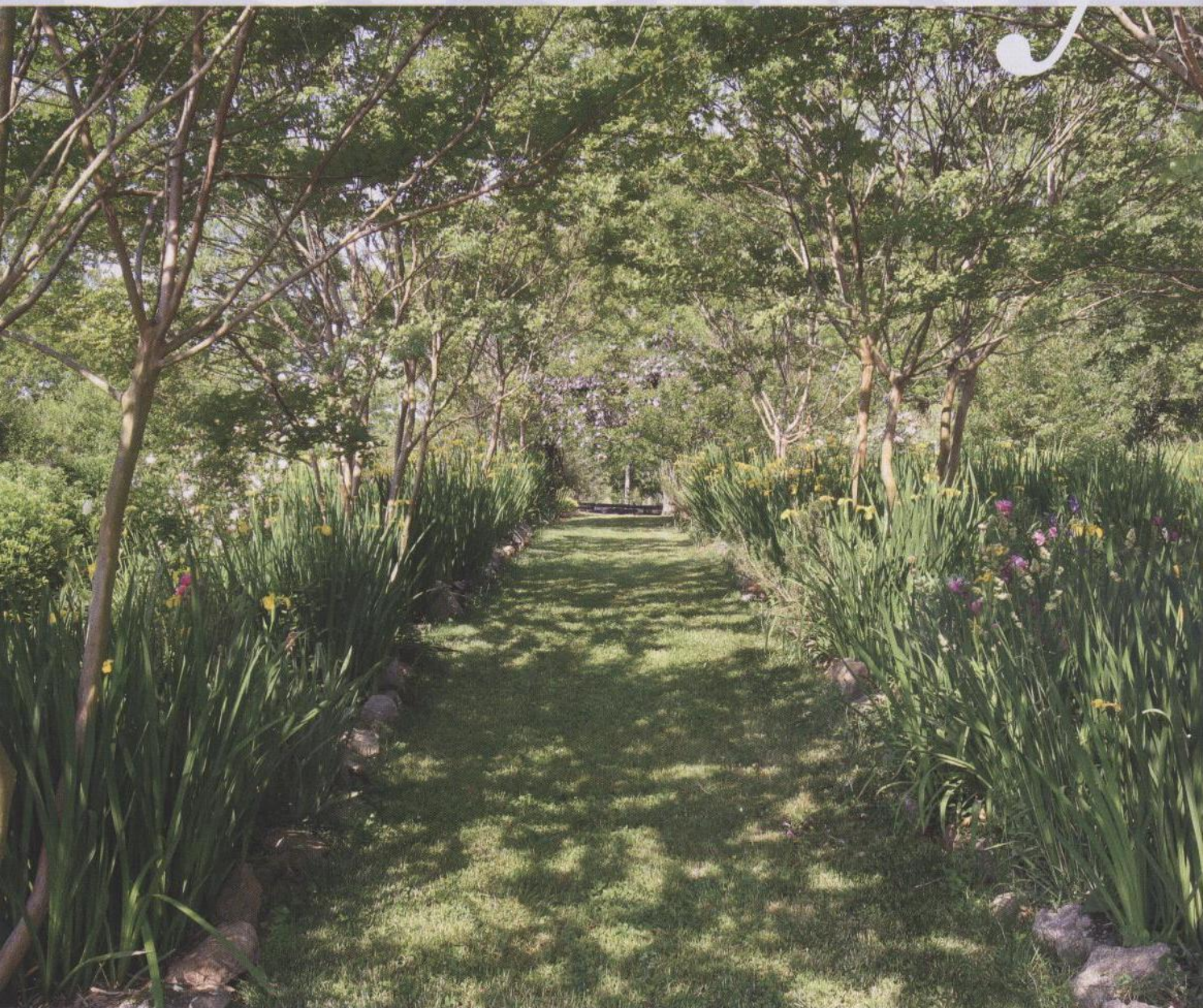


LET'S GO

# Serenity



BY JANET FLANIGAN  
PHOTOS BY BOB FRALEY

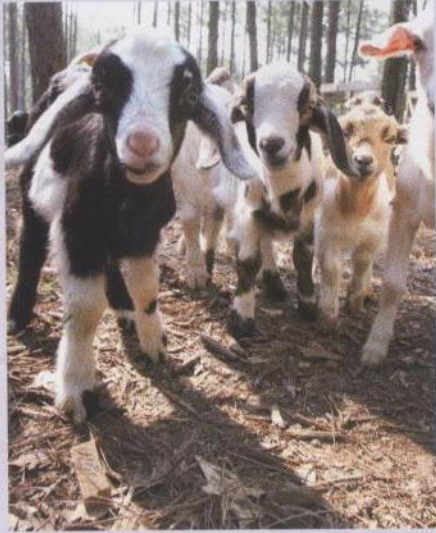
Cars seem to operate in a slower gear on the soft curves of Hutcheson Ferry Road leading to Serenbe Bed and Breakfast Farm in Palmetto. The feeling of quietude continues as tires crunch over the drive. Ginger the Great Pyrenees dog keeps her watch

by the colorful perennial bed, her giant tail whomping the ground in greeting, but she doesn't bother to get up. And why should she? She, too, is caught up in the serenity of Serenbe.

Steve and Marie Nygren originally bought this farm in 1991 as a rustic weekend getaway. One of

*Serenbe seems unique among bed and breakfasts, with its farm atmosphere, and guests truly enjoy ambling all over the acreage as well as enjoying the amenities such as a pool, hot tub, campfires, trampolines, croquet, canoeing and other activities.*

# just a country drive away



our bed and breakfast guests to become the first homeowners in our Serenbe community," he said.

Guests can choose from several different sleeping accommodations including a 1930s converted horse barn with screened porches and private living areas; three different size private cottages with kitchenettes, fireplaces, whirlpool tubs and each sporting different amenities; and the larger Lake House

Atlanta's busiest couples, he founded the Peasant Restaurant Chain, and she had run the Women's Commerce Club. For their weekend sojourns, Marie felt the farm needed a proper name and combined the words "Serenity" and "Be" for Serenbe.

It is no surprise this enterprising duo would simply create their own word to name their unique place and lifestyle. They sold their Atlanta interests and felt compelled to share what they had in Palmetto, turning Serenbe into a bed and breakfast farm.

"People are just so happy to be here," said Steve Nygren in his soothing tone, a genuine welcoming smile on his face. "Our guests experience what my family felt when we began coming here on our weekends." The Nygrens' belief in this lifestyle connected them to nature and gradually led them — and several influential partners — to develop the Serenbe community (see sidebar).

"The peace we've found in this way of life has encouraged many of



with private entrances for housing larger groups.

The Nygrens' tasteful, comfortable and soulful decorating style is prevalent throughout the property, both inside and outside. Rooms and grounds have been decorated with antiques and heirlooms from the owners' personal Southern folk art collection, so each space is an entirely unique experience. When you are finally ready to tuck in, downy soft linens and handmade quilts make sure you will have a restful night's sleep before waking to enjoy a full country





breakfast served in the farmhouse.

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Guests have free rein to wander the grounds and visit the many friendly livestock that live on the farm. Goats clamber to the fence for a scratch, hopeful for a handout and a tickle. Meanwhile, burros begin braying to make sure they aren't forgotten. And over behind the lawn area, pigs and bunnies are ready for a pet from those who are willing and able.

The kitchen garden behind the horse barn is a work of art in itself, including trellises made from tree branches and borders cut from small logs. Herb gardens spill over the sides of their raised beds, and some lettuces gone to seed raise their tops like natural skyscrapers toward the sky.

There are flowers, flowers everywhere, from the artfully tended beds at the entrance to the

wildflower fields throughout the 60-acre property of the bed and breakfast farm. The amateur and more professional-minded photographer alike will want to bring a camera to capture the bounty of flora climbing, cascading, over every fence, out of every urn, in every pot imaginable.

It's all perfectly serene. *NCM*

*Serenbe Bed and Breakfast Farm, 10950 Hutcheson Ferry Road, Palmetto, GA 770-463-2610. Rates from \$140 - \$250. Suite rates include full country breakfast, afternoon Southern tea and sweets at bedtime. Two night minimum on weekends unless booked within two weeks. Parties of 10 or more may arrange dinners.*



# Serenbe Community

Serenbe is a 900-acre community, home to the first of two hamlets to be developed in the 65,000-acre Chattahoochee Hill Country area. Serenbe combines the select principles of new urbanism and conservation communities to create the next generation of responsible development.

The hamlet includes home sites, retail shops, office space, restaurants and unique amenities. In

addition, 70 percent of the acreage is being preserved as green space. Founders include Steve and Marie Nygren, Nan and Rawson

Haverty (she is founder of Swann Services, he is senior vice president of Haverty's), and Ryan Gainey, internationally

known garden designer and owner of Ryan Gainey and Company. For information on The Serenbe Community, call 770-463-9997.

