

How to Spend the Perfect Country Weekend In Manchester, Vermont

Need a time out? This is the place to go.



The Inn at Manchester



BY LAUREN MATTHEWS MAY 8, 2017



There are so many reasons to love southern Vermont. The charming covered bridges and sleepy country lanes, the 360-degree views of the lush Green Mountains, the quintessential white church steeples, the friendly local folks, and, of course, some of the best food in the country, whether it's found at a humble roadside diner or in an award-winning dining room. In short: If you want a time-out surrounded by idyllic scenery and delicious eats, this is the place to go.

While skiers flock to the local slopes in the winter and leaf peepers descend come fall, the quaint hamlet of Manchester bristles with energy in the spring and summer, too. Really, there's no bad time of the year to visit this picturesque corner of the country and soak up its old-fashioned country charm—here's how to have the perfect weekend stay.

Day One

Check in to the [Inn at Manchester](#), a family-owned bed-and-breakfast with 21 rooms inside a historic home that dates back to the 1890s. Now reimagined as a cozy country inn, you'll find a welcoming living-room style pub downstairs, plus a few well-appointed sitting rooms perfect for snuggling up fireside with a book, and a crystal-clear pool surrounded by luscious mountain views out back. It's the perfect home base for a romantic getaway, a family-friendly retreat, or a reunion with your best girlfriends. (The inn also has a [Celebration Barn](#) on site for events, should you be interested in hosting an intimate country wedding.)



Courtesy of the Inn at Manchester

See the sites While the city of Manchester has some excellent shopping options (the [Manchester Designer Outlets](#) include Coach, Crabtree & Evelyn, Eddie Bauer, and J. Crew), you won't want to miss the chance to soak up some local history by visiting the [Hildene House](#) (insider hint: the staff at the Inn at Manchester might be willing to give you some free passes if you ask!). The former estate of Abraham Lincoln's son, Todd, the 400-acre property features stunning formal gardens, a 1903 Pullman car used by Teddy Roosevelt, and a stately Georgian revival mansion (they've

even got one of President Lincoln's stovepipe hats on display). Afterward, head into town and hit up the [Northshire Bookstore](#), where you can peruse the books or grab a cup of coffee at the [Spiral Press Cafe](#).

Dine and drink If you're lucky, you can score a reservation at the [Silver Fork](#) (802-768-8444), where the eclectic menu is always changing, based on what the chef finds at the farmers' market that day. Whether they're serving up Tamarind BBQ Shrimp Mofongo or Wiener schnitzel, you're guaranteed one of the tastiest meals of your life if you can nab one of the six tables or five barstools.

Day Two

Fuel up Don't miss breakfast at the Inn at Manchester, included in your room rate. Get ready to fill your belly with a plate full of cottage cakes slathered with warm apricot jelly alongside juicy sausage links. Afterward, if it's Sunday, swing by the [Dorset Farmers' Market](#), where you'll find fresh veggies and fruits, local maple syrup, homemade breads and pastries, free-range eggs, grass-fed meat and lots, lots more.



Courtesy of the Inn at Manchester

Lunch and shop If you're the adventurous type, you won't want to miss the opportunity for some top-knotch fly fishing, hiking, or snowshoeing, depending on the season. But if you're not, don't worry—just head to [Taylor Farm](#), a 180-year old working dairy farm not far from Manchester, in Londonderry. In the winter, you can hop in the farm's sleigh and snuggle up while you head into the woods (where there's a cup of hot cider waiting for you!), or in the summer, you can take a tour of the farm (and don't forget to drop by the store to pick up some maple-smoked farmstead gouda).

Following your farm visit, head up the road just a little bit further to the small town of Weston, home to the original [Vermont Country Store](#). Once you open the front door you'll feel like you've stepped back in time: The sprawling shop is filled with all manner of old-fashioned curiosities and country staples. After you've picked up everything you need (and maybe some things you don't), head next door to the [Bryant House restaurant](#) for lunch—grab a table in the 1885 bar room, outfitted in salvaged mahogany wood wall paneling.



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Dine and drink Make a reservation for a table at the [Chantecleer restaurant](#), housed inside a remodeled dairy barn filled with antiques and a massive stone fireplace. The seasonal menu changes frequently, but don't miss the venison and duck breast medallions with lingonberry peppercorn sauce and spaetzle, or the Caesar salad, prepared tableside. Looking for a nightcap? Stop by the [Equinox Resort's Falcon Bar](#) and grab a couple drinks to enjoy out by the open-air fire pit, before turning in for the night.

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