

QUEENWOOD GOLF LODGE : A 'WHOLE IN ONE' FOR THE DISCERNING.
PRIVATE GEORGIAN LODGE IN BOWOOD'S STATELY SETTING.

Weaving through 200 acres of Capability Brown's mature woodland, the Bowood golf course in Wiltshire is widely recognised as one of the finest in the south of England, suiting both the occasional golfer and the experienced pro. Its pedigree is assured both by the fact that it was designed by Dave Thomas (who also designed The Belfry) and that it is located in a fabulous, undulating corner of the 4,000 acre Bowood estate that is owned by the 9th Marquis of Lansdowne. An extra special facet of this Bowood gem is the private Georgian lodge that is tucked away within the stately 18-hole championship golf course; Queenwood Golf Lodge.

This wonderfully private four-bedroom Georgian lodge offers a very special bolt-hole where at least two days of top-notch golfing can be blended with overnight treats of the type synonymous with an upmarket country house hotel. What also adds to Queenwood Lodge being in a class all of its own is the chance for a select group of golfing friends, or business colleagues escaping the office, to be its only occupants with husband-and-wife team, Karen and Chris Dawson on hand to dedicate themselves totally to you during your visit.

As you enter the grounds at Bowood (home to the Lansdowne family for some 250 years), through the majestic 'Golden Gates' built by Sir Charles Barry in 1840, and head down the bluebell-lined drive you'll know that you are in for a very special time.

Ahead of you is Bowood Golf Club with its championship course that takes full advantage of a total distance of 7,317 yards with numerous doglegs, hidden bunkers plus tree and water barriers, to test the experienced player, along the way. Yet with the range of tees starting at

5,682 yards, golfers of varying ability are also in for a treat. Great practice and training facilities are featured, too - including a three-hole Academy course, an undercover floodlit driving range and two putting greens. Three PGA-qualified teaching professionals are on hand, too while a former farmhouse has been converted into a smart clubhouse with a well stocked Pro-Shop and a tempting restaurant and bar.

Before you reach the clubhouse, though, turn off the main drive (between the 7th and 8th fairways) and you will see Queenwood Lodge rise up to greet you as it peers out over a small stream, tucked away from the real world.

Karen Dawson will be waiting to welcome you on arrival. Husband and chef, Chris will be hard at work in the kitchen preparing your dinner for the evening and it will be these delicious smells that waft out towards you as you step through the front door, in time for tea by the fireside.

Lady Lansdowne's country house style

Inside Queenwood, the interiors have been decorated lovingly by the Marchioness of Lansdowne. Running her own interior design business and having previously worked at Colefax & Fowler for over 15 years, she has matched up regency stripes with pastel floral prints in the sitting room while opting for full-bodied reds to give the dining room its distinctiveness and warm glow. Each of the four bedrooms (all with their own en-suite bathroom) is individually-decorated with soft-furnishings that are beautifully and elegantly co-ordinated in a very English country house style, truly in keeping with this enchanting Georgian manor house.

Lady Lansdowne's role in turning the lodge into a glorious home does not stop at the fabrics and furniture. Exotically striped tulips from her garden often make up the dining table's centrepiece and if asparagus is on the menu then you can count on it being from her garden too.

Chef, Chris Dawson comments, "It is also marvellous to be able to use herbs that have been grown by Lady Lansdowne, plus other organic ingredients from the private Lansdowne gardens. Fabulous fresh, seasonal foods – from apples, plums and rhubarb to potatoes, broad beans, all types of other green vegetables and salad leaves – hold their optimum flavour as the dishes and recipes featured at

Queenwood celebrate the best of the estate's produce, at the time. Cheeses served are all from the southwest and we do not need to venture beyond Wiltshire and the Cotswolds for our ingredients."

So, 'Modern British' cooking at Queenwood is no hollow description with Chris harvesting the very best of English food in this way. Indeed, if the term 'home cooking' is to be adopted here on account of the Queenwood backdrop then the phrase is redefined fabulously, thanks to the Dawsons. "It's great to have the opportunity to develop menus that are truly in keeping with Queenwood's environment," says Chris. "Being extremely fortunate in having the freshest produce available means that I really can keep things simple and uncomplicated, cooking food in the best way it deserves. Without having to resort to heavy sauces, the very best taste and texture can be achieved. For instance, a typical dinner might include Spring Wiltshire lamb with roasted garden vegetables in a thyme jus, followed by a vanilla pannacotta with poached berries."

Queenwood's double act

Chris and Karen Dawson have recently arrived at Queenwood, in April 2005, and are full of enthusiasm for how to optimise Queenwood's potential for visitors. Both 33, they met in March 1992 at the Hotel Maes-y-Neuadd near Harlech in Wales where Chris was Sous Chef and Karen was Restaurant Manager. This teamwork continued as they moved around the country together, marrying in 2000. Significantly, they helped to put the prestigious Northcote Manor in North Devon on the map while most recently they owned and ran the very popular Dawson's restaurant in Newton Poppleford, near Exeter, where they gained 2 AA Rosettes in the first year there and inclusion in the Good Food Guide and the Michelin Guide.

"Queenwood opens up a whole new dimension for us, too," explains Karen, "as we hone our restaurant and front-of-house experience, for the benefit of groups of up to just eight people at a time. It feels like welcoming friends into our own home and it's wonderful to see people relaxed and happy... and telling us they plan to return again soon."

Avant and après golf.....

Karen continues, “With one of the finest golf courses in the southwest on our doorstep, Queenwood offers a special package that includes afternoon tea, a private dinner party and breakfast alongside two days of golf.

“Whatever your golfing handicap, there’ll be drinks and canapés in the sitting room before a four course dinner at a time of your choice. If there are sporting highlights to catch afterwards, then you can certainly curl up in front of the television with coffee, nightcaps and petit fours served in Queenwood’s cosy study. Breakfast the next morning will also be at your leisure and full English breakfast will definitely be on offer to build up your energy for your second day of Bowood golfing.

“Formality and informality go hand-in-hand at Queenwood and the sense of occasion can be shaped exactly as you wish,” adds Karen, who with Chris will leave guests to their privacy once they have had everything they need...but will be back again at breakfast.

Golf and so much more.....

There’s a great selection of nearby attractions for Queenwood guests, without having to leave Bowood at all! Indeed, if not everyone in the party is lured by the golf course (which, just two years after it opened in 1992, was voted one of the ‘Top 10 New Courses in Britain’ by Golf World magazine and then a year later the same magazine placed it in the ‘Top 50 Golf Destinations in Europe’) then a visit to the House & Gardens could be just the ticket.

Bowood Gardens & Pleasures Grounds cover virtually every period of English garden design from the Georgian period through to today, with the fashionable 18th century garden designer Capability Brown having mapped out the 2,000 acres of Grade I Listed Great Park at Bowood in the 1760s. Such whimsical backdrops as rock landscapes, cascades and grottoes, a hermit’s cave and a lakeside Doric temple are all to be found here.

On a separate part of the estate, a woodland garden of rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias extending over 60 acres, then bursts into life for a six-week flowering season from late April-early June. Two miles of pathways meander through these beautiful sun dappled glades and around the Lansdowne family Mausoleum, built by Robert Adam around 1762.

Queenwood guests shouldn't miss the chance, either, to visit another 'living and breathing' home on the grounds – yet one on a much larger scale. Italianate terraces front Bowood House which contains a treasure trove of antiques and architectural delights. Robert Adam designed the House's interiors throughout the 1760s and created the magnificent 'Diocletian' Orangery wing. Here and in the Sculpture Gallery is housed a selection of the Lansdowne collection of paintings, sculptures and tapestries. There's a private Chapel too and the Laboratory where oxygen was discovered by Dr. Joseph Priestley in 1774. Over several floors, The Bowood Collection displays: aspects of Georgian life, souvenirs brought back from India by the 5th Marquess who had served there as Viceroy, mementos of Queen Victoria's wedding day, an insight into Napoleon's life and times plus tantalising watercolours and porcelain – all united by belonging to various members of the Lansdowne family, down through seven generations.

A number of picturesque walks start from Queenwood's front door, adding to the opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors at Bowood. "We'll point you in the right direction to make sure you don't get lost!" assures Karen.

To hire Queenwood for a night, rates start at £115 per person to include tea on arrival, a four course dinner, overnight accommodation, full English breakfast and - from mid-March through to the end of October - entrance to Bowood House & Gardens.

Bowood Golf Club offers 'pay-and-play' opportunities plus various membership schemes: 'Full', 'Country' and 'Corporate' - with 'Academy' memberships for beginners, too.

For further enquiries and reservations, telephone: 01249 822228 or e-mail: golfclub@bowood.org.
Website: www.bowood.org.

Queenwood Lodge at Bowood Golf & Country Club, Derry Hill, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 9PQ.

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August 2005

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