



Fuquay Mineral Spring Inn and Garden Bed and Breakfast

*At this Wake County retreat, carefully tended gardens
invite guests to bask in opulent surroundings — both indoors and out.*

BY L.A. JACKSON
PHOTOS BY CHARLES REGISTER



When Dr. Wiley Cozart built his new Fuquay Springs home across from the town's popular mineral springs in 1927, it was the prime place to be. No expense was spared on the A.Y. Hairr-designed Colonial Revival structure. Cozart and his wife, Pauline, were active in the community — Cozart was even the town's mayor for 10 years — and they used their home for social and business functions.

An avid gardener and a caring hostess, Pauline made sure the landscape around her home had the same elegant effect outside as the craftsman features, custom woodworking, and decorative details had inside.

Almost 80 years later, the Cozarts' home is still the place to be. Now it is the Fuquay Mineral Spring Inn and Garden, a bed and breakfast owned by John and Patty Byrne. The Byrnes took 18 months to convert the spacious house into a bed and breakfast, opening it on November 1, 2001. Some changes were made, but most of the original design remained to reflect the house's status on the National Register of Historic Places.

Much of the labor went into adding four-and-a-half bathrooms to the home, but extra effort also went to preserving the integrity of the gardens surrounding the house. "The gardens began in 1925 — before the house — with plantings of deep purple double-bearded irises,

white snowbells, tiger lilies, and nandinas, which were accompanied by several Southern magnolias and dogwoods," says John.

He says the double-bearded irises still dazzle guests with their springtime displays, although they now have beautiful competition for attention from a pink dogwood and azaleas planted throughout the property. In the summer, tiger lilies light up the planting beds, along with butterfly bushes, coral trumpet vine, and daylilies.

Many of the plants at the inn have a dual purpose. Herbs can be found in a small bed as well as in pots, not only for their looks but also for use in cooking classes the Byrnes hold. Flowering plants are valuable for luring colorful butterflies and birds to the gardens. Four of the five rooms at the inn are named after birds and the fifth, the Carriage House Suite, is John's pick for the best room to enjoy the gardens.

The scenery alone makes spring mornings at the inn idyllic, but the Byrnes add to the enjoyment with breakfasts of fresh fruits, sweet breads, grits, baked apples, eggs, and bacon.

The third weekend of April typically finds the inn the center of horticultural activity. The inn's pergola serves as headquarters for ticket sales for the town's annual historic home and garden tour, while the main garden transforms into an outdoor gallery for displaying and selling art from the local artists' guild.



At the turn of the past century, an open pavilion and gazebo provided attractive surroundings for the mineral spring that brought visitors to the town of Fuquay Springs. Today, a brick walkway and picnic tables make an inviting backdrop for a stroll through **FUQUAY MINERAL SPRING PARK**, located in the midst of a residential historic district.

105 West Spring Street
Fuquay-Varina
 (919) 552-1430

Remember the good old days when the entire family would pile in the car on Saturday afternoon and head downtown to **BELK'S**? It's tough to find a department store downtown these days, but in Fuquay-Varina, you can relive those afternoons of shopping for new Sunday shoes, a gift for Grandma, and perhaps a new hat for Mother. For a real nostalgia trip, follow your shopping spree with a soda fountain treat from Elliot's Pharmacy.

Hudson Belk, 123 East Vance Street
Fuquay-Varina

Hours: Monday-Thursday and Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Friday, 9:30 a.m.-9 p.m.
 (919) 552-4575



Floral accents and a cheerful decor reflect the inn's sunny disposition.

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Forgot your book? Head to downtown Fuquay-Varina, where **LAZY LION BOOKS** waits with the perfect tale for relaxing in the garden or by the fireplace. The store's secondhand offerings fill tidy shelves with a world of possibilities, and the helpful staff stands ready to make suggestions.

**146 South Main Street
Fuquay-Varina**

*Hours: Monday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.;
Tuesday-Wednesday, 10 a.m.-
5 p.m.; Thursday-Friday, 10 a.m.-
8 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.*
(919) 552-9639

Afternoon refreshment awaits you at the **GOLD LEAF TEA ROOM**. The tasty choices include hearty deli sandwiches, specialty quiches, and crisp salad plates featuring homemade chicken salad and pimento cheese. Too stuffed for dessert? Take home a chocolate chess pie or old-fashioned coconut cake to enjoy later.

**105 South Main Street
Fuquay-Varina**

*Hours: Tuesday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-
2:30 p.m.*
(919) 567-9561

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Stroll past the historic **BALLENTINE-SPENCE HOUSE**, preferably hand-in-hand with a loved one. This circa 1910 Victorian home was first built by the town's "first couple," J.D. "Squire" Ballentine, a local schoolmaster, who built the house for his sweetheart and wife, Varina.

**109 East Spring Street
Fuquay-Varina**

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