

Anniversary Staycation: Another Way to Celebrate Love

Barbara's Sweet Surprise this week comes from Steve & Cindy Wright of Oro Valley, California. 'Revealing and Reflecting the Heart of Christ Within Marriage' is their goal and this super idea is sure to give any marriage a sweet boost!



A few weeks ago we celebrated our 46th wedding anniversary. YAY! It's hard to believe we've been married this long. What's great is that our love for each other seems to ramp up with each passing year. The *Love Story of our marriage* didn't start out that way, but God helped us to get it that way. And He's still helping us. How we pray more of you get to this stage of marriage! It's amazing - a true reason to celebrate. But this year we celebrated our love a bit differently. We put together an anniversary staycation.

We did this for several reasons. Our finances recently took a hit and things were financially tighter. Plus, because of certain circumstances, we couldn't get away for very long. So instead of going away to enjoy new sights together, we celebrated from our home. And instead of celebrating for one day, we put together the plans to prolong the romance of it all and enjoy an anniversary staycation for 3 days.

Anniversary Staycation

We took our initial disappointment of not being able to get away and instead, we turned it into something pretty great. We highly recommend this to anyone with an anniversary coming up. For us, it was a matter of applying the "turning lemons into lemonade" concept. It also, more importantly, goes with the Biblical concept of "being content in any circumstances we find ourselves in." However, now that we've done this, we'll do this again in upcoming years. Sometimes it's good to celebrate just the day of the anniversary. Other times it's good to get away, if this is possible. And then there is the idea of putting together an anniversary staycation.

All of this goes along with something that Dolley Carson once wrote:

"Have a romantic weekend away. Trade babysitting with another couple and dedicate your weekend to romance, playfulness, and joy! No work or projects"

♥ or telephone calls allowed. You're being held captive by love for each other
♥ and unavailable. Remember, you're away... at home! Maybe a whole
♥ weekend isn't possible, but you can still have romance ... plan a date!"

♥ Now it just wouldn't have worked for us to go away for the weekend. But we
♥ live in a great city to enjoy. So why not put together plans to enjoy it all the
♥ more during this special time in our lives? Also, our sons are grown so we
♥ don't need to "trade babysitting." One son is married and lives with his lovely
♥ wife and family in another country across the ocean. Our other son lives with
♥ his lovely wife on the other side of this country. So no babysitting is required
♥ here! But perhaps the babysitting idea is one that you need to employ. Think
♥ about it.

♥ A Needed Relaxing Time Together

♥ However, we did dedicate our time together to romance, playfulness, and lots
♥ of joy! We had a blast, just concentrating on each other. We didn't work
♥ (except to post incoming comments on the web site – after all, this is a 24
hour, 7-day a week ministry). God made it possible for us to do that. It's
something we truly needed, and God obviously knew that. We didn't realize
how much we needed to do that until we did. Thank you God!

♥ We recommend you give this anniversary staycation a try; you may like it!
♥ What we did was plan ahead to go to a few restaurants for one meal a date.
♥ The other times we enjoyed cooking together. We had a few gift cards that
others had given to us, so it helped us to have some "cheap dates." They
were cheap, but they were thoroughly enjoyable. Our purpose was to
concentrate on each other, not anyone else who was in the restaurants, which
we did.

♥ We then had some questions waiting for us to talk about after we ordered our
meals. One question came from the wonderful book, *Cherish* written by Gary
Thomas. (It's a great book that we highly recommend you read. Plus, they
have the DVD series, titled, the *Cherish Video Study*, which we purchased to
eventually share with other couples. We recommend you obtain that, as well.
It's an investment in your marriage that can't be beat!)

♥ Cherishing Each Other

♥ The question we asked each other was:

♥ "What are three specific things you cherish about your spouse? Tell them
what they are."

♥ This was a very moving time for both of us to share together. Also, we
continually had on hand a book that some dear friends of ours wrote. Tom
and Debi Walter, from Theromanticvinyard.com wrote the book *Cherishing
Us: 365 Tips for a Healthy Marriage from The Romantic Vineyard*. We love it
and also highly recommend you obtain it if you can. Within the book they have
a great compilation (arranged month-by-month) of marriage advice, date



♥ ideas, as well as questions you can ask each other. Here are 7 of the many questions we asked each other during our anniversary staycation date times:

- What do I do that makes you smile?
- What is your favorite time of the day? Why?
- What was different about your family as a kid as compared to other families?
- What do you love most about our home?
- Where is your dream vacation if money weren't an issue?
- What do you love most about our home?
- What is your favorite romantic memory we've made together?

A Great Connection

There are more questions we asked, but this is a peek into some of our discussion time. It was truly a time of great connection. During our anniversary staycation we slept in late, cooked together, ate at a few local restaurants, and more. We took walks, played games, took "naps" together, and made great memories. It was all done within 20 miles of our home. How practical can you get? And yet we didn't feel cheated by the simplicity of it at all.

Some couples would enjoy going to the park, lake, picnicking, riding bicycles together, etc. The nice thing about this concept is that you can customize it to work for your mutual likes. Just do it! Celebrate this notable time in whatever special way you can. Enjoy!

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