotel resorts and chains do, so you can have your luxury round of golf or spa retreat and support local businesses.

Whether you're a native, or new to Arizona, now is a good time to visit all the Grand Canyon State has to offer. If you plan to stay in a B&B, start your search with the Arizona Association of Bed and Breakfast Inns (AABBI). The association has worked to develop and grow high standards in the hospitality sector, which translates to a better stay for you.

"The benefits of staying in a B&B are astronomical," said Karen McClurg, spokeswoman for AABBI. "The personal one-on-one care you receive makes you feel like a person, not just a number."

B&Bs are usually smaller than resorts and popular chain hotels, often ranging from three to 50 rooms, which allows for more personal interactions with innkeepers and staff. Today's B&Bs range from the unique to the luxurious, with amenities like locally grown gourmet meals, shade-grown coffee, spa treatments, wireless Internet, flat screen TVs, DVD players and whirlpool tubs.

If you are looking for a more personal, authentic travel experience, and if you want to "do what the locals do," a B&B is perfect for you. Many B&Bs are owned and managed by locals who know the good, the bad and the sublime places to eat, visit and shop.

"They live in the community and have personal relationships with other local businesses," added McClurg. Staying with locals "in the know" gives travelers a unique perspective of their destination. Many B&Bs have rich histories dating back as far as the 1800s, which gives more depth to your stay.

A visit to the AABBI's website arizona-bed-breakfast.com lists 50 of the state's B&Bs. Here you can find links to events, weather and itineraries and find something new to see or do. For the eco-savvy traveler, you can feel good knowing you are supporting locals that have kept being "green" in mind.



Cat Mountain Inn TUCSON

One such B&B, whose owner and creator kept the green factor fully in mind when designing and decorating it, is **Cat Mountain Lodge in Tucson**. The B&B was built with recycled cement and decorated with repurposed furnishings. This eco-driven respite uses solar power and sells back any unused electricity to the local power company.

"Almost everything is recycled, reused or repurposed," said Angel Jackson-Sly, manager and resident innkeeper.

According to the B&B's website, the lodge, completed in 2010, was built to have as little impact on the environment as possible and is the only certified green B&B listed on the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association (AzHLA) website.

Eco-savvy owner, Kerstin Block, and her late husband Spencer, wanted to create an eco-friendly retreat in the Tucson mountains. With her keen fashion sense, she created a comfortable Southwestern feel with repurposed furniture. Green cleaning is incorporated as fine linens are laundered with perfume-free, biodegradable cleaners, and rooms are cleaned with natural, chemical-free cleaning products. Native plants are used in the landscape and are maintained with organic insecticide and fertilizers. The inn also uses graywater, stored in an underground tank, to irrigate the property. Here green-minded travelers can rest in environmentally conscious style.

Cat Mountain Lodge is a great place to use as a base while you explore the nearby Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, the beautiful desert or local artisan shops, says Jackson-Sly, who is also a Tucson certified tour ambassador. There is even a privately owned observatory with personalized guided tours for stargazing.

And don't worry about breakfast or lunch. It's served from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Coyote Pause Cafe. The cafe, run by local Deb Davis, features local, fresh, native foods, such as agave and prickly pear syrups and mesquite flour. The cafe purchases fresh ingredients directly from Native American cooperative farms.

Rooms start at \$99 per night, which includes breakfast at Coyote Pause Cafe.

Cat Mountain Station
2720 S. Kinney Rd., Tucson, AZ 85735
520-578-6085 | catmountainlodge.com



Sunglow Ranch PEARCE

Tucked away at the foothills of the Chiricahua Mountains is Sunglow Ranch. Here guests can experience a real Western guest ranch while still enjoying the comforts of a fine resort. From yoga retreats to cooking classes, Sunglow Ranch provides travelers a tranquil escape.

Located on over 450 acres, Sunglow Ranch gives visitors the opportunity to hike, bike or horseback ride through the beautiful national forest. Visitors can take a horse-drawn carriage ride in the morning and later enjoy a soak in the solar-heated pool, or even a massage and spa treatment.

Hearty breakfasts and gourmet dinners are made from scratch with herbs from the garden and eggs from the ranch's free-range chickens. Ranch chefs use local produce whenever possible for these delectable, fresh meals, and guests can enjoy local wines or Arizona craft beers.

Rates start at \$270 and include breakfast, dinner and afternoon refreshments.

Sunglow Ranch
14066 S. Sunglow Rd., Pearce, AZ 85625
520-824-3334 | sunglowranch.com

Before you wrap up your summer holiday vacations, consider staying at a locally owned and operated B&B, where you're not just a guest, you're a part of the community. ■

Photography courtesy of Cat Mountain Lodge, Sunglow Ranch, and The Annabel Inn



The COTTONWOOD Annabel Inn

This award-winning B&B packs a powerhouse of eco-sensibility into its three-room European cottage-styled inn. In fact, owner Annabel Scippa told local business leaders her green and eco-friendly practices bring return visitors to her inn, according to the Verde Independent.

Organic gourmet meals are made with vegetables and herbs from Scippa's garden and eggs from free-range chickens from Old Town Cottonwood homestead. Even the furniture at Annabel's is sustainable. Last year Scippa purchased eco-friendly, USA-made furniture from Gem Tables as way to continue her eco-friendly ambience.

For green cleaning, Scippa uses non-toxic, earth-friendly cleaning products, including a natural detergent called Soap Nuts, which has been used for centuries; and special attention is given to the rooms as mattresses are vacuumed each time the linens are changed, and there is regular cleaning of shower curtains and bath mats.

Annabel's location in Old Town Cottonwood makes visiting the town's premier wine tasting rooms, local galleries and restaurants almost effortless.

Rates start at \$84, and if you mention Local First Arizona you'll receive 10 percent off any stay or package.

The Annabel Inn
611 N 7th St., Cottonwood, AZ 8632
928-649-3038 | theannabelinn.com