

## Bed & Breakfasts Find Smoke-Free Niche at [www.freshstay.com](http://www.freshstay.com)

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Online network of nonsmoking lodging properties is a perfect fit for quaint, independent B&Bs

**FreshStay(R)**, the fastest growing online network of smoke-free lodging establishments, recently welcomed several more Bed & Breakfast facilities (B&Bs) into its virtual home.

Launched in January, the [www.freshstay.com](http://www.freshstay.com) online directory of lodging properties offering better indoor air products and practices already has more than 250 non-smoking member properties - including an increasing number of B&Bs along with national and regional chains and independent boutique hotels, extended-stay properties and resorts around the globe.

Ray Burger, a 25-year industry veteran and former hotel GM who founded **FreshStay(R)**, said 'the little guys - the independents and the B&Bs - often are the ones that stand to gain the most the most quickly when they go smoke-free and promote their properties on [www.freshstay.com](http://www.freshstay.com).'

'Most B&Bs are quaint little properties where smoking by just one guest may effect the satisfaction of all the guests,' Burger noted. 'Also driving many B&Bs' move to smokefree and move to **FreshStay(R)** is the fact that many B&Bs are historic properties, even national treasures, and their owner/operators and families often are non-smokers and live on-site. These are just a few of the many good reasons B&Bs are a perfect fit for [www.freshstay.com](http://www.freshstay.com).'

### **Protecting People & Properties**

Tana & Nelson Hall, owner/operators of the Red Elephant B&B in North Conway State, N.H., said the property attracts a lot of outdoor enthusiasts who appreciate smokefree environments as much as they do the B&B's view of the White Mountains in Mount Washington Valley.

The four-season, historic B&B - distinctly appointed with art, antiques and other collectibles - features eight guestrooms, each outfitted with a private bath and air conditioning. The B&B's common rooms - its library full of hiking and biking books and trail maps, its den housing a TV, VCR/DVD and classic movie collection (with a Victorian bent, of course), and its formal dining room, where guests receive hearty home-style breakfasts - also are smokefree.

'This B&B was smoke-free when we bought it two years ago - and, to be honest, that's one of the many reasons we bought it, and why it's had so many repeat guests and referrals over the years,' Nelson Hall said.

'Back in Texas, my mother-in-law used to smoke like a chimney. You could see its effects and smell it everywhere in the house - on the artwork, in the textiles and on the woodwork and walls - and we certainly didn't want that to happen here in our B&B,' Nelson Hall said. 'My mother-in-law passed away about 10 years ago as the direct result of a smoking-related disease - emphysema - so protecting the health of our guests and ourselves is an even bigger motivator to stay smokefree.'

Nelson Hall said more and more B&Bs and other lodging properties and restaurants in the area are going smoke-free and he expects the trend to continue locally, nationally and worldwide.

'**FreshStay(R)** is a great idea, and its timing could not be better,' Nelson Hall said. 'As more and more properties join the **FreshStay(R)** fold and more business and leisure travelers and meeting planners hear about and use the site, smoke-free member properties like us will win more and more business.'

### **No Means No**

Another advantage B&Bs have in the growing movement to provide nonsmoking lodging environments is they have fewer guests, guestrooms and staff to check on to ensure their nonsmoking policies and fresh indoor air environments are being preserved.

Sara Baker, co-owner of the Garden and Sea Inn, a B&B built in 1802 near Chincoteague and Assateague Islands and the Chesapeake Bay, recalls having to police one guest years ago.

'We opened our B&B in '94, and that first summer we allowed smoking - but only in our parlor,' Sara Baker said. 'We learned very quickly that it's better to go completely smokefree because the nasty smell and smoke really traveled - especially when one of our smoking guests decided to take his smoking show from room to room, despite our very clear policies and warnings.'

'The guest took an ashtray from the parlor into our restaurant but I told him the restaurant was nonsmoking - like every room in the B&B except the parlor back then - and I took the ashtray back to the parlor. A little later I caught him using our fine china - one of our desert dishes - as an ashtray. That was the last straw. I'm happy to say we've been completely smokefree ever since.'

The Garden & Sea Inn no longer operates the restaurant but does offer full breakfasts and even dinners (upon request) - featuring locally grown produce and Eastern Shore seafood dishes prepared by a professional chef, Tom Baker, Sara's husband. The historic B&B's nine guestrooms feature queen or king beds, private baths (most have whirlpool tubs/showers), TVs, DVD players and refrigerators.

Sara Baker said the B&B's listing on [www.freshstay.com](http://www.freshstay.com) is good for the property and its guests as well as for the smokefree movement in general and the fast-growing online directory supporting it.

'We've been on this bandwagon for 12 years - so we know all of the benefits that are out there for lodging owner/operators and guests - and that was before **FreshStay(R)** came along to help promote the cause and participating properties,' Sara Baker said 'Now, with **FreshStay(R)** in our corner, we'll gain even more recognition, business and networking power with our fellow [www.freshstay.com](http://www.freshstay.com) members.'

Sara Baker said she learned of **FreshStay(R)** after reading about the online network in an electronic newsletter produced by Blizzard Internet, which developed and hosts the B&B's Web site. Blizzard Internet's May 2006 e-newsletter said:

*It wouldn't take you long to discover that FreshStay.com, for example, attracted 200 advertisers in the first two months of its existence, and that submissions are continuing to come in at the rate of five per day. Obviously, a lot of people in the lodging industry believe smoke-free facilities are in demand, and that the niche is a valid way to reach potential customers. Also, as the owner of a lodging property, it would be hard to ignore a growth rate that impressive in the directory's infancy.*

### **Needed Networking**

Peter J. Dooling, owner/operator of the Lakeside Illahee Inn in Vernon, British Columbia, Canada, said going smokefree pays big dividends.

'Since 1995, we've only had one guest disregard our nonsmoking policy - and he was dismissed after not heeding a first and final warning,' Dooling said. 'Our guests and staff understand and really appreciate our non-smoking policy.'

'While I am sympathetic to their addiction, I don't hire people who smoke,' Dooling added. 'This helps us enforce and market our nonsmoking policy and eliminates smoke break-related non-productivity.'

Rising regally from the shores of the beautiful Lake Kalamalka, with 4,800 acres of provincial park at its backdoor (canoes, kayaks, and golf and ski packages available), the elegant, boutique B&B gives/gets referrals to/from **FreshStay(R)** members.

'Our guests absolutely love that we're completely smokefree. Many of them want to know where they can find similar B&Bs that also are smokefree and nearby their next destinations - and that's exactly where **FreshStay(R)** comes in,' Dooling said. '**FreshStay(R)** is much more than a valuable online directory. It's a growing network of smokefree properties.'

*Headquartered in Saint Charles, Missouri, Pineapple Hospitality(TM) is an EPA Energy Star™ partner bringing fresh ideas to hospitality guests' doors and owner/operators' bottom lines - including **FreshStay(R)**, Environmentally Sensitive Amenities, the greenSPA luxury amenity and dispenser system, GE energy efficient lighting, Guestat programmable thermostats, Oxygenic water-efficient showerheads, the Nature's Mist deodorization system, and dozens of other products and programs. To get a taste of Pineapple's sweet solutions helping hundreds of hotels bolster business and cut costs, please visit [www.pineapplehospitality.net](http://www.pineapplehospitality.net), or call Ray Burger at 636-922-2285.*

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