

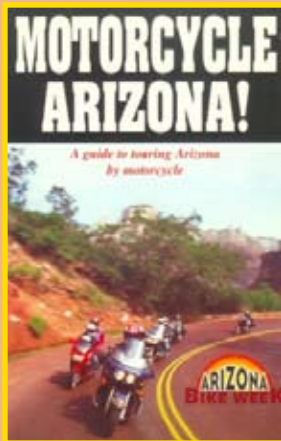
Where to Ride

by Frank Del Monte

“Meet at the Rock”

OK. A nice ride, a historic destination, great breakfast, lunch and dinners, nice folks serving, good prices, and biker-friendly. So tell me, what’s not to like about Rock Springs Café? The answer? Absolutely nothing!

I had been worried that the new owners of Rock Springs Café would turn it into another ritzy-glitzy-tourist-trap, so Cheryl and I took a ride out there just to see if the desecration had begun. Well, it turned out I needn’t worry. Rock Springs is alive and well and better’n ever. The secret is that it changed hands a second time and the new, new owners are dedicated to keeping it what it has always been, with only upgrading and refurbishing as required.



First and foremost, they have marked off the front row of parking for motorcycles only. That’s really nice as it keeps your mega-dollar cyclo-sled nearby. Along those same lines, when they have a “Hogs-n-Heat BBQ on the first Saturday of each month the whole front of the parking area is roped off for bikes only. Hard surface parking! That’s a facility that really cares about its clientele. By the way, the Hogs-n-Heat BBQ is \$12.50 each, all you can eat, with live music. It features Beef, Pork, and Chicken BBQ and ... are you ready for this ... Rocky Mountain Oysters! It’s described

as, “a BBQ and nut fry.”

Second and foremost, the outside has been spiffed up with new paint, doors, and windows. The inside has received the same subtle but important upgrades. There’s also a new doorway between the restaurant and the bakery to encourage you to follow the delightful aromas to their source, the Rock Springs Pie Company. This is an impressive business all by itself.





They sell 250 pies a day and over 6000 pies on Thanksgiving Day alone! They offer 15 types of pies with Jack Daniels Pecan being the house specialty. By the way, on each 2nd Wednesday of the month all the receipts from sliced pie sales in the restaurant are contributed to the Black Canyon City Scholarship Fund. That's pretty neat, so as they say, "Go ahead and have pie for

breakfast, we won't tell."

Third and foremost, the café is chock full of neat antiques, photos, and memorabilia. Take a look at the door in the ceiling over the main counter. It was put there back in the 1940's to fix a hole in the roof. Then check out the wooden telephone on the wall by the fireplace. That was the only telephone for 20 miles around and everyone in the area used it. The walls are covered with old photos, one of them the café taken in the 1940's. In the second dining room off to the right, are dozens of photos and drawings of WWII airplanes. As an Air Force Veteran I enjoyed looking at all of them.



The Rock Springs Café has been around since 1918 or 1920 depending on who you ask and how you figure. In any case it's been there a while. I've been going out to the Café since I moved here in the late '70's, and I remember one time when Rose Mofford was Governor I saw a black car outside with the license plate "Arizona 1" on it. The story I heard was that Rose served pies from "The Rock" when she entertained.

I have to say that when I heard "The Rock" had been sold (the first time) I was really worried that it was going to be homogenized, pasteurized, civilized, and reorganized, to the point where it would be unrecognized and lose all it's flavor. Seriously, I mean what the valley really needs is another fake western ghost town, right? (Not!) So I was really happy when our quick visit found that it is alive and well with a secure future. So ride 30 miles north of Phoenix on I-17 and have a slice of pie with your breakfast. I won't tell.

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