

Our State[®]

DOWN
HOME
IN

NORTH CAROLINA

JANUARY 2010

The Year of the North Carolina

VACATION



\$4.95



www.ourstate.com

12 Great Trips from Asheville to Hatteras



Although Belted Galloway cattle are prized worldwide for their marbled beef, their role at Fearington is strictly ornamental.

march



Urban Escape

Designed to exceed expectations, Fearington Village's five-star accommodations set amid a country aesthetic promise a rejuvenating retreat only minutes from the Triangle's metropolitan hub-bub.

Written by Mark Derewicz • Photography by Stacey Haines

I STUMBLE TO THE KITCHEN FOR breakfast. We're out of tea and milk and just about everything else, and my son is getting a little bit antsy. "Let's go to Fearington," my wife says.

My two-year-old's eyes widen as he shouts, "Fearington cows!"

He loves Fearington Village because of the black-and-white Belted Galloways that graze along the main entrance. But my wife and I love Fearington because it's a unique getaway — a European-style hamlet set among forests and farms — right around the corner from our house in Chatham County. Beyond the metal silo, old milking barn, and fenced-in pastures, several specialty shops, a bookstore, restaurants, walking trails, and finely manicured gardens spread out under large oak trees.

We say hello to the belted cows and head to the Belted Goat cafe for some flaky scones and black tea. Then we make our way around a pair of lakes in Fearington's 17-acre Camden Park before resting beneath a willow tree. Our

leisurely day has begun as if we were on vacation.

That's what Fearington feels like — a vacation, a close-to-home getaway. So much so that my wife and I decide to return for a stay at the Fearington House Country Inn even though we live just down the road.

Small-town feel

The day of our retreat finally arrives. We check into an immaculate room and then head to dinner at the Fearington House restaurant. Fully sated, we settle onto a bench in an intimate courtyard at dusk, sipping tea until the cows come home, literally. We look at each other, smile, and I say, "So *this* is what a Fearington vacation is really all about."

Fearington Village, eight miles south of Chapel Hill and seven miles north of Pittsboro, is set on 1,400 acres, much of which had been a farm for two centuries until Jesse and Willa Fearington sold it to Chapel Hill developer R.B. Fitch and his wife, Jenny, in 1974. Fitch had previously created two smaller residential developments in Chatham County but wanted to try something different at Fearington.

“Jenny was into all the beautiful, soft things of life. I used to call her a nice Martha Stewart.”

“Jenny and I, we were both products of small towns,” Fitch says. “And we always liked the idea of being able to walk everywhere.”

As they started building homes, they began developing shops and restaurants in the town center, all the while incorporating the old farm aesthetic — the old silo, white wooden fences, green pastures, Jasper the pony, and the original barn that the Fitches eventually refurbished to accommodate weddings.

In 1986, inspired by fond memories of their travels to Europe, the Fitches added the inn. “No two inns were alike,” he says. “When we’d visit, we always knew that we’d be well-received, the bed would be comfortable, there’d be a nice bath, good food, and the whole experience would be great.”

It was Jenny’s idea to open the inn — 13 rooms at first — and surround it with lush greenery, including a special white garden, which was dedicated to Jenny after she passed away in 1995. “Jenny was into cooking and decorating, flowers and gardens, all the beautiful, soft things of life,” Fitch says. “I used to call her a nice Martha Stewart. And it was Jenny who got me into the restaurant business.”

The five-star Ferrington House restaurant is in the old Ferrington farmhouse, shaded by large oaks and partially visible from U.S. Highway 15-501. Just inside the front door there’s a bar and a lounge for afternoon tea. Several dining areas wrap around a large kitchen, where Chef Colin Bedford uses the best local produce and herbs, including some from Ferrington’s own greenhouse and gardens — just two of the earth-friendly approaches that helped the restaurant become the Triangle region’s first Certified Green Restaurant, according to the Green Restaurant Association.

At dinner, the first thing I noticed was the perfect service. I mean, perfect. Second, the food; it looked so good on the plate that I almost felt bad about eating it. Almost.

Like many gourmet restaurants, Ferrington is known for its rich and flavorful cuisine. But the menu featured several lighter options, which my pregnant wife wholeheartedly welcomed. I was particularly impressed with the lobster sausage and risotto and handmade tortellini, a treat so delectable that it would’ve made my Italian mother blush. For dessert, our waiter, Adam, did a nice trick of pouring the melted chocolate down upon the soufflé from a significant height. We had to applaud.

After our culinary extravaganza, we knew exactly why *OpenTable* listed The Ferrington House as one of the top 50 restaurants in the United States in 2009. If you want to learn from Chef Bedford, Ferrington offers vacation packages throughout 2010 that include culinary classes.

Elegant yet cozy

Back at the inn, our second-story suite — one of the original 13 — drew the perfect contrast between elegant and cozy, featuring European antiques, original art, and the most comfortable couches and chairs. The newer rooms, some built just two years ago, have a slightly more modern feel. But every one of the inn’s 35 suites and rooms, as well as all of Ferrington, was designed with one thing in mind: “To exceed expectations,” Fitch says. “Life is full of experiences, and we just want this one to be different. We want people to leave with pleasant memories.”

The Ferrington House Country Inn is North Carolina’s only AAA Five Diamond and Mobile Five Star property, and it was one of the first American inns accepted into Relais & Châteaux, an exclusive association of 456 individually owned inns and restaurants around the world. I’m not privy to Relais & Châteaux’s exact standards or requirements, but I bet each inn has two things in common: guests should feel pampered,



Chef Colin Bedford relies on local produce and herbs to produce delectable dishes, like perfectly seasoned salmon, served at The Ferrington House.

if you’re going

Ferrington Village

2000 Ferrington Village Center
Pittsboro, N.C. 27312
(919) 542-2121

Make the most of your trip — go to www.ourstate.com for your guide to where to stay, eat, and explore in the Triangle area.





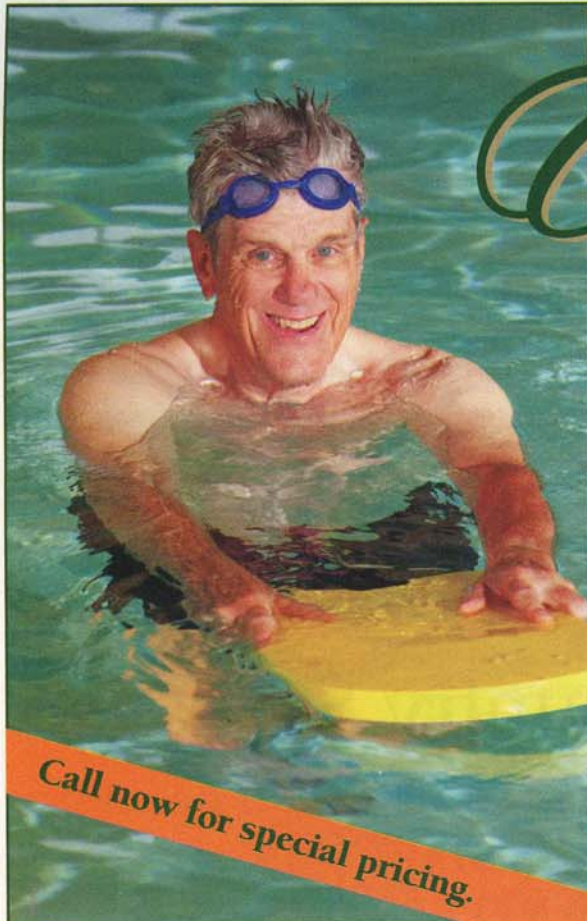
and they should not want for anything, not even a departure from the grounds.

Aside from several shops, the cafe, and the Old Granary restaurant, which is open for lunch and Sunday brunch, guests have access to bikes and trails, bocce and tennis courts, a gym and two pools, a garden room with a fireplace and complimentary champagne and tea, all kinds of special events, and even a few waterfalls and lakes, at least one of which is good for fishing. And if all that wears you out, a massage therapist is on call to soothe away any stress.

If you want to explore beyond Ferrington's boundaries, the village is convenient to several championship golf courses, fine and casual dining, and all the arts and entertainment the Triangle has to offer. The inn has six vacation packages to choose from, including The Girlfriends' Getaway, which I plan never to tell my wife about.

Or, you could do what Fitch and 1,800 others have done — move there. Tired of driving from his home in Chapel Hill to his office at Ferrington, Fitch built a new house in Ferrington 20 years ago. Now he enjoys the small village

In addition to the inn and restaurants, Ferrington Village offers housing, shops, and recreation, all within a tranquil pastoral setting.



At The Village, retirement is about *Convenience*

Gracious living with an abundance of amenities...The Village at Brookwood, located in central North Carolina, has easy access to cultural opportunities, Elon University, major airports, the coast and the mountains. Yet residents like Joe can find everything they need right here at home: the Aquatic and Wellness Center, casual and fine dining, the health care clinic, social programs, and the security of continuing care options.

Come explore The Village at Brookwood. Experience the warmth of our Life Care Community, sponsored by Alamance Regional Medical Center, an award-winning hospital. Visit

www.villageatbrookwood.org

or call toll-free
800-282-2053.



The VILLAGE

AT BROOKWOOD

Choices Community Convenience Comfort

Call now for special pricing.

life with his son, Greg, and daughter, Keebe, who also live and work here.

Not many developers live in a development they've built, let alone never pursue another project so they can focus all their attention on a single life's work. But then again, not many have built places like Ferrington. 🏡

Mark Derewicz lives in Pittsboro with his wife, son, and chickens.

web exclusive

For a behind-the-scenes look at Ferrington Village, go to www.ourstate.com, and click on "January Web Exclusives."

Each of the guest rooms at the inn has a distinct design — but they all offer unparalleled luxury.



Different: defies



In 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright came to The Outer Banks and made a heavier-than-air machine leave the ground and fly. Defy the ordinary and take flight.

877-629-4386 | outerbanks.org/defies

The Outer Banks[®]
OF NORTH CAROLINA
DIFFERENT BY NATURE