Did you just fall into the lap of luxury? It might’ve seemed so. The bed was much nicer than yours, with a comforter like cotton candy. The carpet was sink-to-your-ankles thick. The bathroom, wow, and the view outside the window almost made you speechless. A room like that can make a vacation better. In “The Barbizon” by Paula Bren, it could make a career.

When construction began on Manhattan’s Barbizon Hotel for Women in 1927, America was flush with possibility. World War I was over, prosperity was attainable, and the Nineteenth Amendment had recently been ratified, which had “poked holes in earlier arguments for why” young, single women would eschew careers. And so the Barbizon was built specifically as a residential hotel for proper young (white) ladies to live while they spread their wings. No men allowed, basic rooms were $12 per week, maid service and amenities included.

Being affiliated with the Barbizon from its beginning, the Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School housed its students at the hotel but once the Depression ended, the hotel’s average boarder had changed. “Katie Gibbs” students still lived in the Barbizon – with a housemother and a strict curfew – but other mid-to-late-1930s guests were just as likely to be models for a growing ad industry. Some ten years later, advertising, clothing, beauty, Mademoiselle magazine, and the Barbizon all became linked through an annual Guest Editor contest, which brought fourteen (later, twenty) of the country’s most intelligent young women to New York each summer, and housed them in the iconic hotel. This, and the introductions to influential artists, writers, editors, and actors spurned youth and changed lives until the program ended in 1979.

Despite the glamour that had lived at the Barbizon, though, not everything glittered. Black women weren’t allowed at the hotel until 1956. Quietly, the Barbizon was the site of several suicides. A growing Women’s Movement began to make the hotel seem outdated. And yet, when the building sold, its longest residents refused to leave...

But you say that you love to read biographies. Generals, actors, scientists, politicians, add this to your list. “The Barbizon” is a biography of a hotel.

And yet, a building is nothing but materials, so author Paulina Bren weaves concrete and glass with confidence and glitz, and Carols and Gaels. She opens her tale in a just-right manner, with money and a deliciously outrageous woman, proceeding then through decades of American fads and ideals, stretching from Dust Bowl to disco.

Admittedly, that pop-culture is fun, but the women who lived at the Barbizon and their tales are the raison d’être here and so, with a dash of drama and a bit of period gossip, Bren shows readers the world through the tender eyes of thirty years’ worth of twenty-somethings. For anyone who recalls life at that age, such recollections are sweetly nostalgic, made better by frustrating, funny, heartbreaking updates that truly set this book apart. They make it irresistibly readable, too. They’ll make you want to lap “The Barbizon” up.

This week’s book review
‘The Barbizon: The Hotel That Set Women Free’ by Paula Bren

Surf & Turf
4 oz Cod or Shrimp & Boz New York Strip, Baked Potato, Salad, Veggies & A Roll
$18.95

Come Try Our Fish For Lent Cod, Tilapia, Shrimp

Dine-in at 50% Capacity

TONY’S DINER
734 East Main in Trinidad, Colorado

BUY AN AD OR SO HELP ME I’LL USE THIS BANANA!
It really isn’t a threat, it’s a banana. But if you need an ad, call us!

This week’s book review
‘The Barbizon: The Hotel That Set Women Free’ by Paula Bren

2021, Simon & Schuster $27.00 / $36.00 Canada 336 pages

Welcome to the Sunset Bar & Grill, when you can expect the most exquisite five-star gourmet cuisine in Southern Colorado at an intimate and elegant setting at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Our staff is classically trained and educated from a premier culinary institute. His cooking style traces its roots from classic French and Italian traditions balancing European traditional cooking techniques with Asian minimalist and Indian and American influences. The results are unique and highly personalized cuisine that excites the palate and overwows the soul.

HAPPY HOUR
TUESDAY - FRIDAY
3PM - 6PM
$2 Off All Appetizers
$1 Off All Drafts
$5 Bloody Marys & Margaritas

900 W Adams St, Trinidad • www.sunsetbargrille.com

Wednesday
Chile Rellenos served with beans and rice
$9.99

Thursday
Meatloaf Dinner $9.95

Friday
Fried Fish Sandwich $9.99

Saturday
Perch Chop Breakfast $9.50

Easter Sunday
Ham Dinner $11.25

We will be OPEN
forEaster!

Highway 12, 1118 Robinson Trinidad, CO 81082 • 719-846-0144

Chacona Radio
Subscribe to your local newspaper

Broken character: Chronicle News

By all means. We’re happy to serve breakfast all day long! Thanks for choosing “The Barbizon.” Breakfast will be available Wednesday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. and Sunday from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. We appreciate your business and look forward to your return.

Chronic News

This week’s book review
‘The Barbizon: The Hotel That Set Women Free’ by Paula Bren

2021, Simon & Schuster $27.00 / $36.00 Canada 336 pages

Welcome to the Sunset Bar & Grill, when you can expect the most exquisite five-star gourmet cuisine in Southern Colorado at an intimate and elegant setting at the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Our staff is classically trained and educated from a premier culinary institute. His cooking style traces its roots from classic French and Italian traditions balancing European traditional cooking techniques with Asian minimalist and Indian and American influences. The results are unique and highly personalized cuisine that excites the palate and overwows the soul.

HAPPY HOUR
TUESDAY - FRIDAY
3PM - 6PM
$2 Off All Appetizers
$1 Off All Drafts
$5 Bloody Marys & Margaritas

900 W Adams St, Trinidad • www.sunsetbargrille.com

Wednesday
Chile Rellenos served with beans and rice
$9.99

Thursday
Meatloaf Dinner $9.95

Friday
Fried Fish Sandwich $9.99

Saturday
Perch Chop Breakfast $9.50

Easter Sunday
Ham Dinner $11.25

We will be OPEN
forEaster!

Highway 12, 1118 Robinson Trinidad, CO 81082 • 719-846-0144

Chacona Radio
Subscribe to your local newspaper

Buy an AD or so help me I’ll use this banana!
It really isn’t a threat, it’s a banana. But if you need an ad, call us!