



Ella's Enchanted Treehouses

FOR ELEVATED ACCOMMODATIONS

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When Stacie Griffith decided to leave her teaching position to focus on her young child, she and her husband Casey wanted to replace her income with a new venture. Casey brainstormed a long list of ideas, but the only one that Stacie would even consider was to build treehouses for rent by vacationers. They were fans of Treehouse Masters®, where people all over the country were advised on how to build treehouses. They loved to travel and stay in various kinds of accommodations. This seemed a perfect fit.

Making the dream a reality required several steps. First, they needed a place to build. After a months-long search of available properties, they found that they kept coming back to a 22-acre parcel in the Bittering area of Garrett County, Maryland. It was near thousands of acres of state forest, the extensive Meadow Mountain Trail, and several state parks. The land was on top of a mountain, but relatively level. Best of all, it had a peaceful quality that made it a soothing place to visit.

The next hurdle was planning the buildings. They turned to Treehouse Masters® and other professionals for the necessary engineering of each structure. Local contractors installed well, septic, and sprinkler systems, and arborists inspected the trees. Stacie and Casey found wonderful builders who understood their vision and beautifully interpreted Stacie's ideas.

Stacie designed the buildings to be efficient but not cramped in the use of space. The Griffiths were determined from the beginning that each treehouse would be comfortable—these are not the treehouses of your childhood!—so there are modern bathroom and kitchen facilities, air conditioning and heat, and generators.

The Griffiths knew they wanted to incorporate elements of the outside forest into each cabin. Some friends wanted to demolish their storm-damaged barns, and Casey and Stacie took them down to use the wood in the treehouses.



Guests at Ella's Enchanted Treehouses can choose between (clockwise from top left): The Eagles Nest, The DayDreamer, The Cozy Spruce, and The Gathering Tree.

They also drew on design ideas they had encountered on their travels, and purchased furnishings and fittings, as well as the fireplaces, from places including Amish country around Berlin, Ohio.

Since 2017, four treehouses have been built, and there are no immediate plans to build more. The treehouses are sited far enough away from each other for all guests to have privacy, but close enough that family or friend groups renting more than one treehouse can easily get together. The collection has been named for the Griffiths' daughter Ella, whose name has the Germanic meaning of beautiful fairy, and in Hebrew, tree. Certainly treehouses are appropriate dwellings for fairies!

Each treehouse has its own personality and purpose, connected to a scriptural text.

Eagles Nest (sleeps 4-5) is high in the trees with elevated views and a special loft space especially appealing to younger family members. Its name was inspired by Isaiah 40:31: "But they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles."

Gathering Tree (sleeps 6) is intended to be a place where larger groups can gather and renew their relationships. The inspiration for this treehouse is Matthew 18:20: "For where two or more are gathered together in my name, there will I be also."

DayDreamer (sleeps 6) is completely ADA-compliant. Situated on a slightly sloping site, it is entered via a ramp, and everything inside is carefully designed for accessibility. It is meant to be a calming space; the scriptural reference is Psalm 91:4: "He will cover you with His feathers, under His wings you will find refuge."



Top left and right:
The interior of The DayDreamer treehouse accommodates wheelchair users on the main floor.

Second tier photos:
Appropriately, there is an intimate table for two in The Cozy Spruce (left) and kitchen seating for a larger group in The Gathering Tree (right).

Bottom right:
Fun-for-the-young bunk beds provide a lofty perch in Eagles Nest.



Cozy Spruce (sleeps 2-3, with third person being a child under 16) is intended as a restorative escape for friends or couples. Relationships—and life—can be challenging; thus, the scriptural text for this treehouse is Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!”

It took some time for rentals to become regular, but during the pandemic, business skyrocketed due to people’s desire to get out into nature safely, and the treehouses remain popular year-round. Several traditions have taken root at the treehouses. One is to search for the hidden treasures along the Tremendous Trail, a walking path installed by the Griffiths. Another is to add to the fort area, an ever-changing construction of rocks and branches built by guests.

Ella’s Enchanted Treehouses are luxurious accommodations inviting couples, families, and friends to reconnect with nature

and each other. Though there is good cell reception for some carriers, there is intentionally no wifi, and many visitors enjoy being free of screens during their time in the treehouses. The treehouses also are excellent bases from which to explore the area and its many forms of recreation, festivals and attractions.

Full information and reservations are available through the website: <https://eetreehouses.com>