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July  
2009

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# TulsaPeople

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Photo courtesy of Tammie Dooley.



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OUTDOOR TRAVEL BY TAMMIE DOOLEY

## Let's go glamping

Go camping in glamour and comfort, Tulsa style.



Photos courtesy of Tammie Dooley.

Top, Judy Brill's "glamping" grounds. Above, the Tulsan relaxes in her luxury tent.

**MORE AND MORE** baby boomers are retiring and going back to nature after decades of material excess.

But they're no longer interested in crawling in and out of a small tent, sleeping on the ground, scrounging up a meal over a 3-inch burner and deploying the grunge look for that week in the wilderness.

Yet camping still holds the same nostalgic allure and is an affordable way to vacation, though, unfortunately, it still has many women digging in their 3-inch heels against it.

Meet Tulsa's own Judy Brill, fly-fishing diva, fashionista and decorator extraordinaire. Brill also was one of three featured gardeners this year for the Tulsa Garden Club's Spring Event, sharing Tulsa's best residential gardens with the public.

She has news for these women and for all the men out there who want to camp but can't (or don't want to) hack the roughing-it part anymore.

They should try glamping.

Although Brill didn't invent the term — she first heard it on a national morn-

ing news show — she may have made it doable for just about anyone.

Just what is glamping? Upscale camping in which a tent large enough to walk through replaces the pup tent, bedding takes the place of the sleeping bag, a beautiful rug covers the plastic ground floor and campers use real barware instead of plastic cups. In short, it makes camping more civilized.

For Brill, it's become the only way to go.

"The way I camp, who wouldn't love it?" she says. "With some planning and organization, it can be done on a shoestring, offers the best of the outdoors with the comforts of your own home and secures you the right to stories and adventures that'll have all your friends' jaws dropping at your adventurous spirit."

Every summer, Brill and her husband, Steve, spend 15 days or better in a remote part of Wyoming. There, Brill has honed the art of glamping.

"It takes no more thought or planning than any other camping trip now that I've done it a few times," she says.

And while this particular trip is the longest of the season, they head to Greenleaf State Park in Muskogee several weekends during the fall.

"We don't do this once a year and then store everything," she says. "We're heading out 10-15 times a year and wanting more. I don't expect everyone would want to glamp as much as we do; then again, it gets in your blood. I do expect there are a lot of people who would enjoy doing this once or twice a year, and I highly recommend you try it my way at least once."

Her way started with a tent large enough in which to stand upright, a queen-size bed on a stand and indoor/outdoor carpeting to cover the tent's plastic floor.

"Besides (being) highly unglamorous, crawling around on your hands and knees isn't well suited for aging bodies," she says.

The bed on a stand means storage

space underneath, which she hides with a dust ruffle.

A comforter set; high-thread-count cotton sheets; appropriate blankets for the weather forecast; and a small needlework throw pillow of their bulldog, Jerry Lee, who doesn't accompany them to Wyoming, dress up the bed.

To cover the tent floor, the couple first used indoor/outdoor carpeting. Then, a few years ago, Brill scored a \$20 oriental rug at a discount store.

"That's about when this whole thing really began to gel," she says. They added acrylic barware for sipping champagne and refreshing summer cocktails. By testing a few recipes in their home kitchen, the standard camp-out menu was altered to include a nightly gourmet dinner. "With a bit of prep at home, we enjoy delicious dinners that run the gamut from salmon in basil crème sauce to steak with roasted vegetables."

Over the years, they've learned what works and what doesn't.

"There is no way to duplicate all the comforts of your home," Brill says. "What



Photo courtesy of Tammie Dooley.

would be the point? But you can make the enjoyment of the outdoors truly pleasurable.

"The sense of peace I gain from time in the outdoors far outweighs any effort expended. It's the best vacation money can buy." ■

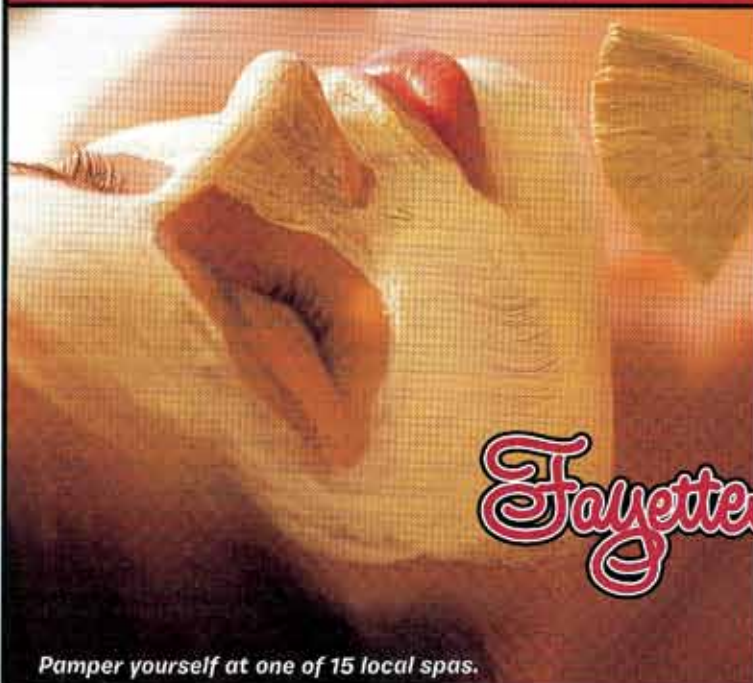
*EDITOR'S NOTE: Tammie Dooley is a Tulsa-based freelance writer. Find her online at [www.SoloRoadTrip.com](http://www.SoloRoadTrip.com).*

**Brill and her husband, Steve, count fly fishing among their favorite glamping activities.**

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For a list of additional items Brill recommends for glamping, visit the Life & Style section.

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