If you were an employee of some big company, and they invited you to spend a few days and nights at the company headquarters, and that was presented as a big benefit, would you think you were being taken for some kind of corporate-camaraderie ride?

Not if you were an employee of the Jack Daniel Distillery, and you were beckoned to come and stay on the fabled distillery grounds in custom Airstream trailers, you wouldn’t.

By Tom Bentley

The cozy sleeping area of one of Camp Jack’s Airstreams, with its on-brand black-and-white bedding and accessories.
The distillery has arranged and outfitted 13 Airstreams on the property in Lynchburg, Tennessee—comprising “Camp Jack”—where they host employees from all over the world, plus journalists, musicians, consumer sweepstakes winners, and hundreds of bartenders from across the U.S. Besides offering the literal camping experience of the Airstreams, Camp Jack is also an instructional program in all things Jack Daniel’s—a chance to absorb the deep history and company commitment to tradition and quality. And maybe a shot or two.

“Usually, when we bring groups to Tennessee, the bulk of our time is spent in Nashville and the visit to Lynchburg can feel like a ‘stop along the way’ instead of the main attraction,” says Greg Luehrs, Jack Daniel’s Partnership and Sponsorship Director. “Part of the reason for this is that there are few lodging options in or near Lynchburg, so we solved that problem by creating our own style of glamping.”
That kind of glamping goes down as easy as a pull of Tennessee Whiskey, since the Airstreams include eight 27-foot Flying Clouds, five 22-foot Sports and one 22-foot Bambi, many of them gussied up with Jack Daniel’s themed decor, courtesy of the design eye of Nashville’s Kate Richard. “Working on Camp Jack was such a fun project for me!” says Richard. “I have always been enamored by life on the road and the iconic nature of the Airstream. Finding unique, on-brand decor to create a seamless experience was such a delight,” she says.

The distillery sourced the trailers directly from Airstream, working with Chief Marketing Officer Mollie Hansen and just-retired, 56-year Airstream-veteran, Larry Metz. The rigs were purchased fully furnished, with no structural changes, some of them enhanced by Richard’s crafty touch. “Their one directive was the decor be on-brand with their colors of black and white,” says Richard. “I really wanted to play up the experience as well, which is why I added fun books, games, and entertaining pieces.”

Lynchburg is in Moore County, by law a dry county, but the distillery has a business exemption that allows guests to taste the wonders of whiskey. Those wonders include the familiar Old No. 7, Tennessee Rye, and Sinatra Select, a homage to the Chairman of the Board, who was buried with a bottle of Jack. “One of our earliest brand ambassadors, Sammy Gulley, once said, ‘Give me a drinker in the Hollow for a day, and I’ll make him a Jack Daniel’s drinker for life,’” says Greg Luehrs.

The Airstreams were an easy choice … they are American made and from a small town, similar to Jack Daniel’s and Lynchburg.
The Hollow property is famed for its cave spring, the limestone-filtered water source that is the heart of every drop of the distillery’s whiskey since its inception in 1866. Airstream hasn’t been around quite that long, but there are many generations of the trailers, paralleling the distillery’s sense of American know-how and heritage.

The distillery Airstreams will continue to be used for the entertainment of diverse groups, bartenders, and employees. Luehrs says the Airstreams were an easy choice to house the distillery explorers: “They are American made and from a small town, similar to Jack Daniel’s and Lynchburg.”

They didn’t have any Airstreams on the property when I visited Jack Daniel’s 30 years ago, but they seem right at home now. I’ll be sitting by the phone, waiting for my invitation to come on by, sample some of that single barrel, and see the Tennessee sky out of the window of my Airstream.

Looking for answers, but have no clues? See page 57.