

TOURISTS IN TRAINING

This is Wednesday morning and it is time to batten down all the hatches in anticipation of a long tough drive to the Verde Valley. After 49 miles we arrived at the Thousand Trails Preserve of Verde Valley! I'm sure glad we don't have many of those demanding drives. This is a beautiful park with lots of shade trees. The elevation is 3500 or so feet high and the temperature is between 80 and 100 degrees during the day. The evenings are wonderful.

Our purpose for being here in this area is to ride the Verde Valley train from Clarkdale to Perkinsville. This is an old ore-carrying route in the 1900's and now serves as a tourist attraction.

The train travels at our speed, 10 mph! It is a 4-hour round trip and you wind along the Verde River. A narrator fills you in on all the sights to see. We booked a first class ticket, so we had lounge seats in the air-conditioned car, complete with a snack buffet and host bar. We could walk out to the open car anytime for pictures.

This is a popular trip during the season. There were about 475 people on board this trip.

The train depot is about 8 miles from Jerome, AZ. We had taken the car from Prescott a couple of days ago and toured the town and had had lunch.



There are about 500 people living here presently. The old original homes are being restored and a lot of the old commercial stores are operational. Most of the buildings are hanging from the side of the hill and the streets snake through the town with hairpin turns at each level. The town is a popular destination for tourists, especially the motorcycle crowd. The saloons are crowded and Harleys line the curb in front of them! When the mines closed, the town closed.

We are enjoying this Preserve so much that we extended for 2 more nights. One of the deeds that we did this time was to purchase another RV Park contract. This one is with Western Horizon Resorts. It is similar to Thousand Trails and in the areas they have resorts it will complement the other one. Thousand Trails has tied all their Preserves to one computer now, and they can track the number of nights you stay and require you to be out the same number, up to 7 nights. This will allow us to stay at a WHR resort, which is usually close by, for the number of nights we have to be out.

Dave & Bonnie
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