

# BIG CEDAR LODGE

The biggest show in Branson, MO



By Marilyn Hackett

Branson boasts budget-friendly shows, food and accommodations of all kinds. While shopping at Downtown Historic Branson and the Landing, along the Missouri River, I bought souvenirs at the Bass Pro Shop and found information on BIG CEDAR RESORT LODGE (run by Bass Pro). The Lodge is located 10 minutes south of Branson.

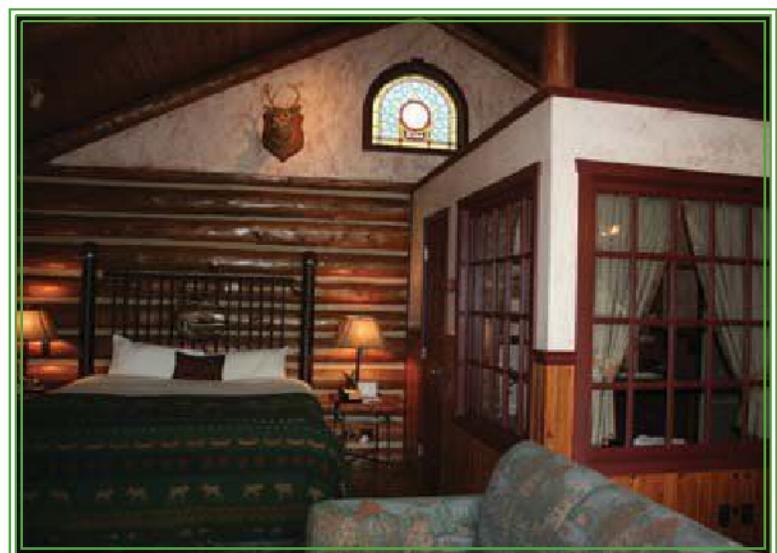
Once there, you drive narrow, tree-lined roads that entertain you with staged “scenes” in the pines. (You’ll see an old pick-up getting gas at a rusted gas pump, for instance). There are shallow pools of water to cross, laid out like welcome mats. Waterfalls cascade from above, while below is the breathtaking view of Lake Taneycomo and the historic buildings of Big Cedar. A horse-drawn carriage waits outside registration for tours of the property.

For morning smoothies and pastries I recommend that you go to the historic Truman Coffee & Café. For dinner try the Worman House. Both were homes built in the 1920s by wealthy Missouri railroad executive, Harry Worman.

For lunch, get a picnic and rent a boat at the Marina Market. Or, visit Devil’s Pool Restaurant, named after

the Osage Indians. For an after dinner drink head down to Buzzard Bar. Parents and children alike were enjoying the singing cowboy comedian there. Big Cedar is able to entertain large families and still maintain the quiet, romantic nature of the place. For children, there are 800 acres of playgrounds, video arcades (coin operated), basketball, board games, canoes, paddleboats, movies, horseback riding, fishing lessons, miniature golf, volleyball, shuffleboard, nature trails, swimming pools, and crafts. All complimentary!

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There is a room for every price range. I stayed one night in the Falls Lodge. The room had a fairytale view of the lake, rustic furniture, and an abundance of taxidermic animals. There was a raccoon climbing the armoire, two flying birds, one deer head, two pairs of antlers, and a full-size trout. It can be a little spooky, especially after a few drinks at the Buzzard Bar.

If you are bothered by stuffed critters then book a cabin. These each have a fireplace, TV, complimentary Wi-Fi, whirlpool tub, kitchen, outdoor deck with BBQ and lodge décor. They offer complimentary drinks stocked in the refrigerator and a welcome basket of cookies, popcorn, trail mix and chips.



Also under the Pro Bass emblem is Dogwood Canyon Nature Park in the Ozark Mountains. This 2,200-acre park has a hiking and biking trail that meanders along waterfalls, dramatic Indian bluffs and caves. Check out [www.dogwoodcanyon.org](http://www.dogwoodcanyon.org). A shuttle from the hotel will take you to a two-hour tram ride through the park and includes lunch. You'll see Texas longhorn, elk, bison, and white-tailed deer. We left Branson suspended somewhere between the adventures of Mark Twain, a Lewis and Clark Expedition and Tom Sawyer on a luxury island.

**BIG CEDAR LODGE:** 612 Devil's Pool Road in Ridgedale, Missouri; (417) 335-2777 or (800) BCLodge; [www.bigcedar.com](http://www.bigcedar.com)

