

TRAVEL

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ICE PALACE, LEADVILLE, CO

Re-treat Yourself

Don't be fooled by the remote locations of some of these bed and breakfasts; each is lesbian-owned and -operated and sure to make you feel right at home.

Pearl's Rainbow Resort for Women

525 United Street, Key West, FL,
 800-749-6696, pearlsrainbow.com

Out owners Leslie Leonelli and Heather Caruthers are proud to admit that Pearl's Rainbow has grown from a small, unassuming lesbian guesthouse to the largest resort for women in the world. Considered the hub of lesbian activity in Key West, Florida, guests travel from as far as Europe to check out the scene at Pearl's. After purchasing this former guesthouse in 2000, Leonelli and Caruthers named Pearl's

"in honor of a close friend who loves to entertain women." As a result, the resort has taken on a welcoming, safe and comfortable spirit for women in need of a relaxing break from city life. Just a few blocks from the southernmost point of the United States, Pearl's offers two pools, two hot tubs, and a poolside bar—ideal for enjoying Key West's tropical climate without wandering too far from your room. The area's natural setting in the middle of a national marine sanctuary provides dozens of activities for those desiring outdoor adventures. Guests won't

have to stray far from their rooms when ready to party into the night: The Patio is the only exclusively women's bar on the island, and it is located directly on the Pearl's property. The bar hosts regular women-only events, including fundraisers and dance parties. It is obvious that Pearl's Rainbow is more than just a place for women to rest their heads. Leonelli and Caruthers have earnestly taken Key West's city motto, "One Human Family" to heart. Says Caruthers, "Seeing guests return year after year... and hearing guests say that, for the first time, they truly felt that they could be themselves at Pearl's, makes any challenge well worth it."



PEARL'S RAINBOW, KEY WEST, FL



The Highlands Inn

Off Route 302, Bethlehem, NH,
 877-LES-B-INN (537-2466), highlandsinn-nh.com

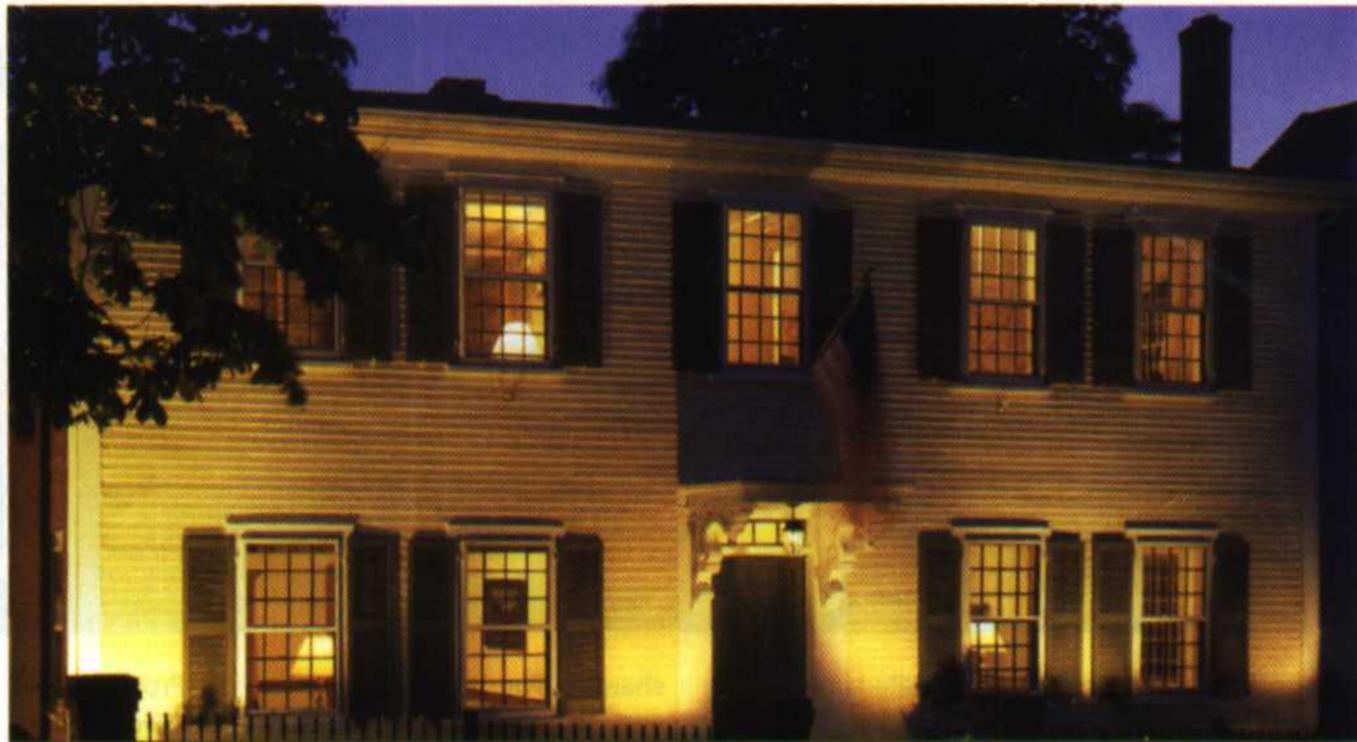
With over 100 acres, 19 rooms, and 15 miles of trails on the property, it's virtually impossible not to find privacy at this lesbian resort in Bethlehem, New Hampshire. Owner Grace Newman says, "This is a wonderful spot year round—very gay-friendly and beautiful. We are very well known and respected in the community and guests are very comfortable in the area." Although it was chosen as "One of the most romantic lesbian destinations on

the planet" by PlanetOut, The Highlands Inn is also the perfect getaway for singles. Its warm and friendly atmosphere draws guests to mingle in the living room or on the comfy wicker chairs gracing the porch—you may just leave with 30 new friends! May 11–13 the Inn hosts "Especially for Singles" weekend, highlighted by a wine and cheese party and free concerts. These concerts have become particular to the Inn. The Highlands Women's Music Series began with a few concerts in 1999 and gained so much momentum the following year that Newman had no choice but to create the series. Now the Inn hosts over 25 performers (past performers have included Sister Funk and Tret Fure) throughout the year. Located deep within the stunning White Mountains, outdoorsy girls will be in paradise: the area boasts of hiking trails, fishing, kayaking, and mountain biking. Those a little less adventurous can spend a day or two hunting for antiques, playing golf, or catching a show at one of the summer theaters. One of the Highlands' best features is its location 20 minutes from St. Johnsbury, VT, where same-sex unions are legal. Newman explains, "Since the civil union law went into effect, we have had over 250 couples stay at the Inn while becoming 'civilly united' in Vermont."

The Ice Palace Inn

813 Spruce Street, Leadville, CO,
800-754-2840, icepalaceinn.com

"Yes, we certainly are; we are lesbians and we are very friendly to everyone." Owner Sherry Randall's candid answer to my "Is your B&B lesbian-friendly?" reflects the warm and open atmosphere of her inn located in Leadville, Colorado. "Leadville's gay community is 'out' more than it is in my hometown in Michigan. One of our main objectives was to have a place where we could cater to the gay and lesbian communities without facing the homophobia we have experienced in other areas." While Leadville is a small town, don't expect its residents to be anything less than friendly and accepting. Randall describes it as a diverse population where every lifestyle is accepted. Randall's dedication to guests' comfort is obvious in the décor and with each delicious homemade meal she makes. The Inn offers seclusion and romance, with spectacular views of the mountains (Leadville is located in the Arkansas Valley), and it is an ideal place for amateur astronomers to take in a little star viewing. Each room is adorned with its own fireplace, heirloom quilt and antique furniture. The Ice Palace Inn's



FAIRBANKS INN, PROVINCETOWN, MA

unique history is another reason to make the trip to this sleepy town. Leadville's legendary Ice Palace was built by townspeople in 1896, and the Inn is accented by mementos from the original ice structure. Randall and her staff share with guests their extensive knowledge about the history of Leadville and off-the-beaten-path places to visit. History enthusiasts will be enchanted after visiting the Mining Museum, the Healy House and the Mineral Belt Trail. Guests having a bit of cabin fever may want to challenge themselves to a hike or mountain climb up Mount Massive or Mount Elbert.

The Jameson Bed and Breakfast

255-1 Creek Hollow Road, Dalton, PA,
570-586-2905, thejamesonbedandbreakfast.com

In the Lackawanna borough of Dalton, Pennsylvania, a drive along Creek Hollow Road will inevitably steer you into Jameson Bed and Breakfast, a beautiful brick home situated at the end of a tree-lined driveway. For those city dwellers craving some good ol' country rejuvenation, look no further. Former California attorney Dianne DeLucca and partner Julie Smith, graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, are the power duo behind this bed and breakfast built on five acres in the Endless Mountains. After DeLucca was diagnosed with cancer, the women wanted to start a business that would allow them to work from their home together. "It's so nice because we are both 'people peo-

ple,'" explains Smith. The enjoyment of their work and attention to detail are what make Jameson such a unique home-away-from-home for women. The Inn, named after their Irish setter (and therefore very pet friendly), offers five romantic and uniquely styled rooms. Guests can enjoy their breakfast each morning, afternoon tea, and lemonade and cookies served on the back deck during summer. For outdoor excursions, visit one of several lakes close by or make an appearance at a gay/lesbian bar in Scranton and Wilkes-Barre. "Dianne and I are both out in the community and we have never had any issues. Our guests as well are always welcome to feel free to express themselves; we are not about judgments" explains Smith. Though there are restaurants just down the road, chef Smith serves up an enticing gourmet menu. Better yet, Jameson also offers room service at no extra charge. Needless to say, DeLucca and Smith have succeeded in making their dream B&B a "romantic, safe, friendly place where all [can] relax and enjoy."

Red Rock Inn B&B Cottages

998 Zion Park Blvd, Springdale, UT,
435-772-3139, redrockinn.com

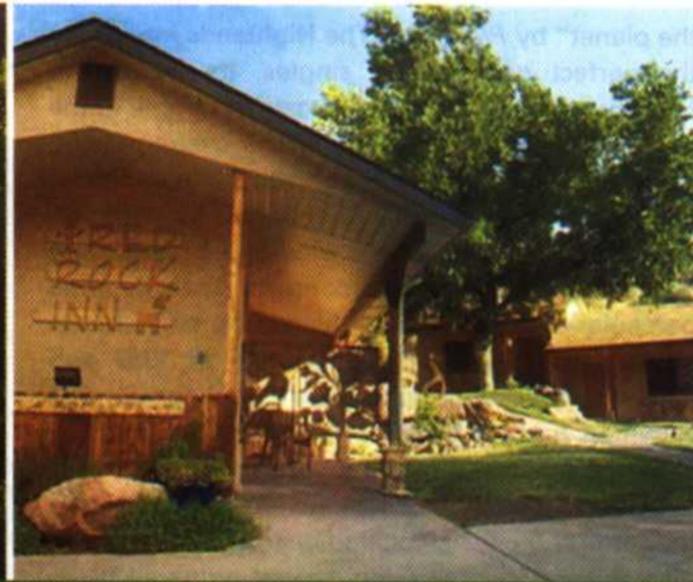
"Privacy" is the key word at this southwestern-inspired bed and breakfast in Springdale, Utah, just one mile from the Zion National Park entrance. The Red Rock Inn's adobe architecture, surrounded by red clay and tumbleweeds is the perfect desert



LEFT & CENTER: JAMESON B&B, DALTON, PA; HIGHLANDS INN, BETHLEHEM, NH



RED ROCK INN, SPRINGDALE, UT



escape. Each private cottage is engulfed in stunning views of the red rock cliffs of Zion and is individually decorated in calm hues. One room offers a private Jacuzzi spa for gazing at stars or watching the sunrise over the canyon, and all of the rooms come with a private patio. Hang out in the large living room, or lace up your hiking boots and discover one of the dozens of trails in Zion Park. Need to fuel up before heading out to the desert? Breakfast chef Blythe uses organic ingredients to create a unique breakfast spread delivered to you each morning at your doorstep. Although Zion boasts over three million tourists per year, out owner Eileen Crookes has created the cottages to give visitors the utmost in privacy and seclusion. "We are lesbian friendly. But we are not gay or lesbian focused. We are in a small town in Utah! So discretion is prudent. We are 'out' but don't wear it on our sleeve" explains Crookes.

Women Innkeepers of Provincetown

Provincetown, MA, WomenInnkeepers.com

"It's the gay-est place on earth! You have to come here," exclaims Lynette Molnar, who heads the Provincetown Women's Innkeepers Association in Massachusetts. This is no exaggeration, considering the volume of activities catered to gay men and women year-round. This summer is the perfect time to dust off that bathing suit and dive into this hot spot. Begin by checking out Single Women's Weekend, hosted by The Women Innkeepers and Girl Power Events, beginning the second weekend of May. (Women have come as far as Ireland and Australia for this event.) New this year will be the Women of Color and Allies Weekend, May 18-20. Young chicks will not want to miss this Memorial Day weekend in P-town, as it becomes a hub for younger lesbians, both single and coupled up. Stay up all night at The Pied Bar on Friday and Saturday nights, check out a live comedy show, or singer Kate Clinton at The Crown & Anchor. Provincetown even has its own lesbian beach called Herring Cove. With so much to fill your day, where do you go when you're ready to crash? According to Molnar, Fairbanks Inn and Gabriel's are the high-end places. The Inn at The Moors offers a pool and gorgeous views of the bay, while the Heritage House is a great pick for those wanting to spend less but don't mind getting cozy with other guests (bathrooms are

shared). For more information on Provincetown and events, visit ProvincetownForWomen.com, WomenofColorWeekend.com, and GirlPowerEvents.com.

Casitas Laquita

450 East Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, CA, 760-416-9999, casitaslaquita.com

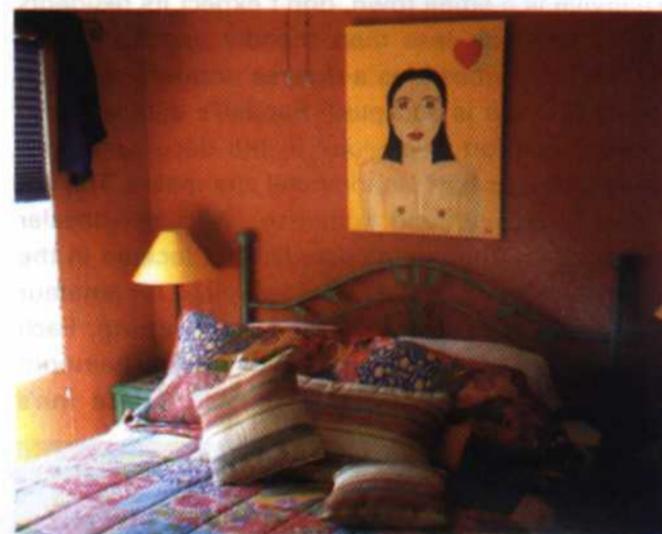
Voted one of the world's 10 most romantic gay guesthouses by *Out & About*, Casitas Laquita offers 1.2 acres of private retreat nestled amid sizzling Palm Springs, California. For those looking to explore the opposite coast, Palm Springs has been likened to a "west coast Provincetown"—minus the humidity. Owners and partners Joanna Funaro and Denise Roberson have preserved the area's American Indian heritage by incorporating Indian and Southwestern furnishings and design. Along with a safe, tranquil environment, Funaro asserts they are very service-oriented: "We're here 24 hours. We're not in customers' faces, but we are here if our guests need us." Laquita also has knowledgeable staff members who are available to take guests on hikes and guide them through the Palm Springs area. While Laquita is located within walking distance of some of Palm Springs' finest cuisine, each casita (room) at the inn is equipped with a full kitchen, and guests receive free organic coffee and a breakfast basket each day filled with deliciously fresh continental fare. For guests choosing not to wander into town, you will not be far from entertainment. The inn hosts comedians and local musicians, and claims a pool surrounded by shady palms and lounge chairs. Guests who are looking for the utmost in romance will want to stay in the Romance Casita Suite, which comes with a private yard and Hot Spot Spa.

The Newnham SunCatcher Inn

131 Griffith, Saugatuck, MI, 800-587-4249, suncatcherinn.com

With over 16 years of experience in the bed and breakfast business, Barbara Wishon is finally hanging up her hat. While she plans to sell The Newnham SunCatcher, don't expect her and partner Nancy Parker to check out of town—they have purchased a lot just down the road. This is how much the couple, who began running their B&B in 1991, love Saugatuck, Michigan. Their charming inn is located in Saugatuck's business district, just steps away

from boutiques, art galleries, The Acorn Theater and a variety of restaurants. This lakeside town (running along Lake Michigan) has been deemed the Fire Island of the Midwest, making it the perfect welcoming stopover for guests on their way to the annual Michigan Womyn's Festival in Walhalla (a three-hour drive). A wrap-around porch, carved woodwork, country-style kitchen and antiques make for an inviting stay at this home built during the 1920s. The SunCatcher's in-ground heated pool is the only one of its kind in the area. A full breakfast is served each morning, and guests can even enjoy their eggs by the pool. The double suite cottage in the back of the main house comes equipped with a full kitchen, a fireplace stove, TV and a private bath. Wishon is president of Grand Escape Inns, which offers wine tasting and murder mystery dinners for guests searching for some unique activities. Those ladies wanting a little more from a night out, check out Saugatuck's gay bar, Douglas Dunes. And not to worry about the inn switching hands; "We will sell to someone who is gay-friendly," Wishon affirms. ■



TOP: CASITAS LAQUITA, PALM SPRINGS, CA; BOTTOM: NEWNHAM SUNCATCHER INN, SAUGATUCK, MI