

DEPARTURES

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A New Way to Stay at The Inn at Little Washington

By Sasha Levine | Hotels



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The Inn at Little Washington, which opened in 1978 in Washington, Virginia, a 90-minute drive outside of D.C., was never conceived of as solely a cozy place to stay. Under the direction of chef and proprietor Patrick O'Connell, the 26-acre campus of gardens, greenhouses and well-appointed rooms was assembled with pieces of history restored—made all the more charming, of course, by a modern approach to luxury.

In his latest contribution to the area's decades-long beautification process, O'Connell has opened the Parsonage—a six-bedroom, 6,000-square-foot Victorian home refurbished inside and out to its 1850s-era origins, with help from London designer Joyce Conwy Evans.

"With each restoration and renovation, our goal is to make it look like nothing happened," O'Connell explains. "We let the house and the architecture dictate the feel."

The result? A whimsical interpretation of the past in the form of one charming abode, complete with individually decorated guest rooms with working fireplaces and Bulgari amenities; a tiled Victorian conservatory inspired by French country homes and Moorish influences; a wide, luxurious porch; and a garden dotted with centuries-old trees. Access to the inn's famous tea service and culinary creations is just a request away.

"More than anything we've done, I think this casts a spell of incredible tranquility because it's a self-contained little universe," says O'Connell. And with plenty more land (ten acres)—and clever ideas—left to explore, no doubt the Parsonage won't be his latest way to step back in time for long. *Rooms start at \$575; 309 Middle St.; 540-675-3800; theinnatlittlewashington.com.*