

Inside Stellenbosch's whimsical

Le Grand Jardin Private Manor



Stellenbosch, renowned for its winding scenic routes and near endless vineyards, is one of South Africa's oldest towns, ranking well among some of the world's most inspiring food, wine, and art destinations. Steeped in history, with an intriguing juxtaposition between shops, cafés and wine-tasting modern spaces, and the Cape Dutch more prevalent architecture which denote the colonial history of Cape Town and her surroundings, Stellenbosch is well revered as a must-explore destination for travellers with a penchant for well curated experiences and adventures that appeal to the entire family.



But hidden on a secluded estate is an enchanting boutique villa, Le Jardin Private Manor, owned by Bernard Fontannaz. His roots are firmly in winemaking, and so it was no wonder that in settling for this curious little boutique lodge, it's backdrop would be the rolling vineyards of Stellenbosch, which present views to embellish from just about every corner of the estate.

Fontannaz is also the founder of Origin Wines, a premium wine business built up from the vineyards he owns in South Africa, Argentina, and Switzerland. In a bid to expand his footprint in Stellenbosch, in 2016 Fontannaz purchased Le Grand Domaine, a stone's throw from Le Grand Jardin, to create a "chateau" concept and produce iconic Bordeaux blends based on varieties that come from carefully selected clones and rootstock. These Bordeaux blends can be paired with a meal or enjoyed in front of the fire on any given evening.

Le Grand Jardin: Where old world charm and a celebration of life come together.

Set on the grounds of a well-manicured 5-acre estate, Le Grand Jardin is the signature residence of Wonderland Escapes, a portfolio of boutique villas and residences across the world from which Le Grand Jardin is managed. Because the private estate is in the heart of the historic Stellenbosch

THE WANDERLUST WITHIN • LE GRAND JARDIN PRIVATE MANOR

(est. 1679) winelands, guests are welcomed to a unique property that presents old-world charm, inviting you to still time while you are there, curl up with a book in the summer house or in front of a roaring fire in winter, enjoy a stroll through the fairytale-like gardens, or when the weather permits, bask in pool side relaxation with surrounding views of the heritage-rich Stellenbosch.

Guests will also be intrigued to note that, beyond the space art and grandeur of a bygone era, the elegant Sir Herbert Baker-style manor house also sits on grounds from which 500 rose bushes and lavender fields grown, and the surrounding rolling lawns lead up to a fantastic eco-pool, complete with a little wooden footbridge that leads to a deck right in the middle it.

Inside the Manor House

The newly refurbished private manor house is as eccentric in décor as it invokes the curious mind to wonder about the premises. No two rooms are the same, and each is decorated in such a way to carry the distinctive trimmings of a luxurious villa, yet make you feel right at home for the simplicity in rendered service. The interior design draws on the restorative qualities of the expansive garden and surrounding vineyards, with a welcoming hand painted De Gournay/Aquazurra wallpaper collaboration in the entrance hall.

Housing three en-suite bedrooms, the Manor House's main bedroom has a king-sized bed with en-suite, the second bedroom is best suited for children sharing or a couple with a smaller child as it

has a double and single bed with bath and shower. The guest bedroom has a double bed with shower and the upstairs lounge area boasts a balcony where you can relish in pristine views of the expansive gardens below over a coffee or glass of wine. Also added in this space is a state-of-the-art, central media entertainment area with a fireplace to cuddle up at, completes the living space layout upstairs.

The downstairs living area avails plenty of space to gather as family and friends, taking in the distinctive colourful décor, which each carrying a story tell. Meals are served from a fully equipped kitchen onto a formal dining room, and drinks post dinner can be enjoyed from the uber sexy blue gin bar or tasting room with private cellar and drawing room or study or library, each with fireplaces.





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Spend some moments lounging at the Pool Pavilion

A special touch, especially groups travelling in larger numbers, is the availability of The Pool Pavilion, standing separate from the majestic Manor House but literally a few steps away. This space includes three bedrooms and a fully equipped kitchenette for the convenience of guests staying in this space. The Rockit Family Suite consists of a king size bed and two single beds with full en-suite bathroom, the Full Bloom room comes with a King size bed and the aptly named Into the Wild room bears has a queen size bed and full en-suite bathroom. As you may have guessed it, the room names suit the theming of the rooms, whose décor transport guests into warm spaces carefully curated to invoke the enchantment for which Le Grand Jardin prides itself. Doors swing open to present a spectacular view of the pool area, with paths leading to the eco-pool visible as soon as one emerges from their suite.





Looking Glasshouse for the perfect event

Beautifully set adjacent to the Pool Pavilion is the Victorian glasshouse, an incredible display of creativity and wonderland charm. Within good reason. This space is built around the 100-year-old oaks, offering an intimate, sun-dappled venue for making memories with extended family and friends. Perfect for breakfast, lunch or as a spectacular backdrop to a magical photoshoot, The Glasshouse comes complete with fireplace, artworks, quirky decorative trinkets, and is available for small, bespoke celebrations such as weddings, milestone birthdays and family reunions.

The garden theme is at play throughout the estate, with the Victorian-style glasshouse and the exuberant garden inspired interiors. Children will love the life-size Alice in Wonderland characters hidden near the eco-pool, which is in fact ideal for wild swimming. An authentic 1930s carousel and a showman's caravan also sit on Le Grand Jardin's estate, and equally come with interesting stories should one ask the Manor hosts.

Plenty to get up to around Stellenbosch.

In a destination that's replete with boutique hotels, there's also a strong sense of community as this region welcomes visitors from across the globe to indulge in proudly South African curated food, wine, and artistically inspired experiences. From unforgettable cellar door experiences, picnicking and fine dining at award-winning globally celebrated wine estates and restaurants, afternoons mixing with nature, cycling, or hiking enthusiasts as well as art and culture aficionados, one simply cannot get enough of all that's to offer in and around Stellenbosch. But let your journey start with a decision on where to stay, and Le Grand Jardin bears open doors to all with a penchant for remarkable, simplified, homely hospitality. 