



Fontanel Mansion boasts huge crystal chandeliers, five fireplaces, two kitchens and more than 20 rooms, including the Great Room, and a gaming area.

PHOTOS BY TREVOR MAYO

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Best Kept Secret FONTANEL MANSION WHITES CREEK, TENNESSEE

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You'll find plenty of tourist attractions around Nashville, the Country Music Capital of the World, but none are quite as fascinating as the Fontanel Mansion, formerly owned by country music legend Barbara Mandrell.

Music stars owning luxurious mansions is common, but the Fontanel is pretty un-common: It's a 27,000-square-foot, beautifully furnished log cabin complete with an indoor pool, game room with a jukebox, shooting range and 13 bathrooms. In 1987, Mandrell and her husband Ken Dudley had Fontanel, made of larch logs from Montana on more than 100 acres,

built right outside Nashville. The couple designed the mansion to be both a comfortable and unique place for them and their three children, who are represented throughout the property by carved wooden bear cubs. Although a log house, Mandrell was determined to furnish it with a touch of elegance with gold trimmed mirrors and crystal chandeliers, providing a rather startling contrast to the log walls.

In 2002, the family decided to downsize and move to a smaller home, so Fontanel became the tourist attraction it is today. Located just a few minutes from downtown Nashville in Whites Creek, it's easy to spend an entire day at Fontanel since there is now an inn, an amphitheater with a variety of musical shows, a cafe that serves Italian food, zip line tours, hiking trails and lots of other family activities.

— Jan Ross