

10 Best Things to Do in New England in the Fall

Written by **Paul Rubio** • September 12, 2016



Feast at Twin Farms

Head to [Twin Farms](#) in Barnard, Vermont, the highlight of New England's rural retreats, for high design cottages, farm-to-table spreads, and sprawling 300-acre grounds. Days are filled with outdoor pursuits, strolls through fall foliage, old-fashioned pampering, and plenty of new-fashioned gluttony at this all-inclusive Relais & Chateaux property, which specializes in over-the-top ten-course, wine-paired meals. Book 48 hours in advance for a spot in the new "cooking suite," a stylish in-kitchen nook where guests can interact with Executive Chef Nathan Rich and his team as they prepare your seasonal feast.

Courtesy Twin Farms

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Take a Leaf-Peeping Road Trip

New England's stretches of forest reach their multi-hued finest between late September and late October. And while you're bound to encounter many a natural masterpiece [throughout the region](#), make sure your fall foliage road trip includes New Hampshire's Kancamagus Highway, a 56-mile country road through the state's White Mountain National Forest, showcasing some of the region's most dramatic colors and natural splendor.



Discover the Holy Grail of Lobstering

Lobster and experiential travel unite at the must-try, two-night "Lobster Like a Maine Native" package at [Camden Harbor Inn](#). Spend a morning at sea on a fully functioning lobster boat, and catch your own crustaceans alongside fishermen at work. After, learn how to prepare and cook your catch under the tutelage of Chris Long, Maine's "Lobster Chef of the Year," and executive chef of the Inn's signature restaurant, Natalie's. Come evening, the fun continues with a five-course, wine-paired, lobster-tasting menu. Did we mention that Camden also happens to be Maine's most charming seaport town?



Be a Cranberry Farmer for a Day

Live the Ocean Spray dream and sign up to work on one of Massachusetts's many cranberry farms for a day, such as [Mayflower Cranberries in Plympton](#), where you'll don a pair of overalls, grab a rake, and wade through the flooded cranberry bogs of rural Massachusetts, harvesting several tons of vitamin-rich red berries. This isn't just for show—all locations are working farms and part of the Ocean Spray cooperative.



Sail (and Island Hop) From Boston

New England's quiet seascapes continue to sparkle in autumn. Enjoy boating's shoulder season at one of the newly renovated, coastal chic rooms at the [Boston Harbor Hotel](#)—home of the city's best waterfront panoramas—and island hop by day to Boston's Harbor Islands (like Georges and Spectacle Island) and other destinations accessible by boat (hello, Salem). The hotel is walking distance to all the wharfs and ferry links, and you can even take a water taxi to the hotel from the airport.



Zipline and Make Furniture at Stowe Mountain Lodge

New England's bounty of family-friendly lodging and outdoor pursuits, [Stowe Mountain Lodge](#) in northern Vermont, has added the [newest and longest zipline](#) in North America to its prolific roster of activities this fall. After flying high above the foliage, enroll in the new "Rustic Furniture Making Classes" back at ground level, and create a one-of-a-kind piece under the instruction of professional woodworkers.



Sample Boston's Burgeoning Foodie Scene

Greater Boston may have been slow catching on to the global foodie movement, but it's sure making up for lost time. Try [Porto](#), an ocean-to-table eatery helmed by James Beard Award-Winning Chef Jody Adams in Boston's Back Bay neighborhood—order the squid ink bucatini and the whole fried black bass in okra, peppers, and Aleppo aioli. Got a long weekend? Head over to Cambridge, and dine at [Alden & Harlow](#), a wildly popular shared-plates spot with rising Chef Michael Scelfo at the helm, consistently delivering new interpretations of New England farm-to-table fare.



Get Up Close to Aquatic Life

Located between Cape Ann and Cape Cod in Massachusetts, the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary is one of the top locales for [whale watching](#) in the country, and where you'll typically end up on organized trips from the Cape, the North Shore, or even Boston. Plan your whale watch for after October 1, when the boat crowds have thinned and the humpbacks are out in full-force (it's a great time of year to get breaching photos). If this sounds a bit too tame, head to Chatham on Cape Cod to shadow [scientists tagging great white sharks](#).



Distill Rye Whiskey at WhistlePig Farm

Of New England's sixty-plus distilleries, one of the more interesting interactive experiences lies at [WhistlePig](#), a 500-acre farm distillery in Shoreham, Vermont offering a behind-the-scenes look at rye whiskey production. All components of production—from grain-to-glass—are completed on site, a first in the United States, and visitors are invited to stay in a shared guesthouse, by special appointment only. Take note: while the website states they're not currently conducting tours, this applies to general public tours, and the distillery can still be accessed by special appointment.



Treat Yourself to a Five-Star Spa Day

Autumn tends to bring plenty of mild, sun-kissed days, but this time of year also requires extra planning for rain. Enter: [The Spa at Mandarin Oriental, Boston](#), an Asian-imbued sanctuary on those sad, grey days—though we do tend to come here rain or shine. Enjoy a traditional massage, or spin for one of the more unique experiences, like the “Soakless Pedicure,” the four-handed “Oriental Harmony” massage, or a Linda Meredith Facial—it's the only spa in the U.S. to offer the beauty