



Then...



Now...

HEAD “DOWNTON” THE MANOR HOUSE

With Downton Abbey fans eagerly anticipating the launch of the movie this Friday, one can't help but wonder what it must be like to be Lord of the Manor. Being served hand and foot by a staff of maids, butlers and footmen. Enjoying high tea in the afternoon and a cognac in the library after dinner. Or perhaps summoning your own “Branson” to bring round the car for a trip into town. Having your slippers put out for you at bedtime, and a breakfast tray brought to your bedside in the morning by your private “Carson”.

Actually – this fantasy is a reality that can still be experienced at the historical [Manor House](#) at Fancourt in South Africa, located in the heart of the Cape's popular Garden Route. This elegant, 150+ year old homestead which has been declared a National Monument, was once the home of Henry Fancourt White, who was born in Yorkshire (the very setting for Downton Abbey) and moved to South Africa with his parents as part of the British 1820 settlers – but today is one of South Africa's most exclusive boutique hotels with just 18 decadent suites - complete with 24 hour “Downton-style” butler service to help you feel just like a post- Edwardian Aristocrat!

Guests can step back into a bygone era as they enjoy a very elegant high tea in the Garden and Tea Lounge or on the patio every afternoon - which we feel sure would impress even the Dowager herself! The Manor has a very traditional English feel to it as “Blanco House” was originally built in the style of a Cotswolds Mansion, and the Montague bar and Library, with its large leather wingback chairs and writing desk, look like a set straight out of Highclere Castle, where a very civilised complimentary whiskey or cognac can be enjoyed while you thumb through a few of the antique books. Guests can even summon the chauffer to take them to a local restaurant or winery!

Located in the wooded parkland of the 613-hectare estate at the foot of the majestic Outeniqua Mountains, Fancourt's sprawling grounds with its sprawling lawns, gardens, massive trees and lily-pad covered ponds, look much like those in the opening shots of Downton. Guest can indulge in age-old country pursuits like billiards, fishing, biking, tennis and horse riding – or opt for more modern facilities include a world class spa with roman baths, both outdoor and indoor swimming pools, and 3 championship golf courses including The Links (the top golf course in SA).

So as we watch Lord and Lady Grantham prepare to welcome some rather royal visitors - why not check in yourself at The Manor House? Rates start from R3,965 (£218) per person per night which includes breakfast, in-room/poolside dining, lunch, afternoon tea, evening canapés with sparkling wine and numerous VIP complimentary extras such as airport and local transfers and a well-stocked mini bar with liquor decanters of premium whisky, brandy, vodka, gin and sherry for enjoyment during your stay. Visit <https://manorhouse.fancourt.co.za>

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