

# northshore

OCTOBER 2017

THE BEST OF THE NORTH SHORE

# FALL HORROR

PEABODY  
ESSEX  
MUSEUM &  
CINEMASALEM  
TEAM UP THIS  
OCTOBER FOR  
THRILLS  
AND CHILLS

FEATURING  
**DOCTORS &  
HOSPITALS**

TOP  
HEALTHCARE  
PROVIDERS  
ON THE  
NORTH SHORE

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PLACES // WOODSTOCK, VERMONT



## Green Mountain Magic

*Autumn in Vermont by bike and on foot at Woodstock Inn & Resort.*

BY JEANNE O'BRIEN COFFEY

A line of bikes awaits just outside the grand entrance to the Woodstock Inn & Resort in Vermont, inviting guests to hop on to explore. There are a multitude of options within an easy few miles' ride, from the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park to the elegant studio of Farmhouse Pottery—all with Mount Tom rising in the distance, ablaze in fall colors at this time of year.

The bikes are just one way

Woodstock Inn makes it easy to sink into a bygone era; the relaxed elegance and authenticity that are hallmarks of New England's best historic inns are evident throughout, from the complimentary vintage pinball machines, shuffleboard, pool, and video games in the downstairs game room to the stately library full of puzzles and board games. Carefully manicured lawns are dotted with inviting places to sit, and the historic downtown is a

short few minutes' walk from the hotel, with several businesses dating back at least a century.

But this inn is no dusty relic. Rooms are comfortable, with modern conveniences and upscale amenities, and a light-filled LEED-certified spa offers everything from trendy Himalayan salt stone treatments to exclusive experiences dictated by the seasons. The resort has nearly completed a multimillion-dollar renovation that rolls back the clock to a grander time when Laurance Rockefeller himself was often seen at the property. Rockefeller built the current Colonial Revival-style inn in 1967, but it feels very much like

During autumn, Vermont is ablaze with the season's bright colors.

It has always been there—perhaps because this parcel has held a hotel for more than 200 years. Or perhaps it's because of the longevity of the staff; bell captain Bill Flower started working at the property at the tender age of 15 for Rockefeller himself, and never left. But even at 44 years running, he can't claim the crown of most senior employee—a retirement party was recently held for another worker who had been there for 50 years.

Rockefeller and his wife, Mary, who grew up nearby, were ardent conservationists, and the evidence is clear just down the street. The Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, a 550-acre forest crisscrossed with carriage trails, hiking trails, and well-tended gardens, was a gift from the pair. Take a hike to the top of Mount Tom, or visit the nearby Billings Farm & Museum. Guests of the Woodstock Inn get free admission to the working dairy farm, home to 70 Jersey cows that contribute their milk to a cooperative that supplies Cabot Cheese. In addition

The Woodstock Inn & Resort's lobby and tavern suite, below, the grand entrance of the Colonial Revival-style inn.



to observing the milking each afternoon, visitors can learn about Vermont's rural farming culture through engaging exhibits and

visiting the restored farmhouse.

Rockefeller's legacy, devotion to the area, and love of the land have kept the focus on conservation at the inn, while carefully adding elements, from a state-of-the-art fitness center to a certified organic garden, that enhance the guest experience without affecting the charming character of the town.

One experience not to miss is a visit to New England Falconry. The inn partnered with the Western Massachusetts-based education organization to bring the 4,000-year-old birding experience to a parcel of land a mile or so from the resort. Participants don a heavy leather glove while an experienced master falconer talks about the trained Harris hawks that live on-site, and then visitors free fly a hawk. On a recent visit, one bird named Newton, the youngest at 7 seven years



old, zoomed on command from the tree line, landing lightly on the outstretched gloves of awestruck visitors, nibbling a tidbit of beef and peering intently at the group before hopping off to snag a grasshopper or slug in the grass. While the hawks are free to disappear into the woods and never return, falconer Jessica Snyder assured the group that these opportunistic birds know an easy meal when they see one, and are happy to stay.

Far from easy, another of the inn's recent additions, Kelly Way Gardens, a breathtaking 2.5-acre certified organic plot terraced into a hillside, is now producing about 10 tons of food a year for the inn, including the award-winning Red Rooster restaurant. Master gardener Ben Pauly and a small staff do everything by hand, from the cultivation to the harvesting of 200 varieties of produce, including spinach grown from heirloom seeds passed down by Pauly's mother, more than 65 varieties of tomatoes, 75 berry and orchard plantings, 50 herbs and edible flowers, a mushroom glen, annual and perennial flowers to decorate the restaurant and public spaces, and honeybees. While guests are always welcome to stop by the garden, and perhaps get an impromptu tour if the staff isn't too busy, at press time, construction was nearly complete on the Red Barn event space at the garden, which will offer dinners and cooking and gardening classes.

The garden is a mile down a country road—a stopping point for a lazy afternoon bike ride. So, leave the car behind and embrace a slower pace. Just be sure to arrive back in time for the hotel's hot chocolate and fresh-baked cookies, served every afternoon in the conservatory. You've earned them. **»»**

Top to bottom, fine dining at the inn, a visit to New England Falconry, and Kelly Way Gardens and the Red Barn.



**CONTACT**  
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woodstockinn.com