

# *the* INNS *of* AURORA

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## OVERVIEW

Located in the pristine Finger Lakes region of New York, the Inns of Aurora is the ultimate lakeside retreat with five distinct properties – the classic, federal-style Aurora Inn, Italianate limestone E.B. Morgan House, warm and contemporary Rowland House, the vibrantly-decorated Wallcourt Hall, and the stunning Zabriskie House. Personal touches seen throughout each property, including a nightly turndown service and resident innkeepers, provide an all-encompassing luxury stay experience.

Many of the intimate guestrooms feature fireplaces and balconies overlooking picturesque Cayuga Lake. Each day begins with organic, fair-trade coffee and fresh, homemade granola bars, necessary fuel for taking a kayak out to explore the lake – a must do activity while on property. Afternoons are best spent tasting at the numerous nearby wineries and breweries before indulging in the signature home furnishings of MacKenzie-Childs’ studio and farm, located down the road. In the evening, guests can dine on award-winning cuisine prepared by Executive Chef Eric Lamphere at 1833 Kitchen & Bar or choose a more laid-back meal at Fargo Bar & Grill. Days come to a close by pulling an Adirondack chair up to one of the lakeside fire pits to enjoy a glass of wine while taking in a panoramic sunset or calm, star-filled night.

The tiny village of Aurora, situated on the eastern shore of Cayuga Lake, is home to 300 year- round residents, a private liberal arts college of 500 students, and surrounded by rolling farmlands and vineyards. Much of the village, dotted with ancient trees and grand architectural gems, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## HISTORY

The Aurora Inn was built in 1833 by Colonel Edwin Barber Morgan (1806-1881), a native of Aurora and original investor in *the New York Times*. During its colorful past, the Aurora Inn was a favored overnight destination for travelers borne by coach, canal boat, and rail, and by the mid-19th century, had become a major stop on the Erie Canal for steamships carrying produce and grains from area farmers to markets in New York City and London. E. B. Morgan first met Henry Wells (1805-1878), founder of the American Express Company and Wells, Fargo & Company, on the commercial dock that once stood behind the Aurora Inn. Wells and Morgan became lifelong friends in life and partners in business, and after settling in Aurora, Wells founded Wells College in 1868 as one of the country's first colleges for women.

Constructed of locally-quarried limestone in 1858, the former home of Morgan and his family now serves as E.B. Morgan House, replete with original, restored floors, millwork, etched glass front doors and skylight, and seven marble fireplaces. Rowland House was built in 1903 for the grandson of E.B. Morgan, Alonzo Morgan Zabriskie (1867-1913) and his new bride, Belle. With a wood-paneled dining room, multiple parlors, and a wrap-around porch overlooking the lake, the grand Queen Anne mansion was designed for entertaining guests of the family from across the country. An expansion of Miss Goldsmith's School for Girls, Wallcourt Hall was constructed in grand colonial style 1909 to house the girls attending school. Later used as a dormitory for Wells College and a studio for MacKenzie-Childs, Wallcourt Hall was abandoned for 40 years and was in great disrepair before its restoration completed in 2016. Zabriskie House, opening August 2019, was originally constructed in 1904 as incentive for brothers Alonzo and Robert Zabriskie to return home to Aurora once their mother, Louise Zabriskie, began to suffer from failing health. The Zabriskie brothers were grandsons of Colonel Edwin Barber Morgan, of E.B. Morgan House, and both had moved away from Aurora in adulthood. Shortly after returning home, their mother Louise sadly passed away, and Alonzo and his wife Belle moved to Connecticut. Robert and his wife Aubin remained in Aurora, living in the family home that was lovingly referred to as the "big white house."

Since 2001, more than ten historic properties in the Village of Aurora – many of which comprise the Inns of Aurora – have been exquisitely restored under the stewardship of philanthropist Pleasant T. Rowland, an alumna of Wells College, noted educator, author of early childhood literacy programs, and founder of American Girl.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

### *The Aurora Inn*

The Aurora Inn strikes a perfect balance of historic charm and modern luxury. Its ten spacious guestrooms are true to their nineteenth century origins, yet have been meticulously re- envisioned for modern comfort. Each offer private marble baths, deluxe appointments, and state-of-the-art technology. Many feature working fireplaces for a cozy winter retreat. Others have private porches with rocking chairs that overlook Cayuga Lake and the vineyards on its western shore.

The Inn's exterior is graced with broad columned balconies, stone terraces, and a lawn rolling gently down to the water's edge. Common spaces feature gleaming antiques, lush Oriental rugs, exquisite fabrics, rich woods and a stunning collection of fine art.

### *E.B. Morgan House*

E.B. Morgan House combines luxurious modern aesthetics with the unparalleled beauty of a historic stone mansion. E.B. Morgan House offers seven stylish guest rooms, private marble baths, exquisite living spaces, gracious porches overlooking the lake and lawns and an exceptional collection of original modern art. An innkeeper sees to guests' every need. Guests are invited to enjoy E.B. Morgan House as they would a home, with the sumptuous comforts of a library, parlor, dining room and pantry.

E.B. Morgan House is ideal for private gatherings—from small weddings to executive retreats, holiday celebrations, family reunions and dinner parties. The entire house can be rented to accommodate such occasions.

### *Rowland House*

Rowland House offers ten chic guestrooms, each with a private marble bath, vibrant color schemes, original modern art, stunning views, luxurious linens, and an innkeeper who sees to guests' every need. The entire third floor is comprised of four guestrooms and lounge decorated with the distinct and playful furniture, accessories, and ceramics of MacKenzie-Childs.

Rowland House serves as the ideal escape from the frenetic pace of modernity. An expansive porch, twin parlors, library and private dining room feature restored and working fireplaces, original architectural details and uninterrupted lake views. An executive boardroom, housed in the original billiard room, offers a state-of-the-art location for meetings and small corporate retreats.

### *Wallcourt Hall*

Built in 1909 as Miss Goldsmith's School for Girls, Wallcourt Hall joined the Inns of Aurora collection in May 2016 after an extensive, multimillion-dollar restoration. With 16 guestrooms and an on-site innkeeper, Wallcourt Hall provides a four-diamond, Inns of Aurora-quality experience (with amenities like Frette linens, William Roam products, and organic coffee and homemade granola bars in the morning) for travelers who prefer to invest in dining and activities over lodging. The property features custom, hand-woven Italian fabrics, restored architectural details, original modern art, and playful interior design, including hand painted Dalmatian dot bathrooms.

### *Zabriskie House*

Opening in August 2019 following an extensive restoration, Zabriskie House will offer 11 guestrooms. Originally built as the brother home to Rowland House, Zabriskie House features many similar gracious gathering spaces including a double parlor with cozy fireplaces, a 14-person wood-paneled dining room available for private events, and a stunning three-story grand staircase. A coffee bar will serve freshly-brewed organic, fair-trade coffee each morning, while indoor lounge spaces and outdoor seating on the front porch or private patio provide relaxing areas to enjoy quiet mornings or peaceful evenings. Similar to the other Inns of Aurora, exceptional original art from founder Pleasant Rowland's personal collection will be displayed throughout the property, and it will closely follow the well-received model of both Rowland House and E.B. Morgan House with an on-site innkeeper, complimentary wine and cheese hour in the afternoon, and turndown service in the evening.

## CULINARY

### *1833 Kitchen & Bar*

1833 Kitchen & Bar has been welcoming guests since 1833 when it was originally built as part of Aurora House, known today as the Aurora Inn.

An inviting setting for group dining or an intimate dinner for two, the property's signature restaurant serves award-winning, farm-to-table American cuisine and craft cocktails. Executive Chef Eric Lamphere, Manager Erin McElhinney and Assistant Manager Ben Maywalt translate a combined deep-rooted passion for the Finger Lakes region and extensive hospitality experience to the refined, from-scratch menu that boasts sustainably-sourced and house-made ingredients. In the summer, guests enjoy unrivaled waterfront dining on the Inn's veranda with vineyard views and spectacular sunsets over Cayuga Lake. Inside, the warm and welcoming dining room features two fireplaces where fires blaze during cooler months, and the new cocktail lounge offers 12 bar seats and several

intimate conversation tables that serve as a welcoming area for happy hours, pre-dinner drinks, or a relaxing nightcap.

### *Fargo Bar & Grill*

Casual food and family atmosphere are the calling card of this neighborhood restaurant and tavern, located directly across the street from the Aurora Inn. Enjoy a beer from the carefully crafted list of over 70 options from around the world or have a cocktail at the bar. Have fun playing pool or relaxing in the backyard, and savor delicious daily features created by the talented culinary staff.

### *Aurora Cooks! Demonstration Kitchen*

Located just down the street from the Aurora Inn, Aurora Cooks is an intimate, fully-equipped demonstration kitchen that feels as though you are in the chef's home. The engaging and informal tasting experiences are led by culinary connoisseurs Patrick Higgins, Executive Chef at Aurora Cooks, and Grace Mattingly, Taste Curator, who offer educational yet relaxed sessions exploring approachable culinary techniques. The demonstrations, which can also be booked as private group sessions, are perfect for a couple's date night or as a memorable gathering with friends and loved ones. Class offerings include signature demonstrations on topics from fresh pasta to braising and poaching to skill-based classes in knife skills and fruit carvings, as well as tasting experiences around chocolate, butter, and more.

### *The Village Market*

Adjacent to the Aurora Inn, the Village Market offers a selection of locally-crafted arts and gifts, regionally roasted organic coffees and fine Finger Lakes cheeses and beer. The market also features a selection of sweet treats, tantalizing take-home meals, soups, chili and chowders-all prepared fresh daily by chefs at the Aurora Inn.

## WELLNESS

### *The Loft*

The Loft at the Inns of Aurora is a sanctuary for personal discovery, wellbeing and relaxation. Part studio, part treatment space, the Loft is a destination for everything from massages and healing sessions (in partnership with Rasa Spa) to yoga, essential oil blending, and painting classes. The versatile space is customizable to accommodate wedding parties, meetings, groups, and more.

### *Director of Serenity*

The Inns of Aurora appointed Director of Serenity Laura Coburn to help bring physical, mental, and spiritual wellness to guests. Whether providing one-on-one yoga instruction to a business traveler following a day of meetings or meditation tips to a bride looking to calm her nerves before the big day, Laura is available to serve each guest's wellness needs. Other capabilities include custom essential oil blending and curated relaxation playlists.

### *The Schoolhouse Activities Center*

Originally constructed in 1903 as District School Number Six, the Schoolhouse honors its heritage as a community center for learning, exploration and gathering. This multi-purpose center offers a variety of indoor activities and complimentary equipment for outdoor seasonal activities.

Guests can visit with Ayurveda-certified Director of Serenity Laura Coburn for private Ayurveda consultations, participate in essential oil or organic tea blending workshops, or enjoy an afternoon of board games and puzzles. The fitness center is accessible 24/7 and equipped with a wide-range of machinery and weights, as well as a stocked hydration and towel station.

Guests interested in an outdoor adventure are welcome to check out a pair of Hunter Boots for an afternoon of exploration or an educational visit at the local organic garlic farm. Water activities can be enjoyed with house kayaks and paddleboards, and in colder weather, snowshoes and sleds are available.

### *The Spa at Inns of Aurora*

Opening fall 2020, the 21,000-square-foot spa and healing center will feature multiple hydro-therapy pools, meditation spaces, and treatment rooms complete with warming fireplaces. The majority of the spa is gender-neutral, allowing couples, friends and colleagues to relax together. The farmhouse-inspired building will sit above the Inns of Aurora, allowing unobstructed access to nature and expansive views of pristine Cayuga Lake.

## W E D D I N G S

The Inns of Aurora is a premier Finger Lakes wedding destination. The Aurora Inn boasts an elegant indoor Lakeside Room - during warmer months, French doors open onto an expansive stone terrace overlooking the

lake, where the large lakeside tent is ideal for large affairs of up to 200 guests. E.B Morgan House and Rowland House can accommodate both cocktail party and seated dinner events for 14 to 50 guests.

Banquet Chef de Cuisine Matt McGarry customizes rehearsal dinner and wedding reception menus using fresh, local ingredients showcasing award-winning cuisine, rather than typical banquet-style food. A skilled fruit and ice carver, Aurora Cooks! Executive Chef Patrick Higgins also creates intricate displays - a spin on traditional floral arrangement decorations.

## ART & DESIGN

Exceptionally fine modern art anchors every space at each of the Inns of Aurora, from the boardroom to the bath. Hand-selected from the personal collection of owner Pleasant Rowland – noted educator, philanthropist, and founder of American Girl – art takes center stage in the exquisite interior design of every public space and guestroom. Featured artists include Wolf Kahn, Helen Frankenthaler, David Hockney, Eric Aho, and Paul Jenkins.

Custom fabrics and finishes complement the art in each space, as do an eclectic but carefully curated collection of antiques from around the world, including hand-carved English mirrors and side tables, Chinese baskets, boxes, and chests from the Fourteenth century, and hand- beaded chairs from South Africa. The third floor of Rowland House – with four guestrooms and a private lounge – features the whimsical and distinctive furniture, accessories, and ceramics of MacKenzie-Childs, headquartered two miles from the Inns of Aurora.

## MEETINGS & RETREATS

The Inns of Aurora features several intimate meeting room spaces able to accommodate groups as small as five and as large as 120. Rowland House features a chic and fully equipped boardroom for engaging and productive meetings while exquisite breakout spaces and the vibrant lakeside setting make for an invigorating day away from the office. The Inns of Aurora is ideal for sales incentive meetings, team building, management retreats, regional gatherings, brainstorming or company outings.

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