



Photos by Lynn Bohannon

The Woodstocker B&B

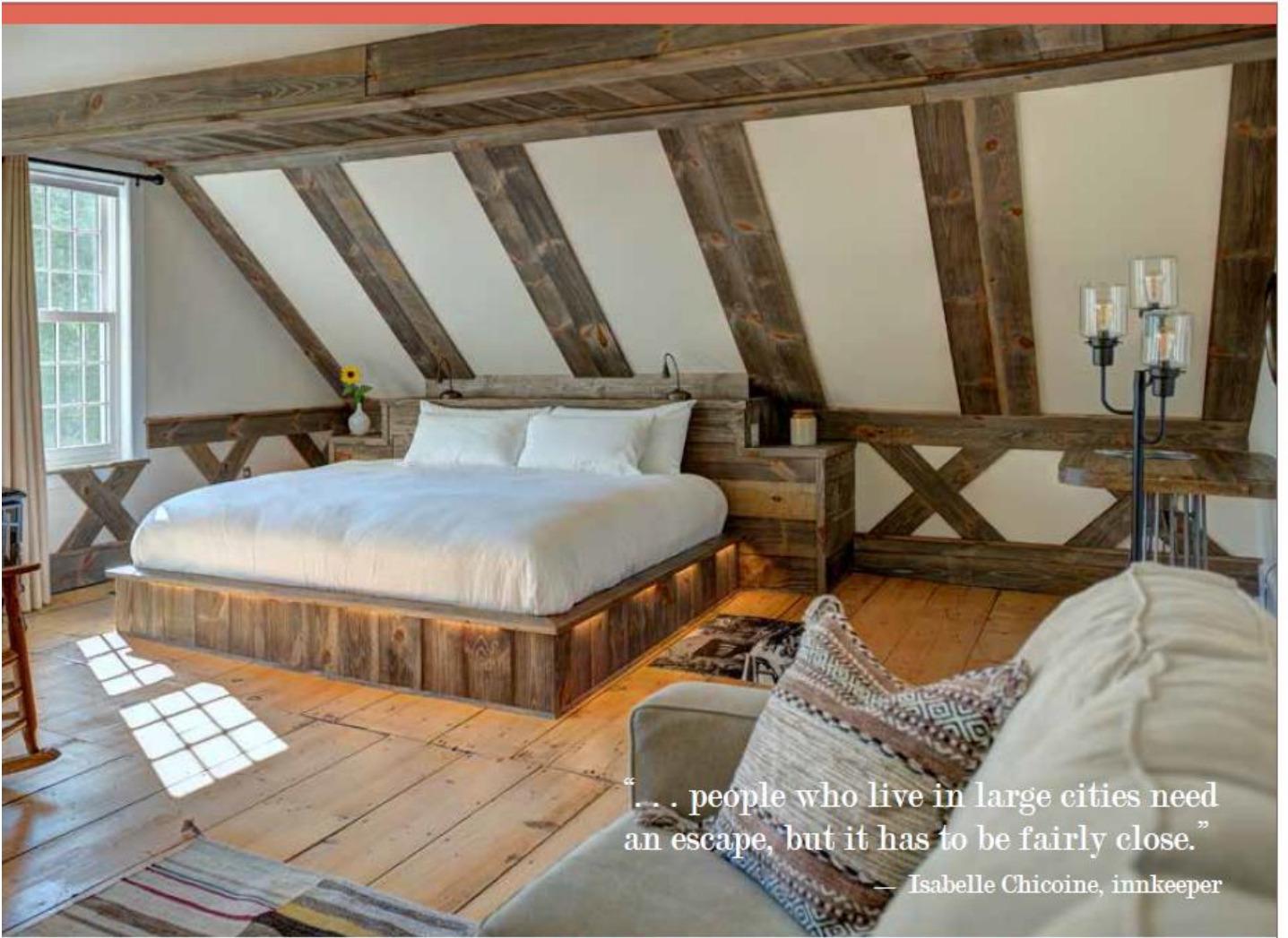
Warm, relaxed, and indulgent

It's the fantasy of those who toil in the world of stressful, long days followed by longer commutes and 24/7 connections to work. Ditch it all, move to the country, and run a small bed and breakfast. Karim Houry and Isabelle Chicoine made it a reality, leaving New York and the corporate rat race and purchasing The Woodstocker B&B, a few blocks from the village, in March. They welcomed their first guests at the end of May.

"We wanted to have a more meaningful life and build something together that was people-oriented," Isabelle says. Their daughter attended the University of Vermont, and they had visited the state frequently. "We loved Vermont, so when we had the idea of purchasing a bed and breakfast, we quickly narrowed it down to Vermont. It's close to three metropolises—New York, Boston, and Montreal—and people who live in large cities need an escape, but it has to be fairly close," she explains. A rural setting with cultural, recreational, and culinary offerings was also on their list as they scouted locations. "Vermont's a beautiful state, and you have year-round activities," Karim adds.



Innkeepers
Isabelle Chicoine
and Karim Houry
with Prisca.



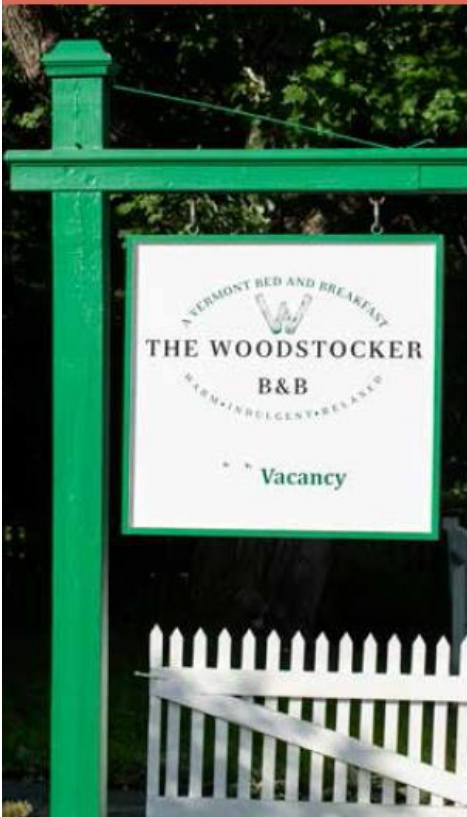
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— Isabelle Chicoine, innkeeper





They visited Woodstock last September to scout it out and get a feel for the town. And they promptly fell in love. They were attracted to Woodstock's sense of community and its New England feel. "Everyone was so welcoming," Karim says. Once they purchased The Woodstocker, they set to work revamping and redecorating the inn and its nine guest rooms. As their tagline says, they wanted the décor to be warm, relaxed, and indulgent.

"Mountain feel and farmhouse style" is how Isabelle describes it. Each room is different and is named according to its individually decorated theme. There are two luxurious suites with private saunas, one suite with a private patio, and six rooms: the Wanderer with its outdoor sports theme, the cabin-like Whispering Wolf, the Club W that features an illuminated red bathtub, the romantic The Woodstock, the rustic Walk in the Woods, and The Willard, with woodwork reminiscent of a covered bridge. Bathroom amenities are from Whisper Hill in nearby Quechee, and slippers and bathrobes await guests.



A homemade breakfast is served in the spacious dining room and includes three different egg dishes, pancakes, and a berry, yogurt, and granola parfait. Homemade brioche and breads are also served. Ingredients are organic and locally sourced when possible. For those who find it difficult to leave the ambience of their rooms, a continental breakfast in bed can be ordered—especially inviting on a cold morning.

“We put out munchies in the afternoon,” Isabelle says; these might include a homemade cake or savory offerings. It’s BYO, she adds, “and we encourage guests to take advantage of that and bring back their beer or wine.” A guest kitchenette has glasses, an icemaker, and a refrigerator. A gas firepit in the garden welcomes guests to take their beverages outside, or they can settle into the leather chairs and comfortable sofa

in the book-lined library. The dining room tends to be a popular gathering place too, notes Isabelle.

Still somewhat new as hosts, Karim and Isabelle say their goal is for guests to want to come back, to feel relaxed and at home, and to be able to disconnect and enjoyed being taken care of. “We like to pamper them without being intrusive,” Isabelle says. They appear to be succeeding. When a recent guest was asked at breakfast, “What would you like?” his response was, “I’d like to stay another week.” ☺



The Woodstocker B&B

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