

# Montgomery's Grove Bed & Breakfast

By Katie McElveen

Arriving at the historic Montgomery mansion in the Pee Dee village of Marion in 1992, it was love at first sight for soon-to-be-innkeepers Coreen and Rick Roberts. "It was just gorgeous, exactly what we were looking for," recalls Coreen. "Unfortunately, the price was a bit more than we could afford." Disappointed, the Roberts spent the next year traveling the country looking for the perfect old home that they could turn into a bed and breakfast. Although they toured several that they liked, they couldn't stop thinking about the Montgomery house. "We finally decided to offer what we could, with an explanation about how we loved the house and what we planned to do with it," says Coreen. "We couldn't have been happier when the family accepted our offer."

The 9,000-square-foot, three-story mansion, which sits on five manicured acres just a few blocks from the center of town, was built in 1893 by W.J. Montgomery. Although the family hadn't spent much time in the home for years before it was sold, it had been so well maintained that the original woodwork, floors, doors and other details were, in 1992, exactly as they has been when the house was new. Bringing them back to life took nothing more than a little patience and a lot of old-fashioned elbow grease. Today, thanks to that elbow grease, the 111-year-old home--rechristened the Montgomery Grove Bed & Breakfast--shines with life.

More open and expansive than a typical Victorian building, Montgomery Grove is grand and light filled, with large rooms that open onto gingerbread-clad wrap-around porches. The rooms themselves are decorated with period antiques, mostly Chippendale and Louis XIV pieces that seem perfectly at home in the elegant rooms that are appointed with silk Oriental rugs. Then there are the chess sets. A professional pilot, Rick Roberts has collected chess sets from all over the world, and they are on display in nearly every room. While some of the sets consist of a board and playing pieces, others include chairs and a playing table as well.

One of the inn's most stunning features is the series of dramatic 14-foot tall heart pine arches that span its doorways and halls. Crafted and carved by shipbuilders during their off-season, the wooden arches are spectacular examples of local artisanship.

A stay at Montgomery Grove usually begins with tea and homemade cookies either on one of the porches, or, in winter, in front of a roaring fire. In the evening, most guests stroll the moss-draped two blocks into the historic town of Marion--named after Revolutionary War hero Francis "Swampfox" Marion--for dinner at a local cafe. A scrumptious homemade breakfast is served the next morning, afterwards, guests wander through the gardens, fish the blackwater of the Pee Dee River, kayak or simply enjoy the lovely surroundings.

Find out more...

Montgomery Grove Bed & Breakfast

408 Harlee St.

Marion, SC 29571

843-423-5220 or 877-646-7721

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