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13 Romantic New England Getaways for Design Lovers

From hidden gems to iconic destinations, these are must-adds to your bucket list.

BY HADLEY MENDELSOHN JAN 25, 2022

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Locals and visitors can agree that New England is easily one of the most picturesque regions in the U.S. That means that it's also home to some of the most romantic getaways in the country. Whether you're looking for a weekend escape packed with farm-to-table dining, a woodsy adventure, or a seaside retreat, these New England destinations are sure to set the scenic, romantic backdrop you've been craving. Here are our favorite design-savvy *and* romantic getaways in New England to enjoy all year round. No matter who you're traveling with you're sure to enjoy these spots, but they're particularly nice for special occasions like honeymoons, Valentine's Day, and other romantic trips.

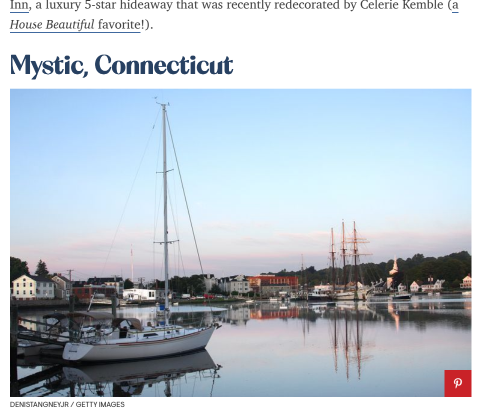
Litchfield, Connecticut

MAYFLOWER INN & SPA

Connecticut is full of happy surprises, and Litchfield County has plenty of them. Located in the northwestern region of the state, it's what Gilmore Girl dreams are made of, complete with gazebos, colonial architecture, and a cozy neighborly feel. It has the lowest population density in all of Connecticut, so it's pretty spread out, but there are tons of beautiful towns dotting the countryside that are worth visiting (and living in!), from Kent to Washington. While coastal Connecticut is just as beautiful (stay at GrayBarn if you're looking for a seaside romantic hotel in Norwalk), this part of the state should definitely be on your radar, too.

Where to stay: Winvian Farms, a property with unique cottages and treehouses sprinkled around the grounds (some feature rustic country charm while others have 18-century luxury vibes, and a few are straight-up kitschy), or the Mayflower Inn, a luxury 5-star hideaway that was recently redecorated by Celerie Kemble (a *House Beautiful* favorite!).

Mystic, Connecticut



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Even its name is enchanting! Mystic, Connecticut, is one of those adorable New England towns you think only exists in picture books. As you stroll down the main road, you'll encounter idyllic summer scenes like ice cream shops, sailboats on the harbor. There are great dining options, beautiful waterfront views, and even a famous aquarium.

Where to stay: The Whaler's Inn Hotel is a classic, cute, no-frills place to stay while visiting.

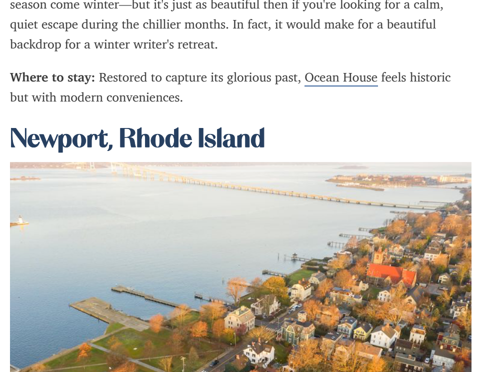
Watch Hill, Rhode Island

OCEAN HOUSE

Tree-lined streets and marina views give a quaint feel to Watch Hill, a small coastal village within the southern Rhode Island town of Westerly. It's a quieter and less crowded alternative to Newport (more on that in a minute) and is most popular with tourists in the summer months, with some hotels actually closing for the season come winter—but it's just as beautiful then if you're looking for a calm, quiet escape during the chillier months. In fact, it would make for a beautiful backdrop for a winter writer's retreat.

Where to stay: Restored to capture its glorious past, Ocean House feels historic but with modern conveniences.

Newport, Rhode Island



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When you think of Newport, Rhode Island, you probably imagine that dramatic rocky coastline studded with gilded age mansions and old-world glamor. Newport, Rhode, Island is a truly fascinating place. Design lovers and history buffs will have a blast touring the Gilded Age mansions, which were summer homes for wealthy American families like the Vanderbilts. And if it's a nice day outside, go drive along Cliff's Walk and then catch some rays at one of the many beaches. Oh, and you should definitely eat dinner at the oldest tavern in the U.S., White Horse Tavern.

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Where to stay: Wayfinder Hotel, you can enjoy the historic charm and traditional style of the town while enjoying a decidedly design-forward, edgy accommodation that breathes some 21st-century life and style into that Newport character. Other luxury hotels include The Castle Hill Inn and The Chanler at Cliff Rock.

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Cape Cod, Massachusetts

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With its protected white-sand beaches, dramatic dunes, and family-friendly towns, Cape Cod has something for everyone. Certain parts of the Cape feel rugged and remote, while other pockets are more populated and lively, but they're all scenic. Provincetown is an ideal destination for its nightlife scene, but if you're looking for something a little quieter (but with still plenty to do in town), consider Wellfleet or Chatham, and then head to Truro for an outdoorsy, off-the-beaten-path experience.

Where to stay: Stay at the Autocamp in Falmouth for glamping, Salt House Inn in P-town for nightlife action, and the Chatham Inn for good, old-fashioned New England beach vibes.

Nantucket, Massachusetts

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The harder to get to, the more special the place, right? If you agree with that statement, then an island destination is the cards for you. We recommend planning your romantic New England getaway to Nantucket, where the colonial Main Street still has charming old cobblestone roads, iron street lamps, and classic storefronts, but also plenty of high-end shops, gourmet eateries, and luxury hotels.

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Where to stay: White Elephant Inn is a landmark luxury hotel group with several different locations on the island. Choose between the classic harborside hotel, garden cottages, downtown lofts, the inn, and even stand-alone residences.

The Berkshires, Massachusetts

BRIAN BUMBY / GETTY IMAGES

There are tons of old-fashioned romantic towns in the western Massachusetts Berkshires, including neighbors Stockbridge and Lenox. The former handsome town inspired Norman Rockwell's artwork, while the latter was home to famed American writer Edith Wharton, who chronicled the lives of the upper class during the Gilded Age. While you're there, take a tour of her sprawling former home, dubbed The Mount.

Where to stay: For a classic accommodation, book a room at the Weightleigh (slightly fancier) or The Red Lion Inn (slightly more casual). If you're looking for a more modern and unique stay, head to the Cornell Inn, outfitted by a roster of designers of color last year, or book The Filomena, a private home designed by Arthur's Design complete with six stylish bedrooms that can accommodate up to thirteen guests.

Woodstock, Vermont

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Woodsy romance is the name of the game in Woodstock, Vermont. It doesn't get any more scenic than Vermont in autumn (foliage and syrup), but it's sure to inspire romance come snow or shine. Think Rustic wooden fences, historic bridges, roaming sheep, rolling hills, and all the countryside tropes, but Woodstock has also long attracted shoppers and visitors who want to enjoy the area's charming small businesses. Its home-y feel embraces visitors while retaining local character.

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Where to stay: There's no shortage of design-savvy and romantic spots in Woodstock... We recommend Woodstock Inn & Resort and Jackson House Inn.

Barnard, Vermont

TWIN FARMS

When it comes to resort towns that are worth the trek simply to stay on the property, you can't beat Barnard. The resort in question? Twin Farms. It's a popular wedding venue and the only 5-star experience in the state, if that helps you imagine just how romantic it really is.

Where to stay: Treat yourself to Twin Farms for pure, unpretentious luxury and farm-to-table perfection.

Bretton Woods, New Hampshire

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If getting active outside in the mountains is your idea of a romantic getaway, consider Bretton Woods, New Hampshire—it offers the quintessential New England experience but also speaks to a traveler who appreciates a more rustic and adventurous destination. Not to mention, it's a beautiful place to stargaze. Of course, there are also lovely hotels and ski resorts to indulge in after a long day spent hitting the slopes or hiking, too.

Where to stay: Omni Mount Washington or the Glenn House.

Lake Winnipesaukee, New Hampshire

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This is the perfect destination if you want to head away from the coast to a lakeside retreat surrounded by trees and mountains. Life revolves around the mirror-like Lake Winnipesaukee in the laid-back town of Meredith, New Hampshire. Once you arrive, there's not much to do besides chill out by the lake or get active with hiking and water sports like sailing, waterskiing, and wakeboarding. In the cooler months, it'll be the perfect cozy place retreat. Resorts dot the shores, giving residents a good excuse to play tourist for the day. However, the most fun way to explore might be the Winnipesaukee Scenic Railroad—you'll feel like you're time-traveling.

Where to stay: Lake Opeechee Inn and Spa or Pickering House Inn.

Kennebunkport, Maine

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Located in coastal southern Maine, Kennebunkport is bursting with charm. There are cultural activities, plenty of gourmet eateries, beautiful views, and tons of cozy inns. You'll want to watch the sunset on the harbor, enjoy some lobster, and check out the historic downtown buildings and local history museums.

Where to Stay: You can't go wrong between the White Barn Inn and Hidden Pond, both luxury resorts.

Bar Harbor, Maine

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Further up Maine's coast is the pretty town of Bar Harbor. If you want to spend your getaway hiking in the woods but also love the ocean, this is a great destination, given its proximity to Acadia National Park. There are tons of nearby trails, but you can also enjoy all the surrounding beauty without hiking to a peak. Thanks to its unique geographical location, you can even enjoy both at once, gazing up at the mountain views from the beach. Because of this, it's most popular during the summer and early fall months.

Where to Stay: The Claremont Hotel or The Bayview Hotel.

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Hadley Mendelsohn is House Beautiful's senior editor, and when she's not busy obsessing over all things decor-related, you can find her scouring vintage stores, reading, or stumbling about because she probably lost her glasses again.

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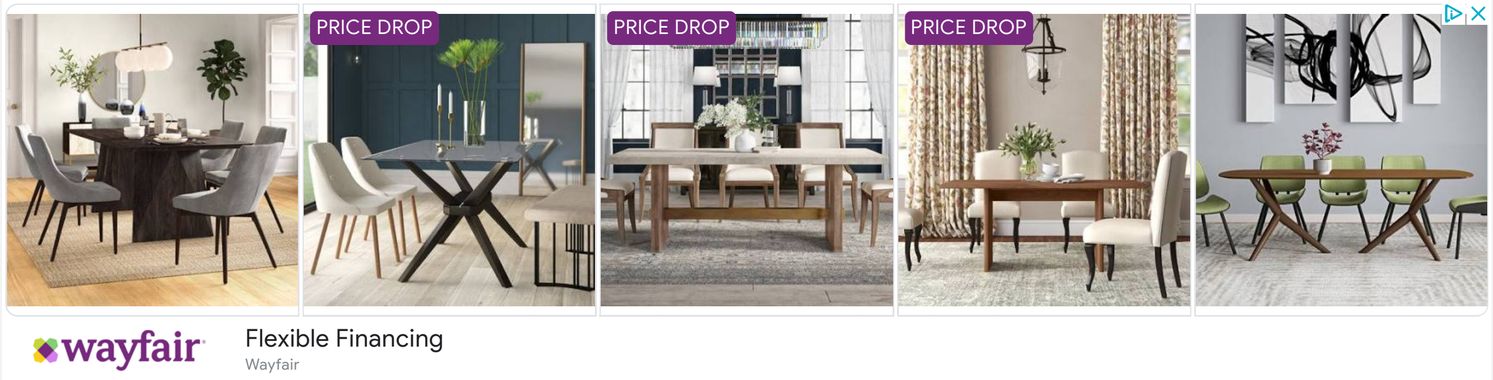

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