

HIDDEN STABLES

A I K E N

Hidden Stables is a peaceful equestrian retreat situated in the fabled Historic Horse District. This 1928 Winter Colony estate offers privacy amid acres of tranquility steeped in legend. The historic integrity of the stables is preserved and maintained to be enjoyed by future generations.

Hidden Stables is comprised of a cottage, turreted stables, carriage house, and separate main house. The property was once a component of “Tip Top Too,” an American Shingle Style estate built in 1928 for the Pinkerton family, whose patriarch founded the famous detective agency. Later, during World War II, Tip Top Too became the second Aiken residence for Lucy Mercer Rutherford. The stables were prominent enough by the 1930s to be pictured in *Sporting Stables and Kennels*, a book published in 1935 by the Derrydale Press. The portion of the estate that encompassed the stables and cottages was detached from the main house, Tip Top Too, (next door) during the 1950s. Later on, land was acquired from Greentree Stables, a winter racehorse training facility owned by the Whitney family. These fields were then incorporated into the present property. Hidden Stables offers 9.10 acres of privacy and sanctuary, whilst remaining conveniently located 5 minutes from historic downtown Aiken, South Carolina.

Hidden Stables has been the domain of the present family for three generations. During this period, the stables accommodated horses for racing, fox hunting, carriage driving, and polo ponies for the family. Other family favorites were the White Tornado, winner of the mule race at the Aiken steeplechase, and a beloved Sicilian donkey, Dolly. Exotic animals roamed about the property over the years, including an emu, peacocks, a pair of large African tortoises, South American trumpeter birds and more. The owner enjoyed entertaining. Members of the United States Park police, the oldest mounted patrols in the country (based in Washington, D.C.) were welcomed annually, along with their horses, at Hidden Stables. The owner enjoyed the company of the Australian three-day event team and provided fields for their use, for training purposes, in preparation for the 1996 Olympics held in Atlanta, Georgia. Over the years Hidden Stables has provided unforgettable memories for the family and entertained numerous guests. It continues as an equestrian venue and gathering place with a flair all its own.

Unique turrets, cedar shake roofs and siding, copper accents, and gleaming white trim highlight the stable and cottage architecture that greets you upon entering the picturesque stable yard.

The estate’s stables are configured in a classic Aiken Winter Colony shed row style allowing for the best airflow. City water and well water service the property. Each of the 14 stalls is 12’x12’ and contains a high back window, and Dutch door fronts fitted with halter hooks. Original square air vents, incorporated in the center of each stall ceiling, lead to the attic. This allows hot air to rise upward to enter wind turbines that facilitate the flow of fresh air. Rectangular built-in ventilation screens are over every stall door to further enhance air flow. All stalls are equipped with drainage and new commercial Canadian rubber mats, 20” commercial fans, blanket bars, solid hardware for 2 water buckets, corner feed tubs, and tie rings. 4 of the stalls in the upper barn have solid walls, and the lower barn contains a laundry room/kitchen/office, and a half-bath.

Both stable buildings feature a corner turret. The upper barn turret is 16 feet high and hexagonally shaped measuring approximately 11 1/2 feet wide with a wide plank wood floor that makes for a wonderfully unique corner stall. The lower barn turret is two stories. The ground floor of the turret reveals a feed room with a heart pine feed bench, wide plank wood floors, a front door, and a back Dutch door for easy load in. The second floor of the lower barn turret is accessed by an iron spiral staircase and contains a clerestory room clad in heart pine, making for a magical tree house feel overlooking the pool and fields beyond.

The carriage house is situated, separately, and between the two barns. The 600 square foot main floor includes Dutch door entrances, a half bath, tack room, double-door carriage bay, book shelves and an enclosed glass cabinet available to display trophies and awards. The 600 square foot loft contains a full bath, and sealed heart pine floors. The tack room is outfitted with 6 saddle racks, numerous antique bridle and harness hooks, a saddle cleaning rack, commercial deep sink with on-demand hot water, as well as an antique hutch for storage.

The Pavilion provides 1200 square feet that accommodates a wash rack (enclosed on three sides by clear Lexan panels), on-demand hot water, and a vet area with plenty of storage. The area also incorporates a Kalglo heater, 2 fans, rubber mat

flooring, a retractable hose, LED task lighting, 3 grooming bays, space for hay storage, and a side entrance for a farrier, with an outside hydrant and parking space.

Contained within the 9.10 acres are 6.4139 acres of irrigated grass paddocks - divided into four 240'x240' front fields with 12-foot alleyways and cross-fenced from the clay roads. Two more paddocks are situated behind the barn: one measures 180'x80' and the other measures 240'x180', furnished with two round pens for rehabilitation or lunging. All paddocks have frost free hydrants fed by a private well, are irrigated and seeded with a mix of Bahia, millet, and some Timothy, and are prepped for winter with rye seed. The soil is fertilized and sampled quarterly by Clemson University. The landscape encompassing the cottage, stable yard, and pool area is irrigated as well.

The charming 904 square foot cottage has one bedroom, one bathroom with laundry, a living room, dining area, and kitchen, with original whitewashed pine floors throughout. The brand-new custom kitchen was remodeled in June 2020 and is equipped with honed quartz counter tops and quartz back splash surround, Bosch glass electric cook top stove, Miele convection and built-in microwave ovens, Fisher & Paykel double-drawer dishwasher, a roll out pantry, and reclaimed heart pine cabinets. The open living room features a wood burning fireplace with an antique pine panel/mantelpiece. This connects to the dining area, which leads to double-paned French doors offering views and access to the stable yard. The bedroom incorporates a library with custom bookshelves and a fireplace with antique mantelpiece, aged interior French doors and another set of double-paned French doors that open to the slate terrace and stable yard. The bathroom contains a newly set subway tile bath-shower combo with a seating ledge, timed ceiling heater to keep you warm after showers, dimmable recessed lighting, a "secret" walk-in closet with built-in shelving, and a separate closet accommodating a stackable washer and dryer.

Only a few steps from the cottage, a serene landscape awaits containing a free-form Gunite pool framed by boulders at one end to create a fountain that spills from the boulders into the pool.

The historic main house* was originally conceived as two separate side by side, structures. One structure was designated the "manager's cottage" for the Tip Top Too estate. The other was utilized as the laundry house ("wash house" in those days). These two structures were combined during the 1950s to create a single 1,795 square foot home. This house is available for imaginative renovation to suit personal needs and style. The house presently has 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, formal dining, a large living room, a kitchen with a classic Wolf commercial range, a mudroom, some antique pine paneling, an antique mantelpiece, and 4 fireplaces (2 wood-burning: previously, the manager's cottage, and 2 coal-burning: previously, the wash house). The main house is private, hidden from the street by vegetation that includes a fine old growth live oak situated directly behind the house.

*The main house requires restoration.

LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Palm trees, and a tall Ligustrum hedge grow along the line of the stables in the vicinity of the main house. The main house utilizes a gated entrance fronting on Grace Avenue. Large, mature magnolia trees line this sandy clay road. The parking area near the house is dwarfed by the magnolia trees adjacent to it. This assemblage of trees is enclosed by board fencing. This fencing borders Grace Avenue, the parking area, and a horse paddock that faces the front of the house (as if the trees had a paddock of their own!). Several pecan trees provide interest within the paddock facing the house. There are tall established oaks, and an assortment of mature trees scattered throughout the Hidden Stables property, including along fence lines that border open fields. The open fields and paddocks comprise 6.4139 acres. This specific acreage has a conservation easement placed upon it by the present owner. The conservation easement is administered through the Aiken Land Conservancy. This easement protects this natural, open space for its scenic value, and ensures that the fields will be available for equestrian activities far into the future. The remainder of the estate features varieties of specimen plants. Floral tones of gardenia and tea olive permeate the air in Spring as one takes notice of mature purple butterfly bushes and snow cap hydrangeas. Venerable, cultivated camellia bushes greet visitors along the walkway in front of the cottage. More camellias, collections of flowering azalea bushes and other specimen plantings may be observed and appreciated throughout the property, as one wanders beneath the mature tree canopy.

Take a moment to view the video tour to appreciate the property and see how the balance of structures integrate into a magical oasis.

Hidden Stables has been curated for the discerning rider thinking about safety and ease of daily programs, and most of all, fun with friends and family. This is an opportunity to create a legacy of your own in the continued evolution of this storied Winter Colony retreat.