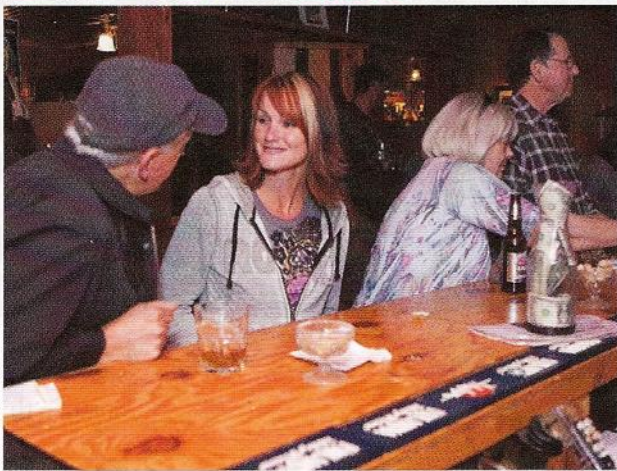
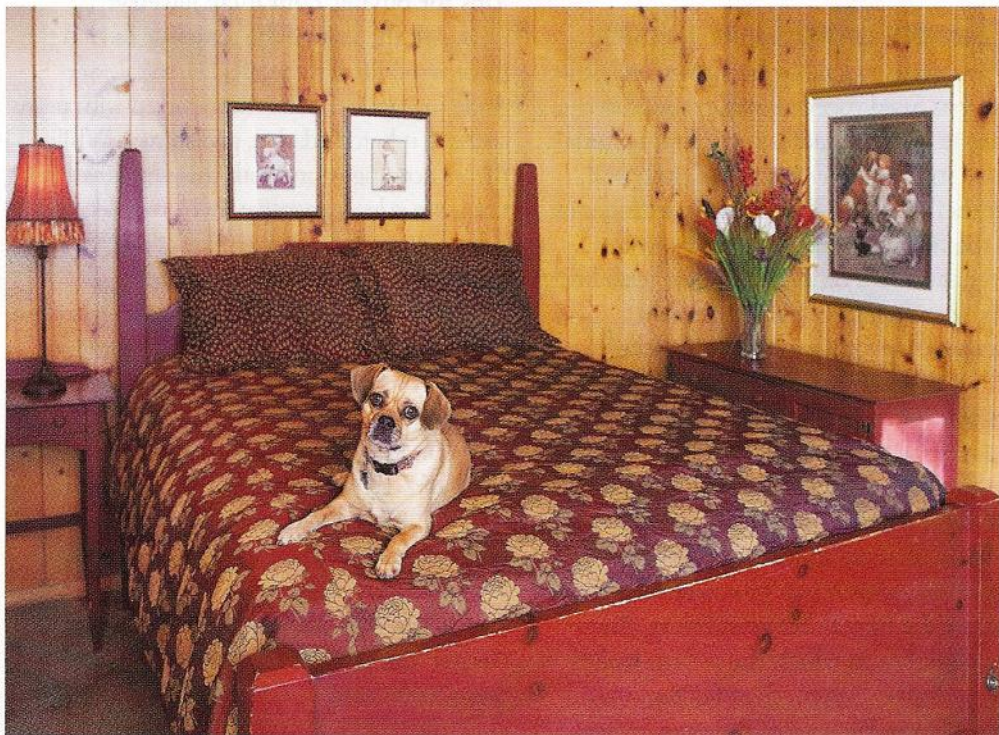


Top—Regulars keep coming back to The Lodge at Red River for its live music scene and proximity to the slopes. **Center**—Richard Ebbs and Roberta Hovey chat at the Lost Love Saloon. **Bottom**—The Lodge prides itself on being pet-friendly.



KATHLEEN BRENNAN



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GIMME SHELTER: RED RIVER

Bum a Ride

IT'S A CLASSIC STORY: Ski bum goes on vacation, falls in love with mountain town, decides to stay. However, this particular ski bum, Steve Heglund, also decided to buy a historic inn with his college friends and give it fresh life. “We just wanted to have a good time and ski all day,” he says of his early days as owner of **The Lodge at Red River**, in Red River, a town of about 500 people more than 100 miles north of Santa Fe, off N.M. 38.

Built in the 1940s to house a restaurant, casino, and guest rooms, today’s Lodge has 24 modest yet comfortable rooms on its second floor. The Lodge has a distinctly Western feel, thanks to its wood paneling, antler hat racks, and gold chandeliers, and its distinctive red façade and central location amid Red River’s shops and restaurants make it hard to miss. And the facts that The Lodge also houses Texas Reds Steakhouse, and that the Mother Lode, northern New Mexico’s largest dancehall, is right next door, make it a true destination.

Known for its juicy cuts of meat, picnic tablecloths, and tabletop peanuts (they let you throw the shells on the floor), Texas Reds was long a can’t-miss restaurant in town. When its previous location burned down in 2004, Heglund incorporated the restaurant and its Lost Love Saloon into The Lodge. With its bustling downstairs full of families dining in the restaurant and Americana music acts crooning in the Lost Love, this isn’t the place to stay if you want to turn in early. It is the place to stay if you want to tap in to Red River’s nightlife.

The intimate Mother Lode, which can hold some 300 people, has attracted such big-name acts as those Grammy Award-winning kings of Texas swing, Asleep at the Wheel; cowboy-music singer Michael Martin Murphey; and Country Music Hall of Fame member Richard Lee. “You get to listen to them, but here you also get to reach out and touch them, and have a cocktail with them after they perform,” says Steve Heglund.

These days, ski bum Steve Heglund doesn’t hit the slopes much; there’s too much going on at The Lodge.

From \$84. 400 E. Main, (800) 915-6343, www.lodgeatredriver.com

—Ashley M. Biggers