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## Stay a Spell

Wake up in a sixties sitcom —or Hollywood movie — in Rehoboth's bewitching trio of inns.

Written By Joe Sugarman

There are bed and breakfasts devoted to Victoriana. Others decorate with a fly fishing or equine theme. There's even a B&B in Moab, Utah, with a room like a miners' shaft. So why not one that celebrates a 1960s sit-com?



Rehoboth Beach's **Bewitched** is its name, and it celebrates the classic TV comedy featuring the beautiful nose-twitching witch, Samantha Stephens, and her very mortal husband, Darrin. Undoubtedly, you're already familiar with the story; it's certainly one reason the inn has proved to be such a hit since its opening in 2004.

Each of the inn's seven rooms is named after a character from the show, and fittingly decorated.

A notebook loaded with facts and trivia about the actor who played each character will arm you with a font of "Bewitched" trivia. (Did you know that Marion Lorne, who played Aunt Clara, and Alice Ghostley, who played Samantha's mischievous sister Esmerelda, had bit roles in *The Graduate*? They were both in the climactic wedding scene.)

"People really care about picking their room," says innkeeper Inez Conover, who, along with partner Kathleen Bailey, also runs the adjacent Sea Witch Manor Inn & Spa and BEDazzled Bed & Breakfast. "At most bed and breakfasts the question is, 'Would you rather have a king room? But here it's, 'Would you rather have Dr. Bombay?'"

With the film version of *Bewitched* (with Nicole Kidman as Samantha) hitting theaters as you read this, the world's only B&B dedicated to the popular show, which ran from 1964 to 1972, should be a hot property with fans this summer. In fact, Sony Pictures, the movie's distributor, is offering free overnights at the B&B to lucky theatergoers across the country.

Even for casual fans of the series, a night at the B&B is good, kitschy fun. On my visit, I draw the Samantha and Darrin I Room. (Not to be confused with the Darrin II, named for Dick Sargent, who replaced the original Darrin, Dick York, at the start of the sixth season.) Conover tells me that Elizabeth Montgomery had a thing for butterflies, which explains the colorful patterns on the bedspread and chair covers. "The room has a very seventies feel, doesn't it?" my hostess says. Indeed it does, with

its mauve and dark green wall coverings and furniture reminiscent of a classy Nixon-era hotel room. The room also boasts a king-size brass bed and photographs of Montgomery's mother and father, actor Richard Montgomery.

The summer rush hasn't started yet, so I'm free to poke around the other characters' rooms. I like the bright Aunt Clara room, with its coral-colored walls and vintage birds-eye maple furniture —it captures something of the character without being too old-lady-like. Actress Marion Lorne collected doorknobs, so her namesake room has a bowlful of antique varieties.

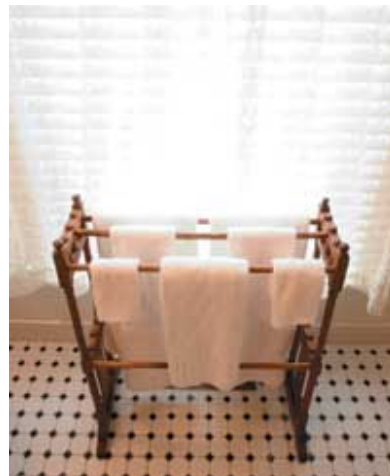
The Dr. Bombay room, named for Samantha's personal witch doctor, sports the requisite touches of India, glittering vases and a bookshelf of trinkets. The Darrin II room contains wonderful art deco furniture, a favorite of actor Dick Sargent, as well as three framed Saturday Evening Post covers he illustrated before he became an actor. Uncle Arthur, played by the frenetic Paul Lynde, gets the smallest room in the house (he did have the smallest role, after all), and a "Hollywood Squares"-like photo montage. Neighbors Abner and Gladys Kravitz's cozy room is adorned with several pairs of binoculars, a homage to the always snooping Gladys, and a display of pipes, Abner's favorite distraction.



According to Conover, the most requested room in the house is dedicated to nagging mother-in-law Endora, played by Agnes Moorehead. "She was a great character actor," says Conover. "Way ahead of her time, but just didn't get the credit she deserved." Moorehead enjoyed Venetian style, so her namesake room is bedecked with a Venetian tapestry, funky gold curtains above the king-size bed, and exotic hanging lamps. Somehow Conover found and framed several 1930s "Playbills" from the St. James Theatre with Evans on the cover.

So why "Bewitched"? "It was the first show that talked about diversity," says the fifty-something Conover, who, in her twenties, served as the first military policewoman in the U.S. Army. "It took on serious issues like racism but did it with comedy." Besides, it fit in with the inns' witch theme.

**Sea Witch Manor** was Conover and Bailey's first venture, and it's undoubtedly the classiest of the three B&Bs, with an airy — and somewhat over-the-top — Victorian feel. Conover and Bailey purchased the 1994 five-bedroom house in 2000, and filled it with antiques left over from their days as New Market, Md., antique store owners. Most everything in the house, including the electric fireplaces in every room, is for sale.



Gourmet three-course breakfasts are de riguer at Sea Witch. (Guests at Bewitched and BEDazzled have continental breakfast during high season.) During my stay, Conover whipped up a mean eggs benedict and peach muffins as she regaled us about her days in the military and as a Washington, D.C., transit detective. Even more interesting is that the Freehold, N.J., native claims she dated Bruce Springsteen in high school. ("He was very quiet.")



vintage magazine ads.

Conover says she's addicted to eBay, and you can see the results of her winning bids throughout Bewitched and especially the third inn, **BEDazzled**, which is as much a museum of

Hollywood circa 1940 as it is an inn. Fantastic black-and-white photographs of Tinseltown stars and starlets — many of them autographed — adorn the walls throughout the house. There are old records and out-of-print books, framed movie posters, and

Like at Bewitched, each room at BEDazzled is named for an actor or actress. The first-floor Marilyn Monroe room is among the most popular, with its teal walls, jeweled chandelier, and art deco dressing table. There's even a glittering sequined dress hanging up, as if waiting for Marilyn herself to pop it on and hit the boardwalk.

Other rooms pay tribute to Judy Garland (with a Liza Minelli bathroom), Bette Davis (with a bathroom dedicated to her archrival, Joan Crawford), and the poshest room of the bunch, named for Humphrey Bogart. This masculine lair has a huge four-poster bed, Maltese Falcon replica, and an autographed photograph of Lauren Bacall. The remote-controlled electric fireplace and Jacuzzi tub bring a nice touch of present-day luxury.

Guests in all three inns have access to complimentary cordial bars, a library of more than a thousand movies, and a very thoughtful service: After checking out, guests can visit the beach and then return to the B&B to clean up in an outdoor shower and use a half-bath. Guests in BEDazzled and Bewitched also have access to full kitchens and barbecue grills and can sign up for a massage at Sea Witch Manor.

Whatever your preferred theme — high Victorian, Hollywood, or sixties sit-com — these three bewitching inns cast a fun spell.

### **Bewitched, BEDazzled, & Sea Witch Manor**

65, 67, and 71 Lake Ave.

Rehoboth Beach, Del.

302-226-9482

[seawitchmanor.com](http://seawitchmanor.com)

Rates from \$145 to \$325 per night in-season; \$89 to \$255 off-season.

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