

A Windsor Gardener's Staycation

by Dennis Payton Knight

Looking for a vacation from retirement? Is too much leisure time getting you down? Have you been chased by one too many spoiled Windsor Gardens squirrels? Is your day measured by a pill sorting box? Do you feel you're becoming Judge Judy's curmudgeon equal?

Time to take a staycation, my friend. Leave your car in the garage, and don't call Cheap-O Air, because you'll need neither. Instead, go to your lanai, push and stack things in the corner, and clear a space on the floor just wide enough to make a snow angel.

That done, open your Amazon app and order a tent. I suggest the Abco Tech Automatic Instant Portable Cabana Pop-up model, with carrying bag, at \$41.97. With free shipping, it's the equivalent today of paying for five hours at a Holiday Inn, and it even comes to you. You don't need the carrying bag because this is a staycation, but it's part of the deal, so pack your socks in it.

Next, plan an exhilarating staycation itinerary. You live within a mile's walk of the Fairmount Cemetery, famous not only as a place of eternal rest, but as Colorado's first arboretum and one of its largest, with tall trees from all over the world. Take a zesty walk under the lush green canopy, browse the many stories etched in this veritable library of headstones, and you will sleep well later. That is, unless you lie pondering the fate of dear old Daisy, born in 1879 but, according to the blank spot on her headstone, seems still to be wandering in search of her final destination. Who knows, maybe she's hanging around Windsor Gardens, waiting for the restaurant to open.

Or you could walk North across Alameda, and amble around what was the first site of the United States Air Force Academy on the grounds of Lowry Air Base. Denver native Mamie Eisenhower got her hubby to put it there while he got the permanent digs built down in Colorado Springs. But we had it first.

You can also take a walk northwest to the Montclair neighborhood, stroll about the park and then uphill and around the block of Baron von Richthofen's castle. I wrote about it recently. The new owners have busted the ghosts and seem to be fixing the joint up. It's a nice walk.

So enough of the planning. The best staycations are improvised, anyway. When your tent arrives, pitch it. No, I don't mean throw-it-out pitch it, I mean pitch it like a boy scout pitch it, but without the spikes. It's easy. This baby pops out and makes its own floor, and a smooth one at that, if you sweep underneath it first.

It holds two people. At double occupancy, I recommend the flagpole sleeping position, but if you get consensus, you might try something like the snow angel position, but not quite so angelic. Remember, what happens on a staycation stays on a staycation.