



AllWays Traveller

The Glazebrook Hotel, Devon UK

www.allwaystraveller.com

A place of awe and wonder - and I wonder what that is?

Set in stunningly secluded gardens and grounds, *Glazebrook House*, which is located on the fringe of the Dartmoor National Park in South Devon, is a genuinely unique boutique hotel.

A one time country residence of the Devon aristocracy, what had become a rather tired hotel has been refurbished with a breathtaking vision by South African couple Pieter and Fran Hamman.

The public areas, bar, bedrooms and every available 'nook and cranny' have been carefully designed with a meticulous devotion to quality and quirky in equal measure.

The result is a five star hotel in a Victorian adventurer's global collection of absolutely everything that caught his eye.

The *Glazebrook* restaurant serves the finest of fine dining.

A stay at the *Glazebrook* is an experience that, once enjoyed, will never be forgotten.

www.glazebrookhouse.com

Ashley Gibbins

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A personal view of Glazebrook



Whimsical charm and lavish surroundings

By Ann Mealor

Appearances can be deceptive. At first glance, *Glazebrook House* looks like any other very attractive, but traditional country house hotel.

However, all is not what it seems – but in a good way!

Step through the castle-like archway and you enter a world of retro curios and vintage chic that can't fail to delight and surprise the most discerning of guests.

With great whimsical charm, this late Georgian/early Victorian mansion has been redesigned by Timothy Oulton, in the quintessentially British style of a 19th century collector.

The skeleton of an exotic bird stands on a plinth in the hallway, crystal chandeliers hang from the ceilings and plush tartan carpet compliments polished wooden floors.

Union flag drapes

Traditional buttoned leather sofas sit alongside plush Union flag drapes and a large chrome British bulldog sits on the polished steel reception desk, complete with a Churchill style bowler hat.

Each room is different but has the same integrated style, comfort and surprise factor.

The bar has tufted leather panel walls and chandelier coffee tables that automatically light up at 6pm.

The large leather chairs are handcrafted, the floor is polished wood - all creating a feel of a modern Gentleman's club.



Elegant and glamorous

The elegant bar is made of lavish red marble, on top of which stands a huge glass urn filled with liquorice allsorts.

The dining room, in the evening, is candlelit with white table linen and chinaware, comfortable tanned leather studded chairs.

Light from the sparkling chandeliers bounces off the selection of silver trays that cover one of the silver grey walls.

For breakfast it converts to a charming, homely rustic place with wooden table tops, terracotta plant pots filled with herbs and traditional blue and white porcelain plates for the tables and displayed on one of the walls.

Large, decorative pine mirrors help to reflect the light from the tall, bay windows.

Dining at the Glazebrook



There are not many places where the food lives up to its surroundings, but *Glazebrook* is most definitely one of them.

We started our evening meal with a pre-dinner cocktail at the red marble bar, an experience every guest should enjoy.

We then moved into the serene candlelit restaurant and started our meal with an Amuse Bouche of smoked mackerel and coriander and prune bread.

As I opened the lid on the Amuse Bouche, smoke gently drifted out of the jar – another *Glazebrook* surprise. It tasted delicious.

For my starter, I chose Thai style River Fowey Mussels, with chilli, lemongrass and ginger. They were fresh, fragrant and juicy.

Ashley went for the Ticklemore Goats Cheese Fritters & Gingerbread whipped mousse and beetroot.

The local goat's cheese was smooth and creamy and the gingerbread mousse gave it spicy edge.

We were both pleased with our choices.

Then I had the Sirloin Steak, triple cooked chips, crisp onion and watercress.

Choosing steak is always a risk for me and, if not done just how I like it, the meal is ruined.

I explained how I wanted my steak, medium-well, with no blood running out when it was cut.

It was cooked perfectly and melted in my mouth. I was pleased I took the risk.

Ashley tucked into whole Lemon Sole, samphire, lemon butter and minted new potatoes. The sole was beautifully prepared and tasted superb.

We then shared a velvety smooth Blueberry Crème Brulee and amoretti biscuit.

And so all delicious and good to see so many local products on the menu.



Sleeping at Glazebrook

The eight luxurious bedrooms at *Glazebrook* are named after characters from *Alice and Wonderland*.

This happened quite by chance, but *Glazebrook* fits the subtle, quirky *Alice* theme very well indeed.

As I said, the luxurious bedrooms at *Glazebrook* are named after characters in *Alice and Wonderland* and this theme fits with the rest of the hotel design very well indeed.

Our bedroom was the 'Mad Hatter' room, a luxury double, and I couldn't wait to see it! Dominating the room, and placed on the plush tartan carpet, was an extremely large super king-size bed with a plush leather buttoned headboard.

Special mention

The bed deserves special mention as it is one of the most comfortable I have ever slept in.

It is not surprising, as all the beds at *Glazebrook* are hand made with pocket sprung mattresses and cost thousands of pounds to buy.

Dolls houses are fixed to the ceiling above the bed head, so when lying down you can see into all the rooms – unusual but very interesting.

Chandeliers fell from the ceiling on thick ropes either side of the bed.

Handmade Belgian linen drapes hung from the Georgian windows and a large stainless steel trunk lay at the bottom of the bed.



The modern, flat screened TV was on a wall surrounded by a selection of green and brown patterned porcelain plates.

Another wall was decorated with a selection of old hats.

A large pine wardrobe housed the free mini bar. Yes, a free minibar with wine, beer, soft drinks, crisps, nuts and chocolate! It was a real treat and fits in with Pieter and Fran's ethos of 'surprise, delight, enrich'.

The bathroom was huge and stylish, with a black and white marble heated floor, two basins and a large rain shower.

Lighting is very important to Pieter and it can be adjusted in each room to create the right mood or atmosphere.

The Glazebrook gardens



Glazebrook is set in a glorious four acres of grounds and gardens.

Mature trees, tall and elegant and some dating over 150 years, stand majestically.

There are huge Japanese maples with their bright red leaves sitting comfortably with mature rose and petal pink azaleas and rhododendrons.

Stone steps lead up to a small plateau of lawn with tiny paths heading off to a bluebell filled wood.

Following the narrow tracks, I almost believed it was possible to come across a tardy white rabbit.

The gardens can be enjoyed from the patio next to the bar, a suntrap in which to sip a chilled glass of wine or a delicate cocktail.

Pieter has plans to turn this area into a conservatory and brasserie, so that the gardens can be enjoyed all year round.

www.glazebrookhouse.com

A snapshot of the Glazebrook



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The International Travel Writers Alliance

The International Travel Writers Alliance is the world's largest association of professional travel journalists.

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