

The Kennebunkport Inn is Out to Prove Maine is a Year-Round Travel Destination

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A “Paint the Town Red” event highlighting everything this quaint New England town has to offer



Built in 1899, The Kennebunkport Inn offers traditional charm mixed with a few modern amenities.

If you’ve ever been to **Maine**, you’ve probably noticed the signs and license plates that dub the state “Vacationland.” To most people, especially in the Northeast, this means Maine is the perfect **getaway in the summer** when the ice thaws, the snow melts, and the temperatures rise. And if you’ve ever seen the local population booms that take place from May to September, you’ll know this to be true. But the Pine Tree State has beauty, culture, and events that should be experienced year-round, and the small coastal town of Kennebunkport is out to spread the word with events in all seasons, such as “Paint the Town Red,” a celebration of love in “New England’s Most Romantic Town” that takes place from Jan. 28 to Feb. 28, 2017. To

experience the event ourselves, we checked into the classy and cozy Kennebunkport Inn, a historic spot that's doing more than its fair share to put the town on everyone's radar. Or perhaps "everyone's map" is a better term; after all, Kennebunkport is an old-school town that was incorporated way back in 1653.

A member of the Kennebunkport Resort Collection, The **Kennebunkport Inn** offers a total of 33 guestrooms: 13 in the original Main Inn, built as a mansion in 1899, and 20 in the adjacent Riverhouse addition, which was astonishingly converted from a laundromat in the 1950s and is accessible via an enclosed corridor. Each available guestroom is a bit different and offers it's own charm, with preferences to fit every traveler's needs. If you've journeyed to Kennebunkport for the town's classic New England charm, you might feel more comfortable in one of the "premier" rooms, which offer traditional colonial decor, antique furnishings, and working fireplaces. For modern accommodations, opt instead for a "classic" room, which feature custom wood furniture and decor punctuated with modern conveniences such as iPod docks and flat-screen TVs. Can't decide between the two types? The Kennebunkport Inn has you covered there, too. The third and final category, "deluxe" rooms, blends aesthetics in a seamless combination of old and new for a perfect balance. Regardless of which option you choose, you'll be staying in a recently renovated space, as the Main Inn's common areas received a facelift and new furniture in 2012, and the Riverhouse's guestrooms got the same treatment two years later.

We ended up with a classic room and couldn't have been more pleased. Our accommodations were modern, spacious, and tastefully decorated in a crisp red,

white, and blue Ralph Lauren color palette that screamed both nautical and New England without having a single anchor or photo of a ship (don't worry sea-lovers, there's plenty of that in other rooms and elsewhere in the hotel). The white-and-grey-tiled and marble counter topped bathroom was bright and roomy and was designed so well that we snapped a photo as inspiration for our own bathroom at home.



Of course, you won't want to spend your entire vacation in your room. (Although the Inn certainly makes this a tempting choice by offering upgrades for seasonal flower arrangements delivered right to your suite, in addition to artisanal cheese plates, a wine list with a dozen delectable options, chocolate-covered strawberries, and even milk and cookies.) Head to the back of the Main Inn to visit the in-house restaurant and pub called **One Dock Prime**. Once May first rolls around, the menu expands and so does the available seating, which includes an adjacent dining room and large outdoor patio in the warmer months. Regardless of the time of year, a myriad of cocktails can always be prepared courtesy of the Inn's wonderful bartenders, as well as bar bites from French onion soup, buffalo cauliflower, and chicken wings to crab cake sandwiches, cheesesteaks, and burgers.

Since we visited during Paint the Town Red, we had the chance to attend an emotional mixology class at the Inn's pub. Ben, our extremely friendly and knowledgeable barkeep, had attendees spin a wheel labeled with different emotions and asked them to name their favorite liquor. He then stirred, shook, and mixed several cocktails - including a traditional **Manhattan** and

the bar's signature **El Diablo** (jalapeño-infused tequila, ginger liqueur, citrus, blood orange, and house sour mix) - to meet the criteria in a fun and tasty way. Word on the street was that the next weekend would feature an après skate event, which turns the Inn's patio into an ice rink, adds a hot cocoa bar, and provides snacks and fondue prepared by chef Pierre Gignac of Kennebunkport's French eatery, **Ocean**.



With wonderful restaurants, enticing shopping, and the convenient proximity to outdoor adventures, there's always plenty to do in Kennebunkport - however, we won't try to deny that the spring, summer, and fall months are the *best* times to visit, as that was clear based on conversations with managers, employees, and locals who repeatedly used the phrase "when it gets warmer." Even the hotel's perks improve with the weather, as summertime means complimentary beach shuttles and other outdoor-themed add-ons. However, the town was nevertheless abuzz on a random night in the middle of February, the Inn was completely booked, and so were numerous local restaurants. When Maine talks about Vacationland, its timeline truly knows no bounds.

If you don't personally believe the hype, simply book a trip and a stay at the Kennebunkport Inn yourself, and you'll see it doesn't take a calendar, a thermometer, or a single event to make Kennebunkport great - you can paint the town red all year long.