

INN THE GROUND

A Luxurious Wellness Retreat in Yamhill County, Oregon

| BY TRACY ELLEN BEARD

Nestled within the rolling hills of Yamhill County, Oregon, Inn the Ground offers an unparalleled escape into luxury, sustainability, and nature. This exquisite bed and breakfast is part of The Ground, an ambitious venture by husband-and-wife duo Brenda Smola-Foti and Frank Foti. Their broader enterprise encompasses Tabula Rasa Farms (now part of Source Farms), Humble Spirit Restaurant and Catering, the original Farmhouse B&B, the garden, the event center, the store, and Yamhill House. Brenda, who founded Tabula Rasa Farms in 2015, has worked tirelessly alongside Frank to create an environment that harmoniously blends regenerative farming with world-class hospitality.

Brenda's journey began with a vision of sustainability, and as the farm evolved, so did its purpose. Animals were introduced to the farm in 2017, and Frank brought his expertise in business and leadership when he joined in 2019. Initially, the farm was intended to be a 33-acre homestead, but it rapidly expanded into a thriving agricultural and hospitality destination. Recognizing a shortage of accommodations in Yamhill County, the couple saw an opportunity to develop a space where guests could immerse themselves in the serene countryside while enjoying modern luxuries.

A Unique and Sustainable Retreat Inn the Ground is more than just a bed and breakfast—it is an experience

designed to connect guests with nature in an entirely new way. The retreat, built into the hillside, is a luxurious escape that offers an immersive stay in harmony with the land. Brenda and Frank took special care to construct the Inn with minimal impact on the environment, using reclaimed wood and ensuring that the surrounding landscape remained untouched. “Frank and I were intrigued by houses built into hills,” Brenda explained. “The construction allowed us to preserve the natural beauty of the area while offering a truly unique lodging experience.”

Each of the Inn's nine rooms is designed with comfort and elegance in mind. Guests can enjoy king-sized beds, plush queen-sized sofa sleepers, private patios with breathtaking panoramic views, and modern amenities such as mini-fridges, complimentary coffee and tea stations, spa-inspired bathrooms with soft cotton towels and robes, Samsung HDTVs with sound bars and Apple TV, and electronic safety deposit boxes.

Sustainability is a key component of the Inn's design. A living rooftop covered in wildflowers not only enhances the building's aesthetic but also serves to conserve water. Additionally, solar panels contribute to the Inn's energy efficiency, reinforcing the Fotis' commitment to environmental stewardship. Immersed in Nature and Adventure Guests at Inn the Ground have access to a variety of activities that highlight

the region's natural beauty and agricultural abundance. The property boasts eight miles of wooded trails, perfect for a rejuvenating hike through the hills. For those interested in learning more about sustainable farming, guided farm and permaculture tours offer insight into the regenerative practices that sustain The Ground.

For a more leisurely experience, visitors can observe the cattle grazing in the pastures, enjoy complimentary wine tastings at local vineyards, or engage in a friendly game of pickleball or tennis. Regardless of how guests choose to spend their time, they are sure to find relaxation and inspiration at this tranquil retreat.

A Personal Retreat with My Daughter

My daughter Brittney and I had the pleasure of spending a few nights at Inn the Ground, and our experience was nothing short of magical. Upon arrival, we were immediately captivated by the sweeping views of the Willamette Valley, the lush greenery of the pastures, and the gentle sounds of nature that surrounded us.

Our spacious room, thoughtfully designed for both comfort and aesthetic appeal, provided the perfect setting for unwinding. One of our favorite spots was the upstairs communal living area, featuring fireplaces, cozy seating, and floor-to-ceiling windows that overlooked the wildflower-covered roof. There, we spent time sipping coffee and simply soaking in the tranquility of our





HOTEL

surroundings.

A highlight of our stay was the wellness experience led by Jordan, a dedicated member of the Inn's team. We began our morning with a guided meditation session in a quiet outbuilding, followed by a forest walk that allowed us to immerse ourselves fully in the serenity of the landscape—the fresh air, rustling of leaves, and peaceful ambiance made for an incredibly rejuvenating experience.

Exploring The Ground's Farm

One afternoon, Brittney and I joined Heather, one of The Ground's knowledgeable staff experts, for an in-depth tour of the property. As we wandered through the farm, we learned about the diverse range of animals raised at The Ground and gained a deeper appreciation for the sustainable farming practices employed on-site. The vegetable and fruit gardens were particularly fascinating, as they supply fresh produce not only for Humble Spirit Restaurant but also for breakfasts at the Inn, the local food co-op, and various events hosted by The Ground.

The tour was an educational and eye-opening experience, offering valuable insights into the importance of regenerative agriculture and the ways in which The Ground is making a positive impact on the local food system. Guests are encouraged to explore the farm at their own pace or participate in guided walks.

A Farm-Fresh Culinary Experience

Each morning at Inn the Ground began with a delightful farm-fresh breakfast. We started with an assortment of chocolate and lemon breakfast breads, scones, and a refreshing green juice.

These tasty treats were followed by a creamy yogurt parfait topped with housemade granola. The main course consisted of locally sourced ham, fluffy scrambled eggs with chives, and toast served with homemade jam and butter. Every bite was a celebration of the region's rich agricultural bounty.

An Unforgettable Dinner at Humble Spirit

Our culinary adventures continued with dinner at Humble Spirit, The Ground's signature restaurant. The atmosphere was warm and inviting, and the menu featured an exquisite selection of seasonal, farm-to-table dishes crafted by talented chefs.

We began our meal with a trio of shrimp rolls, each bursting with fresh flavors. Next, we enjoyed a colorful hummus plate, accompanied by

seasonal vegetables and delicately adorned with edible flower petals. The highlight of the evening was a perfectly al dente fresh pasta with corn, followed by a succulent roasted chicken that was both hearty and satisfying.

For dessert, Brittney and I indulged in two delectable treats: a poached pear with blue cheese and housemade Oreo-style cookies served with milk. The combination of flavors was both playful and sophisticated, making for a truly memorable dining experience.

A Luxurious and Meaningful Escape

Our time at Inn the Ground was an unforgettable journey of relaxation, adventure, and culinary delight. The combination of thoughtful hospitality, breathtaking scenery, and sustainable living made this retreat one of the most unique and fulfilling getaways we've ever experienced. Whether you're looking for a romantic escape, a wellness retreat, or an opportunity to connect with nature, Inn the Ground offers the perfect setting to unwind and recharge.

For anyone seeking an extraordinary travel experience in the heart of Yamhill County, Oregon, this hidden gem is a must-visit. Brenda and Frank Foti have masterfully created a space that honors the land, celebrates sustainability, and welcomes guests with open arms. Our stay left us feeling inspired, rejuvenated, and eager to return. ❖



