

AT HOME

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Bed-And-Breakfast Gives Taste Of Early Tampa



John and Cindy Ryan worked for about a year fixing up the 100-year-old building. It opened last weekend as the Bayshore Ryan House.

Tribune photos by FRED FOX

By ANDREA ARTERBERY
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TAMPA — John and Cindy Ryan have stayed in bed-and-breakfasts all over the United States. But they found there are only a few here at home.

So when they purchased a historical four-bedroom, four-bathroom building on Verne Street — off scenic Bayshore Boulevard — they knew exactly what to do with it.

The Bayshore Ryan House, which opened last weekend, offers the charm of early Tampa, the convenience of location and the amenities important to business people — a combination the Ryans hope will appeal to corporate travelers.

"The house is part of a grouping of the first houses that were built in Tampa," says Cindy, 41.

Originally built in 1902 with three floors, the house lost the third story in a 1937 fire, she says. The couple hope to replace it one day by adding two more

suites.

When they bought the home last year, it served as an apartment building and was in "awful shape," says Cindy, a Realtor for 11 years.

They restored the staircase, wood floors and kitchen cabinets, but replaced just about everything else, she says.

A 1900s look pervades the front hallway and sitting room. Several photographs from south Tampa's early years adorn the walls.

"The rooms were fun to design," Cindy says.

Each bedroom has a different theme: Aztec, safari, Bavarian and Victorian. They also offer modern conveniences, including Internet access and

a two-person Jacuzzi in each bathroom.

The kitchen comes with a refrigerator full of drinks and a 24-hour

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Owners plan games for guests.



The bed-and-breakfast is on Verne Street near Bayshore Boulevard. The structure once was among the first houses built in Tampa.



Tribune photo by FRED FOX

Each of the home's four bedrooms features a different theme: Aztec, safari, Bavarian and Victorian. The rooms offer modern conveniences, including Internet access and a Jacuzzi.

RYAN HOUSE

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snack bar. A wine-and-cheese hour is planned on the weekends, and beginning next month, there will be a "murder-mystery" night.

"It will be just like a big game of Clue," Cindy says.

Another game, The Oldie Weds — "sort of like 'The Newyeds Game'" — will start in September.

The enterprise will be a family undertaking, says John, 41, an employee of Southwest Airlines.

The Ryans and their four

children, ages 9 to 13, have lived in the Tampa area for several years. The children worked together on the landscaping, planting a tree in the back yard and designing brick paths in the front and back yards, Cindy says.

An important feature of a bed-and-breakfast is, of course, a hearty morning meal. That's the job of on-site manager Carmella Williams, says Cindy.

"We plan to serve Belgium waffles, stuffed french toast, casseroles and, of course, eggs, sausage, bacon and Danish."

Summer rates range from \$135 to \$175 a night; winter rates are from \$175 to \$225. "Holidays and special events will cost more," Cindy says.

The Ryans say they hope to

open more bed-and-breakfasts in Tampa if the business is successful.

Bob Bruce, president of the St. Petersburg Area Association of Bed and Breakfast Inns, says the Bayshore Ryan House is one of very few bed-and-breakfasts he knows of in Tampa.

"It's in a good location, and the quality of the inn is fabulous," he says, adding it should be "wildly successful."

Bruce and his wife, Martha, own one of about a dozen bed-and-breakfasts in Pinellas County.

For information about the Bayshore Ryan House, call (813) 253-3142.

Reporter Andrea Arterbery can be reached at (813) 259-7154.