



Brigham and Ginger Edwards offer a variety of activities at North Fork 53 along the Nehalem River.

Find Calm on the Farm

North Fork 53 offers food, lodging and relaxation at the homestead inn

By Denise Porter

Located 10 miles from any town on windy Highway 53, the secluded location of North Fork 53 calls for quiet, reflection, a good cup of tea and perhaps some yoga. Innkeepers Brigham and Ginger Edwards invite their guests to cast off their cares and reconnect with a slower pace.

North Fork 53 is available to host private retreats, or rent one of the five rooms for a weekend getaway.

Brigham, 53, knows firsthand what it feels like to need to recharge.

“I was getting real worn down with my lifestyle,” he says, of his former life as a semi-professional skateboarder and production welder in Portland.

He longed for something, but wasn’t certain what.

“I’m a country kid,” Brigham says. “I grew up on a farm. I did 4-H. My mom was a champion barrel racer.”

Brigham says he wanted reconnection, a lifestyle that was less frantic, and someone to share that with.

Nearly four years ago, Brigham took a chance with an online dating service, where he found his perfect match. “Farmer Ginger” had an organic vegetable farm, selling through local farmers markets and running a weekly delivery route for clients near Nehalem.

“I was farming,” Ginger says, explaining why carving time for a dating life was difficult.

Farming is hard work with long hours. Ginger decided to create an online profile and discovered Brigham.

“We hit it off right away,” Ginger says. “We’re an



Brigham is growing tea plants and using his knowledge of herbalism.

online miracle story.”

They took off on a two-month trip to Asia and got married. Brigham moved to the coast and, inspired by Ginger’s love of growing foods, began studying herbalism.

In 2015, Ginger sold her business to two friends, and the Edwards bought a historically significant property across the road from her old farm.

The property owners, who were also friends, approached Brigham and Ginger with a vision for the place. They wanted to see the rundown homestead become a place for people to gather and connect.

Brigham and Ginger say the idea struck home with them.

Ginger says leaving her farm was emotionally hard, but also felt great.

“It was a perfect hand off,” she says.

The new owners had worked for her for several years.

“They’re great farmers and I’m really proud of them,” she says.

The new property would have ample garden space for Ginger—2 acres—and it would allow Brigham to put down some roots of his own. He wanted to try his hand putting his herbalism knowledge into practice. He envisioned growing tea plants on the property—something he says is new to the coast.

Ginger stands in the middle of the home’s kitchen

and marvels at the transformation.

“This was the old homestead piece of the Nehalem Valley,” she says, looking out the kitchen window at the Nehalem River.

The kitchen used to be a milking area for cattle. Ginger says the milk was put into metal cans and onto a boat. They were floated down the North Fork to the Tillamook creamery to be made into cheese.

The property used to be hundreds of acres and was slowly sold and portioned off over time. Today, Ginger focuses on the 2 acres of farmland remaining on the original North Fork 53. She grows much of the food served to the home’s guests.

The couple named the place North Fork 53 because its location is on the North Fork of the Nehalem River on Highway 53, and because of the food connotations the word fork brings to mind.

Thinking back, the couple recall that the very first hurdle was to raise capital to renovate the building. They called on friends in the community and hosted a large fundraiser dinner to share their vision. In a single evening, they generated the \$45,000 needed to renovate. Friends worked for hundreds of hours to help revive the building.

“It was six months of intensive work,” Brigham says. “We had work parties every three weeks. It felt like a modern-day barn raising.”

“It was a big remodel,” Ginger adds. “We tried to keep it eco-friendly. We used a lot of recycled pieces around the house.”

Local artist friends donated pieces for the space, too.

Ginger says the spirit of the residents of the North Tillamook Coast is what she loves most.

“This is a place where people come to work together,” she says.

Halloween 2015, the Edwards opened the doors to their first guest. Nearly three years later, Brigham says he understands what his heart was longing for: connection with people, with the earth and with himself.

“Here, we engage with people,” he says. “It’s really exciting to see them come and connect with their brain and heart.” ■

North Fork 53 is at 77282 OR-53, Nehalem, Oregon. Reservations can be made at www.northfork53.com.



A wood-fired sauna offers guest a relaxing way to reduce stress.