

Lewisburg: Nestled in the Greenbrier Valley

By **Stephanie Green** - December 7, 2018



The French Goat is a popular bistro in Lewisburg, and one of the few French restaurants in the state.

I left my heart in Lewisburg because of a French goat.

Actually, it wasn't a French goat, but the French Goat — one of only a few French bistros in West Virginia, and the only one in Lewisburg, which is redefining small-town chic.

Nestled in the Greenbrier Valley with a population under 4,000, Lewisburg is just a short plane ride over the Shenandoah Valley, thanks to a new flight on United out of Dulles operated by SkyWest Airlines.

When most people touch down at the Greenbrier Valley Airport, they immediately hop on the handy white shuttle bus to be whisked off to the secluded splendor of the Greenbrier resort.

And for good reason: you can't call yourself a proper Georgetowner without at least a couple of Greenbrier golfing excursions or weekend getaways in your back pocket for cocktail party banter.

Now well into its 60 Days of Holiday Cheer, the Greenbrier is reason enough to jump on that new nifty flight.

But the next time you're in the Greenbrier Valley, stay an extra day or two to take in just a little more of that Mountaineer fresh air in nearby Lewisburg, outside the hotel's chintz confines.

I did, and I can't wait to get back.



*Gravesite of African American hero Dick Pointer
in Lewisburg, WV.*



Historic graveyard in Lewisburg, WV.



Rustic scene in West Virginia.

Start out cruising down Washington Street. It's basically Mayberry, minus Floyd's barbershop. Everybody knows everybody, and the shopkeepers and café owners thrive on making outsiders feel welcome.

The Stardust Café is a good example of West Virginia hospitality, where you can get a farm-to-table meal. I suggest the curry chicken sandwich for a lunch break between cemetery visits, a must in history-rich Lewisburg.

Adjacent to the Old Stone Presbyterian Church is the Lewisburg Cemetery, dating back to 1797 and the eternal home of many an interesting character. Sadly, across the narrow street is a segregated area

where Dick Pointer, an enslaved man who defended Lewisburg during a Shawnee attack in 1778, was laid to rest in a cemetery for African Americans.

Civil War buffs should check out the well- kept cemetery for unknown Confederate soldiers and Tuckwiller’s Hill, where in 1863 Union troops retreated after being duped by Lt. Col. George Edgar.

But Lewisburg’s biggest historical figure, Revolutionary War Gen. Andrew Lewis, the town’s namesake, is also its most luxurious draw, because of the newly restored Historic General Lewis Inn.



The Historic General Lewis Inn in Lewisburg. The 19th century carriage is authentic as are the hotel’s many antique pieces.



The stunning Greenbrier resort which has made The Greenbrier Valley a national travel destination.



The garden of the Historic General Lewis Inn.

The 19th-century inn, purchased by Aaron and Sparrow Huffman in 2014, has become the town’s coolest watering hole, thanks to the boutique craft cocktail lounge in the living room they’ve installed.

You can alternatively take your cocktail to the garden they’ve charmingly turned into an ideal wedding venue.

Seven of the 24 rooms have been updated in recent years, giving the hotel the feeling of a very glam Wild West saloon. Those of you who appreciate retro details will get a kick out of opening your room with a real key. There’s nothing plastic about this place. Everything is natural, including the friendly customer service and the authentic carriage from the 1800s sitting in the hotel’s front yard.

Which takes me back to the French Goat, just a short drive away. It’s a 19th-century home that’s been turned into the cutest Gallic eatery you’ve ever seen by Debbie Porter and Arthur Forgette, who fled the D.C. dining scene for the hills of West Virginia.

Like most of the homes in Lewisburg, the French Goat has the perfect front porch, from which an American flag proudly flies. I had the steak and frites, which rivaled some of the meals I’ve had in

Europe, provided by local artisan food producers and farming communities.

The French Goat may not steal your heart, but the people and atmosphere of Lewisburg will.



Typical front porch of homes in Lewisburg.



The inviting front porch of the Historic General Lewis Inn.



Four poster bed and antique details add retro charm to the Historic General Lewis Inn in Lewisburg.

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