



El Tovar Hotel is located just 30 yards or so from the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. Photo provided by Xanterra South Rim.

Fall Getaways Beckon in Northern Arizona:

From historic hotels (some are haunted!) to the majestic Grand Canyon

By David M. Brown

Lingering summer and the colors of a Southwest fall: During the next few months, escape one and enjoy the other in Northern Arizona. Within a few hours, you can find a variety of premiere hotels and inns while enjoying the area's diverse activities and seasonal beauty. Many of these accommodations are historic — some with haunted rooms which, eerily, rent out first.

In the White Mountains, Molly Butler Lodge in Greer is 8,000 feet cool, with year-round recreational opportunities. Just 12 miles from Sunrise Ski Park are the main lodge, with four rooms, and 51 differently configured cabins. The Chop House offers excellent inside and patio dining; just beyond, painted against the peaks, is a mountain stream, attracting deer at twilight.

Founded in 1910, the lodge is celebrating a centennial this year — the longest continually operating lodge in Arizona. Teddy Roosevelt came here to hunt, and Zane Grey, the Western novelist, also stayed in the main lodge. Other famous guests include Herbert Hoover and actor John Wayne, who spent much time in Arizona making movies and ranching.

An hour and a half north of the East Valley, in the Bradshaw Mountains, is Prescott's romantic Hotel Vendome. Surrounded by the mile-high city's signature Victorian homes, the two-story 21-room inn is a half block from Whiskey Row and the Courthouse Plaza. Built by J.B. Jones in 1917, the intimate bed and breakfast was restored and enhanced in 1983 by Prescott architect Bill Otwell; today, it is maintained and managed by David Waddle, Eric Marichal and Tiffany Owens.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Vendome features contemporary amenities such as air conditioning as well as historically spirited bathrooms with claw-leg tubs and pull-chain toilets. Silent-screen cowboy Tom Mix kicked his boots off here when he was filming westerns in Prescott Canyon.

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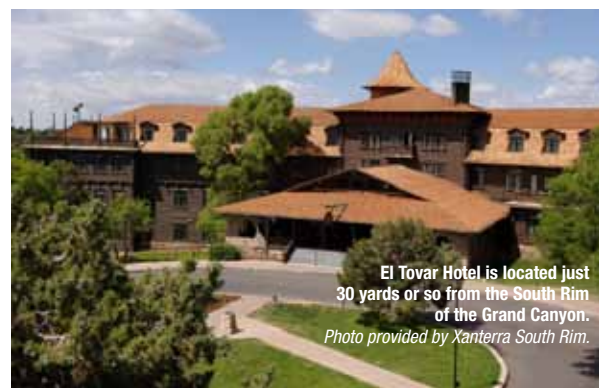


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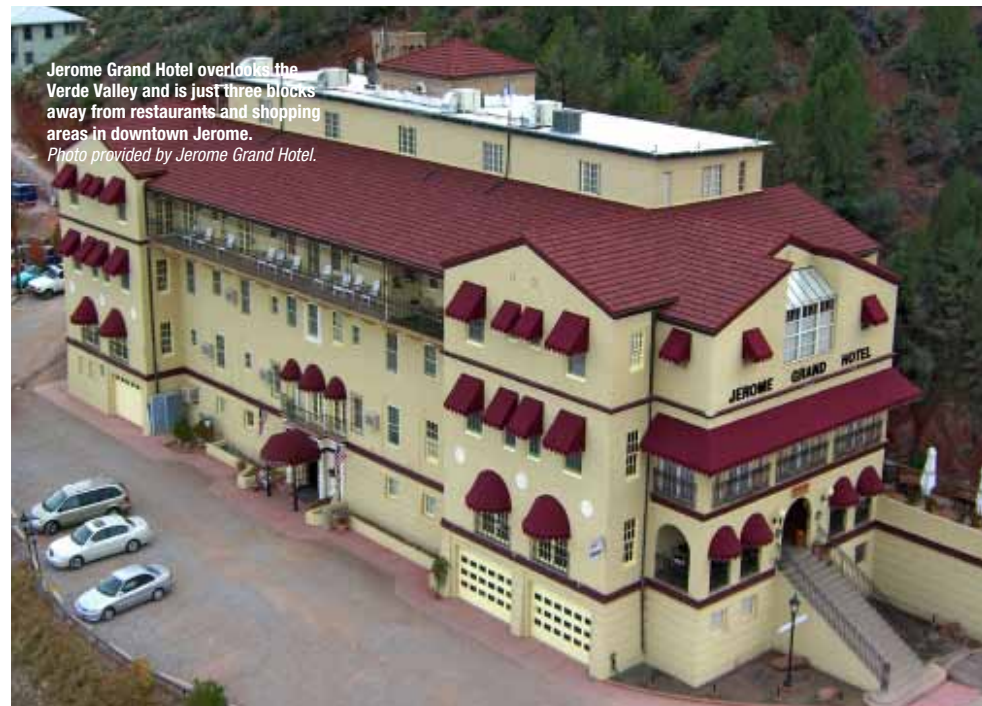


Hotel Vendome.
Photo by Stephanie Morgan.



Hotel Red Garter Bed & Breakfast in Williams, AZ.
Photo provided by Red Garter.

The first floor of this hotel is a bakery that provides guests with fresh baked goods.
Photo provided by Red Garter.



Jerome Grand Hotel overlooks the Verde Valley and is just three blocks away from restaurants and shopping areas in downtown Jerome.
Photo provided by Jerome Grand Hotel.



Only an hour and a half north of the East Valley, Hotel Vendome is Prescott's romantic getaway.
Photo by Stephanie Morgan.

continued

Riding shadowy shotgun with Mix are other ghosts — one human, one feline. Local legend has it that the ghost of a previous owner lives in Room 16 with her cat, Noble.

An hour away in the Mingus Mountains is the Jerome Grand Hotel, a memory of the copper boom days. Opened as the United Verde Hospital in 1926 and operated until 1950, the building was vacant until Bob Alther and his brother, Larry, purchased it in 1994, opening two years later. The hotel currently offers 25 rooms, a restaurant and lounge; when complete, it will total 32 rooms. Overlooking the Verde Valley, the Grand is about three blocks from downtown Jerome, now a vital arts, restaurant and shopping area.

Among its vintage elements are the Otis elevator, a Kewanee steam heat boiler and antique phones that ring to a switchboard. Call about Ghost Hunting Nights, Monday through Thursdays — several of the nurses who worked at the hospital say the building was haunted years before it closed.

If you're in Flagstaff, home of the Northern Arizona University Lumberjacks, book Laurel and Richard Dunn's four-bedroom England House. This superlative bed and breakfast is adjacent to Mars Hill, where, at the Lowell Observatory, Pluto, now a disgraced planet, was first seen. Finished in 1908, the two-story Coconino and Moenkopi stone house was built by Barbara Michelbach-England and William England, a master stone-cutter.

The Dunns have meticulously restored and tastefully updated the sturdy building. With four uniquely finished rooms, the elegant England House features include Sears and Roebuck pressed-tin ceilings, a parlor, a sitting room with great views of the San Francisco Peaks, a back deck and a lower patio. Treated like royalty for every stay, you'll be properly and warmly accommodated with robes; hair dryers; rosemary, cedar and thyme soap; shampoo, conditioner and lotion. The Dunns serve complimentary wine and beer at check-in time and a gourmet breakfast in the sun room.

About 45 minutes west of Flagstaff, Williams, the "Gateway to the Grand Canyon" is below 9,000-foot Bill Williams Mountain, named for the pioneering mountain man. One of the town's finest inns is The Red Garter Bed & Breakfast. German tailor August Tetzlaff built it in 1897, expecting rich business for his saloon and bordello when the new Grand Canyon Railway reached a silver mine. Every day, the tourist line travels to and from the canyon from a station just across the street.

The mine went bust, but the saloon and bordello boomed. Today, with a gift store and bakery instead, the Red Garter comforts travelers coming down Historic Route 66 or Interstate 40 to visit the Grand Canyon. Owner and innkeeper John Holst has restored the yellow brick Victorian Romanesque building during the past 30 years. Originally with eight cribs and a two-story outhouse, the second

floor now offers four rooms, all with private bathrooms, original skylights, antiques and 12-foot ceilings. The first floor bakery provides guests fresh-baked breakfasts and is open to the public with a gift shop and a display of artifacts found on site.

You can take the 80-mile Grand Canyon Railway to the Canyon or drive about an hour and a half from Williams. Either way, try to stay at El Tovar, just 30 yards from the South Rim, a national monument and World Heritage Site.

El Tovar, recalling a Spanish explorer under Coronado, opened Jan. 14, 1905 — a hybrid of Swiss chalet and Norway villa styles, designed by Charles Whittlesey with interior design elements by Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter. He eschewed the Victorian wood-frame trend in hotel architecture for log and stone construction, using Douglas fir and locally quarried stone. On the first floor of the four-story, 78-room landmark is The Rendezvous Room, the lobby, where the original lights were known as electroliers. Here also is the spectacular El Tovar dining room, which overlooks the rim. When opened, El Tovar was considered the most luxurious hotel between the Rocky Mountains and San Francisco, a century later, El Tovar remains, for many tourists, the perfect space in Earth's perfect place. ■



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