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Subject:

Saturday, September 18, 2010 10:35 PM
Postcard

We are sitting in our room at the Desert Rose in Bluff, Utah. Bluff is a town of, oh, 65 permanent residents and 125 temporary tourists a couple of miles from the Navajo reservation. We've been here 4 or 5 times in the last 10 years and the biggest excitement we ever saw was a broken down tour bus at Twin Rocks Café. But the Navajos are in town tonight for their Utah Ahoohai Days. Ahoohai can translate to rodeo, hen, rooster or chicken lice. We're going with rodeo. The air is filled with pungent smoke, there is an incessant drum beat that penetrates the room walls. When we open the door we can see the lights of a tilt-a-whirl. Somehow that's comforting.

The day started with a trip to Sunset Crater. This national monument celebrates a recently (geologically speaking) active volcano in Northwest Arizona. It has a trail around its bottom. You cannot see inside the crater. You may not climb up to the top of the crater. Your experience has nothing to do with a crater nor – unless you visit late in the day – a sunset. Here are a few non-crater, non-sunset pictures.







Today our vacation is in ruins. And we are glad. Adjacent to Sunset Crater is Wupatki Pueblo, a genuine, bona fide anasazi ruin with an open trail. Not a roasting pit in sight.





We ate lunch in the park and had a stare down with a raven. He flew away.



Bluff has been notable for its awful food. Two years ago we tried both the local eateries with equally disastrous results – we picked through a Navajo taco at Twin Rocks looking for the green lettuce, and next night we got an inedible steak at the Cottonwood. Since then, the Cottonwood has gone out of business and the San Juan River Restaurant has opened. We had mushroom ravioli with side salads. Bellissimo!

D&S

