

Glamping: Eat Your S'Mores in Your Stilettos

Vintage Style Camping



In 2008, during our annual trip to the Finger Lake Grassroots Festival of Music and Dance, we stumbled upon a Marilyn Monroe-style camper. This tiny trailer, not even 10 feet long, was decorated perfectly in vintage glory: tiny little curtains, a kitchenette that became a twin bed and a couch that folded into a double bed. From that moment on, I was smitten and insisted that I would find one and we would never sleep in a tent again.

It didn't take me long. Just a year later, after looking into people's backyards as we drove by, my husband discovered a vintage trailer, with a bush growing into it, in Warren. The owner sold it to us for \$250. By July 2009, we had completely refurbished a 1970 Shasta Compact into the Cherry Shasta. And we'd gotten a good friend of ours hooked as well. He has purchased, refurbished and sold at least six vintage campers and convinced us to take his 1965 Scotty Sportsman as our next project.

The new craze of vintage trailer refurbishing and camping is what many refer to as glamping, or glamorous camping. Further evidence of the craze includes 2,300 members on the Facebook "Vintage Shasta Trailer Campers" group and another 900 on the "Serro Scotty Camper Enthusiasts" group. Prior to glamping, most people were classified in two groups: outdoorsy or not. You either camped or would rather be strangled to death. Glamping provides a connection to nature for those hotel vacation types who want to dip their toes into the world of camping. And glamping is often ecologically friendly. According to the website, glampinghub.com, "With glamping, less is more. Whereas energy and materials used in the construction and management of a small hotel are quite high, in many cases glamping accommodations take advantage of surrounding elements of nature. Composting toilets, solar power and working gardens are just a few examples. Or, if you're lucky, you can find yourself sleeping in a repurposed carousel or caravan."

I interviewed Ruben Martinez, co-founder of the website glampinghub.com, which lists over 7,000 glamping rooms raging in price from \$30 to \$3,000 a night all over the world. His company, much like Airbnb.com, connects people with teepees, vintage trailers (called caravans in Europe), treehouses, safari tents, yurts and cabins all over the world. In Vermont, you can rent a yurt, a treehouse or a converted barn. Maine offers cabins, yurts, and vintage Airstreams on Mt. Desert Island. Some folks even deliver their vintage airstreams anywhere you want to camp. For families who don't want to lug all

the supplies with them for the week, glamping offers amenities and upgrades at your door. Glamping.com, described as “a discerning guide to experiential travel” offers upscale and adventurous accommodations from eco pods to nature resorts. El Cosmico (elcosmico.com), in west Texas, offers vintage trailers, teepees and 120-square-foot safari tents. While they don’t call their experience glamping, their site expresses all that is glamping: comfortable accommodations, outdoor showers under the night sky and land, far as the eye can see.

So this summer, when you want to drag your non-outdoorsy friends out in nature with you, offer them the alternative, glamping experience. With plenty of places to glamp, in New England alone, a campfire, some s’mores, and a warm and DRY comfy bed, is right at your fingertips. Or kick it old school, and hook up your 1965 Teardrop and hit a state park. Everyone will stop and ask if they can look inside and tell you a story about a trailer from their youth. Happy Trails!