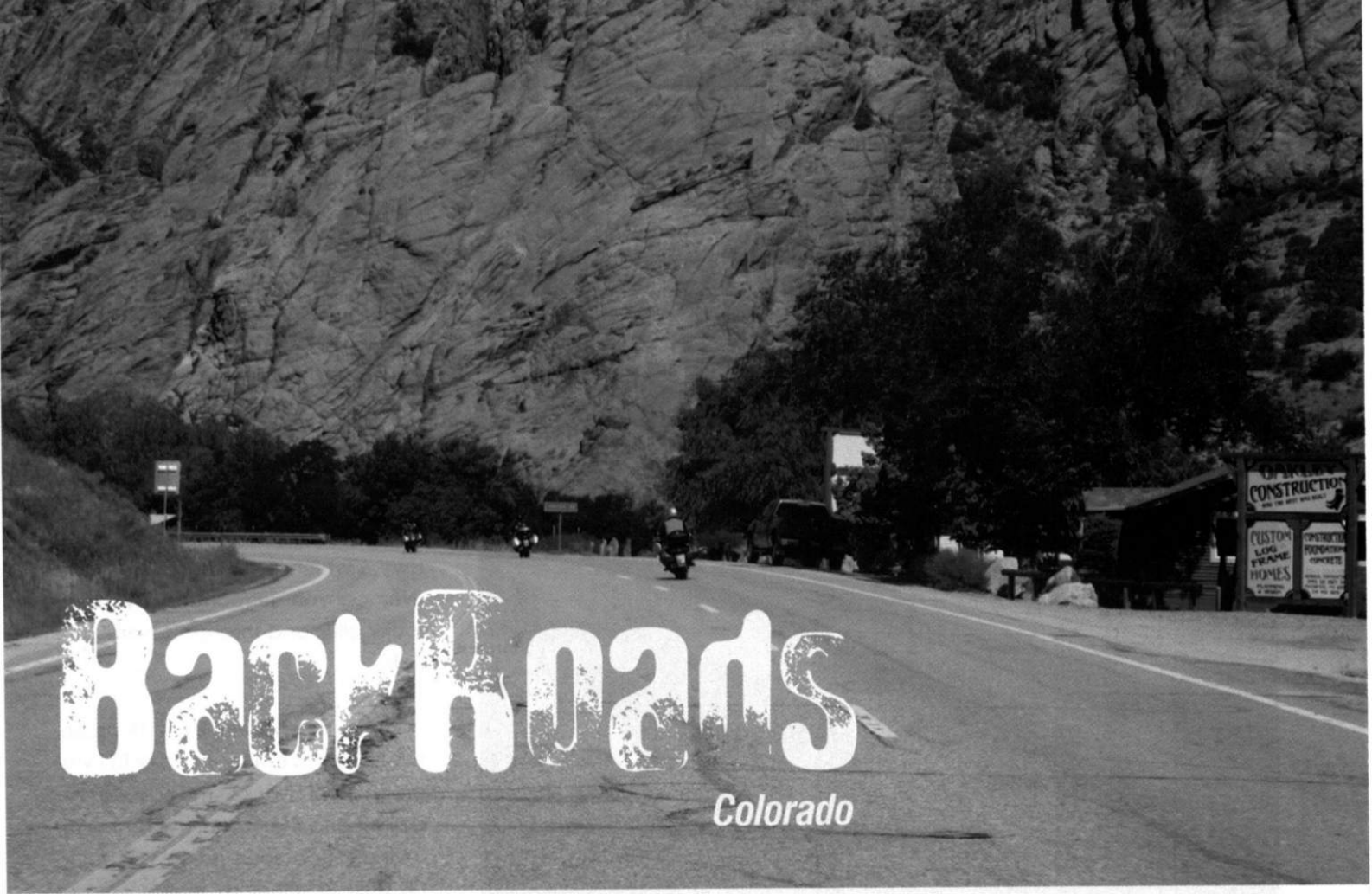




Back Roads

Colorado

A Motorcycling Honeymoon in Colorado

by Jessica Morris (Piotrowski)

Spending my honeymoon on a motorcycle traveling through the Rocky Mountains would never have crossed my mind as a remote possibility if I hadn't married a man who dreams, breathes, sleeps and lives motorcycles. I had the opportunity to share something with my husband that he loves dearly which was a wonderful experience. And traveling in what I consider to be one of the most beautiful areas of the country; how could I possibly beat that?

June 29th (76 miles)

We arrived at the sprawling Den-

ver airport the morning of June 29th to be met by mild weather and Tom Matthews of Turkey Creek Tours. He guided us to the luggage pick-up and we met Lynn, Tom's wife.

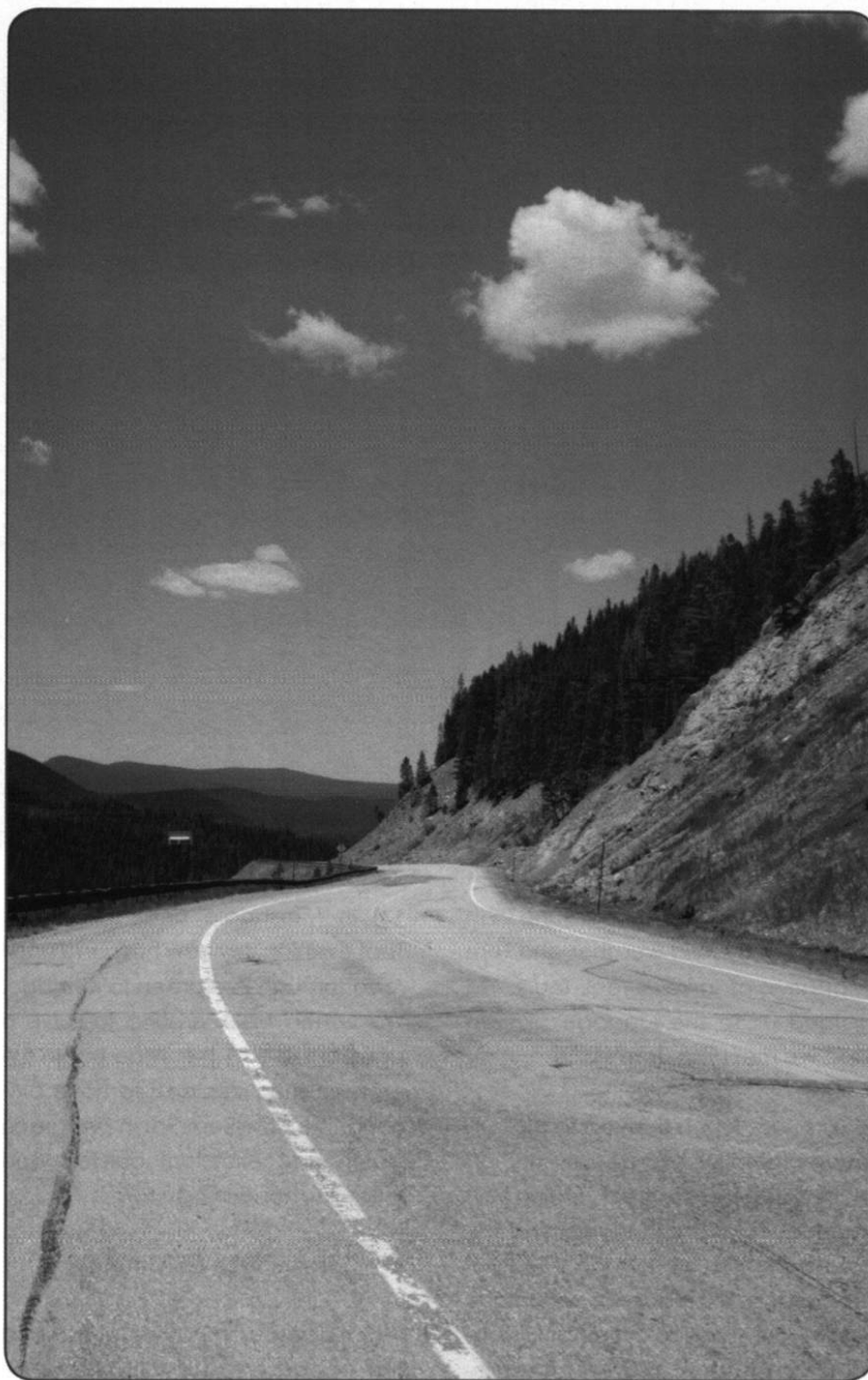
First was lunch then on to pick up our rental bike. We geared up, left our luggage in the truck, which was to meet us at the Inn later, and followed Tom (on his Triumph Tiger) out across the first ridge of mountains west of Denver also called the "Hogback". The area provides the scenic western backdrop of the Denver metropolitan area.

We traveled from Deer Creek Canyon to South Turkey Creek to North Turkey Creek to finally settle at the **Bears Inn Bed & Breakfast (pg.**

13) in Marshdale near Evergreen. That evening, my new husband and I rode through Evergreen to Kittridge. We turned back around to have a glass of wine at the Wine Bar in Evergreen then decided to have dinner at the Little Bear Bar in Evergreen which had excellent burgers and fries. Ah, honeymoon fare.

June 30th (170 miles)

Saturday morning we again had the opportunity to venture out on our own and do some exploring before the "official" tour began. We rode Upper Bear Creek (CR 470) but ended up turning around in some dirt while searching out Hwy 103. North on Hwy 74 to Bergen Park to finally hit Hwy 103 (Squaw Pass) where



we turned around because we had to be back at the Bears Inn in time for breakfast. Vicki, the Inn's hostess, served up a delicious breakfast she had prepared. Full and ready for the day, we headed out again. We

dropped in at a nursery in Kittridge, bought some flower seeds and admired the flora. We couldn't believe the number of different types of succulents. We never realized that Colorado had such a variety of cacti.

We left down Hwy 74, found an Albertson's and bought a map to plot our course. We traveled North I-74 to West I-70 to North Hwy 6/119 through Black Hawk where we saw a lot of casinos and old gold mines and into Nederland. In Nederland we stopped and had an espresso and did some touristy shopping. Leaving via South Hwy 119 to East Hwy 72 we came out of the mountains and back across the hogback, then South on Hwy 93 and East on Hwy 6 which was like traveling in a river canyon surrounded by sharp rocky cliffs and through several tunnels.

Hwy 6 met up with Hwy 119 again, to I-70 East to I-74 south back to Evergreen off of Hwy 73. The ride was excellent and the scenery was breathtaking. Bob seemed to be doing his best to either (1) frighten me or (2) ride the edges of the tires on the bike that had probably never seen a rider such as him.

That evening we met up with Tom and Lynn who introduced us to Mike, another rider who was doing the tour. To officially kick off the tour, we all had dinner at Café Prague which was located in the historic downtown section of Morrison, Colorado. The restaurant was upscale contemporary featuring European and American cuisine and everything we tasted was delicious. It was a wonderful way to begin our motor-riding adventure.

July 1st (180 miles)

Another fabulous breakfast at the Bears Inn and it was time for us to



get the gear loaded and head out for the first leg of the trip. That day the ride took us across some beautiful countryside and a 360 degree breathless view of the mountains while we rode through a mesa. We stopped in Hartsel and had buffalo burgers for lunch at HOB Café and Saloon. From there it was to the Royal Gorge, which is approximately 1,000 ft above the Arkansas River and the world's highest suspension bridge. We rode the bikes across the bridge. Intimidating doesn't even begin to describe what I felt after we had ridden across the Royal Gorge Bridge and then got off to walk on the bridge. Honestly, I didn't realize how daunting that was while we were crossing. Then walking on the bridge it was interesting how much more stable it seemed on the bike.



*A blend of the Southwest
and Southern Hospitality*

 **RIVER BEND**
bed & breakfast

42505 Hwy 160 • Mancos, CO 81328
riverbendbandb@hotmail.com

866-403-7063
www.riverbendbandb.com

We watched the rafters on the river below and enjoyed the cool breeze off the canyon. During the remainder of our ride that day we were fortunate to see a large herd of buffalo with a lot of babies, all being carefully guarded by a giant male buffalo. We also saw an antelope and a llama. The flora and the blooming cactus surrounded us at all times and were quite beautiful. We ended our ride at **The Florence Rose Bed & Breakfast (pg. 14)**. Dinner that evening was at El Caporal Restaurant in Cañon City, where we met up with two more riders joining the tour, Larry from Motorcycles: On The Road Again magazine and Neil LaHaye.

July 2nd (215 miles)

Cindy, the Innkeeper at the Florence Rose offered a lovely breakfast of which we all did partake before we headed out once again. We got to behold the "Super Max" or Federal Penitentiary just in case the ride itself wasn't enough excitement. This is where actor Woody Harrelson's father died. For lunch we stopped at the Coyote Cantina in Johnson City. Coyote Cantina had a old west ambience and breathtaking views of the Collegiate Peaks range of the Rocky Mountains. They also have John Denver's old motorcycle on display. Leaving there we were on our way to Leadville, riding through Twin Lakes to Independence Pass. The weather was beautiful and the height was staggering, but it was an experience not to miss. We parked the bikes for the night at the **Delaware Hotel (pg. 11)**, an 1886 Victorian Inn in the Historic District of the

old mining town of Leadville. Dinner at Quincy's Steak & Spirits was an event. They serve ONE thing and one thing ONLY. Steak. But when you serve one thing, I guess you get it right because it was fabulous. The only choices you really needed to make were the size of your steak (small, medium or large), your salad dressing and how you wanted your potato dressed.

July 3rd (212 miles)

We started our day with a Mexican Mocha at Cloud City Coffee and breakfast at the Golden Burro. Today's ride was unlike anything we had experienced thus far. We were traveling through the "high desert." It was extremely hot even while riding on the bikes. The landscape was enough to make you catch your breath. We were riding with flat land miles and miles around us but still the mountains surrounded us. We stopped in Dillon for lunch and then rode up Loveland Pass. We finished our day at the Steamboat Grand Hotel in Steamboat Springs with dinner at the Ore House at the Pine Grove. The restaurant was an old barn originally built in the late 1800's. It was converted into the restaurant in 1971. There was plenty of memorabilia including old stoves and wagon wheels found on the ranch.

July 4th (199 miles)

After breakfast at the hotel we headed out once again making a stop at Rabbit Ears Pass for a few photos. On to Walden we rode, where we made a pit stop and had lunch at the River Rock Café. On the way



to Winter Park we passed through acres of forest ravaged by beetles. Thousands upon thousands of trees lay dead and black against the green mountains, a humbling sight to behold. We stayed the night at a European style bed and breakfast, **Gasthaus Eichler (pg. 12)** in Winter Park. That evening we had a most delicious dinner prepared by owner René Weder. At one time he was the Executive Chef at Château Élan near Atlanta, Georgia. It was truly a traditional Slavic meal; my Grandmother would have been proud. That night we ventured out to see the fireworks and caught a glimpse of them over the trees as they were set off in the

next town over. Our room that night was directly above the rushing waters of the river and with our windows opened, it was most pleasant to hear and we were lulled to sleep by the sound.

July 5th (143 miles)

We wrapped up our tour on the most tumultuous day of the trip. We had breakfast at the Gasthaus Eichler and rode to Idaho Springs. Up Mt. Evans road to the Echo Lake Lodge where we took a quick glance at the weather. We decided to head up to the summit of Mt. Evans, the highest road in the U.S. at

14,264 ft, and hoped the weather would either pass us by or we would be able to finish up our trip before it hit. The rain sprinkled on us just as we topped the summit. We dismounted the bikes and the first thing I noticed was that the lightning wasn't high above us in the clouds; it was right next to us. We decided NOT to hike the additional 200 feet. Instead we took photos and scrambled to get off of the mountain. On our descent, the rain turned into snow. As we continued down, the snow turned into hail (which really hurts on a bike, by the way). As we still continued down, the hail turned into freezing rain. When we pulled back into Echo Lake Lodge we managed to peel ourselves off the bike and drag our freezing bodies into the Lodge for hot cocoa and some lunch. We finished Squaw pass (Hwy 103) and it was back to Denver to return our bike. We were in 35 degree weather at the top of the mountain and by the time we returned the bikes in Denver it was 95 degrees. Quite an experience for the last day! What an awesome ride! Where else can you experience that? Needless to say, it was sad as we drove back to the Bears Inn to enjoy our last night. We celebrated a great riding experience by wrapping up the tour with dinner at The Fort, just outside Denver.

July 6th (1,199 miles)

Our tour was up and we had to return home but we ended with memories to will last a lifetime.

This was a special honeymoon to be remembered.

Hotel Delaware The Crown Jewel of Leadville

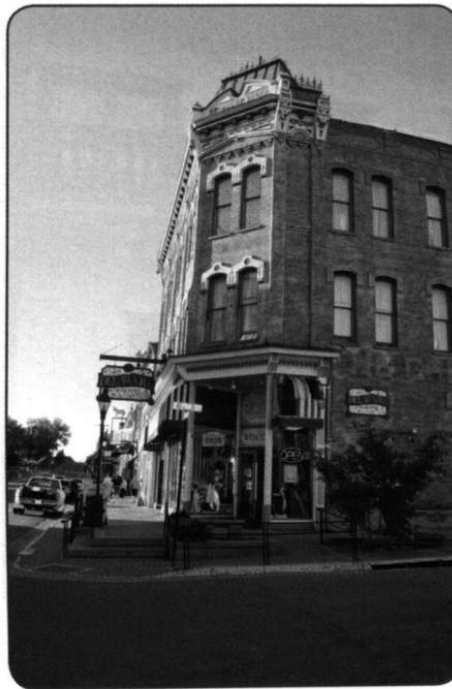
Larry Gore

It is fascinating when your lodging isn't just any common ol' motel or hotel but has a history. The hotel Delaware in Leadville, Colorado in the Colorado Rocky Mountains is just such an inn. An 1886 Victorian Inn, located in the National Historic District, the proprietor Tammy, and her staff, take care of their guests with the same graciousness of the era from which this structure was erected.

The air here is so clear and so blue that it almost seems as if the pollution of the city from where we came is still a thing in the distant future. Towards the west, in the foreground is the flat plains of the plateau which are framed by the mountains that run along the continental divide. Although it is on a plateau surrounded by 14,000 foot peaks, you don't realize the altitude, but Leadville, Colorado, at 10,152 feet, is the highest city in the United States.

Leadville dates back to the 1860's when gold was discovered at California Gulch. After the gold was gone, it became a ghost town, until 1877 when silver was discovered.

In the mid 1880's three merchant brothers came to town from Denver to establish a branch of their business. In 1886 they erected the "Delaware Block" at a cost of approximately \$60,000. The three story building has sidewalk level shops with finished rooms on the second and third floor



walk-ups. The building was fitted with steam heat, hot and cold water, gaslights, 6 bedrooms and a few closets, quite luxurious for the time.

Today the building is a hotel and has 36 rooms including four 2-room suites. At street level is the lobby and there are shops accessible from the sidewalk. The main lobby and the mezzanine areas also serve as a retail center for vintage clothing, lamps, crystal, clocks, vases, pottery, jewelry and art work. Upstairs, in addition to the antiques in the rooms, the hallways, several adjacent rooms are further full.

Visit the hotel more than once and you will notice that the furnishings and décor change. All of the furnishings are available for sale and antique hunters purchase various pieces for their own collections necessitating new furnishings and décor in the rooms on a regular basis.



It would take several days of intense shopping to explore all that the Hotel Delaware has to offer.

Many famous people have walked the streets of Leadville including, to name a few, President Grant, Doc Holliday, Houdini, John Phillips Souza, Butch Cassidy and "The Unsinkable Molly Brown".

When you visit Hotel Delaware you too will receive royal treatment and feel as famous as the people who have walked the halls in the past.

Hotel Delaware
700 Harrison Avenue
Leadville, CO 80461
800-748-2004
www.DelawareHotel.com

Quincy's Steak & Spirits
Leadville, CO
719-486-9765



**Gasthaus Eichler
Chateaubriand, Warm Apple Strudel
and Motorcycles**

Larry Gore

The snow-capped peaks of the Swiss Alps loomed large against the crystal blue sky. The rushing waters of the glacier-fed stream crashed, swirled, gurgled and turned white as it crashed over and around rocks. The rocks, worn smooth over years of being tumbled and buffeted by the icy water stand as silent sentinels in the midst of the chaos of the stream. In the distance a train whistles. I stand here enjoying the cool, crisp, pure mountain air.

In the background the white stucco and dark logs of the inn give it a storybook quality. Aaahhh, Switzerland is beautiful in the summer. But wait, this isn't Switzerland. It is Winter Park, Colorado where Joan and René Weder have recreated a bit of René's homeland in the Gasthaus Eichler. Even the dining rooms reflect

the magic, charm and elegance of a true European experience.

Hans and Hannelore Eichler of Rhein Valley, Germany established Gasthaus Eichler in 1987. In 2003, the Weders purchased the property. After 30 years as Executive Chef in fine establishments in Boca Raton, Beaver Creek, the Brown Palace in Denver and Chateau Elan & Resorts in Georgia, Rene and Joan felt it was time to head home to the mountains. You see, Rene and Joan not only love the mountains but they love riding the mountains on René's motorcycle. They value the opportunities they get to ride the Colorado Mountains between the time consuming business of running the inn and restaurants.

The Gasthaus Eichler brings you a sensation of peacefulness and relaxation. Start your day in **The Lounge** with a full service European breakfast of fresh pastries, breads, cereals, fruits, meats and cheeses accentuated by a daily hot entrée along

with international teas and coffees.

In the winter, and by prior arrangement in the other seasons, **Fondue Stube** serves such specialties as Meat Fondue Lucerne, Swiss Matterhorn and Chocolate Decadence served on impressive Edelweiss design china, folklore coasters and legendary weinhaebers.

Dine at **Dezeley's Restaurant** overlooking the creek with a backdrop of the Arapahoe National Forest. An international staff serves continental cuisine that bite after bite, is every bit as delightful as your view. The service is impeccable, the kind of service where your glass is never empty, your coffee always hot, your bread basket full and yet you never seem aware of the presence of the staff attending to your every need.

Both Joan and Rene take a very active role. Joan watches over all the activity and makes sure that the entire experience is delightful. Rene, when he gets a chance, ducks out of the kitchen and visits each table to make sure that everything is perfect and his guests are happy.

When you visit Colorado be sure to plan your route to include a stay at the Gasthaus Eichler in Winter Park. You can enjoy an outstanding culinary experience and talk to the Chef about the best rides in the area at the same time.

Gasthaus Eichler
78786 US Hwy 40
Winter Park, CO 80482
800-543-3899
www.GasthausEichler.com

The Bears Inn Bed and Breakfast

Tom Matthews

From the tantalizing views of Mount Evans, from turning onto the driveway to putting down your fork after the sumptuous gourmet breakfasts, the Bears Inn provides a true foothills retreat.

Located between Evergreen and Conifer on Highway 73 at an elevation of 7755 feet, the Bears Inn is just 30 miles to the east from the Denver metro area. The bucolic inn is set among towering evergreens and aspens where the large rear deck, complete with waterfall and hot tub, affords a cool, quiet and restful retreat. Wildlife abounds in the area; hummingbirds, foxes, deer and elk. Here you can enjoy the dazzling landscape and enjoy the peacefulness that surrounds you.

The site was developed in the 1920's as the Marshdale Lodge Resort. The current building was constructed in 1928 and known as the Marshdale Annex. The resort operated under various owners through the 1960s and served as the summer headquarters for the 75-member Colorado Youth Philharmonic Orchestra from 1968 to 1986. Vicki acquired the property in 2002. Since that time, Vicki has refurbished the entire inn from top to bottom with new electrical, plumbing and heating, new windows, the works.

The great room, complete with a country-style stone fireplace is a great meeting place for the guests to plan the day's adventures or just



to relax. Laid back says it all. The eleven guest rooms are all tastefully decorated in their own unique theme with names like the "Nantucket", "Lonesome Dove" and "Safari" they each have their own private bath.

An incredible, healthful breakfast, served in the great room, is included in the room price. Vicki prepares fresh whole grain muffins, fantastic egg dishes and her signature item, lacquered bacon (baked then brushed with a special sauce), served up with fresh fruit, juice and coffee. Leaving the inn hungry is your choice alone. Catering and meeting services are also available.

Evergreen, just three and a half miles to the north, has numerous restaurants and watering holes along with shopping. Evergreen Lake provides fishing and canoe rentals during the summer months and ice-skating during the winter. Denver and its suburbs are nearby with more shopping, museums, concerts and sports venues. The world famous Red

Rocks Amphitheatre in Morrison is 30 minutes away and features top music acts throughout the summer in a stunning natural outdoor setting.

For the motorcyclist, the inn can provide parking for your trailer and tow vehicle on site (call first to arrange a space) and access to great day rides along the Front Range just half a mile from the fantastic twisties of North Turkey Creek Road. Other great day rides include Highway 8, (Bear Creek Canyon) to Morrison, Highway 103 over Squaw Pass, Lookout Mountain Road, the Peak to Peak highway to Estes Park and Colorado 5 to the summit of Mt. Evans.

A great starting point to explore the Rocky Mountain West. Excellent service, comfortable rooms and a great morning meal await you.

Bears Inn Bed & Breakfast.
27425 Spruce Lane
Evergreen, CO 80439
303-670-1205
www.BearsInn.com

A Rose in Florence

Larry Gore

You can spot their signs from a mile away and recognize them by their shape as they are silhouetted against the sky; Best Western, Holiday Inn, Ramada, Days Inn and a host of others. They are recognizable because of the consistency – their signs are always the same design, the same color and the same shape.



Unfortunately, this sameness also tends to apply to their rooms. They are very utilitarian and very boring. If you are traveling and need to make a quick stop for some sleep this is fine. It is what they exist for. However, when you want to make a trip special you need to get out of the ordinary and stay in places that are part of your trip experience.

The Florence Rose Bed & Breakfast was just such an experience on

our recent trip to Colorado.

Just outside of Canon City, Florence, Colorado is located in the Wet Mountains and is a town with a rich history dating back to the early days of mining.

With the prosperity of the mining camps, towns flourished and the residents began putting down roots and building real houses. Built in 1900 the Florence Rose was a 2-story Victorian home with all the comforts available at the time. Spacious

rooms, high ceilings, large windows, wood floors, authentic period furniture, gardens, stately trees and a lush lawn all make you feel like you stepped back a hundred years in time. Modern conveniences such as indoor plumbing, electricity and air conditioning keep the experience from having excessive reality.

Restoring the Florence Rose to its original grandeur was an eight year project during which time meticu-

lous attention was paid to every detail right down to choosing wallpapers. Each of the five guest rooms has a unique theme and décor and combines comfort amid the historical mood.

Retrofitting the home to serve as a B&B resulted in some rooms with private baths and some rooms that share a common bath. If a private bath is important to you be sure to ask when you make your reservations.

From the Florence Rose is it only about 20 miles to Royal Gorge, home of the world's highest suspension bridge. The Wetmore Mountains, Bishop's Castle and Westcliffe are all within 30 miles. Westcliffe, known for its summer theater, is located against a backdrop of the mighty Sangre de Cristos mountain range, surely one of the most striking views in the Rockies.

If you choose to you can get off your bike and spend a day or two rafting the river – some 100,000 people per year enjoy whitewater rafting in this area.

So leave behind the plastic rooms of the plastic motel chains and stay someplace unique on your trip. You'll never be sorry with an experience like you will have at the Florence Rose Bed & Breakfast.

Cindy Calahan
The Florence Rose B&B
1305 West Third Street
Florence, CO 81226
719-784-4734
www.FlorenceRose.com

Mad Dogs, No Englishmen

Tom Matthews

Back in 2005, Debbie Lavallee and Mark Miklos decided to start a motorcycle shop in Conifer. Needing a name for the business, they looked to their four dogs. Knowing that choosing one dog's name over another might cause friction amongst their pets, the name MADDOG was chosen to incorporate them all. The doors opened July 1, 2005 as a full service motorcycle repair shop and accessories store. Stocked with chrome accessories, apparel items, and riding necessities, MADDOG's is the only bike shop along the Highway 285 corridor.

Service and repair of Harley and Harley derived customs is Mark's specialization. Mark has been riding and repairing bikes since he was 11 and knows a thing or two about bikes. Mark now rides an '03 Road King along side his wife, Debbie, who has been riding her own '04 Fatboy for three years.

Debbie's initial experience buying a bike opened her eyes to some of the issues women in motorcycling face. "Some dealers don't know how to sell to women. When I was looking to buy my first bike, the salesman wanted to talk to the guys who were with me. They need to focus on the woman and what she wants. I'm sure it's gotten better in the last few years." At least we hope it has.

Mark built three customs this year and during this interview a pallet arrived full of bike parts. He told me



that it contained an engine and drive train for a customer wanting to build his own bike. "The customer told me he's been watching too many 'biker build' shows on TV." Mark will be assisting in the build.

One of Mark's customs, valued at \$150,000, is being raffled off by three local VFW posts so his customer will be getting some fantastic expertise.

Mark and Debbie find that running the shop, they don't get to ride as much as they would like. But when he can, Mark loves the roads near Breckenridge and Debbie loves to ride anywhere in Colorado as long as it's not on the interstate.

This will be the second year that the two will pack up and move the shop to Sturgis for the Black Hills Rally. This year they will be the largest service vendor at the rally providing oil changes and other repairs with six motorcycle work stands.

Debbie is involved in charity work and combines her passion for community service and motorcycles by sponsoring rides that benefit both children in need and Wilderness On Wheels. "WOW" maintains a facility in the mountains that allows wheel chair users and other handicapped individuals who haven't before been



able to experience the outdoors, a way in which to access the wilderness that had previously been unavailable to them.

Through poker runs and other organized rides, Debbie and MADDOG provide Christmas joy to families by providing holiday meals, clothing and toys. Debbie believes it's important to get children involved in helping others, especially kids. They are invited to the rides, parties, gift-wrapping parties and gift distribution. The campout for the WOW ride at the end of June was a family affair, and lots of kids enjoyed the outing.

If you are riding Highway 285 through the foothills west of Denver, be sure to stop in to visit with Debbie and Mark. And like them, do your part to support your motorcycling community's charitable efforts.

MadDog Custom Cycles

10895 US HWY 285

CONIFER, CO 80433

303-816-1129

maddogcustomcyclesweb.com

Wilderness on Wheels

P.O. Box 1007

Wheat Ridge, CO 80034

(303) 403-1110

www.wildernessonwheels.org