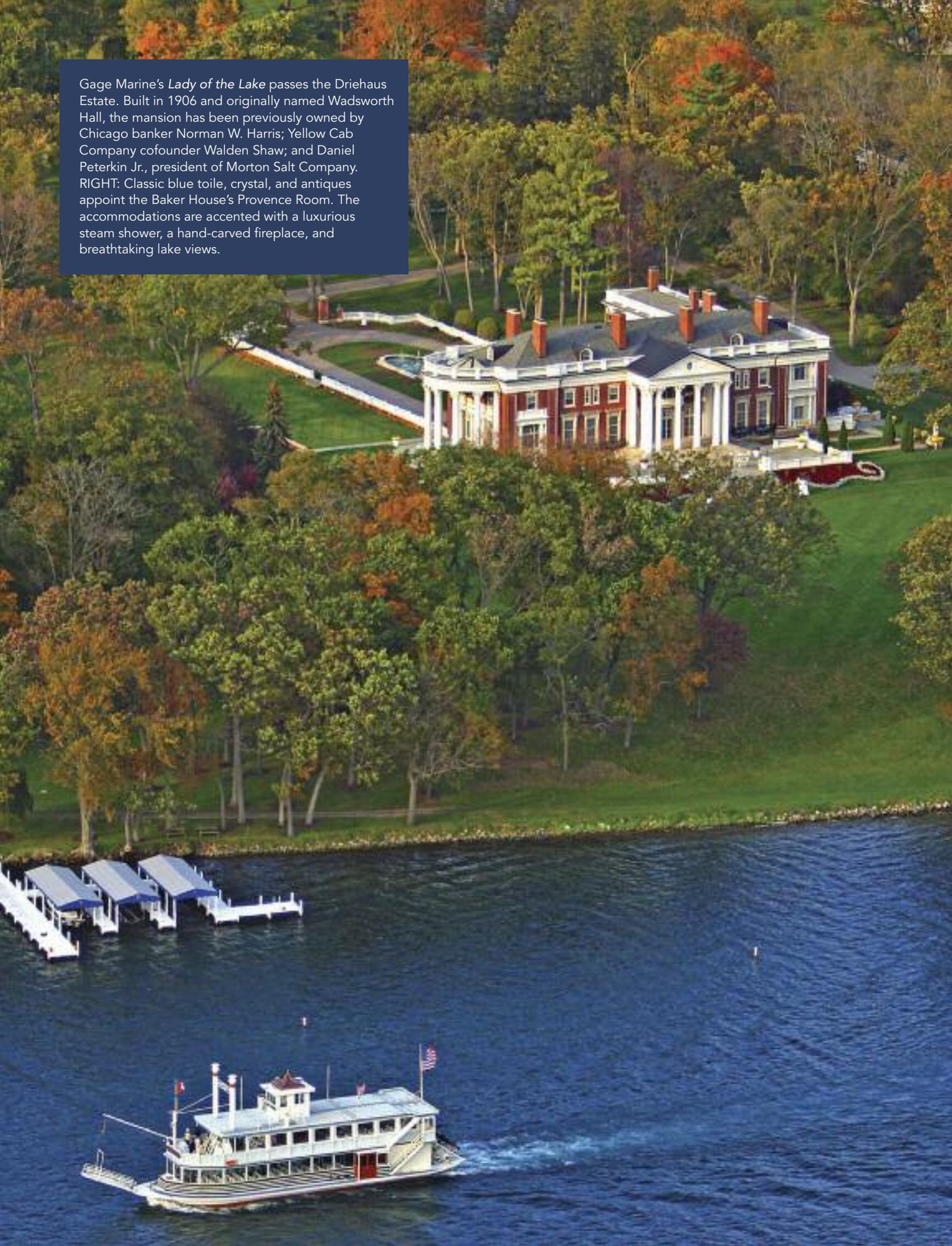


Gage Marine's *Lady of the Lake* passes the Driehaus Estate. Built in 1906 and originally named Wadsworth Hall, the mansion has been previously owned by Chicago banker Norman W. Harris; Yellow Cab Company cofounder Walden Shaw; and Daniel Peterkin Jr., president of Morton Salt Company. RIGHT: Classic blue toile, crystal, and antiques appoint the Baker House's Provence Room. The accommodations are accented with a luxurious steam shower, a hand-carved fireplace, and breathtaking lake views.





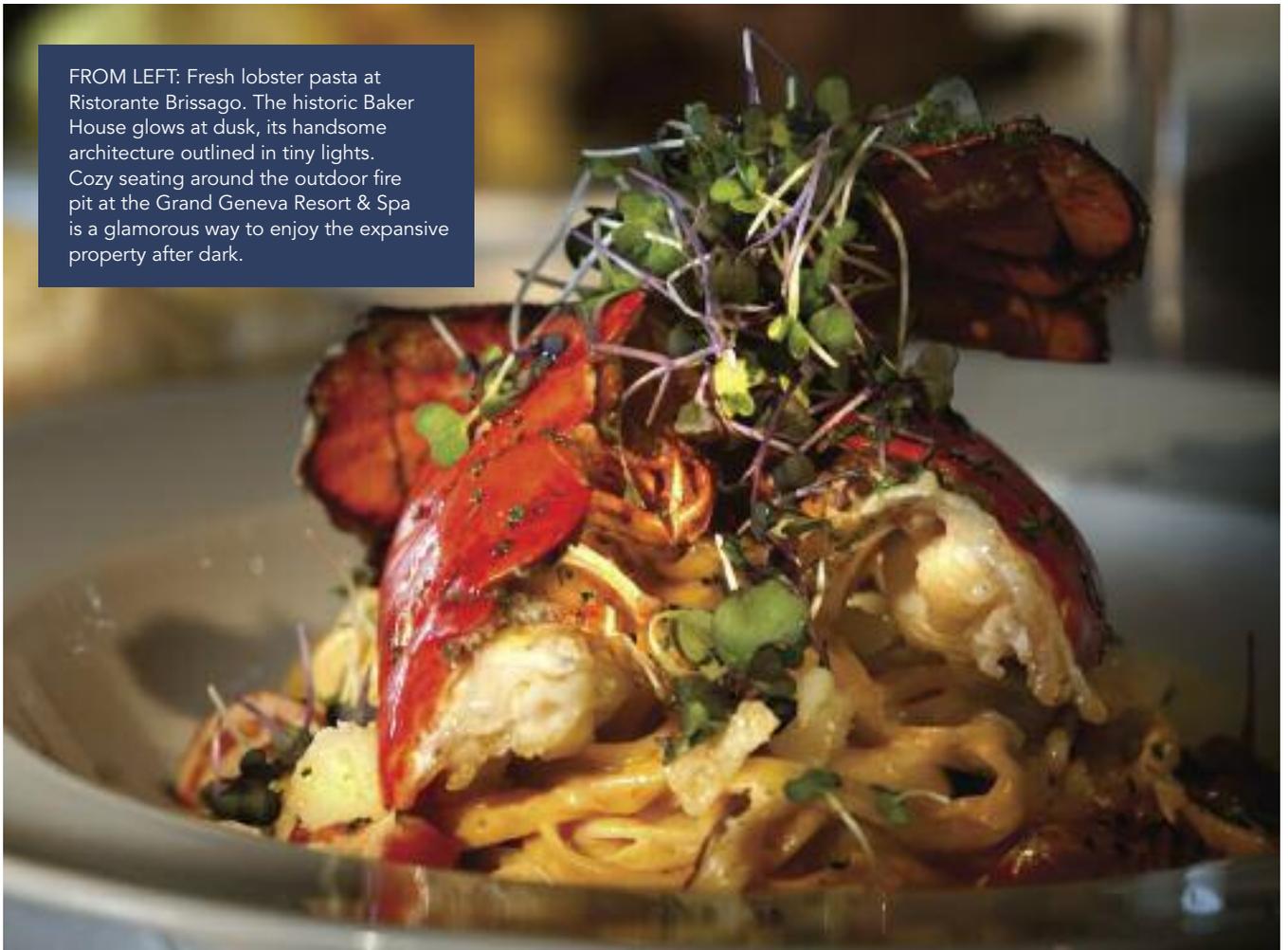
# Lake Geneva

W I S C O N S I N

FROM ICONIC WATERFRONT MANSIONS TO CLASSIC CRUISE BOATS AND PRISTINE BEACHES, THIS MIDWESTERN DESTINATION SWIMS IN HISTORIC CHARM AND TRADITION

*Written by Robyn Roehm Cannon*

FROM LEFT: Fresh lobster pasta at Ristorante Brissago. The historic Baker House glows at dusk, its handsome architecture outlined in tiny lights. Cozy seating around the outdoor fire pit at the Grand Geneva Resort & Spa is a glamorous way to enjoy the expansive property after dark.

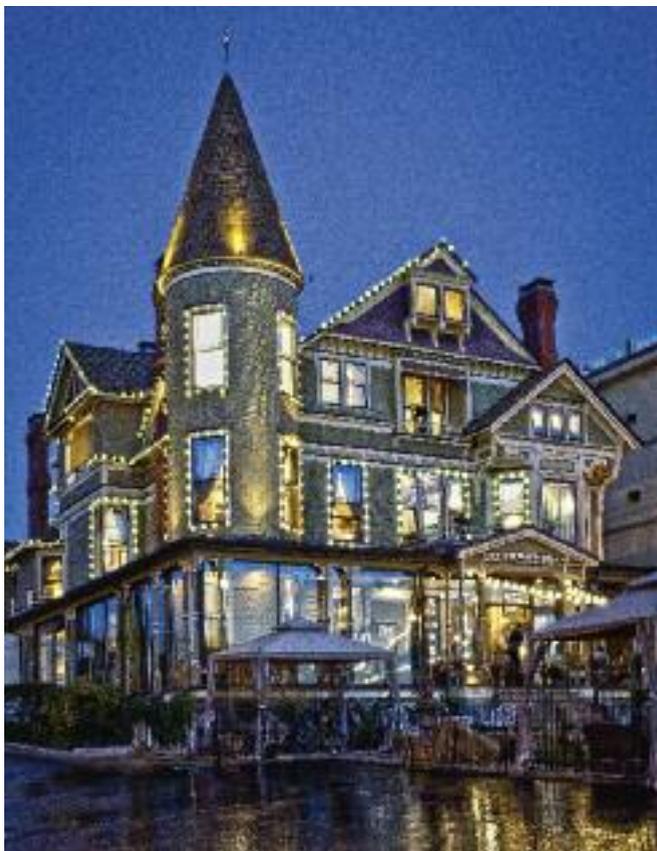


*If you've ever wondered what it might be like to live in a luxurious manor on the shores of a crystal-clear lake, a visit to historic Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, is a perfect way to live out that fantasy. Travelers have been flocking to this beautiful destination, located just an hour's drive from Milwaukee and ninety minutes from Chicago, for more than 150 years since it was settled following the Civil War in the mid-1800s.*

After the Great Chicago Fire in 1871, wealthy families escaped to their summer lake homes while the city was being rebuilt. The Wrigleys of the chewing-gum empire, the Vicks of cough-drop fame, the Maytags of the washing-machine business, and the Schwinns of the world-famous bicycle company are only a few who built multiacre waterfront estates on Lake Geneva during the next several decades. Amazingly, many remain intact, still enjoyed by fifth- and sixth-generation descendants.

No longer just a summer destination for the affluent, Lake Geneva is a charming town filled with lovely clothing and decor shops, world-class golf resorts and spas, weekly cottage rentals, and casual and elegant dining choices. An especially beautiful time to visit is early autumn, when breathtaking foliage colors surround the water with brilliant hues against the deepest blue skies imaginable.

A stroll on the lake's twenty-mile walking path that runs between the water and the mansions allows you close-up views



of the manicured gardens and estates, without fear of trespassing on private property. It's a unique feature that keeps the lakeshore accessible to everyone.

The Baker House is a perfect spot to experience what privileged lake life was like during Victorian times. Originally built as a thirty-room summer residence in 1885 for Mrs. Robert Hall Baker, the mansion has been beautifully preserved with nearly all of its original ornate details intact and sits on the National Register of Historic Places. You'll luxuriate in sumptuous bedding in a freshly restored suite that has one of the home's thirteen original working fireplaces, all exquisitely adorned with rare J & JG Low Art Tile of Chelsea, Massachusetts. It's a joy to see these colorful tiles that were so carefully installed more than a century ago by master craftsmen.

Each suite has a decadent bathroom and there's a lovely parlor, a library, a cozy bar, and intimate small-plate dining to enjoy. Best of all, a private butler is waiting to serve you day or night. Need laundry or pressing attended to? Perhaps you'd enjoy a cold glass of bubbly as you relax on the chaise by the fire? Not a problem here. Your every wish is his command. An extensive collection of fancy vintage hats on display throughout the house is a playful touch. Co-Owner Bethany Souza encourages guests to try them on and assume a new character while in residence.

The Grand Geneva Resort & Spa, with its Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course, is another excellent lodging choice.

The property was opened in 1968 by Playboy magnate Hugh Hefner as the first Playboy Club and operated as such for nearly twenty years. Although that era is gone, the resort's elegant mid-century modern architecture remains as a nod to its storied past.

In addition to the resort's airy guest suites overlooking the golf course, a highlight is dining at the outstanding Ristorante Brissago, where all ingredients are flown in from Italy weekly. You can expect mozzarella made in Campania, Sicilian hand-rolled pasta, and an extensive wine list representing only Italian vintages. Brissago is a dining experience that will be long remembered for its authentic and delicious food, inventive presentation, and romantic setting with spectacular views of the Wisconsin countryside.

For the true Lake Geneva experience, you have to get out on the water. There's no better way to capture the majesty of America's steamboat era than aboard Lake Geneva Cruise Line's beautifully restored lake boats, many of which have operated since 1873. One of the most delightful summertime experiences is a ride on the U.S. Mailboat Tour, one of the only marine mail deliveries of its type in the country. It's rollicking fun to see the mailperson leap off the boat onto a private pier, drop the mail into the box, and jump back aboard, without the boat stopping.

Whether you visit in the summer or fall, Lake Geneva will certainly charm you. It's a rare opportunity to peek into the enclaves of the rich and famous, while enjoying the present of one of America's most unique and treasured destinations. ■