

Harraseeket Inn

FREEPORT, MAINE

Some innkeepers put a very high priority on access. Take Chip Gray, of the Harraseeket Inn for example. Says Chip, “We have discovered that the ADA rules are actually only the tip of the iceberg.” Indeed, not many historic inns have a pool with a lift, like the Harraseeket Inn. And to borrow a quote from Chip, that’s really just the tip of the iceberg.

Located on Main Street in downtown Freeport, the Harraseeket Inn encompasses two period buildings that were built in 1795 and 1850, plus a new wing that was added in 1989. This 84-room inn features accessible parking near the back entrance, elevator access to all floors, and a barrier-free pathway through the perennial garden.

The Gray family first opened the Harraseeket Inn as a five-room B&B in 1982. Throughout the years they have made many additions and renovations, but they have always been very mindful of access issues. Chip’s mother, Nancy Gray, remembers the early days. “Access issues were very confusing back then,” she recalls. “Sometimes the federal and the state access regulations were different. I ended up doing a lot of research on the subject and I even served on a statewide access committee. When I was on that committee I met a lot of people with different disabilities, and I began to really understand the rationale behind the access rules. In the end, we tried to incorporate as many access features as we could into our historic property.”

Today the Harraseeket Inn includes two accessible guest rooms. Room 107 is located on the ground floor and features a level entry, wide doorways, good pathway access, lever handles, and a lowered closet rod. The bathroom has a tub/shower combination with a hand-held shower, a roll-under sink, and grab bars in the toilet and shower areas. There is a full five-foot turning radius in the spacious bathroom, and a shower chair is available upon request. Room 204 has these same access features, except it has a roll-in shower in place of the tub/shower combination.



Room 107 at the Harraseeket Inn is located on the ground floor and features good pathway access.

There is good access throughout the public areas of the inn, including the two on-site restaurants. And this is one of the few inns where I have ever seen *New Mobility* and other disability publications in the magazine rack.

Nightly room rates in the high season (July 1 to October 31) range from \$195 to \$275. The bargain season is from mid-May to July 1, when the weather is still quite mild, and the room rates are \$160 to \$235 per night.

You just can't beat the location of the Harraseeket Inn, as it's only a few blocks away from the hundreds of outlets that line Freeport's main drag. Access is fairly good in downtown Freeport. This pedestrian-friendly town has wide sidewalks and plentiful curb-cuts. About 75% of the shops have level entries and access to at least one floor. Many of the shops are housed in historic buildings and have a few steps or narrow doorways, but there are still plenty of accessible shopping choices in the downtown area.

If you'd prefer to enjoy the great outdoors, head on over to Wolf Neck Woods State Park, where you'll find the accessible White Pines Trail. This hard-packed dirt trail winds through the forest and alongside the Harraseeket River. It is four feet wide, level, and very easy to navigate in a wheel-

chair or scooter. Says Chip, “It’s one of the few accessible trails in the area that actually takes you right down to the water.”

If you visit during the late spring, be on the lookout for lady’s slippers in the shady areas on the forest floor. These pink orchids are a protected species in Maine, and they bloom from late May to early July. And no matter when you go, don’t forget the insect repellent!

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