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# Strange RV Encounters: Two-Story Outhouse in San Juan Bautista, CA <sup>12</sup>



The Weird, the Wacky, and the Wonderful



Juliana Mathews, Yahoo Contributor Network  
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I'm sure I've heard a joke about one somewhere before, but there it was -- a real two-story outhouse. *A two-story outhouse? Who thinks of these things?*

Apparently, hotels owners in the mid-1800s do.

It began at the Plaza Hotel, built in 1856, in [San Juan Bautista, California](#). As was the practice of any proper and self-respecting hotel, single men were housed on the bottom floor, while families and single women were housed on the second floor. Also on the bottom floor were the saloon and the only privy.

When needing to use the outhouse, the prim and proper ladies were required to pass the saloon, thereby enduring the unwanted attentions and catcalls of the rowdy male patrons.

This did not suit those ladies of delicate sensibility. They were not interested in the calls of the drunken saloon patrons; the only call they cared to answer was that of Mother Nature.

Deciding it was in everyone's best interest to add an outhouse for the ladies, the Plaza Hotel built a walkway from the second floor sleeping rooms to a new outhouse built over the existing one.

Looking at the first floor, you see two closet-sized rooms (the privies), each with a bench with a 12-inch hole in the center. Between the two privies, a vertical shaft runs up to the second story privy. Because it's no longer structurally sound, I wasn't allowed to walk up there, but I can guess the one privy on the second story makes use of the shaft running between the two on the first floor.

You say you don't really have the stomach for viewing a two-story outhouse? There's much more to see in San Juan Bautista: the [Old Mission](#) established in 1797, a museum depicting life up to the late 1800s, and the San Juan Jail built in 1870, probably for those rowdy saloon patrons.

To see more photos, [follow more of my weird, wacky, and wonderful RV adventures on Flickr.](#)

**My next stop:** [Strange RV Encounters: Cement Ships Do Float.](#)

**Read how it all began:** [Strange RV Encounters: An Introduction.](#)

Published by [Juliana Mathews](#)

*In the summer of 2011, Juliana bought an RV, gave up most of her possessions and began traveling around the country with her cat, seeing all the weird, wacky and wonderful roadside attractions. She writes... [View profile](#)*

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