

Bed & Breakfast

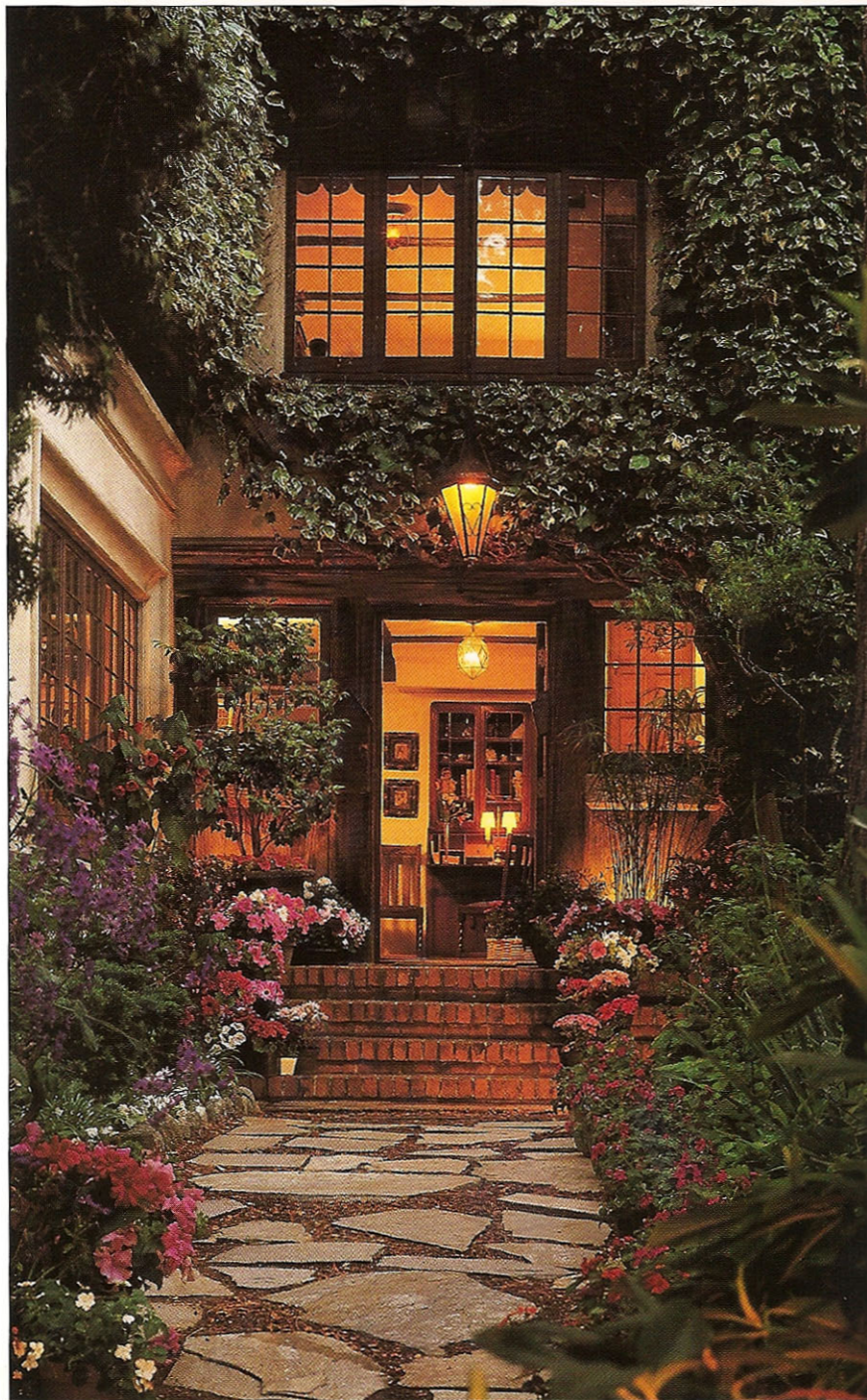
The delicious aroma of freshly baked cinnamon rolls and sizzling bacon winds its way up the stairs of the Victorian gingerbread bed and breakfast, rousing you from a restful night's sleep. Your half-open eyes scan the well-manicured room, taking in the pine armoire, antique lace linens and chintz-covered window seat. If you listen closely, you might hear the barks of playful sea lions in nearby Monterey Bay and the rhythmic crash of the surf breaking on its shore.

There's something about a bed and breakfast that bespeaks warmth and relaxation. Maybe it's the oversized chair in the parlor seducing you to sit in front of a crackling fire with that meant-to-read book, or the grandmotherly innkeeper relaying humorous tales of raising her brood in the former residence.

More and more travelers are resisting rising hotel rates and big-city getaways in favor of rustic surroundings, friendly hosts and the reasonable rates bed and breakfasts afford. According to Betty Rundback, co-author of *Bed and Breakfast U.S.A.*, there are more than 15,000 bed and breakfast inns in the U.S., and the number is increasing rapidly. When the book was first published 15 years ago, only 40 B&Bs were listed.

The term "bed and breakfast" probably came from British housewives with an extra bedroom who "took in" guests and sent them on their way in the morning with a proper English breakfast.

The Monterey Peninsula, with its magnificent coastal scenery, gentle weather, attractive shops and galleries and top-notch restaurants, is one area where bed and breakfast inns have flourished. Following are a few of the unique B&Bs in the area and a listing of others you'll want to try as well. One word of caution, though: Be sure to make advance reservations. Some of these inns have become so popular that there may be as much as a three-month wait.



By Sheila Rooney



Entranceway and two of the quaint rooms in the Old Monterey Inn.

The Old Monterey Inn, Monterey

It's easy to see why the Old Monterey Inn has been dubbed "one of the world's most romantic bed and breakfast inns" and is one of only two California inns ever to receive the Mobil Travel Guide four-star rating.

Built as a residence by Monterey's first mayor, Carmel Martin, Sr. in 1929, this three-story, half-timbered Tudor mansion has been transformed into a breathtaking inn by proprietors Gene and Anne Swett. After raising a family of six, the Swetts missed the activity of a busy household. They opened as a bed and breakfast with just five rooms in 1978, and now have nine rooms and a garden cottage.

Touring the house with Anne is like taking a history class from a favorite college professor. Her exuberance and love of the subject matter is infectious as she

weaves in bits of Monterey history while pointing out the extra touches: the hand-painted design panels in the dining room ceiling and hand-plastered Gothic archways and bullnose corners.

Each of the inn's 10 rooms includes European goose down comforters and pillows, and linens from such designers as Laura Ashley and Ralph Lauren.

Private wood-burning fireplaces, stained glass windows and skylights add warmth and brightness to each of the rooms, while a sitting area provides a spot for private time and resting. Anne explains they tried to include all the elements they enjoy in their home in each of the rooms.

Every effort has been made to make the stay memorable. You are treated like a family friend rather than a hotel guest. Paisley challis robes hang in cedar closets; fresh cut flowers perfume each room; and inviting books line the shelves. Medicine cabinets are well-stocked with perfumed soap and toiletries, and refrigerators on each floor include complimentary beverages.

A favored room by guests is the library, a book-filled retreat complete with wood paneling, private sun deck and an original

