



THE ROGERS HOUSE BED & BREAKFAST INN LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

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Photographics

As we drove into the Historic District of Lincoln, Nebraska, we were transported to a different era. The streets were flanked by large homes and beautiful mansions built around the turn of the century. And as we pulled into the driveway and porte-cochere of The Rogers House, we were instantly reminded of

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days gone by. Our hostess, Nora Houtsma, beckoned us in and as we stepped into the elegant 1914 mansion we felt as if we were literally stepping back in time.

The rich wood tones reached out to us as the period antique furniture and soft music instantly created a relaxed and

refined atmosphere for our arrival. Houtsma herself was as warm and welcoming as the mansion. After a short exchange of introductions, she began our tour of the property, which includes two houses: The Rogers House and the West House. Next, she showed us the room in The Rogers House that we would occupy during our overnight visit. Our "oos" and "ahhs" could be heard on all three floors as we marveled at the spaciousness of our room, The Banker's Suite.

Located on the second floor, this suite of three rooms was the original "winter master bedroom," said Houtsma. It featured a working fireplace and queen-size high back mahogany bed. The sunroom on the east side had me feeling as if I'd been crowned queen-for-the-day as it was filled with magnificent leafy indoor plants and had a white wicker couch that I immediately claimed for my early morning moments of private reflection. The



▲ The warm and inviting atmosphere of the Sun Room

adjoining room, once a smaller guest room, featured a large Jacuzzi whirlpool for two, as well as a full bath with a shower. We briefly discussed how cozy it would be to have breakfast served privately in our sunroom, but since the dining area downstairs had a similar feel, we chose to join other guests and enjoy the full experience of The Rogers House breakfast.

After completing our tour of both buildings, Houtsma gave us excellent directions to the Historic Haymarket District where we found her restaurant suggestion, Lazlo's Brewery and Grill, to be exceptional – a good selection of entrees at reasonable prices. The Haymarket is located immediately west of the Old Market Square, near Downtown Lincoln, and marks the location of Lincoln's first City Hall, built in 1886. The Haymarket has since been certified by the National Park Service and is a federally-certified historic district. Lincoln is filled with historic dis-

tricts and properties.

According to Houtsma, "The Rogers House was built in 1914 by banker N.C. Rogers as a retirement mansion when he was 70 years old. Rogers moved to Lincoln from Minden, Nebraska." Amazing as it may seem, this elderly man had the following rooms built into his house: a spacious parlor living room, a mahogany paneled dining room, a library, three sun rooms, two master bedrooms, two guest rooms, three full and four half baths, a maid's quarters, and a third floor ballroom.

Following the death of Rogers and his wife, his daughter, Virginia, who was married to a doctor, then inherited the house and lived there until 1968. My husband and I were in the mahogany paneled dining room when Houtsma explained how the house was used by a fraternity from 1968 to 1973 and then as a group home for the mentally handicapped for the next



ten years. What impressed us the most about the story was the absence of any nicks or gouges in the rich mahogany paneling. The room had demanded respect, and obviously received it from the youthful college men as well as the handicapped



residents.

Houtsma had been living temporarily in Lincoln in 1983 while on a quest to find antique items that would fit nicely into a collection inspired by her grandfather. When the mansion was put up for sale that year, she and two financial partners from Denver were destined to purchase it and begin an extensive renovation that continues today as technology moves forward and guests desire wireless high-speed internet access.

The Inn opened in 1984 with five guest rooms on the second floor. Houtsma lived on the property for the first

three years of operation. According to Houtsma, “In 1991 the Ricketts-Folsom House (The West House) next door went

The West House was built in 1909. It was purchased and renovated in 1995 and makes a great addition to The Rogers House.

up for sale. The house was purchased, extensively renovated, and opened in 1995. The West House is older than The Rog-

ers House, built in 1909. A.C. Ricketts was a prominent Lincoln attorney at the turn of the century. His descendants were the Folsom family who donated the Folsom Children’s Zoo to the city. The West House reflects a Frank Lloyd Wright/arts and crafts influence.”

Both The West House and The Rogers House have the distinct honor of being declared local historic landmarks and are located just five blocks from both the Folsom Children’s Zoo and the Sunken Gardens – a work of art in progress.

Today, the Inn consists of eleven guest rooms in two historic houses located next

door to each other: The Rogers House, 2145 B Street, and The West House, 2125 B Street. All eleven guest rooms have full private baths while three guest rooms feature jacuzzi whirlpool tubs. Our guest room, The Banker’s Suite, has a working fireplace. Houtsma is the sole owner of both properties. Houtsma loves the interaction with her guests. “This setting, this house, the building next door, are just wonderful places to be.”

Both of the traditional homes are decorated in a very deliberate manner. When asked about the décor and how she keeps the visual appeal so consistent, Houtsma replied, “My love of the homes goes back



to my antiquing days. I love the uniqueness of the pieces of furniture. I want to focus on the pieces. I don’t want to distract from them. I like a clean feel in a room; it gives it a calmness.”

The Rogers House is a true getaway. Wireless high speed internet access will soon be available, but you’ll find no televisions or DVD players in the rooms, and only the three rooms tailored for business guests have telephones, along with desk work areas. The Rogers House clientele like it that way and return year after year to rest, relax and recharge their batteries.

The historic property has long been a favorite site for celebrating special oc-

casions. Hundreds of pre-nuptial dinners, showers, retreats, reunions, and receptions have been held over the past twenty years in the spacious downstairs living area. During our brief stay, the staff was preparing for an afternoon wedding that would be held in the living room of The Rogers House. You would expect a great deal of frantic last minute preparations to have overshadowed our morning with such a big event just hours away, but the well-trained and experienced staff had everything under control. The peaceful, soothing atmosphere of the mansion was not disturbed in the least.

Following our gourmet breakfast on the main floor’s sun porch, we snapped a few photographs, visited with Houtsma and began preparing for our departure. It was at this time I realized what a nourishing and sensory experience The Rogers House has to offer travelers. There is a quiet grandeur in every room of the mansion, and it has a profound relaxing effect on visitors by enfolding them in a serenity seldom found in our busy lives. The warm Nebraska hospitality of Houtsma and her staff are just icing on the cake. BBA

**The Rogers House
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AMENITIES & POLICIES



The Inn consists of eleven guest rooms in two historic houses located right next to each other.

AREA ATTRACTIONS

The Rogers House is close to the following local area attractions:

- The Sunken Garden
- Folsom Children’s Zoo and Botanical Gardens
- Governor’s Mansion and State Capitol
- Pioneer’s Park Nature Center
- Museum of Nebraska History
- Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
- National Museum of Roller Skating
- Historic Haymarket
- Hyde Observatory
- Children’s Museum
- Ager Play Center

Also close to:

- Lincoln Municipal Airport
- University of Nebraska



Lincoln, Nebraska
Average Weather Statistics

	AVG HIGH	AVG LOW	AVG PREC
JAN	33°	11°	0.8 in
FEB	38°	16°	0.8 in
MAR	50°	27°	2.4 in
APR	64°	39°	2.9 in
MAY	74°	50°	4.1 in
JUN	85°	60°	3.7 in
JUL	89°	66°	3.7 in
AUG	86°	64°	3.4 in
SEP	78°	53°	3.1 in
OCT	66°	40°	1.9 in
NOV	49°	27°	1.4 in
DEC	36°	16°	0.9 in