

'MR. PALM BEACH' RUNS TRANQUIL B&B IN GEM OF FLORIDA

1920s Spanish estate shines with intimate cottages, heated pool and expert hosts



ROCHELLE LASH

On a recent trip to glorious South Florida, I visited a man I would call Mr. Palm Beach, a.k.a. Rick Rose.

This host-with-the-most runs Grandview Gardens Bed and Breakfast and Palm Beach Vacation Rentals in West Palm Beach. A local expert, he knows everyone and everything in a town where that sort of tourism intel is pure gold.

Rose is the official tour guide along posh Worth Avenue and author of Palm Beach: The Essential Guide to America's Legendary Resort Town. He also is on the board of Discover the Palm Beaches, which covers nearly 40 communities from Boca Raton and Highland Beach in the south, running north to Jupiter and Tequesta, and including the county seat, West Palm Beach, a city where culture and cuisine are booming.

Grandview: Grandview Gardens is an upscale, five-room B&B built around a restored 1920s Spanish Mediterranean manor house.

It's on a quiet residential street, but within a few blocks of 'downtown' West Palm Beach. The lawn is shaded with tropical foliage and there's a courtyard and heated swimming pool.

It's intimate, tranquil and reflects Old Florida charm, with lots of architectural details and cozy interiors.

You can stroll through the garden or relax in a tiny, antique-filled sitting room, which has a piano, bookshelves and a fireplace for chilly winter mornings.

The accommodations are all separate units, like mini-cottages, built about 13 years ago.

Each has a private entrance, a walk-in closet, a desk, a sitting area and French doors leading to a balcony or patio. Guests enjoy air-conditioning, in-room tea and coffee, TVs and mini-fridges. "We're equipped, but it's not like a large hotel," said Rose. "People often stay several days or several weeks."

The homey vibe is a switch for Rose and his partner, Peter



Grandview Gardens Bed and Breakfast has a heated pool and antique-filled interiors on a gracious 1920s estate. *DISCOVER THE PALM BEACHES*

Emmerich. They're both marketing dynamos who met while working in Europe. They're sophisticated hosts and between them they speak English, French, German and Spanish.

Grandview serves a breakfast buffet, plus a daily special such as Eggs Benedict, peach-topped French toast or quiche.

Cottages: In addition to B&B lodging, Grandview also manages more than 20 private houses that are for rent.

"Canadians love staying long-term," said Rose. "Different generations of families or groups of friends take adjacent properties, and simply live the Florida lifestyle."

One of the houses is Coco Palm, a vintage cottage on the grounds of Grandview Gardens, which allows guests to use the pool and bikes.

West Palm Beach: Grato is an exciting West Palm Beach trattoria run by executive chef Clay Conley, a semifinalist for the James Beard culinary award for best chef in the South. The open kitchen provides an entertaining show of chefs at work, and happy hour offers tasty treats like meatball sliders, truffle arancini and \$10 pizza, plus perky cocktails featuring basil, Limoncello, jala-

peños, strawberries and figs.

Grato's specialties include Mediterranean-style octopus and calamari, Key West shrimp and Italian ingredients such as burrata, white anchovies, pistachios and artichokes. There is also pasta with beef, morels, lobster or shrimp and main courses of steak, chicken and fish.

The West Palm Beach Warehouse District embraces the Grandview Public Market, which has several trendy food kiosks, and fun enterprises such as Gypsy Surf, Steamhorse Brewing Co. and Elizabeth Avenue Station, an entertaining collection of artisanal shops.

The Grandview Heights historic neighbourhood is also home to the Palm Beach County Convention Center, Hilton West Palm Beach and the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts. Nearby are Antique Row, West Palm Beach's Clematis Street and Rosemary Square (previously CityPlace).

The expanded Norton Museum of Art is a local jewel, prized for its splendid sculpture garden and The Restaurant at The Norton, run by executive chef David Schiraldo, who fuses the best of Italian, French and Japanese cuisine.

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IF YOU GO

Grandview Gardens B&B: 561-833-9023, grandview-gardens.com, 1608 Lake Ave., West Palm Beach, Florida.

Prices are approximate: Watch for last-minute discounts. Dec.-April, US\$239; June-Aug., US\$139-\$155; spring-fall, US\$155-\$169; including full breakfast. Wi-Fi, parking, bicycles, library, in-room coffee/mini-fridge. Pets \$10 per night. Tennis, basketball, shuffleboard, jogging path, dog run in adjacent Howard Park. **Grato:** 561-404-1334, gratowpb.com; 1901 South Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach, Florida.

Discover the Palm Beaches: thepalmbeaches.com

Rick Rose's walking tours: Worth Ave., Palm Beach; 561-659-6909, worth-avenue.com; 11 a.m. Wednesdays, Dec.-April; \$10 to charity.



Grato is a West Palm Beach trattoria with Mediterranean specialties and a generous happy hour. *J.P. FERRON*

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