

# INDIAN HOT SPRINGS RANCH

OLD TIME RANCH ON THE RIO GRANDE

**Location:** Between Ft. Davis and El Paso, just a short distance away from the Rio Grande, you will find the **Indian Hot Springs Ranch**. This property is located in a small valley formed by the Rio Grande River's cut through the Quitman Mountains, almost surrounded by them. The Ranch is rich in history and easily accessible. Something you have to see to believe. Call to schedule a showing today!

**Vegetation:** Plenty of salt cedar, mesquite and cacti, along with many varieties of grasses and shrubs.

**Water:** There are seven springs in the area, giving **Indian Hot Springs Ranch** its namesake. The springs range from between 117°F and 81°F. Two wells supply fresh water to the ranch along with Rio Grande water rights for two large duck ponds.

**Improvements:** Several improvements have been made to this property and more are planned. Call for details.

**Minerals:** No minerals available

**Game:** Native game in this area includes aoudad, javelina, white tail deer, mule deer, bobwhite quail, wild cat, and doves. There is also a wide variety of migratory birds that use the ranch ponds each year as they traverse the West Texas flyway. This ranch has been slightly hunted, though well maintained. The ranch is implementing the Texas -Managed Lands Deer Permit Program.

**Electricity:** Electricity to the ranch is provided by Rio Grande Electric Coop and Dell Telephone currently serves the ranch with fiber optic buried cable for internet and phone.

**Price:** \$ 5.1 Million

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6400 ACRES  
HUDSPETH COUNTY, TEXAS

**Indian Hot Springs Ranch** is located in a small valley formed by the Rio Grande River's cut through Quitman Mountains in Hudspeth County, Texas. On the United States side of the river, it is just across from the small village of Ojo Caliente, Chihuahua, Mexico, and is almost completely surrounded by mountains.

For serene restful beauty nestled in an invigorating, smog-free valley of the Rio Grand, remote from the hustle and bustle of big-city pollution, is **Indian Hot Springs Ranch**. At the hotel spa, you will find picturesque landscapes, intriguing historical sites, and naturally heated waters whose therapeutic values were well known to Indian tribes of long ago. Indian warriors came here to recover from their battles and rest up from their forays across both sides of the border.

Mountains of Mexico rise behind the **Indian Hot Springs Hotel**, a big rambling masonry hotel built in the 1920's and partially restored. It provides a comfortable home base while a new hacienda lodge is being constructed nearby. **Indian Hot Springs Ranch** affords two adjacent duplex apartments as well as a private cantina (saloon) for the enjoyment of invited guests.

The main hotel is within a stone's throw of the Rio Grande. A swinging bridge used to connect **Indian Hot Springs Ranch** to the small quaint Mexican village of Ojo Caliente. When the first white explorers came to this valley of the Rio Grande where **Indian Hot Springs** nestles in quiet splendor at over 3,000 feet elevation, they found stone troughs, hand dug by prehistoric people. The stone troughs, located around the warm springs provided enjoyment in the therapeutic waters. Later, the Indians made use of the natural stone "bathtubs" for bathing in the waters, and considered them to be enchanted liquids capable of miraculous healings. Many visitors over the years have written testaments to the hot springs' soothing and calming effects while they were guests at the ranch. Come and experience the rich history of Old West Texas.

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## *HISTORICAL INFORMATION*

### Buffalo Soldiers, A brief history:

“The natural hot springs in this area have been used by people seeking their curative powers for centuries. Early Spanish exploration parties evidently passed through this vicinity, and the springs along the Rio Grande were mentioned in their reports. The reports of the expedition of Juan Dominquez de Mendoza which surveyed the area in 1683-1684 included references to hot springs in the area. The springs were used for generations by Indian tribes, and are known locally as **Indian Hot Springs**. Efforts to capitalize on the reputed curative powers of the spring have led to several commercial ventures here in the 20th century, including the operation of a hospital by a team of El Paso doctors and the promotion of the area as a health spa and resort hotel.

In this immediate vicinity are eight separate springs, seven of them with hot or warm water and one with cold. Soda Spring is the cold spring which is the farthest north of the springs. Beauty or Horse Trough Spring is north of the hotel building near the entrance to the complex. Chief Spring, the largest of the eight springs, is now pumped into the bathhouse and Squaw Spring was used by Indian women in the past. Dynamite Spring was dynamited in the 1970's in an attempt to increase the flow and Stump Spring is used in the wading pools. Mexican Spring was used for many years by people crossing the nearby Rio Grande and Masons or Fishing Hole Spring is the farthest east of the eight springs. In addition to the presence of the springs, this site was popular with nomadic Indian tribes of the region because of the shallow crossing of the Rio Grande. This site was especially popular with the Mescalero Apaches in the 19th century.

Following the Civil War, the U.S. Army established regiments of Black soldiers many of them former slaves. The 9<sup>th</sup> and the 10th US Cavalry units, and the 24<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> units were comprised of Black troops commanded by white officers. For the next three decades they were posted on the western frontier to protect the growing settlements from Indian attacks and to perform scouting and surveying missions. Led by Col. Benjamin H. Grierson and posted at Ft. Concho in Tom Green County, the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry conducted numerous scouting and mapping expeditions in western Texas. In the 1870's the Buffalo Soldiers, as they were called by their Indian adversaries who thought their curly hair resembled that of the buffalo, became instrumental in the war against the Mescalero Apaches led by Chief Victorio.

Resisting efforts to confine them to reservations in New Mexico and Arizona, the Mescalero Apaches conducted a series of raids on settlements in New Mexico, West Texas and northern Mexico. Attached to the sub-post at Fort Davis, the soldiers of the 10th Cavalry were sent out to guard water holes and river crossings along the Rio Grande frequented by the Apaches. Companies B and K were assigned to patrol and scout in the vicinity of **Indian Hot Springs**. Although the U S. Army was victorious in battles with the Indians at Quitman Canyon and Rattlesnake Springs in July and August 1880, Victorio himself was killed in a final decisive battle with the Mexican army at Tres Castillos on October 10. A remaining band of Apaches led by Chief Nana continued to raid in this area.

Knowing that the Indians would use their favorite river crossing at this point on the Rio Grande Companies B and K of the 10th Cavalry positioned themselves on a ridge facing the springs and built a stone redoubt about one mile from Soda Springs. Referred to as "Pickett Ridge" in later reports, it would be the site of one of the last Indian battles in that part of Texas. Nana and his band of apaches attacked at dawn on October 28, 1880. Accounts vary as to the number of men on the 10th Cavalry who were present, and also as to the number killed. The best information seems to indicate, however, that five cavalrymen were killed on the ridge, and two more, who were reported missing the following day were found dead weeks later and were presumed to have been killed by the Indians during the attack. The five reported killed were Carter Burns and George Mills, both of Company B; and William Backus, Jeremiah Griffin, and James Stanley, all of Company K. The two reported missing were Scott Graves and Thomas U. Roush (Roach), both of Company K. Burns, Mills, Backus, Griffin and Stanley were reported buried by their comrades on the ridge where they died. Weeks later, when two bodies believed to be those of graves and Roush (Roach) were located; they were thought to have been brought here and interred with the other five on the Pickett Ridge. Although no conclusive evidence exists to prove the graves at **Indian Hot Springs** are those of the Buffalo Soldiers, local oral tradition has maintained the interments here are those of the 10th Cavalry troopers killed by Indians. Sometime in the 1960's when the **Indian Hot Springs** complex was owned by Dallas businessman H L Hunt he reportedly had the seven graves moved to a site next to Soda Springs and covered with cement.”

**By Cynthia J. Beeman. Historian  
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