

TRAVEL INSPIRATION • CULTURE



What to Do in the Berkshires

by **Kate Donnelly** August 26, 2017



Courtesy John Ferrillo/Tanglewood

One of our favorite summer outings is a concert on the lawn at Tanglewood.

It's everything you could do in New York City or Boston, but in the woods!

Deep in the mountains of Western Massachusetts, a Shakespearean theatre troupe mounts *The Tempest*; a James Turrell exhibit lights up a room; and Sting readies his band. It may seem an unlikely place to find this caliber of arts and culture, and meals that would drag a New Yorker or Bostonian three hours away from home, but the Berkshires have long been an escape for urbanites. There's still time to get out there for a weekend—the summer may fade, but fall foliage season is right behind. Here's how to plan a getaway:

North Adams

Art The small, strollable city of North Adams has that mix of New England charm—all cottages and family farms—and edgy art thanks to the sprawling (and newly expanded) contemporary arts haven, MASS MoCA. Don't miss Sol LeWitt's psychedelic grand-scale drawings and James Turrell's mesmerizing *Into The Light* exhibition (by appointment). Nearby, set on 140 acres, the Clark Art Institute by architect Tadao Ando showcases Renaissance frescoes and panels like Piero della Francesca's *Virgin and Child Enthroned With Four Angels* and historic American landscapes by the likes of George Inness. On Main Street, Jarvis Rockwell Gallery (owned by the son of Norman Rockwell) displays miniature installations of toy action figures he started collecting in the late 1970s; G.I. Joe and Bart Simpson stand guard.

Eat and Drink The casual-industrial Public serves comfort food (flatbreads and burgers) and rotating craft beers. Speaking of suds: Bright Ideas Brewing pours pints of saison, IPAs, and American wheat in an art-filled taproom. Drop by Pedrin's Dairy Barn, with its brightly colored picnic tables, kid-friendly vibe, and bounty of hamburgers, fried clams, and ice cream sundaes. Or keep that Americana mindset with classic hot dogs from Jack's.

Get Outdoors For a relatively easy hike, the Cascades Trail affords a peaceful river walk that ends at a spectacular waterfall.

Stay Steps from MASS MoCA, and spread over six Victorian row houses, the 47-room shabby chic Porches Inn offers a summer camp feels with antique rocking chairs and an outdoor pool.



Courtesy Porches Inn
Home away from home Porches Inn

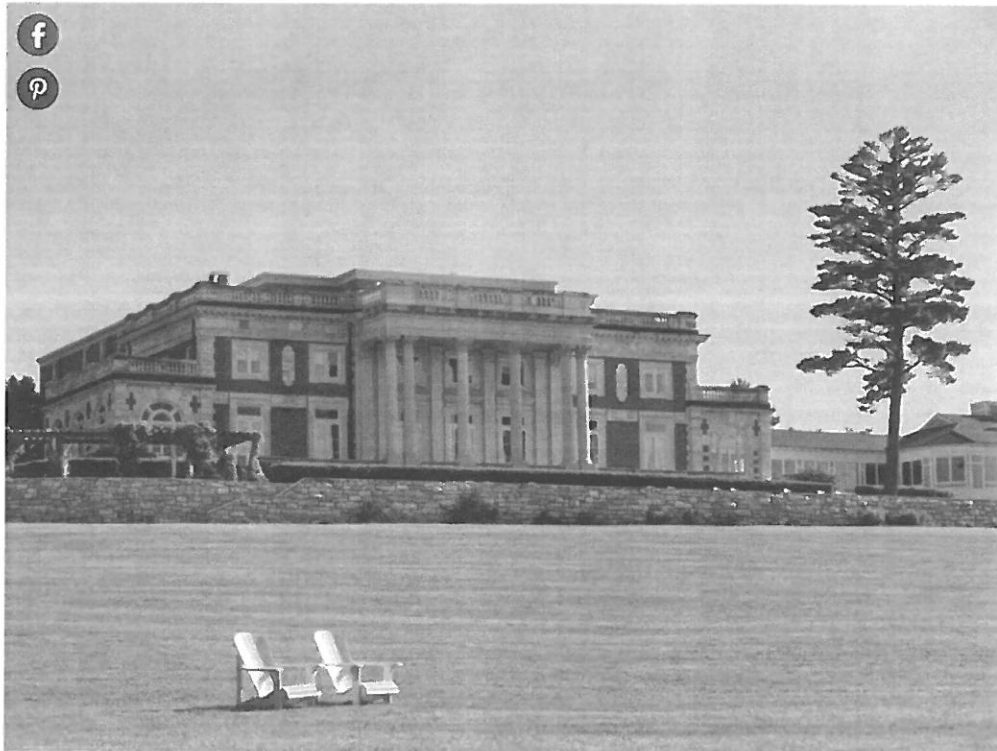
Lenox

Eat and Drink Snag a reservation at the small, modern Nudel, run by James Beard–nominated chef/owner Bjorn Somlo. His ever-changing menu—chilled carrot soup one day, crispy chicken drums the next—features ingredients sourced from nearby farms. And for late-night tapas and crisp Cava, drop by Brava.

On Stage Head to Tanglewood, the famed summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, for a sunset picnic. This season Sting and Diana Ross are headliners. Theater aficionados should get tickets for Shakespeare & Company performances like *The Wharton Comedies* and *The Tempest*.

Get Outdoors Ideal for lunch and quiet reflection, The Mount, Edith Wharton's former stately home, is surrounded by elegant gardens and grass steps embedded in a sloping hill. And covering more than 1,000 acres, Pleasant Valley trails wind through meadows, forests, and wetlands and depending on your level, can become a choose-your-own hiking adventure.

Stay This fall ♡ Canyon Ranch in Lenox unveils a much-needed refresh of its 126 rooms alongside new luxe residences. Sign up for the standards like acupuncture, reiki, and then follow-up with New-Agey astrology readings and a memorable 50-minute, sound-enhanced Soul Journey.



Courtesy Canyon Ranch
Canyon Ranch's lawn is begging for a game of croquet.

Great Barrington

Eat and Drink With its rustic farmhouse feel, the beloved Prairie Whale (from Brooklyn's Diner former founder Mark Firth) serves farm-to-table salads, fried chicken, and pork goulash with braised cabbage. For a casual breakfast drop by Southfield Store; you can meet your caffeine goals at the nearby Six Depot. Park yourself at one of the picnic table at the roadside Bistro Box and dig into a cheeseburger-and-fries combo. At Rubiner's, gourmands can pick up serious cheese like Hauser Cabochon and Capra lago d'Orta, pâtés and all sorts of jams. Nearby in New Marlborough, Cantina 229, a barn-like space, hosts Taco Tuesday with charred street corn and cumin slaw. Outside, there are lawn games like horseshoes and corn hole.

Shop The well-curated Farm and Home sells a range of table linens, waxed oil totes, and woolen throws and blankets. A few blocks away, Hammertown stocks furniture alongside French totes, hand-poured candles, and melamine plates. Asia Galleries has a nice collection of Japanese antiques and Buddhist sculptures.



Courtesy Hammertown
There's a conspicuous dearth of hammers at Hammertown—but plenty of other souvenirs

Get Outdoors Less than a three-mile loop, the trail at Monument Mountain delivers a quick hit of wild flowers, and rewarding views at the summit of Squaw Peak.

Stay Old Inn on The Green, a light-filled historic retreat a few miles from town, includes handsome rooms outfitted with wingback chairs, four-poster beds, and claw-footed tubs. Nab a table inside the candlelit restaurant or the outdoor garden terrace for Peter Platt's seasonal New England food, featuring the likes of pan-roasted Maine scallops and Hudson Valley foie gras.

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