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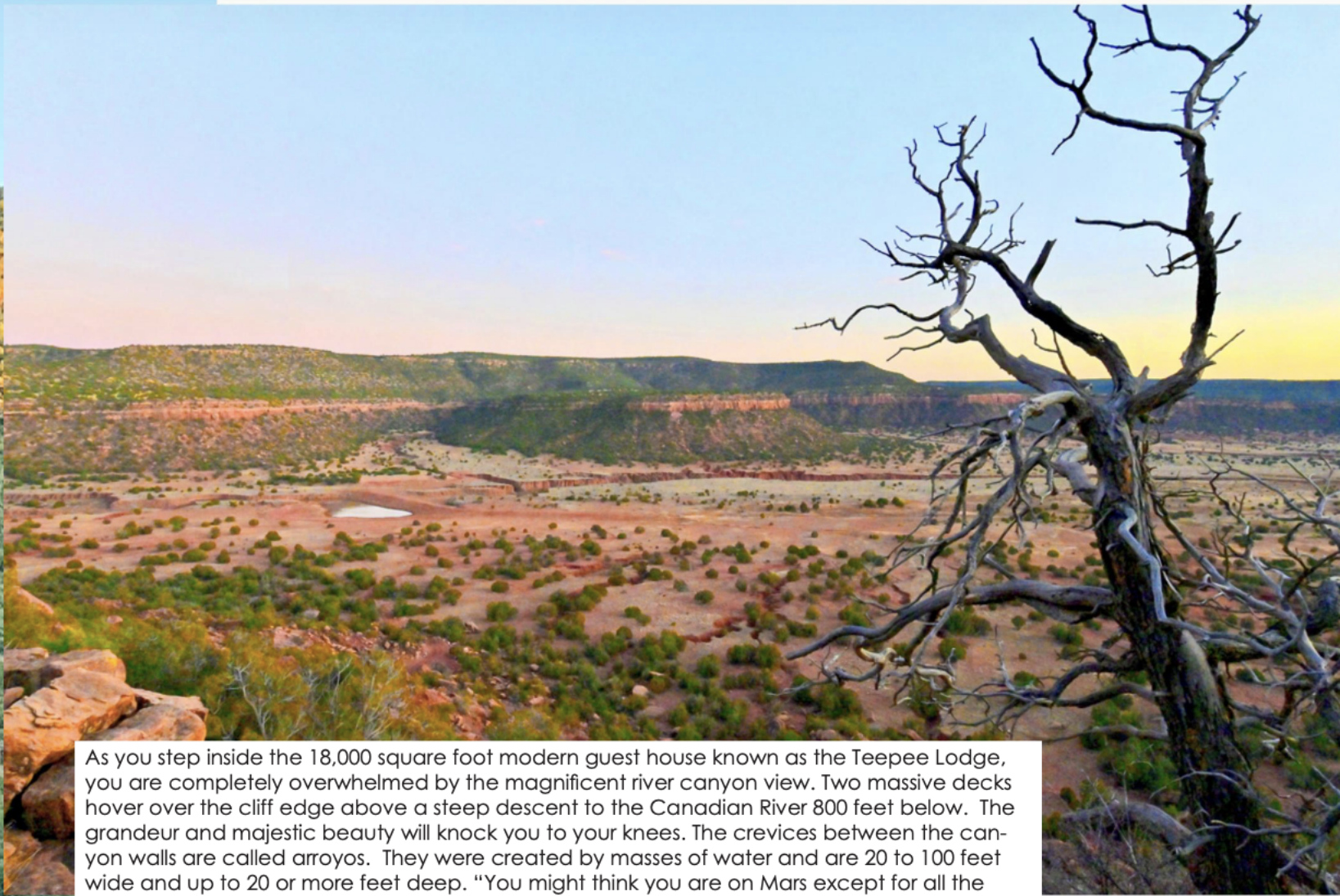
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An **EQUESTRIAN HEAVEN** or is it **Pure Madness?**

Story and Photos
By Diane Holt

Canyon Madness Ranch in northeastern New Mexico is just five hours from Denver, two hours from Santa Fe and three hours from the airport in Albuquerque. This special ranch offers guests an exceptional time warp adventure to connect with nature and horses and to simply unplug. This is NOT a dude ranch. Dennis Law, a retired surgeon, built this extraordinary ranch oasis on 14,000 acres where the horses roam free and guests can savor a "back-in-time" vacation with 21st century luxuries.



As you step inside the 18,000 square foot modern guest house known as the Teepee Lodge, you are completely overwhelmed by the magnificent river canyon view. Two massive decks hover over the cliff edge above a steep descent to the Canadian River 800 feet below. The grandeur and majestic beauty will knock you to your knees. The crevices between the canyon walls are called arroyos. They were created by masses of water and are 20 to 100 feet wide and up to 20 or more feet deep. "You might think you are on Mars except for all the green in the landscape," said Law. I have to say that I completely agree with him.

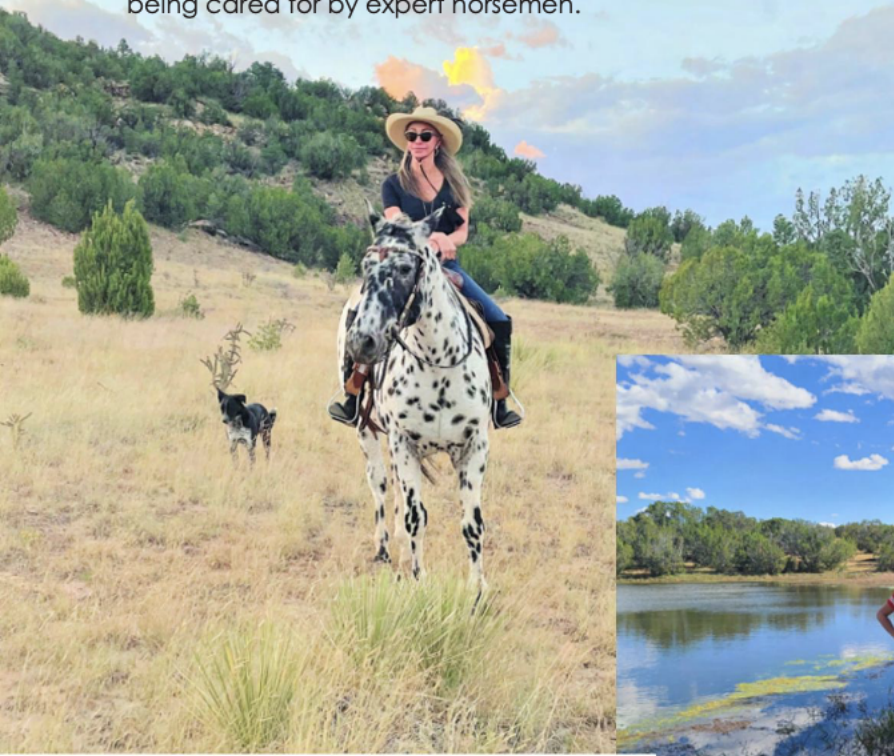
Canyon Madness Ranch offers two main bookend adventures. There is an equestrian paradise with outstanding horses and a firearm sports playground to please your heart. One day you're riding a trail along the canyon edges all the way to the river bottom, passing old 19th century Native American homestead sites. The next day you're shooting a Barretta M82-A1 (50 cal.) from a veteran's Humvee that was used in the Iraq war.



Continued...

For the equine enthusiasts,

like myself, it made my heart warm just seeing the mix of well-bred and trained quarter horses, paints, gypsy vanners and gypsy crosses in one large herd roaming free over 14,000 acres. At CMR they are living life as nature intended, yet still being cared for by expert horsemen.



The ranch has a wonderful covered arena for focused training and lessons. The horses are schooled in different disciplines to ensure safe and secure mounts which cater to a variety of guest hobbies such as English cross-country trail riding, obstacle course training, jumping, western-style reining, cutting cow herding and more. CMR offers a range of riding experiences to guests from beginner through expert level in any discipline.



A favorite for our group were the breathtaking trail rides along the canyon edges down to the river. Our adventures allowed us to explore in extraordinary proportions and take in the legendary views. This is NOT a "nose to tail" ride. You ride at your level of comfort but expert guides are there if needed. Regardless of what horse breed you prefer, I can promise that you will fall in love with CMR's horses and want to bring your mount home with you. I am still trying to figure out how to get "Jughead", a Percheron/quarter horse cross, home with me. This big gentle giant carried me on trails along the canyon with drops that were hundreds of feet below.

If you like shooting firearms or have never shot one before, this is the place to enjoy it. CMR has a state-of-the-art firearm playground. Kip Rahmig, the ranch certified professional instructor, took us all shooting. I have always been a bit nervous, well truthfully extremely nervous, around firearms. Kip brought out an astonishing array of pistols and rifles, some automatic, including a massive 375 Cheytec long range rifle. I could seriously feel my heart beating faster thinking I don't want to do this. Well after some incredible guidance from Kip and his team, I found myself popping off targets left and right. My apprehension about handling firearms quickly disappeared.





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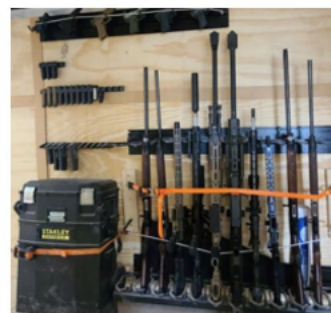
The firearm program is designed to appeal to all. There is a full range of options with guided instruction and safety lessons for amateur hobby shooters to professional expert firearms enthusiasts. I have to say I haven't forgotten the quote Kip used "Until you're ready, keep your booger hook off the bang switch." My husband had one of his best experiences shooting with a 375 Chey Tac and a (50 Cal) BMG sniper rifle with bullets 4" long. To my surprise, this firearm playground was one of my favorite parts of the trip.

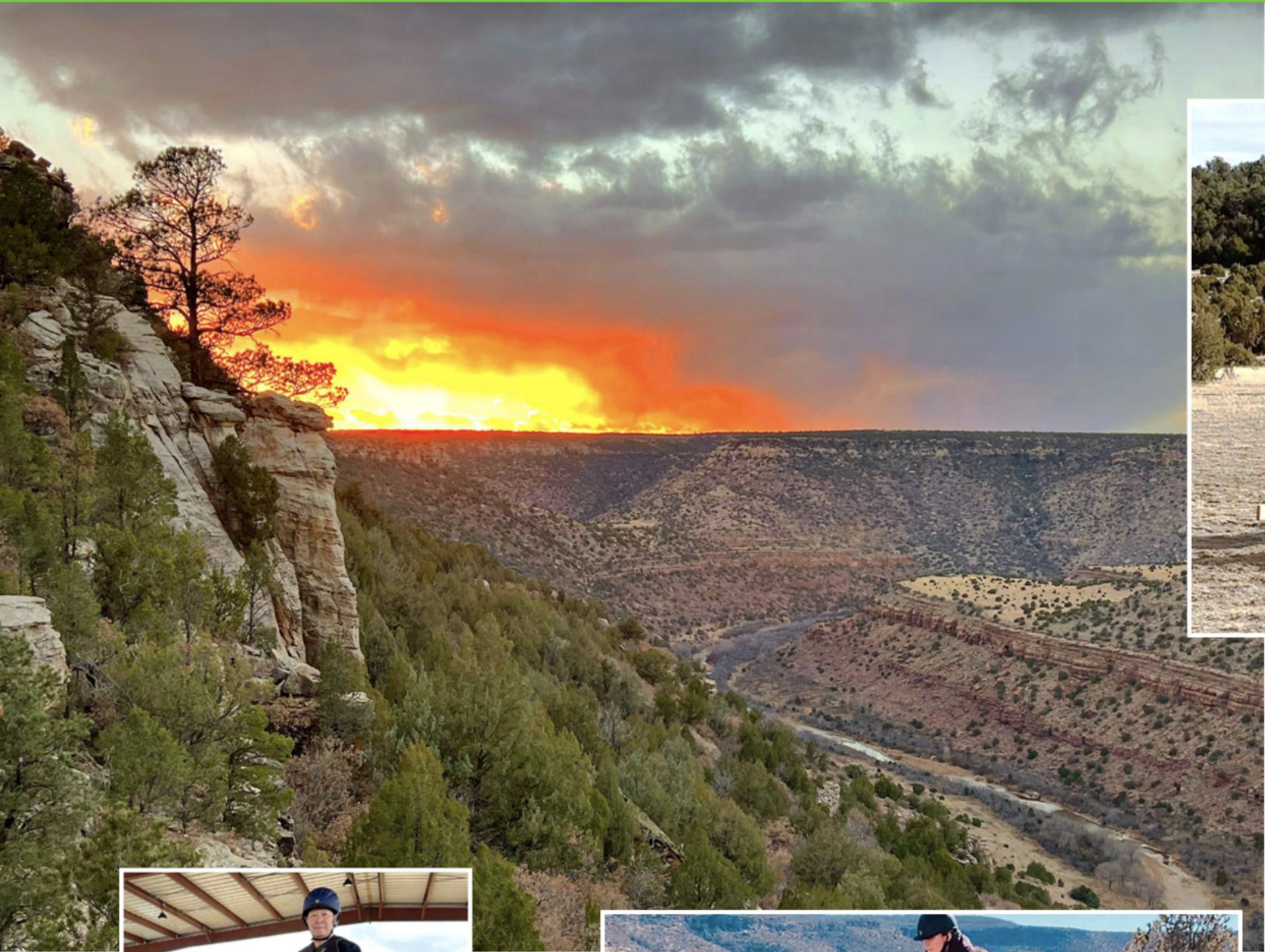
When you search the internet for ranch vacations, you will find very few ranches that offer both horse and firearms sports. If both are offered, then you will find at least one side of it is rudimentary. I would say that NO vacation ranch anywhere comes close to the complete offerings CMR has in those 2 bookend adventures.

In person the scale of this magical place is overwhelming with incredible geological formations of countless deep fissures in the red-crested ground which set the stage of New Mexico's legendary kaleidoscopic sunrises and sunsets. This pristine landscape is a nature enthusiast's dreamland. Pictures do not do it justice. It is definitely a "bucket list" trip!

The Canyon Madness Ranch is an all-inclusive destination. The kitchen puts an emphasis on a farm-to-table bounty and chefs focus on healthy, organic exotic meats like farm raised buffalo and ostrich, plus of course beef. The ranch also is home to an ostrich farm with two adults producing fresh eggs for the menu. I highly recommend requesting a homestyle meal cooked on a firepit either out on the range or on the back porch to truly enjoy the real ranch experience. The ranch staff was another one of the best parts of our visit. We loved gathering with them, listening to stories and learning from them. We left as friends, not as guests.

More...





**Dennis Law
on Vader**



The timeless saying "pictures are worth a thousand words" doesn't hold true here. You have to experience it in person to fully grasp why Canyon Madness Ranch is that rare breed of madness!

Thank you, Canyon Madness Ranch, for a lifetime of memories and experiences never to be forgotten.

You can book the entire ranch (eight contemporary suites with living rooms) or book a few rooms by contacting Canyon Madness Ranch directly.

For inquiries and bookings, prospective guests are welcome to call Ashley at 720-878-9676 during office hours for inquiry or email awang@lawbrothersgroup.com.



