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A Walk On The Nude Side

Why I Love Nudism

By Marilyn Mills

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In 1976, I was an athletic eighth grader living in rural Michigan. I had a class in Michigan history, and it was there that I had my first hard lesson—in sexual harassment. Would you believe it came from my forty-something teacher?

One day, I was leaving class, and he was sitting at his desk watching us file out. Out of the blue, I heard my name. "Mills...you could churn a pound of butter with those hips." I stopped and turned around. I saw him and my classmates looking at me. No one said a word. I slowly turned around and kept on walking. This moment has been burned in my memory. I wish I'd had the courage to say something, but there were no words to express my humiliation and powerlessness. In the outside world, there have always been rude men offering unwanted comments, unfortunately.

The world of nudism offers a great vibe of fun and friendship. What happened in eighth grade has NEVER happened to me at a nudist resort. I wish all women who wonder what it would be like would come out and see what a unique atmosphere it is. I have gone as a single woman many times, as well as part of a couple. Every time, I have felt welcomed. No one stares at me, makes comments, or otherwise makes me feel uncomfortable. Many resorts have security watching out to make sure everyone is respectful. People have been asked to leave the grounds for inappropriate behavior, but this is rare. Nudists understand respect.

I started going to Harbin Hot Springs ten years ago and learned about Lupin Lodge and Laguna del Sol through word of mouth. In the past seven years, I've visited clothing optional resorts in Florida, Texas, Arizona, and California. Nudism has opened up a new world of friendships, sports, and body acceptance for me.

There are some myths surrounding this lifestyle. As nudists, we know they are not true!

1. MYTH: Everyone looks good without their clothes on at nudist resorts.

Not true! You will see the same people here as you do in the grocery store. We represent a cross section of society, which means all sizes. Sadly, a lot of women are hyper-critical of themselves, and don't feel they look good enough to be here nude. Once women visit, they realize everyone fits in.

2. MYTH: If you like nudism, you are a little "out there" in some way.

I can only speak for myself and my observations. All of the nudists I know are just like my non-nudist friends. I see no difference.

3. MYTH: I won't fit in at those places.

This was my biggest fear the first time I went. I thought everyone would be cliquish and I would be hanging

out alone. I was invited to a potluck on my first day out, although I knew only one person. At every club I have visited, I have met nice people and made friends.

Here are my top ten reasons for loving nudism.

10. De-stressor. Everything is laid back here. You can't help but relax. You also can get an awesome tan—with no lines.

9. Simple pleasures. You get to feel the wind touch your skin as it blows through your hair. You get to swim nude, feeling unencumbered, au natural. Your body feels free, because it is.

8. You get to be you. People do not judge you for your possessions, your occupation, or your body type. Nudists observe your character, kindness, and how much fun you are.

7. Bargain. Compared to most athletic or private clubs, the cost of membership at nudist resorts is very reasonable. I know of two clubs in California where it is under \$350 per year for a single woman. You could go every day if you so desired.

6. Location. you will almost always be in a beautiful, peaceful location. Nudist resorts are often off the beaten path, and in the midst of nature.

5. Inclusive. As a female, you will have the opportunity to join in conversations, sports, games, and more. Or you can read a book and relax. People are very friendly, but not pushy.

4. Community. Nudists make good friends and neighbors. We have potlucks, celebrate birthdays, loan out tools, and say hello to everyone. This feels like a family, and if you are lacking one, you can have one here.

3. Activities. Are you an athlete or open to trying new things? There is a variety of activities: tennis, volleyball, karaoke, hiking, water volleyball, swimming, shuffleboard, table tennis, pool, hot tubbing and more. There is something for everyone, even if you are non-athletic. Most clubs have a gym also.

2. Positive self-concept. Nudists will like you for who you are. Do you? We are famous for being non-judgmental regarding the sizes and shapes of others. This is a glaring difference between nudists and the outside world. You will experience acceptance the way it should be everywhere but, frankly, isn't.

1. Friends. Good friends and fond memories are what we will remember most when our time has passed. I have met the most wonderful people through nudism, including my boyfriend. They are the ones who make me laugh and help me enjoy life. I feel blessed to have a lot of great people in my life, many of whom are nudists. Many women fear that men will gawk and be a little "too friendly." The truth is, men are respectful and people often go out of their way to be helpful. If by chance someone is not acting appropriately, it will be handled swiftly by management.

I hope someday nudism is much more mainstream and our membership grows exponentially in the next few years. We need to recruit more people to come join us! We all need to tell our female friends that nudism is a great place for women to have fun. It is ironic that we as women get more harassment from men with our clothes on than with them off! I hope that women who visit will enjoy their experience as much as I have.

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