



HOTEL DU PONT

PRESS INFORMATION

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HOTEL DU PONT, THE BRANDYWINE VALLEY AND OTHER DELIGHTS

WILMINGTON, DE -- Few hotels in the world have such a strong and appealing connection to the history and character of its geographic surroundings as the Hotel du Pont in Wilmington, Delaware. For guests of the hotel this means that nearby attractions, including some of the most popular on the East Coast, provide a fascinating glimpse into American history and culture as well as an opportunity to experience some of the country's most beautiful natural landscapes.

The Hotel du Pont's story and its personality, like the scenic Brandywine, have been shaped, to a large degree, by the history of the famous du Pont family, one of the most influential in American life. Eleutherian Mills, a Georgian-style residence, was the first du Pont family home, built by Eleuthere Irene du Pont in 1803. Since then, five generations of du Ponts have been associated with the house, which is now a part of the Hagley Museum. Offering a realistic portrait of early 19th century life, the museum features the original du Pont powder mill and exhibits tracing mill history from small water-powered mills through the Industrial Revolution. Interpreters in period dress depict scenes from early 19th century life at Blacksmith Hill, the former home of powder year foremen and their families.

The Hagley Museum is located on Rte. 141 in Wilmington. Call 302-658-2400 for further information.

A little over a century later, Irene du Pont's grandson, Alfred I. du Pont built Nemours, a magnificent chateau named for the area in France from which the du Pont family hailed. The pale-pink 102-room mansion features marble floors, lace curtains from Brussels and a 24-carat gold leaf on the dining room walls. The extensive gardens resemble a miniature Versailles and are one of the finest examples of French-style horticultural offerings in America. Reflecting pools, a maze and well-planned colonnade make Nemours a particular delight.

Nemours, also in Wilmington, is open for tours May through December. Call 302-651-6912.

Even more famous is Longwood Gardens. Purchased as a summer home for entertaining nieces and nephews, Pierre S. du Pont, great-grandson of Irene and builder of the Hotel du Pont, let his imagination wander as he created some of the most spectacular gardens in the world. Influenced by frequent trips abroad, Longwood features plantings from around the globe, all playing a role in du Pont's wish to paint a landscape of color that changes with the season. Christmas features poinsettias and fanciful wreaths; spring brings a world filled with the scent of hyacinth and daffodils, tulips, dogwood, and flowering cherries painting a portrait which would inspire Claude Monet; and autumn features chrysanthemums in every shape, size and color.

Longwood is located on Rte. 1 and Rte. 52 near Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. For information call 215-388-674.

Unlike the other family estates boasting beautiful gardens, the emphasis on Henry du Pont's famous home, Winterthur, is on the collection of American art, architecture and antiques. Serving as a resources to students and teachers, the mansion features 196 rooms displaying everything from enormous Jacobean fireplaces to formal Southern dining salons. Nowhere else is Colonial America so well preserved. Winterthur's unique "Touch-It Room" gives visitors opportunities to play with 18th and 19th century toys or host a make-believe tea party in a parlor setting.

Winterthur is located on Rte. 52, six miles from Wilmington. For further information call 800-448-3883 or 302-888-4600. The museum also features four 18th and 19th century houses in the historic village of Odessa, 23 miles south of Wilmington.

The Brandywine River Museum is housed in a Civil War era gristmill on the banks of the Brandywine River in Chadd's Ford. It houses the largest and most complete collection of Brandywine Valley Art in the world. Artists represented at the museum include N.C., Andrew, and Jamie Wyeth, Maxfield Parish, Howard Pyle, Charles Dana Gibson, Rockwell Kent and Rose O'Neil. The museum is famous for its collection of American illustration, still life and landscape painting.

The Brandywine River Museum is located on Rte. 1 in Chadd's Ford, Pennsylvania, 12 miles from Wilmington. For further information call 610-388-2700.

An equally impressive collection of American art is on display at the Delaware Art Museum, which boasts original paintings and documents from the "golden age" of American illustration. The collection of Howard Pyle works is unmatched. Also featured at the museum is a large display of English Pre-Raphaelite art. Major works by Dante Gabriel Rosetti, Edward Burne-Jones, William Holman Hunt, and Ford Maddox Brown are included.

The Delaware Art Museum is in Wilmington,. For further information call 302-571-9590.

Visitors who would rather experience early American life in three dimensions will enjoy historic New Castle. Within a three-block area are outstanding examples of architecture from the era of Dutch settlement from 1651 through the late Victorian period. Market Street, the town's original cobblestone streets, the red brick cupola-topped Court House dating from the 1750's and the 1892 octagonal shaped library are just a few of the sites. Visitors are also welcome to tour any of three furnished homes.

New Castle, a National Landmark Historic District, is just south of Wilmington on the Delaware River.

Continuing south on Rte. 1, guests of the Hotel du Pont will reach the Chesapeake Bay region. Suitable for a full day's outing, the historic area offers recreation (the beaches of Rehoboth and Bethany), charming villages dating back to the 18th century and open scenic landscapes dotted with farms. The glamorous, bustling sailing capital of Annapolis is less than 100 miles from the hotel.

The Hotel du Pont offers one and two-night packages to allow each guest even more opportunities to customize their stay.

Winner of the American Automobile Association Four Diamond Award for 16 consecutive years, the 217-room Hotel du Pont is located in the heart of Wilmington, less than 25 miles from the Philadelphia International Airport and only minutes from Amtrak and Interstate 95. The hotel offers dining in the elegant Green Room, its own 1,200-seat DuPont Theatre (presenting Broadway touring shows and other entertainment, including a children's theatre season), and a shopping arcade with a bank, gift shop, jewelry store, and a styling salon. Afternoon Tea and 24-hour room service are among the many guest amenities. The hotel is a member of Preferred Hotels & Resorts and Historic Hotels of America.

For information and reservations call 800-441-9019 or 302-594-3100 or see your travel agent.

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