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Novel Ideas for Romantic Retreats



If you've ever dreamed of stepping into the pages of a romance novel and leaving the real world outside of castle gates or just beyond the gardens of Scarlett O'Hara's beloved plantation then wake up and smell the antebellum: Both Buhl Mansion and Tara Inn provide romantic retreats that are close to home but out of this world.

Buhl Mansion Guest House and Spa

Located about an hour north of Pittsburgh, the old industrial town of Sharon was the home of Frank H. Buhl, founder of Sharon Steel Corporation. As a tribute to his wife, Julia, Buhl built her a castle mansion in 1898 right in the middle of town.

Today, Buhl Mansion is a year-round haven for lovers and others from all over the world and are treated like royalty. Upon arrival, bed and breakfast guests are met with flutes of champagne as the pampering begins. A grand oak staircase leads past the stained-glass window on the second-floor landing and peek into Julia Buhl's frilly bedroom. Replicas of famous paintings and sculptures decorate the mansion, and the third-floor wall is adorned with a hand-painted mural of gardens and cherubs. With names like Tropical Nights, Park Place and The Artist Loft, each bedroom has a personality and a Jacuzzi and fireplace all its own.

The staff is on-call day and night to fulfill your wishes then quickly disappear, leaving you to bathe in bubbly waters, enjoy breakfast in bed, have tea and cakes in the parlor or just wander through the castle and its magnificent gardens. The Buhl Mansion Spa offers 24-hour use of its steam room, sauna and monsoon showers.

The spa offers a variety of rejuvenating facial and body treatments, including the Myoxy-Caviar Tri-Phase Treatment Mask. Reputed to be a non-invasive alternative to botox, Pevonia combines the power of pure, preserved caviar with other natural ingredients to visibly relax wrinkles with immediate benefits. A destination in and of itself, the spa offers package deals for afternoons of self-indulgence, including lunch and champagne. But be forewarned, you won't want to leave.

Castle Escape packages at Buhl Mansion start at \$350 and include full breakfast, afternoon tea, champagne and hors d'oeuvres, and significant discounts for dinner at nearby Tara Inn.

Tara - A Country Inn

Six miles away from the Buhl Mansion on picturesque Shenango Lake in Clark, Pennsylvania, Tara offers exactly what its name implies: a glimpse into the graceful, long-ago world of Gone With the Wind.

Tara can be experienced in tandem with the Buhl Mansion or enjoyed on its own merits formal gardens punctuated by life-size replications of Frederick Remington Bronze statues; enticing indoor and outdoor heated pools; gourmet dining in two distinctive restaurants; and 27 guest rooms inspired by memories of Scarlett O'Hara, Rhett Butler and Fiddle-Dee-Dee! Tara offers Gone With the Wind Getaway packages that feature dinner, breakfast and a tour of the historic home, which was built in 1854 by farmer and former senator Charles Koonce. Weather permitting, guests may ride complimentary bikes along manicured paths or peruse the inn's vast array of Gone With the Wind memorabilia.

Dinner at Tara can take the form of a casual meal at Stonewall's Tavern, which serves steak and seafood; or an elegant, seven-course extravaganza by candlelight at Ashley's Gourmet Dining Room.

For more information, visit www.buhlmansion.com or www.tara-inn.com.

As a dual citizen of the United States and Switzerland, writer Jill Cueni-Cohen has lived and traveled abroad for the past 16 years. She currently resides in Pittsburgh with her two young children and Swiss husband. Contact her at cueni2@comcast.net.

Feature Stories

THIS BOLD HOUSE

A room-by-room look at local trends in home remodeling.
By Jill Cueni-Cohen

THE MAKING OF MEN AND WOMEN

How military discipline can help some kids discover their true selves.
By Jill Cueni-Cohen

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Camelot: How this former farmland became one of the closest-knit communities in Peters.
By Rachel Weaver

REAL ESTATE REALITY CHECK

Five top agents talk about selling homes in Peters, the good, the bad and otherwise.
By Tim McNellie

ROOM TO GROW

The emergency room staff of Canonsburg General Hospital will soon leave their cramped quarters for a spacious new \$7.3 million facility.
By Brian Kravish

HALFTIME HEROES

A television appearance by a group of Bower Hill first-graders means new storybooks for the whole school.
By Tim McNellie

TUNED IN

McMurray Elementary teacher Dave DiFilippo is using music lessons to help parents help their children.
By Chris Geer

A GROWING HOUSE

As Peters Township has grown in recent years, so have its churches. Now, many are physically expanding to meet the needs of larger, younger congregations.
By Tim McNellie

ABRUPT ENDING

After entering the season looking to win a fifth-straight Penguins Cup, the Peters hockey Indians came up a few goals short in the championship game. Now the team copes with the unusual feeling of defeat and looks ahead to next season.
By Earl Bugaile

MUSIC WITH A MESSAGE

Five McMurray Elementary teachers use their musical talents to teach kids to respect their peers.
By Kristina Kregiel

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