

## **Cabins on the rim of Palo Duro Canyon offer relaxing escape**

**By Lisa Carr Amarillo Globe-News**

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Doves Rest Cabins on the west rim of Palo Duro Canyon State Park began as one personal home turned rental property in 2015 and grew into a full-fledged business.

“It’s the new trend in travel where people can come out, be by themselves, bring their own groceries, cook for themselves and there are no check in lobbies,” said Jeff Means, DRC managing director. “What makes us super unique is our cabins are on the west rim of Palo Duro Canyon State Park.”

Located one and a half miles away from the entrance to the state park, Means calls the lodging facility a public service.

“If you’re not camping in the park, the closest overnight lodging is 16 miles in Canyon,” he said. “Nobody really thinks about going to Amarillo on vacation. A lot of people haven’t heard of the canyon because the state does a lousy job of marketing their parks. This is an impact not only to the city of Canyon but also to Amarillo.”

Means said he has turned the cabins into a destination vacation spot drawing visitors predominantly from Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, Austin and San Antonio.

“We’re finding the people and bringing them up here for a destination vacation. We have a lot of celebrations up here -- either they’re getting married at the Mack Dick (Group) Pavilion, ... having business meetings and even church groups have had retreats here,” he said.

Marketing mostly through social media and on the reputation of nearly 600 5-star reviews, Means said DRC had 494 individual bookings and operated at 79 percent occupancy in 2017.

“We’re introducing people to Palo Duro Canyon first and foremost because our research has shown many people in Texas have never heard of Palo Duro Canyon,” he said. “We’re really sending a message to new Texans that are coming here that have not heard about our gorgeous Panhandle and the second largest canyon in America.”

The year-round rental establishment has grown to nine cabins, five which are luxury cabins, each with a hot tub, and unobstructed views to the state park. Constructed by Mike Standefer, of Standefer Builders, Means said each cabin is built to blend into the natural habitat of the canyon. The property is also dark sky compliant as to not interfere with natural night sky.

The luxury cabins also include a fire place for chilly nights and Weber grills for warm days; firewood and propane are provided at no additional charge. Each cabin is distinctive, featuring art by local artists like Jim Livingston and merchandise bought at local retailers. The grounds are also pet friendly.

“People just love to take road trips and bring their animals. We’ve hosted pets from Peregrine falcons ... all the way to cats ... and we’re about to build a horse corral,” Means said.

In October, they unveiled their longhorn ranch cabins nestled inside a 350-acre registered longhorn ranch overlooking Timbercreek Canyon, in upper Palo Duro Canyon.

“We feel like the chamber of commerce for Palo Duro Canyon State Park because so many people hadn’t heard about it before or they heard about it but didn’t want to camp (there),” Means said. “It’s a joy for us to break out the gift of hospitality ... to show off one of the most remarkable landmarks, certainly in the state of Texas, if not one of the top 10 in the United States.”

Prices, 360-degree tours and more can be found at [dovesrestcabins.com](http://dovesrestcabins.com)