



For Immediate Release

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? APPARENTLY NOT!

WARNER VALLEY, Calif. -- In a time when the question "Can you hear me now?" is immediately recognized as implying cell phone connectivity, there's one destination in California where making a call is done the old-fashioned way, by telephone operator.

To call the Drakesbad Guest Ranch in Lassen Volcanic National Park you have to make the call as was done in the early part of the last century. That means calling a 530 area code operator first, then asking the operator to patch your call to a remote toll number and then ring Drakesbad toll station number two to be connected to the guest ranch. Even cell phones don't work, as the only mobile phone capable of communicating outside the Warner Valley is a rudimentary analog behemoth that fills a large satchel and needs an antenna strung 400 feet up a mountainside for its faint signals to be received.

While that may seem quaintly anachronistic to Drakesbad's guests, it has created a huge problem for the guest ranch operator, as fewer people have called Drakesbad to reserve one of its 19, highly prized rooms. That's because, each year, fewer and fewer telephone operators know how to make a toll call, and the Drakesbad area is one of the last remaining toll service areas in California.

That has had the effect of preventing many faithful Drakesbad guests from getting through to their beloved time-locked retreat whose kerosene-lit bungalows are normally sold out in summer, resulting in many rooms – that would otherwise have been fully booked months ago – remaining unsold from late summer to the ranch's closing in October.

To make it easier to reserve a room at the remote resort, a voicemail reservation line has
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DRAKESBAD

2-2-2-2-2

been established in Red Bluff, 88 miles to the west. By dialing 1-530-529-1512, ext. 120, callers can record their name, number of guests in their party, contact information and preferred dates. The recorded information is then transcribed and sent to the ranch where it is matched with available rooms and a reply sent. Reservation requests can also be made online at www.drakesbad.com.

Rooms begin at \$155 and include three meals and use of the resort's hot spring-heated swimming pool. The Drakesbad Guest Ranch is located in the Warner Valley, 17 miles north of Chester, Calif.. Many hiking and equestrian trails lead from the ranch to fly fishing streams and lakes, views of Lassen Peak and geothermal areas within the National Park. Other services at the ranch include saddle horses and massages. Drakesbad Guest Ranch is operated by California Guest Services which is an official licensed concessioner of the National Park Service.

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High resolution photos are available.

For additional Park information, contact the national park public information officer at (530) 595-4444 ext. 5130.