

# Welcome to the Garden House on Orcas Island

We hope you'll enjoy being here. Our goal is to offer clean, quiet accommodations in a setting of both simple and attractive functionality. Please read this information sheet for details about various items that we'd like you to know about; please feel free to come over to the main house if you have any questions. We don't want to interfere with your visit, but we want you to know we're available to help make your stay a pleasant one.

## ***Animals (mine!):***

Despite pleas, bribes and years of training attempts, the cat simply refuses to obey the rule about staying OUTSIDE. He will likely take every opportunity to come in and upstairs, trashing my intention to keep the Garden House dander-free for guests who are allergic. You can help! Don't let him in! Louis, a male with the white blotch on his face, is very affectionate. He may try to climb up your leg; if this happens you will notice how sharp his claws are. Feel free to hug and pet this little sweetie, but outside only please.

## ***Smoking:***

Please observe a no indoor smoking policy. Those who smoke outdoors, please leave no evidence!

## ***Before you leave:***

Please help us by observing the guidelines in the checkout checklist posted on the refrigerator. We sincerely welcome your participation in keeping the building as spiffy as you found it.

## ***Trail to the shoreline:***

The trail to the rock outcropping on the shore has some steep and unforgiving places. Please wear good footwear when traversing the trail, which has several alternate routes to give variety and change the angle of descent (pick your fav). Please stay on the trail, to protect both the flora and yourself. We ask that you build no fires on the rock outcropping and pack out any paper, bottles, etc. that you might have brought with you. *Please ensure that the garden gates are closed at all times! The deer will destroy the garden in minutes if a gate is left open.*

## ***Firewood:***

Firewood is available right outside the door.

## ***Wood stove:***

The wood stove works very well as a wood stove—if you operate it with the doors closed you'll probably end up opening a window, even with the controls set at the lowest level. During some of our nastiest winter storms, with the wind chill around fifty below, a

modest, slow fire produced inside temperatures of 75 degrees. Unless you are personally familiar with Vermont Castings wood stoves, be sure the chrome lever on the left side of the stove is UP. Ask me if you have questions.

***Housekeeping:***

We clean the cabin before you arrive and after you leave. If you wish additional linens and/or towels, please ask us.

***Children:***

A portacrib is available as well as a fold-out futon and a stair guardrail (for toddlers). There is also a baby monitor in case parents want to sit on the deck once the little ones are asleep. The following comments are added as safety reminders: parents should assess the trail to the water and determine whether their children can traverse the trail unsupervised; be sure you and your kids know what a nettle is; wasps go postal for a few days each summer generally in August.

***Garbage:***

Please put any overflow garbage in the garbage can (in the shed by the Leaf electric car parking area) and close the shed doors—otherwise the raccoons will get it! Please use a plastic garbage can liner for the can under the kitchen sink. Recycling is available in the kitchen pantry for papers and #1 and #2 plastics plus steel cans (in one bin), glass bottles (separate bin) and aluminum cans (separate bin).

***Heat:***

Just set the temperature controls to the temperature you prefer. There is a separate mini split head for the bedroom and the sitting room; each operates with its own remote. Please do not mix up the remotes. Please leave the temp at 70°F for each room (or perhaps a bit lower as desired in the bedroom.)

***Sound:***

You may be unaccustomed to how quiet it is here. Because of the lack of background noise, all sounds travel further than you may imagine. Please keep any outdoor sound you might generate louder than a conversation limited to daylight hours, and note that, particularly at night, normal deck conversations may be less private than you might expect.

***Gas Stove:***

The top burners have pilot lights and will light immediately when their knob is turned—if for some reason they don't light please contact me immediately. The oven has a pilot as well, but when you turn on the oven you will not hear the main burners 'kick on' for almost a minute—this is normal.

### ***Safety Detectors***

A smoke detector is mounted on the ceiling in the hall just outside the bedroom door. It is tested frequently to insure the unit is working properly. If for any reason you believe it is not working, please contact me immediately. (If you stand below the smoke detector and look up, you should see a steady green light, indicating that there is power to the unit.) Do not disable the unit by removing the battery. You can use a stick (see top of trim on door to bedroom for a stick labeled for this purpose) to push in the white button on the detector to temporarily disable it for 15 minutes should it go off due to a kitchen smoke incident. The white button has the letter "S" (for silence) on it. There is a separate smoke detector in the bedroom; should it go off, it will speak to you in English and in Spanish. If it is chirping, it means the battery needs replacing. Please notify me immediately if this occurs.

There is also a Carbon Monoxide detector in the bedroom (it is mounted near the remote).

### ***Bathroom:***

The skylight opens in the bathroom. Reach up and pull on the aluminum handle at the top of the skylight—it will 'click' as it opens to preset positions: two clicks and it is free to swing open. Please don't leave it open if it's raining. Please use the bath mat and be sure the shower curtain is inside the shower—otherwise we'll have water downstairs! Use of the fan while showering is recommended. **Note:** on occasion the GFI (ground fault interrupter) breaker will trip in the bathroom; this unit is built into the outlet mounted on the wall/ceiling just to the left of the bathroom sink. You can tell that the circuit has tripped because a little red light will display on the outlet and, of course, the lights and outlet and fan won't work. Just press the RED reset button on the GFI outlet (in the center of the outlet) and everything should come back on.



Note that the outlet to the right of the sink becomes energized when the light switch is on (and it is also protected by the GFI outlet).

### ***Charcoal grill:***

An outdoor, charcoal grill is available for your use. While we often store it under the eaves, please move it away from the building to use it. (Charcoal and lighter fluid not supplied).

### ***Energy Conservation / Carbon Neutral Program:***

We are participating in an electrical energy conservation program with the local electric utility; we participate in this conservation program in order to do our part toward reducing global climate disruption. In addition to replacing all (save 3-way) light bulbs with CFLs or LEDs and super-insulating the building, we purchase green power to offset all electrical consumption, ensuring that the Garden House meets a carbon neutral standard.

The Garden House has a heat pump hot water tank that *uses over 60% less* electricity than is used in a standard hot water tank; the recovery time is longer than with a standard tank. So far no guest has ever mentioned running out of hot water.

***Parking:***

Please park in the space next to the building. This keeps the driveway 'loop' open for everyone, and ensures that when you come in at night, the automatic light will most effectively illuminate your way.

***Parties Using the hide-a-bed and/or futon:***

Every effort is made to insure that guests are fully informed about the sleeping arrangements at the Garden House. The vast majority of parties are 2 people constituting a couple who share the bed in the bedroom. In order to provide options for parties larger than a couple, the Garden House has a 4 person maximum, which allows for families with up to two children, or two couples, or two single people (e.g., an adult parent and his/her adult child). Given that the Garden House is a single bedroom structure, the hide-a-bed allows for sleeping options to accommodate these desirable party-size variations. The best hide-a-bed unit has been complemented by the best mattress available. Even so, adult guests are often used to a “real” bed and may wish for greater comfort than the hide-a-bed can offer. A workaround suggested by some guests is to simply put the mattress on the floor. The futon also plays second fiddle to a real mattress, and is best suited for children. The tradeoff of an air mattress is between greater comfort and the space it consumes. Suggestions for how to best provide privacy, comfort and flexibility are always welcome and appreciated.

***Check out time:***

Normal checkout time is 11 am. On days when we do not have another guest immediately following you, you are welcome to stay longer—please check with us if you would like to consider this option.

***Land line Phone:***

A land-line phone is available for making calls, as the signal strength here of most cell phone carriers is zip. Verizon might work occasionally; T-Mobile is good. There is an old Panasonic phone on the desk in the pottery room on the first floor, accessible by the always unlocked single door on the garden side of the deck. Feel free to use it.

***Ferries:***

The ferries can be a nightmare, especially if you are leaving on a Sunday afternoon or, basically, *anytime* in the summer. As you know, WSF San Juan Islands ferries operate on a reservation system. You likely know that you need to make a reservation from Anacortes to Orcas and a return reservation from Orcas to Anacortes. The key factors are: a) you really *really* need to have a reservation to return to Anacortes and b) you really *really* need to be

through the WSF Orcas toll booth *at least* 30 minutes prior to the scheduled departure. There can be a huge line of cars, snaking back on the road, beginning an hour prior to any summer (or Sunday afternoon in off-season) sailing. You may be in that line, crawling toward the toll booth, hoping that you get checked in before the 30 minute clock ticks down. WSF has maintained a pretty uncompromising attitude about this rule: if you pass thru the toll booth less than 30 minutes before sailing, you lose your reservation and go to the back of the standby line. This is not a pretty picture.

***Refund Policy:***

Every effort is made to ensure that the Garden House advertising is faithfully accurate; indeed, surveyed guests indicate that the advertising understates the quality of the building and the amenities. Should a guest choose to leave early, we offer refunds only in cases where the building is clearly uninhabitable (such as a direct strike by a tactical nuclear weapon or a tree which penetrates the building envelope). Appliances which occasionally fail due to misuse or normal wear and tear do not make the building uninhabitable.

***Pets:***

Guests who bring pets are asked to faithfully observe the pet policy. If you brought your pet without prior approval, please notify me.

***Emergencies:***

In an emergency, either use your cell phone (dial 378-4141 for the San Juan County 911 operator) or the land-line phone on the first floor (dial 911) to request immediate aid—tell the 911 operator that this is the Symons residence, 3222 pt Lawrence rd; then, if at all possible, come tell us.

***Help:***

If a car is here, there's a good chance that someone is around the main house. Occasionally I might be out for the day, yet you might have an important but non-emergency need. Use the phone downstairs to call Raenya (360 622 8753) or Doe Bay Resort (360 376-2291).

***The View:***

If you read the building history, you'll discover that almost everything about the Garden House is intentional. This quality applies to the location of the building on the property and to the mindful choice of leaving trees between the building and the water. The trees block both the view and the onshore breeze, raising the effective temperature of the garden and the Garden House deck several degrees—to the benefit of the plants and deck occupants. Another benefit of ensuring only a partial water view at the Garden House is to tempt guests to take the trail to the water. It's worth it.

***Key:***

The door is generally left unlocked when guests are not present. By far the most frequent problem results from guests locking themselves out; this can become troublesome if no one is in the main house to unlock the door. To date nothing has been taken. *Please confirm* that the door is unlocked *before* you close it when leaving for the day, insuring simplicity of access whenever you return. Note the lock position information by the door.

***Creatures:***

This is the country. Almost nothing goes bump in the night. Still, there is the occasional mosquito, the extremely-occasional bat or bird, the ubiquitous spiders and flies that can enter the building, especially if the windows are left open. If you are concerned about any of these, leave the windows closed, particularly beginning in the early evening (we're talking summer here). The woods have nettles and thorns; the ground has slugs and the occasional garden snake. There is nothing that is life threatening but some individuals may have concerns due to inexperience with country life. Please recognize that the property and building exist as part of nature and that you must use caution and common sense if these natural phenomena are unfamiliar to you.

***Radio Stations:***

KPLU, 88.5fm, is the local NPR and jazz radio station. Other stations are: KING-FM, 98.1, classical; KSBG, 97.3—oldies rock and roll and KUOW, 94.9, NPR talk. (You'll need to supply your own radio). Almost all of these stations stream their content on their web site.

***Body Oils and Sheets:***

Occasionally, guests wish to use various oils and lotions in bed. Most of these liquids permanently stain the sheets. If you would like to use lotions and oils, please ask for a set of extra sheets for that purpose—remove the existing sheets rather than put the additional sheets on top of them. We don't consider permanently stained sheets "normal wear and tear"; thus if you stain sheets, you may be asked to purchase a new set.

***WiFi:***

There is a secured (password required) wifi network in the building. Please let me know if you are having any difficulties accessing the system. The password is printed on a post-it located in the black 3-ring information binder.

***Food and Other Possibly Helpful items:***

Guests often leave unused or partially used containers of basic items (from olive oil and spices to shampoo and conditioners) or items (flowers, bar soap, books, window sill decorations, etc.) Those items that have a long shelf life and may be useful to other guests are left in cupboards in the bathroom and kitchen or in appropriate locations. Feel free to use, consume and/or dispose of any items that obviously fall in this category (except books!) The Garden House does not endorse any of these products or represent that any of

them are suitable. We use the FDA GRAS standard: "Generally Recognized as Safe". We remove any items that are inappropriate, obviously unintentionally left (like clothes), or of questionable value.

***Additional Guests:***

Occasionally a party will invite guests to the Garden House that are in addition to the number originally indicated on the reservation. Often these guests will spend the night. Please let us know at the time of check-in if you expect the number of overnight guests to exceed the number indicated at the time of the reservation.

***Potential anomalies:***

The Garden House has equipment and services that are designed to be of high quality and are well maintained. Even so, an occasional guest has mentioned issues that we can't do much about. Examples: the refrigerator makes an occasional knocking sound. The smoke detector in the bedroom has a tiny green light that flickers every minute or so to confirm that it is working. Outside sensor lights can flick on at night due to animals or occasional winds. There may, tho, be an anomaly that we *can* do something about, so please don't hesitate to tell us what comes to your attention.

***Supplies and Services:***

In general, Eastsound (about 20 minutes by car) is the place where you can obtain everything from haircuts to cleaning your laundry to car parts. Doe Bay Resort (about one minute, going east) has a very small store which caters to the needs of travelers. If you have a special need or request, please find me. See the "Help" paragraph above for additional contact information.

***At your discretion:***

We welcome suggestions for games, creative activities, books, articles, music, art, or ideas outside our imagination that might add to the value of being here.

***Suggestions:***

We are always interested in improving our service. If you have any complaints, suggestions or ideas, *please* tell us, either in person or in writing, no matter how small (or large) they are.

***Airbnb Reviews:***

We strive for 5 star reviews in all categories. If we can't make 5 stars from you in any category, we would really like to know why, so we can make every attempt to improve our offering. We need to hear your concerns. Please be honest, forthright and speak your truth. We will be very grateful for your comments. Thanks!

***Above All:***

We hope you feel welcome, safe, private, and comfortable. We hope you leave feeling relaxed, refreshed, renewed and restored.