

A Royal Tradition comes to Yorktown

By [Stephanie Sabin](#), WY Daily

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YORKTOWN — York Gardens and Tea Room has the distinction of being the only traditional English tearoom in Virginia.

“The tea room came about as a result of my love of gardening,” says owner Jimmy Howell. “I originally thought I would open a garden center but, I also wanted to sell herbal teas. As I began to develop that the idea became an English tea room with complimentary gardens.”



(York Gardens Tea Room)

Howell, a Yorktown native who also owns ChesBay Landscaping, used his love of landscaping and gardening to create a unique, one-of-a-kind dining experience any Bridgerton fan would swoon over.

Opening in December, the business, located on the George Washington Memorial Highway in Yorktown, is already expanding its outdoor space. Plans include a croquet lawn with a water feature, a patio for outdoor dining, and a life-sized wrought iron carriage that will be displayed in the rose garden.

Afternoon tea, says Howell, began with one of Queen Victoria’s ladies-in-waiting. As only breakfast and dinner were traditionally served, the custom of sharing tea in the private parlor with small sandwiches and snacks began. Eventually, the event grew to include friends and ended with a walk through the palace gardens.

“The to-do society of England caught on and it became a very sociable event. Our goal is to replicate that and exhibit an atmosphere as closely as possible to a royal feeling,” says Howell,

“After a leisurely meal, customers are able to walk about the gardens and enjoy the space. It is meant to be a relaxing, shared experience.”

The tea room offers afternoon tea, lunch and dinner seven days a week with a reservation. In addition to the gardens, guests can enjoy the parlor seated by the fireplace and view Howell’s Wedgewood china collection.

“All our dishes are made in-house and the pace is slower,” says Howell, “but I find people do not mind waiting for a fresh baked scone or quiche. This is not a fast-paced restaurant. We want customers to sit, relax and enjoy.”

To make a reservation or get directions, visit [York Garden Tearooms](#).