

The Suite Life

Art galleries, bird-watching, wine-tasting ... there are many reasons to visit Patagonia, including the Duquesne House, where three of the four guestrooms are spacious suites that just might keep you from leaving the property.

Strictly speaking, the Duquesne House is a B&B, offering comfy beds and scrumptious breakfasts for a fee. But poke around a bit, and you'll correctly deduce that every inch

patagonia

of this wildly eclectic place, filled with family heirlooms, rustic Mexican furniture and fanciful

Norwegian-inspired folk art, is as much home as it is business to owners Nancy McCoy and Ralph Schmitt.

When the formerly Midwestern couple bought the historic property in 2003, situated on what was once Patagonia's main street, the original structure — a tin-roofed adobe built in 1898 that served as a boarding house for the area's lead and silver miners — had already been converted into a B&B. The previous owner (local artist and gallery owner Regina Medley) had stuccoed the exterior, creating porches for each private entry.

Three of the four guestrooms are actu-

ally suites, each comprising a spacious bedroom, private bath and sitting room with two daybeds. One sports an ancient (but still operable) wood-burning stove and a claw-foot tub; another features hand-carved wooden chairs and a delicate wrought-iron bed; and a third displays antique needlepoint chairs (Nancy's grandmother's) and a distinctly feminine canopy bed. Separated from the other suites, the sunny, ultraprivate fourth room — originally designed as a mother-in-law apartment — contains a small TV, fridge and microwave, as well as a walk-in shower roomy enough for three or four close friends.

Two suites boast back doors leading directly to a private, terraced garden that overlooks the Patagonia Mountains. Lush with shade trees, cactuses and flowering plants, it attracts butterflies, hummingbirds and lazy humans.

The other two guestrooms open onto a screened-in Arizona Room, comfortably

furnished with Mexican equipale, a wood-burning stove, houseplants and reading material. Indoors and out, the message is the same: "Take a chill pill; you're in beautiful, laid-back Patagonia."

Cozy bedrooms notwithstanding, the most memorable thing about the Duquesne House may be Nancy's fantastically good breakfasts, eaten communally at her long dining-room table. Expect inspired recipes, beautiful composition, edible flower garnishes and an overwhelming urge to lick your generously portioned plate.

Most visitors go to Patagonia — a funky artists' colony — for its galleries and shops, excellent birding and proximity to wine country. But for some, the Duquesne House is reason enough. — NIKKI BUCHANAN

The Duquesne House is located at 367 Duquesne Avenue in Patagonia. For more information, call 520-394-2732 or visit www.theduquesnehouse.com.

