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TRAVEL & LIFE

## HARVEST GETAWAYS

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**Farm Stays**

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# Fabulous Farm Stays

BY TRACY ELLEN BEARD



**F**rom cozy, self-serve cottages to full-service, opulent rooms and residences, today's farm stays offer an abundance of accommodation options and a plethora of experiences to enjoy. Listen to the quiet sounds of country life, forage for your food, help with the daily chores, or relax and read a book at one of these three fabulous and diverse farm stays: Nettles Farm, Inn the Ground and Leaping Lamb Farm.

# Leaping Lamb Farm

► [leapinglambfarm.com](http://leapinglambfarm.com)

Scottie Jones and her husband Greg own and operate the Leaping Lamb farm in Alsea, Oregon, with the help of farmhand TK. Greg takes care of the plants and Scottie handles the livestock. The homestead originated in 1862, and today, guests can come to escape city life, hike the onsite trails, watch the spawning salmon run through the creek, help with chores, or simply relax and read a book, preferably Scottie's farmoir, "Country Grit."

The farmhouse, built in 1895 with only one bedroom, now offers guests six bedrooms and three bathrooms: Three rooms boast queen beds; one has a queen and a double bed with an en-suite bathroom; one room features a double bed; and the last room has two twin beds. There is a large deck with a BBQ available for guest use. The cottage, also located on the property, has an additional two bedrooms with one queen bed each and one bathroom to share. Outside the cottage is a large porch overlooking the pastures and another BBQ for guests to use.

Breakfast on the farm is serve yourself with coffee, teas, fruit, and waffle/pancake mix available in the cupboards and refrigerators. Eggs are a lovely addition to the meal; one only needs to collect them fresh from what Scottie calls the "Chicken Hilton." Basic staples fill the cupboards, and a complimentary basket of fruit, a loaf of bread, orange juice and milk will be in the refrigerator upon arrival. Guests often stop at the store on the way to bring additional supplies for lunch and dinner if they do not plan to leave the farm during their stay.

Participating in the daily chores is optional but loads of fun. Throw some grain to the chickens, turkeys and ducks, and don't forget Elton the peacock. Shuck the stalls and give some

hay to the horses, or get out a grooming brush and give Paco, the burro, some attention. Feed the goats or cuddle the lambs, and don't miss out on shepherding the sheep to the pasture each morning and bringing them back in at night. If you are lucky enough to be there when a lamb is born in the field, you can carry it into the barn for the night. In the fall, guests can help with cider-pressing.

Farm stays offer guests more than just a room and breakfast. Scottie, the founder of Farmstay USA, sums up the reason for booking a farm stay vacation.

"Farm Stays support an American heritage, the small family farm, without raising taxes or food prices. They provide an experience for the public that creates



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memories. Accommodations can range from tents to treehouses to posh digs. Most heritage farmers have a strong sense of place and tradition. The addition of livestock is important because interacting with animals is often the bridge that allows people to connect to the rural experience. That's why a farm stay is not just a bed & breakfast on a farm. It's not a room, it's an experience. It's a window into the rural lifestyle."





© Inn the Ground



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# Inn the Ground

► [theground.love](https://theground.love)

Husband and wife team Brenda Smola-Foti and Frank Foti own The Ground, an umbrella company encompassing their ventures in Yamhill County, which includes Tabula Rasa Farms, Humble Spirit Restaurant and Catering, Farmhouse and Yamhill House. Their most recent endeavor, Inn the Ground, opened in July 2023.

Inn the Ground boasts a luxurious bed and breakfast set in the hillside above a regenerative working farm. Each of the nine rooms has a king bed, adjacent queen sofa sleeper, mini-fridge, luxurious bathroom, and a private patio with chairs and panoramic views overlooking the hillside.

The rooms are under the living roof topped with wildflowers, and there is a beautiful great room for breakfast and coffee. Another lounge lies at the opposite end of the great room on the first floor, and guests can enjoy the fire pit and numerous trails that meander throughout the property. The underground rooms maintain comfortable temperatures, and the building, complete with solar panels, is environmentally energy efficient.

The Farm Tours are educational and fun. Each year, 80 Deven and Dexter cross calves, 75 Heritage Cross hogs, 500 laying hens, 300-400 turkeys and sometimes ducks grow up on the farm. The staff uses organic practices; however, the farm is not certified.

Garden Tours are another optional activity at the Inn. Jordan, a staff member, says, "Fruit and nut trees separate the plots, which helps with the integrity of the soil. We believe that the more diversity we bring on top and beneath the soil, the healthier it becomes."

Jordan adds, "Regenerative principles are used throughout the farm, known as The Ground. Crop plots are rotated each year. No crop is planted in the same place each year except the fruit and nut trees." The livestock is also

rotated around into different pastures throughout the year.

Forest Bathing is a must when staying at Inn the Ground. This practice began in Japan, and it is often prescribed by doctors to alleviate anxiety. It involves concentrating on the five senses: sight, sound, touch, taste and smell in a natural forest environment.

Breakfast at the Inn is healthy and delicious. Dine on delectable meats and produce from Tabula Rasa Farms. Enjoy flavorful, fresh juices, local meats, yogurt parfaits with honey, oat granola, eggs, fruit preserves and a tasty variety of bread.

Dine at nearby Humble Spirit. Most of the ingredients come from the farm, and there are several scrumptious sharable plates.



# Nettles Farm

► [nettlesfarm.com](https://nettlesfarm.com)

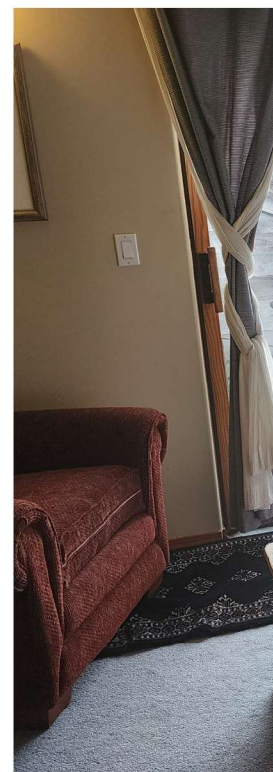
Riley Stark built Nettles Farm on the Northwest side of Lummi Island, Washington. This farm is the perfect place for families, groups and couples to cook together, explore the Salish Sea, and kick back and enjoy island life.

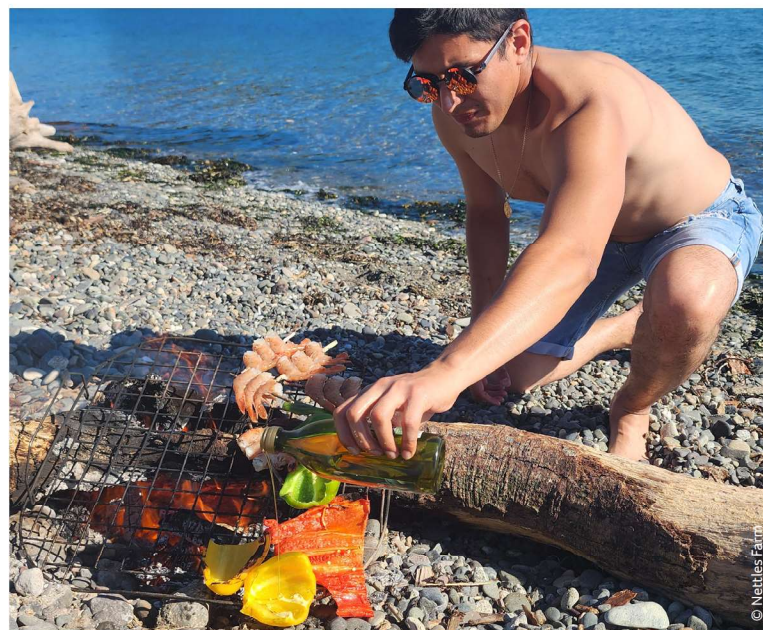
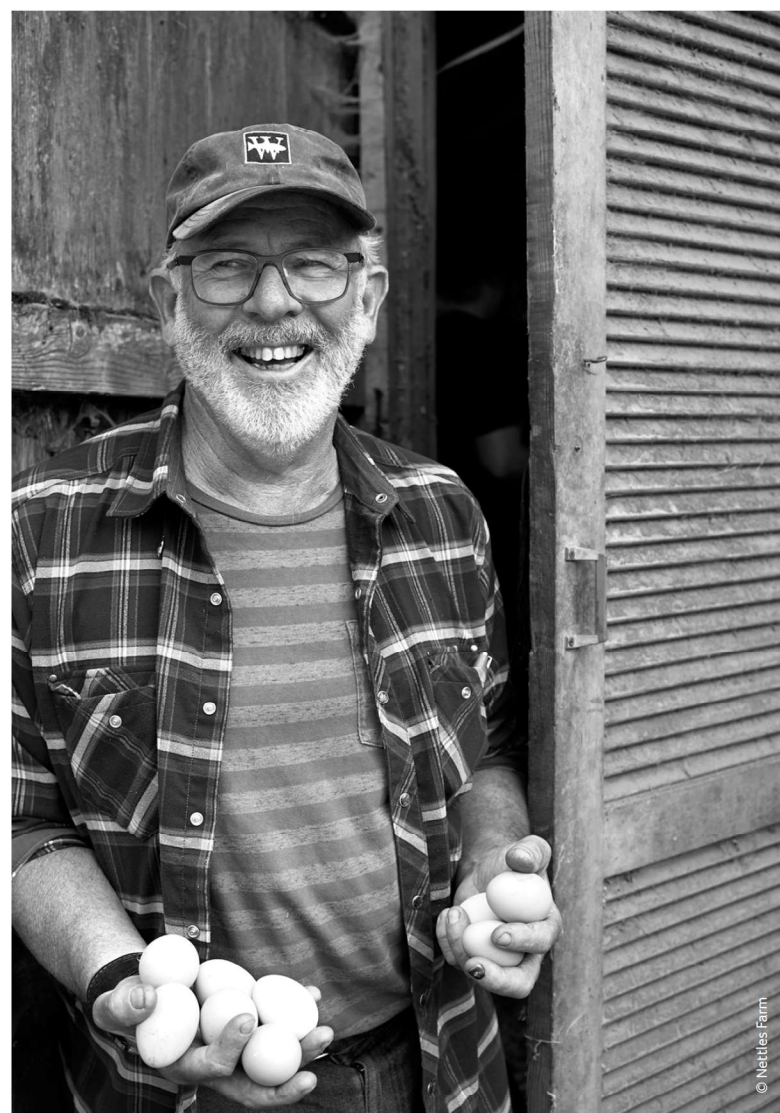
The Farmhouse boasts three comfortable bedrooms with queen beds, and the primary bedroom has a stunning walk-in steam shower. The Farmhouse Suite features four bedrooms: The main bedroom has a private soaking bathtub and a queen bed, two bedrooms have queen beds and one offers two twin beds.

Guests have access to the stocked gourmet commercial kitchen. Coffee at the farm is a fabulous way to start the day. Riley purchases his coffee beans from Sweet Maria's Coffee, sourced from a single Guatemalan farm, and then he roasts the beans at the farm.

Riley loves to interact with his guests—schedule time to cook an incredible chicken dinner modeled after one of Argentine Chef Francis Mallman's famous recipes. Use the chapa, fire dome, fire pit and char-broiler for a fun, interactive experience. Forage fresh greens and herbs from the kitchen garden and sip wine on one of the covered decks while waiting for dinner to finish cooking.

Another fun dinner to prepare is grilled salmon on a piece of driftwood.





Head down to the beach with Riley, scavenge for the ideal piece of wet wood, season up a filet, and listen to Riley's stories while the fish cooks on the grill.

A trip to the reefnet is another exciting excursion on the island. Visit the seaweed farm between July 20 and October 1, ask to stop for a picnic on Charles Island, and take a spin around Legoe Bay.

Riley raises a unique breed of blue-footed chickens year-round. These birds are the result of a 20-year saga of a red-combed, white-feathered, blue-footed bird like the coveted poulet de Bresse from France. Help with the chores and feed the chickens, collect eggs, and be sure to take a peek in the incubators to see if any new chicks have hatched. 🐣