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Barnsley Gardens Resort: Georgia's Hidden Treasure

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Barnsley Gardens Resort: Georgia's Hidden Treasure

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An evening view of the golf course.

Hidden away just an hour north of Atlanta, Georgia and south of Chattanooga, Tennessee in the scenic foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains is the undiscovered paradise that is [Barnsley Gardens Resort](#). As you drive through this quiet and rural area on your way to the resort, it's hard to believe there is a world class, luxury resort which is included in *Southern Living Magazine's* Hotel Collection located around the next turn. Until you arrive at the perfectly landscaped grounds and meticulously groomed driveway with a firmly closed gate and a pleasant guard manning it who politely asks for your name and checks your reservation before he ever opens the gate.



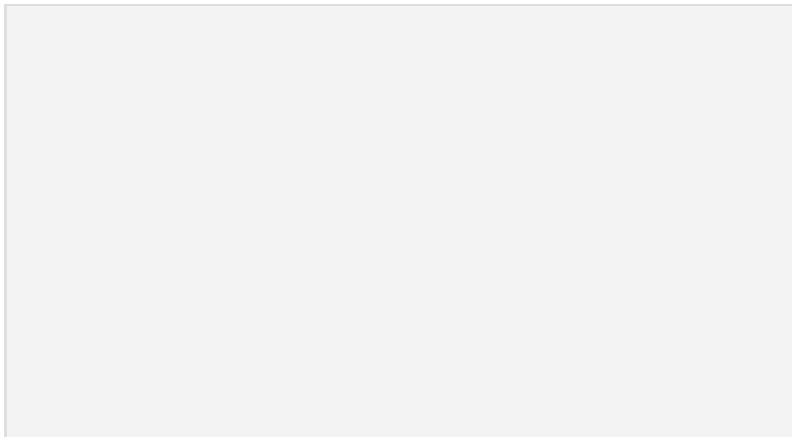
Some of the amazing landscaping.

After driving through the gate, you will traverse the road back to the registration area, marveling at the emerald green golf course, incredibly lush landscaping of beautiful maintained shrubs, trees and lush flowers that are everywhere on the 1,300 acres of this unique and lovely property.



The 18-hole golf course.

Barnsley Gardens Resort is not your typical resort, but one with a unique and fascinating history. The original Manor House, called Woodlands, was built by Godfrey Barnsley for his beloved wife, Julia, on land that was once inhabited by the Cherokee Indians. The ruins of Woodlands, which were severely damaged by a tornado and the Civil War, still stand on the property, carefully restored and maintained as a unique location for weddings and other events.





The Manor House.



Terrace at the Manor House — perfect for events.

Godfrey Barnsley came to America from England in 1824 and became one of the most affluent men in the

South through his shipping business and the cotton trade. In 1828 he married the beautiful Julia Scarborough from Savannah, and began construction on an Italianate villa and elaborate gardens for his beloved wife, inspired by the work of Andrew Jackson Downing, a landscape designer of Italianate and Gothic revival architecture in the 1840s. Unfortunately, Julia never saw the estate, as she passed away after an illness.



The Rice House Restaurant.

Because of his six children and for future generations of his family, Barnsley determined to finish the estate, and in 1848, the estate and gardens of Woodlands were finally completed. The modern, luxurious Manor House featured modern plumbing, marble from Italy and France, and beautiful furnishings from all over the world.

But the Manor House of Woodlands, directly in the path of Sherman's army, was severely damaged during the Civil War; in 1906 a tornado tore away the roof.

Although descendants of Barnsley occupied the estate until 1942, the gardens and manor house were in disrepair and it was finally auctioned. In 1988 Prince Hubertus Fugger of Bavaria purchased the estate, expanding the gardens and restoring the Manor House ruins.

Today, Barnsley Gardens Resort is a different sort of

resort destination, with charming, luxurious cottages, world class amenities and three restaurants, an 18-hole championship golf course and a salt water pool along with a full service spa.



The inviting salt water pool.

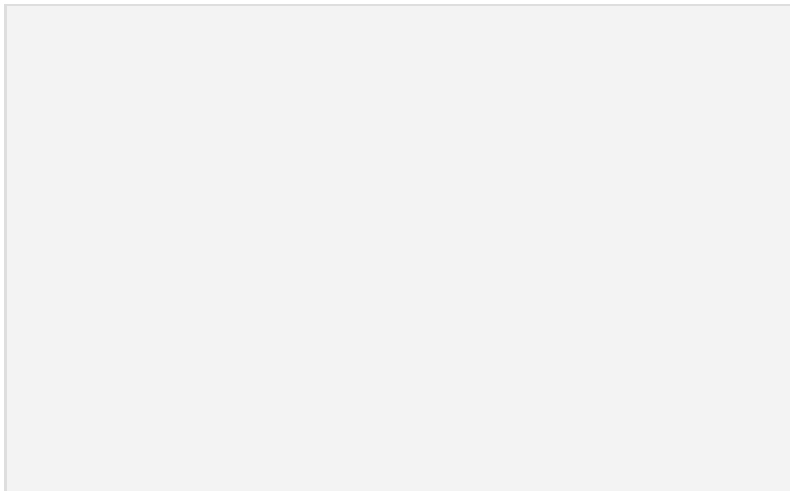
You can choose from an incredible array of recreational activities, including horseback riding, skeet shooting, tennis, croquet, volleyball, badminton, hiking, paintball, biking, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, garden tours and even more. You will not ever be bored here.

Designed to resemble an English village, 36 cottages are scattered all over the grounds, from private one bedroom cottages to much larger, sprawling houses which can accommodate large families or groups of friends. There are 90 guest rooms and suites to choose from and each cottage is unique, with perfectly and uniquely designed landscaping. Park your car by your cottage and you won't need it again, as you can just pick up the phone and call for a golf cart to transport you everywhere. Every time I called, the drivers were considerate and friendly and arrived in fewer than five minutes.



One of the resort's many lovely cottages.

A girlfriend and I visited Barnsley Gardens Resort in the summer, and it was an ideal time for a stay as all the gorgeous flowers on the estate were in full bloom. We stayed in one of the charming four-bedroom cottages, each of which is uniquely designed. We had a lovely room with a huge soaking tub in the bathroom, and a common living room area which was furnished with comfortable furniture and a desk area, where you could use the free and very fast Wi-Fi connection. The cottage had a large front porch, which was well furnished and had a fabulous swing. Some of the larger cottages also have a kitchen, which would be handy for whipping up a meal or even just storing snacks and drinks in the fridge, especially if you were staying for several days.





A cottage bedroom.



Fabulous soaking tub.



Perfect place to relax!

Be sure to visit the spa, which is located in a beautiful building beside the salt water pool. The spa has an extensive menu, including everything from a hot stone massage to a radiant skin treatment to a relaxing spa pedicure. All guests enjoy full spa privileges, with access to the whirlpools, steam room and sauna. There are also lower prices available during the week, so be sure to check those out. Our massage and pedicure were perfect and relaxing; then we relaxed even more by the salt water pool. Feeling lazy and enjoying the sun and the pool, we realized we could order from the Woodlands Grill menu and have it delivered poolside, so that's exactly what we did!



Among the best of the many wonderful experiences we had at the Barnsley Gardens Resort were the meals, each better than the last. Lunch at the Woodlands Grill is the perfect place for a casual, unpretentious meal, dressed. We also enjoyed the wonderful buffet breakfast there each morning; it offered a large selection of breads, fruits, cereals and a fresh omelet and waffle bar and was the perfect start to each day.

Dinner one night at the Woodlands Grill was equally lovely, as candles had been lit and the restaurant made just a little fancier, so dress-up clothes were perfect. We ate on the screened-in porch overlooking the golf course and had the most delicious and perfect appetizer I have ever tasted – fried lobster! One of our sweet golf cart drivers had recommended that we try this dish and he was absolutely right. My grilled shrimp salad was prepared to perfection; carrot cake topped off the dinner.



This is definitely the place to try fried lobster.



Yummy grilled shrimp salad



The perfect dessert

The food at the Woodlands Grill was lovely, but it was dinner at the Rice House Restaurant one night that really overwhelmed us; it is truly a gourmand's delight. In one of the original buildings with stone fireplaces and a lovely sun porch, the Rice House is an elegant place for an evening meal. The menu features the finest cuts of beef, wild game, beautifully prepared seafood dishes and produce from the garden on the resort grounds. We feasted on soup, scallops, steak and the most wonderful, rich, and beautifully presented chocolate dessert.



The perfect starter



Beautifully prepared scallops



Perfectly prepared steak.

We were lucky enough to have a personal tour of the property and enjoyed seeing the lovely gardens everywhere, the fascinating ruined mansion house which is used for all kinds of events, and the ponds, meadows and trails that are scattered all over the extensive property.



Sunset at Barnsley Gardens Resort

Barnsley Gardens Resort is truly one of the most unique and beautiful resorts I have ever visited. Don't let this amazing location hidden away in Georgia escape your notice.



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