

Horseback Riding at Fairwinds

I went out on a trail ride with you earlier this week. Firstly I'd like to thank you for an amazing day. I was really amazed at how great you guys are. From this point on I will definitely know where to go for trail rides! I'm very interested in taking lessons at your stables!

-Helena

"Wonderful place, great people, we had a great trail ride today. Mom loved it she had not been on a horse for years :)"
--Sandra

"I had contacted you awhile back about trail riding. You were wonderfully nice enough to hook my significant-other up with your Percheron, Polly. He enjoyed it so much! He's been asking about getting back on a horse (told me he would have bought Polly if she were for sale)... I did get him a helmet for his birthday and would like to set him up for a few lessons. Nothing fancy to get him in the show ring, but just enough that he's comfortable with the basics. Your farm had such a great atmosphere!!

Thank you,
Stephanie

I just wanted to say thank you! We did your camp in July and had a great time. It was a fun and learning experience for them. Camp has opened her heart for her own pony Midnight. I am enjoying seeing the bond between the two of them again.

Your kindness and hard work, as well as Co-co's, has given her confidence to ride again.

Your farm is beautiful. Hope to see you next year!

Take Care,
Jen

Baltimore Magazine: July 2012

Milking a goat for fun? Why farmcations are a hot, new tourism trend.

By Deborah R. Huso

When I was a child growing up on a small farm in Virginia's rural Blue Ridge Mountains, it never occurred to me that wading through yellow grass among cattle who watched with casual indifference or throwing newly split armfuls of firewood onto the back of Dad's pickup each fall was anything but normal. My friends all grew up like this, among cattle and horses, even chickens and rabbits, and the pastures and woods of our parents' grazing lands were our playgrounds.

But as our society grows ever more urban and suburban, many people, even those who may have grown up on farms, are becoming increasingly alienated from rural landscapes. Now, thanks to the hospitality of several working-farm bed-and-breakfasts in the Mid-Atlantic, even city dwellers can experience a taste of life down on the farm, sometimes referred to as a "farmcation."

Whether you just want to sit in a rocking chair on a long front porch and watch sheep graze or you actually want to get down and dirty taking care of horses and Alpacas, these farms provide plenty of opportunity for getting back to the land.

Juniper Moon Farm—also called Camp JMF—offers a variety of workshops throughout the year on an 11-acre sheep farm outside Charlottesville, VA. Among them is a weekend session on poultry keeping (Sept. 7-9), where participants learn how to care for chickens, ducks, or geese, and can purchase a coop in advance to take home two healthy, egg-laying hens—which means almost instant breakfast the next morning.

But one doesn't have to be into chickens to enjoy a weekend at Juniper Moon (434-589-4455, fiberfarm.com), which offers accommodations for four in a bunkhouse.

Farm owner and shepherdess Susan Gibbs opened Juniper Moon three years ago after moving her herd of about 100 mostly Cormo sheep (as well as a few Angora goats and Babydoll Southdown sheep) from her previous farm on Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts. A former CBS network news producer, Gibbs gave up her career in a quest to find out what she really wanted to do with her life. "I was in a bookstore one day and saw a book about raising sheep," she says. "Something

in my head just clicked.” Today, she also operates a successful yarn CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), selling mainly to spinners and knitters, along with her bed-and-breakfast and farm workshops.

And while Gibbs offers a popular shepherding camp, where people can learn about everything from trimming hooves and catching sheep to fence building and veterinary skills, there are less intense offerings, too.

Bed & Breakfast

Our family had the best time at Fairwinds! Our visit will always be a jewel of a memory for us. We will always remember how we spent Hanna's 15th birthday and our 20th anniversary. We loved staying in the family suite upstairs! Don't laugh, but I loved the VCR! I could do it with my eyes closed! We miss Lilly, Finnigan, Possum, Kenzie, Rascal, Paco, Dixie, Spring, Willie (and Flo), Sandy, Smoky, Ariel, Billy, and all the others. Thank you for your delicious breakfasts and fun conversations around the table. I regret that we forgot to sign the guest book. I wish you would take an excerpt from this email and write it in the guest book for us. Please find our email full of pictures from our stay with you! I look forward to reading Bed, Breakfast, and Beyond! Haven is enjoying her autographed copies of your books! I was very surprised and delighted to receive Secretariat and Sea Biscuit plates! I am glad my hubby overheard our conversation! Thanks again for the memories!

Becky

Thank you so much for sending me the money I left in the dresser drawer where we stayed at Fairwinds... That was so careless of me to leave it there, but as I told you, Ted Freud said when you leave something somewhere, it means you want to return there. And we sure do! We had a great stay, and our horse did not want to leave.

You have such a wonderful place there. We loved all the animals who greeted me early in the morning when I went down to feed the horse.

Thanks again. Hope to see you next time.

Sincerely,
Joan

I had to write to you to express my deepest gratitude for the wonderful stay at your farm. You made us all feel at home and everyone had such a wonderful time. I was in awe of all you have accomplished and do in your lives, but mostly how warm, laid back and fun you both are. We will remember this birthday for our whole lives as the way my husband put it, “the best birthday I ever had!” You went out of your way to make every detail special for us. Those meals were so wonderful, I am here hoping you will write back with the marinade and recipe for that pork loin, veggie, and breakfast casseroles. Thank you so much for the heartwarming experience and I hope we will get to see you both sometime again. If you ever come to visit in San Diego, please look us up!!

Fondly,
Susan
Carlsbad, CA

Just wanted to let you know how much my family enjoyed our visit to your lovely home and stable last weekend. Upon arrival, our daughters, aged six and three, practically disappeared as they discovered your carefully-placed tree swings and hammocks. Our infant son and dad loved petting the donkey and watching the bunnies, while mom relaxed and watched a riding lesson. What a wonderful way to start our evening away!

The girls loved their little room in the eves, the moon and stars on the wallpaper above their heads. The evening was wonderfully cool and so quiet and peaceful! We all slept well!

Thank you to Mr Ted for allowing the girls to collect the eggs in the morning - and being so patient when our three year old dropped one!! And thank you to Ms JoAnn for a wonderful breakfast - corn fritters, amazing bacon and wonderfully fresh watermelon and cantaloupe - yum!!

After breakfast, mom and daughters enjoyed a lovely trail ride - I won't say 'peaceful' only because our daughter kept up a running conversation with 'Mr Justin' who was helping her on the trail. It was her first experience horseback riding and she LOVED it! Our older daughter, who has been taking lessons in our home town of Baltimore, had a wonderful experience in her lesson - she was made to feel very special when the instructor asked her to be the 'leader' for her group of

students. She learned an enormous amount in that hour - and, in fact, refused to get off her horse at the end of the lesson! She finally relented when I promised that we would return soon for another lesson - so I will surely be calling you soon to keep that promise!

Thanks you again and we can't wait to tell all our friends about our fantastic weekend!

Lisa, Arthur, Ella, Kailtyn and Patrick

Thanks for everything! We had a great time as usual. You go above and beyond and I so appreciate your kindness and graciousness -

Fondly,

Vicki & Al

A few highlights from our guest book

Date	Comment
4/30/08	Great room! Horses happy! Thanks for getting up extra eary to make coffee. Much appreciated.
5/4/08	Finally! A place that my horse, the dogs, and I can rest on our travels! Excellent - we'll be back.
11/8/08	What a beautiful home in a beautiful setting. I am awestruck. Thanks for making us feel so welcome. The horse riding was fantastic and we had great weather too! The only problem is we don't have enough time to stay longer! A perfect experience for my first time in Maryland. I love it here.
10/18/08	Thank you for a wonderful time! Food was delicious, company was wonderful, the bed was so comfortable. Rocket enjoyed it too! I'll be back!
7/16/11	Stayed here for my 33 rd birthday party celebration with dear friends + enjoyed a fun tea party with friends who came up for the day. What a fun place.
01/07/12	60°, clear skies, full moon, light traffic, beautiful room, and spacious stall for my horse. What a delightful place to rest. 400 miles behind us, 400 miles tomorrow. See you in April!
4/10/12	I stayed here with my kids - looking for something fun and different. Everyone was warm and friendly, the atmosphere is laid back, and the house + farm are beautiful. I got some wonderful shots of the kids at the pond, and of course some great pictures of the horses.
7/29/12	Thank you so much for sharing your beautiful farm. Smokey, Cassie + Polly were wonderful! - JoAnn + Ted weren't bad either!
8/11/12	What a great lay-over place for the horses! For us too! We'll definitely stay again when we are in the area!
9/6/12	Thank you - this is my heaven on earth.
9/26/12	What a great mini-vacation! Loved being able to bring the horses. Wonderful turnout & stalls. They were very happy and comfortable. House was just like home. Thank you for the best get away I can remember - will definitely return. Already making plans -
10/7/12	Thank you for an awesome mother/daughter weekend away! We so appreciate your hospitality & the chance to get our horse cravings in! We will definitely recommend your B&B to others!

Special Events

Thank you for making the dove release and horse and buggy ride so beautiful and perfect! The buggy ride was so nice and by far one of my favorite parts of the wedding because it gave us a few minutes of peaceful alone time right after the ceremony. It was so special, so sweet, so perfect! Thank you for making our wedding complete! That you for adding such a special touch to our wedding. Everything went perfectly and we thank you for it!

Sincerely,
Karen & Dan

Just wanted to send you a quick email to let you know how much fun everyone had at the birthday party! You provided a wonderful and unique venue. We were thrilled!

Angie

We visited today's Family Farm Day and we had a ball! ☺ The animals were a hit with our girls, ages 6 and 7, and 8 liked buying books from a local author and fresh produce on our way home. Great job! ☺ Amy.