



Vermont Department of Tourism
Welcomed the UK's Lonely Planet Traveller
to Experience the State's Winter Celebrations
in December 2016. Resulting in a Twelve Page Feature, plus
Cover December 2017



WINNER: TRAVEL MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

lonely planet
JANUARY 2018

SLEEP BENEATH THE
**NORTHERN
LIGHTS IN
LAPLAND**

HOT HOT HOT
TASTE THE BEST OF
MEXICO'S FOOD

Your
DREAM WINTER

From a classic
Christmas in
NEW ENGLAND
to the magical
JAPAN ALPS

ALSO STARRING

- ✦ SCOTLAND
- ✦ MOROCCO
- ✦ ROMANIA
- ✦ NORWAY
- ✦ ICELAND

Maria Gern church
in Berchtesgaden,
Bavaria

WIN!
A TRIP TO
Australia

DRIVE YOUR
BUDGET FURTHER
**ROAD-TRIPPING
THROUGH
EASTERN
GERMANY**



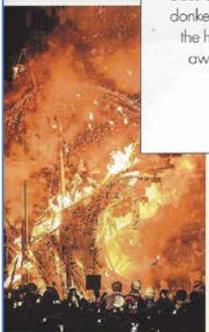
editor's note



Making each issue of *Lonely Planet* magazine is always a fun and mind-expanding experience – this month it has also given me both the sweats and the chills! Within these pages the heat first gets dialled up in a seemingly improbable place, high in the Japan Alps (p68). In this home of hot-spring-dwelling snow monkeys and ancient traditions kept raucously alive, the annual Nozawa Onsen Fire Festival sees a towering bonfire lit in tribute to the spirits said to inhabit the surrounding mountains. A blend of sunshine and fearsome chillies keep the temperature rising as local chefs guide us through some of Mexico's most authentic dishes (p80), while the photographer Charlotte Curd presents her take on Sydney's beach culture (p100), right now basking in the height of summer. Back in the northern hemisphere, we whisk you through our favourite unusual winter experiences (p90), and head to a corner of the US state of Vermont where Christmas is equally a classic and a kitsch spectacle (p56). Which is my prompt, alongside the donkey in his Santa hat below, to offer you festive greetings and wish you the happiest year ahead. As always, thank you for joining us on (multi-award-winning) *Lonely Planet* magazine's ever-evolving adventures.

PETER GRUNERT, GROUP EDITOR
@peter_grunert | @petervg73

FROM LEFT Japan's Nozawa Onsen Fire Festival; Sydney's Maroubra Beach; seasonal Vermont; the Opal schooner follows the whale migration in Norway's fjords, just one of our unusual winter experiences

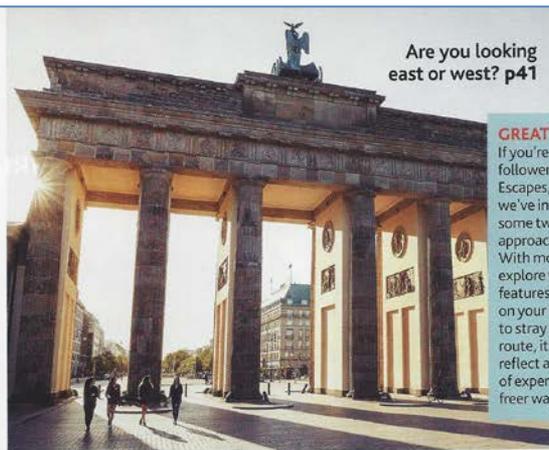


PHOTOGRAPHS: PHILIP LEE, HANVY, CHARLOTTE CURD, MARK READ



Subscribe! See p14
Follow us on Twitter @LPmagUK and Instagram @lonelyplanetmags
Join our Lonely Planet magazine insiders panel at immediateinsiders.com

Award-winning Lonely Planet magazine
Consumer Publication of the Year
Consumer Writer of the Year
Photography Award
Favourite UK Consumer Travel Magazine
Young Travel Writer of the Year



Are you looking east or west? p41

GREAT ESCAPE

If you're a regular follower of our Great Escapes, you'll notice we've introduced some tweaks to our approach in this issue. With more room to explore the unique features of each stop on your itinerary, and to stray from the main route, it's designed to reflect a broader range of experiences and a freer way of travelling.



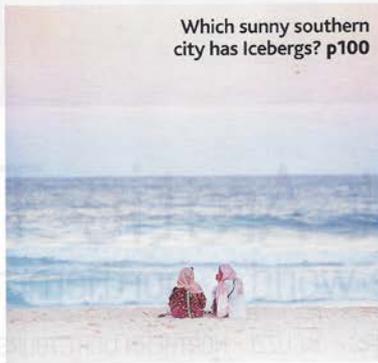
The Green Mountains all in white p56



Fire in the snow country p68



Know your sopas from your aguas frescas p80



Which sunny southern city has icebergs? p100

DESTINATION INDEX

Albania	p99
Australia	
Sydney	p100
Uluru	p23
Western Australia	
Denmark	
Copenhagen	p27
Ecuador	
Galapagos Islands	p10
England	
Brighton & Hove	p35
Devon	p95
Gloucestershire	p93
Lincolnshire	p93
London	p24, p30, p35, p93
Sheffield	p35
Somerset	p34
Tyne & Wear	p32
Finland	
Lapland	p92
France	
Strasbourg	p117
Germany	
Bavaria	p93
Eastern Germany	p41
Iceland	
South Iceland	p95
Indonesia	p20
Italy	
Aosta Valley	p98
Japan	
Hokkaido	p99
Japan Alps	p68
Kosovo	p99
Mexico	p80
Morocco	p94
Norway	p7
Lillehammer	p94
Lysefjord	p8
Troms	p95, p98
Romania	p97
Russia	
Moscow	p119
Scotland	
Cairngorms	p96
Edinburgh	p35
Inner Hebrides	p37
Spain	
Canary Islands	p29
Sweden	
Lapland	p90, p97, p99
Switzerland	
Graubünden	p96
Vaud	p99
Tanzania	
Serengeti	p10
Thailand	
Bangkok	p125
Turkey	p94
United Arab Emirates	
Dubai	p94
USA	
Florida	p32
Los Angeles	p123
Vermont	p56
Yellowstone	p97
Vietnam	p11

The perfect Christmas gift that lasts all year!



Treat yourself or a loved one to a *Lonely Planet* magazine subscription and pay just £29.99 every 12 issues – a saving of 40% on the standard shop price. We'll also send you a copy of *Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2018* book, worth £9.99.*



12 ISSUES FOR **£29.99** PLUS BEST IN TRAVEL 2018!

- #### SUBSCRIBER BENEFITS
- Save 40%** on the usual shop price with your subscription
 - Money-back guarantee** – cancel and we'll refund your remaining issues
 - Save 35%** on Lonely Planet guidebooks – exclusive to our subscribers*
 - Never miss an issue** – delivered direct to your door
 - Receive **unique, collectable covers**, only seen by our subscribers

MAKE IT HAPPEN

ORDER ONLINE AT buysubscriptions.com/LPP118

CALL US ON **03330 162 125** AND QUOTE **LPP118**
(lines open 8am–6pm weekdays and 9am–1pm Saturday for orders only)

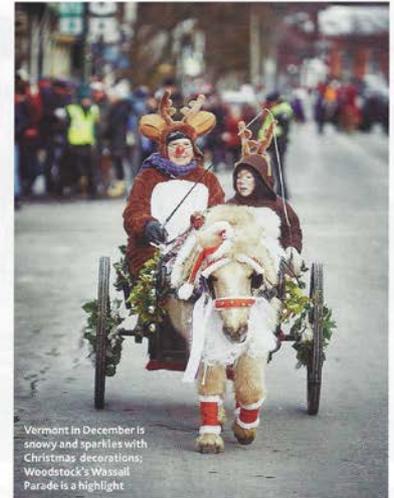
Complete the order form opposite and return to the freepost address detailed

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK/ANDREW HARRIS; SHUTTERSTOCK/CHARLOTTE CUD; PHILIP HARRIS; JONATHAN WOODS

It's a Wonderful Life

With an abundance of festive cheer set against a landscape of snow-laden firs, Vermont has all the charm of the classic American Christmas movies, but dig a little deeper and you'll discover a state like no other in the US

WORDS ORLA THOMAS [@OrlaThomas](#) PHOTOGRAPHS MARK READ [@markreadphotography](#)



Vermont in December is snowy and sparkles with Christmas decorations; Woodstock's Wassail Parade is a highlight



OPPOSITE Jim Blair's husky pack includes some sledding champions

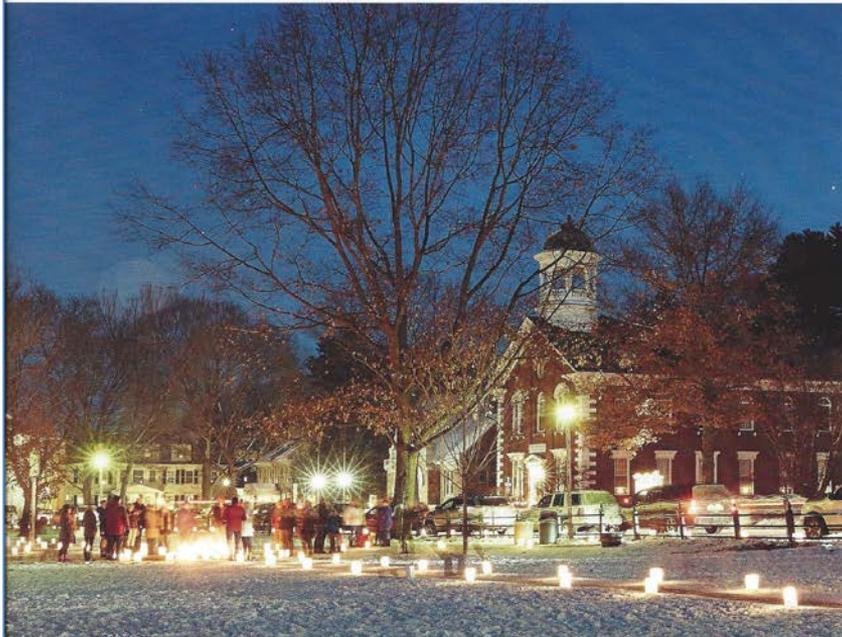




WINTER IN VERMONT

Top 5 Vermont foods

- 1 Runamok Maple makes specialty smoked, barrel-aged and botanical-infused syrups (from £13; runamokmaple.com).
- 2 Jasper Hill Farm is at the cutting edge of cheese—try the bark-wrapped and bloomy Herbison (£16 for 9oz; jasperhillfarm.com).
- 3 Hen of the Wood's maple and bacon roasted Brussels sprouts should convert sprout haters (£5; henofthewood.com).
- 4 The state is home both to Beer Advocate magazine's best-rated beer (Heady Topper; alchemistbeer.com) and microbrewery (Hill Farmstead; hillfarmstead.com).
- 5 Tour the Ben & Jerry's factory in Waterbury and finish up with a tub of Americone Dream (tour £3; benjerry.com).



Wrapped in down jackets and woolly hats, the crowd gathered for the parade lets out a hoot of laughter as the inaugural performer trots into view. A Shetland pony with a Rudolph nose and antlers fixed to her harness, she moves skittishly down Woodstock's main street. She is led on reins past shop windows strewn with baubles and fairy lights, and redbrick houses with lacquered front doors hung with wreaths of holly. Also among the seasonal cavalry are mighty shire horses towing cartloads of elves, girls dressed as Christmas trees perched on ponies, and older ladies riding side-saddle in full skirts and fake-fur hand muffs. Weaving among them on Rollerblades is a woman wearing a top hat, who shovels up the occasional pile of manure left in the merry conga's wake.

The parade is the highpoint of Woodstock's annual Wassail weekend, and, although the light is fading fast, the crowd's exuberance is slow to dissipate. Seeking respite from below-zero temperatures, some retreat into the historic Woodstock Inn for cups of hot cider and mulled wine. I gather with others around a huge bonfire that has been lit on the green. A father and daughter, both wearing

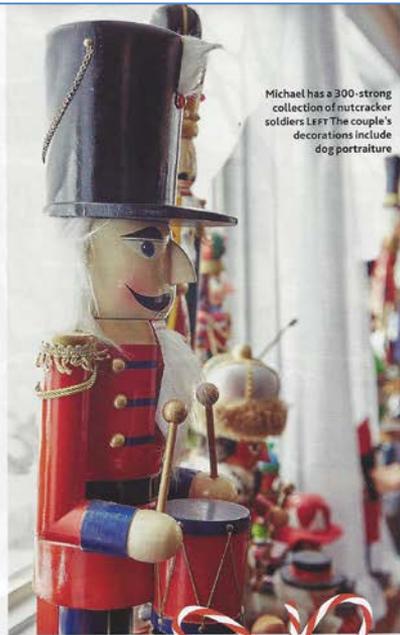
Victorian-inspired costumes, stand warming their hands at the blaze. 'The key to Vermont winters is to embrace them,' says Rick Read, who's from the nearby town of Hartland.

Fourteen-year-old Sydney, looking like Red Riding Hood in her bright coat, nods earnestly in agreement. 'You have to go into them with a lot of spirit and determination,' she says. 'And there's so much spirit here at Christmas! A real sense of community. It's fun to get dressed up and be a part of that.'

Woodstock's Wassail may be old in style, but it's an enjoyable anachronism. First celebrated here in the 1980s, this winter tradition has its roots in the pagan festivities of the mother country. Stemming from the old English wassail ('be in good health'), medieval wassailing saw merry bands of revellers moving from house to house singing as they partook in boozy hospitality. Caroling is still part of the event—as darkness descends, members of the local Rotary Club light paper-bag lanterns and hand out song sheets. I join in with jolly rounds of *Silent Night* and *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*. Locals rosy-faced from the fire collapse into giggles when we fumble over the words. Like them I pore over the lyrics with light from a smartphone, but there is still something primal in the ritual, gathering to sing around the flames. →

Festivities centre around Woodstock's village green, with carol singing at dusk. ABOVE: Riders and spectators dress in festive costume for Woodstock's Wassail equestrian parade. Many, like these worn by Rick Read and his daughter Sydney, are Victorian inspired





Michael has a 300-strong collection of nutcracker soldiers LEFT The couple's decorations include dog portraiture

The wassail tradition of calling on your neighbours also has its modern equivalent, in Woodstock's Holiday House Tour. Every year, various locals agree to open their doors so visitors can cast their eyes over homes decked out in their Christmas finery. The first house on the route belongs to Michael Cassidy and Ron Garwood, who've been together for 18 years, but more recently married and moved to Woodstock. Within this palace of December kitsch, their joy in the season is apparent in every room. On the breakfast bar sits a Vermont town in miniature, complete with carollers and fake snow. Baubles and candy canes engulf their ceiling-height tree, a toy train circling at its base, while an army of nutcracker soldiers obscures a nearby windowsill. 'This is minimal for us!' says Michael as he stands near the hearth, smoothing the pendulous ears of the couple's basset hound. 'My first-over job was as a tree trimmer and I have always loved making Christmas magical. It's so much fun – every year it takes me back to being a little kid again.' Husband Ron appears from the kitchen, carrying a jug of Bloody Mary.

'We always hoped to retire to Vermont,' he adds. 'It's so charming, with the look of a Norman Rockwell painting.' For a mostly rural state, Vermont is unusually liberal. It is the only one with a socialist senator, Bernie Sanders, and was one of the first to legalise same-sex unions. 'Woodstock seems to be a very open and accepting place,' says Michael. 'We certainly feel welcome here.'

Ron and Michael's easy hospitality is unbeaten elsewhere on the tour, largely because many other participating houses seem to be second homes, their owners not in town. Woodstock's buildings are so uniformly pristine that walking among them is like strolling through a Hollywood set, a movie-standard simulacrum of New England life. Historic clapboard properties feature picket fences whiter than the snow, behind which ruddy-cheeked children frolic under new falling flakes. Inside, high-end fixtures and fittings – marble worktops, chestnut kitchen islands, floor-to-ceiling picture windows – speak of money and good taste. Christmas adornments are equally charming: colour-pop fireplace stockings and origami birds, or a tree adorned with clouds of baby's breath. →

Feel the Bern

America's answer to Jeremy Corbyn, Vermont's junior senator Bernie Sanders is the only socialist representative in the US Congress. In 2015, the septuagenarian ran against Hillary Clinton for the Democratic presidential nomination.

He garnered unexpected grassroots support, particularly among young voters, who popularised the slogan 'Feel the Bern' by wearing it on T-shirts at political rallies.

Woodstock residents Ron Garwood (on left) and Michael Cassidy, with their basset hound, Emma-Rose, welcome visitors during the town's open-house tour



It's Vermont's wealthier residents and visitors who keep ShackletonThomas in business: husband and wife, furniture-maker Charles Shackleton and potter Miranda Thomas work in a 180-year-old mill just outside Woodstock. Here, Miranda is to be found in a light-filled studio, hand-making ceramics that often end up in the homes of heads of state – she supplies diplomatic gifts to both the White House and the UN. 'A clay bowl is a symbolic offering; inherently humble and very much of this place,' she says, painting a stylised rabbit onto one she made earlier at her wheel. On the shelves behind are vividly coloured pots containing glaze, from peacock blue to a rich evergreen. 'The natural world informs our work,' she says. 'Vermont is a place of leaves and trees, and people who live or visit here are choosing to make that a part of their lives.'

Originally from the UK, Miranda and Charles migrated to the state over three

decades ago. 'A lot of artisans and artists are drawn to Vermont simply because it's so beautiful.' But for them, making objects that reflect the beauty of their surroundings has never been enough. In 1987, at a time when artisanal production was decidedly out of fashion, Miranda and Charles founded a business based on the principle that each piece would be made from start to finish by one person. Employing a traditional apprentice system, their workshops would train the next generation of craftspeople.

ShackletonThomas' philosophy is that handmade objects possess a 'fourth dimension' – a human element, or soulful quality, which manufactured items lack. I pick up a mug glazed in a milky blue, the colour of a pale moon, and run my fingertips over the maker's mark etched below the handle. 'Mass production has led to homogeneity, to everything being the same,' says Miranda. 'But here people are very receptive to what we do. There's a bit of a counter-culture, particularly in Vermont, of people seeking individuality.'



Vermont's 'small is beautiful' ideology is also apparent in its food scene – symbolically, the state capital, Montpelier, is the only one in the US without a McDonald's. Instead, there is a push towards

farm-to-table eating, making the most of Vermont's abundance. Its best-known products are maple syrup – 40 per cent of the US crop is produced here – and Bon & Jerry's ice cream. This now-global brand has true Vermont roots. Founded in 1978 by two self-confessed hippies, it's a company that emphasised giving back to the community long before corporate-social responsibility became a buzz phrase. It is still Vermont's many local producers that give the state its culinary edge. There are more artisanal cheese-makers and craft breweries per capita here than anywhere else in the US.

A drive north on scenic Route 100 passes dairy farms and maple sugarhouses, general stores and brewpubs. In between are snow-covered fields, the odd tumbledown barn and wooden houses with mini-snowploughs parked in their drives. In accordance with local zoning laws, no building is taller than 38m. Billboards have been banned since 1968, lest they spoil the view. Hugging the Green Mountain National Forest, Route 100

takes in more trees than people: maple, birch, elm and ash alongside great swathes of evergreen firs and spruces, boughs heavy with snow. This reliable powder brings an annual influx to Vermont's ski towns, of which Stowe is perhaps the prettiest, its white church spire poking from the snow to give it the look of an iced cake.

Stowe is also a place of pilgrimage for another reason: it's the home of one of America's most sought-after beers, Heady Topper. Perhaps the finest example of the India pale ales that Vermont has become known for, it's consistently voted one of the best beers in the world and only sold locally – people often travel cross-country to pick up some cans. Vermont was in the vanguard of the craft-beer movement, and many pioneers began as home-brewers. Like John and Jen Kimmich, co-founders of the Alchemist Brewery that makes Heady Topper. Today, Jen is working the taps at the company's visitors' centre. 'We do make great beer,' she says with a modest shrug, placing a sample before me on the counter. I notice its hoppy scent first. Heady Topper tastes creamy and citrusy, with an inviting sweetness, and is noticeably strong at 8 per cent APV. Behind Jen in the brewery are shiny silver vats filled with beers in various states of production, from her favourite, Focal Banger, to a seasonal

WINTER IN VERMONT

offering called El Jefe ('the boss'). 'This facility is new,' she says. 'We used to sell from a smaller brewpub in Waterbury, but Heady Topper became so popular it was causing traffic jams down Route 100.'

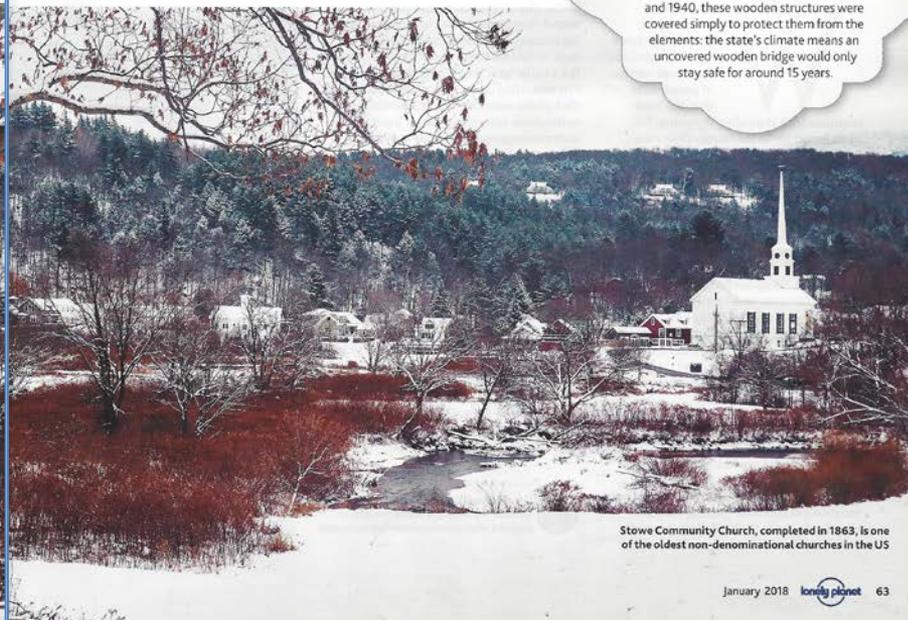
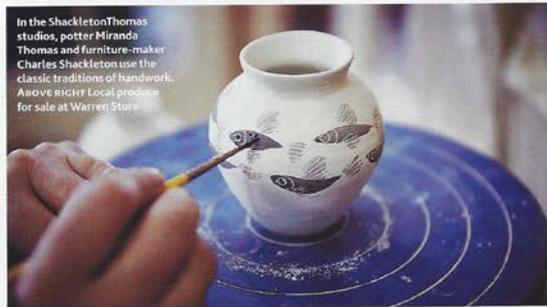
Jen is amused by the furor surrounding their signature brew, which the Alchemist distributes only within a 25-mile radius. 'Globally, there's a move to people wanting to eat food grown closer to home,' says Jen. 'People like to support their local businesses, as well as enjoying produce grown on their doorstep. It's a community thing.' The Alchemist's idea of community is more inclusive than that which you'd find in many rural towns. A sign featuring a rainbow heart is displayed prominently at the brewery's entrance. 'Hate has no business here,' is printed in bold type. 'We stand with our LGBTQ community members. We stand with Muslims, refugees and immigrants in our community. All are welcome.' →

Take cover

Vermont has over 100 covered bridges, the highest concentration anywhere in the world. Built mostly between 1820 and 1940, these wooden structures were covered simply to protect them from the elements: the state's climate means an uncovered wooden bridge would only stay safe for around 15 years.



In the ShackletonThomas studios, potter Miranda Thomas and furniture-maker Charles Shackleton use the classic traditions of handwork. ABOVE RIGHT Local produce for sale at Warren Store



Stowe Community Church, completed in 1863, is one of the oldest non-denominational churches in the US

WINTER IN VERMONT

The Alaskan husky

A category of dog, rather than a pure breed like the Siberian or Greenland husky, Alaskan huskies are bred solely for sled-pulling power rather than looks, resulting in a more varied appearance. Their eyes are often, but not always light blue and their coats are usually short in length, to better dissipate the heat they generate when running. Long-legged and lean in the body, these energetic animals are built for racing.



Whether newly arrived or long-settled, Vermonters have space to carve out their own version of paradise, in this, the least-populated US state after Wyoming. Jim Blair found his in the north of the state, in the aptly named village of Eden. His life in this remote corner revolves around the large pack of Alaskan huskies he keeps for dog-sledding. "These guys are family and friends to me," he says, slipping harnesses over those selected for the morning run. They lift their paws helpfully, eager to get going despite the blizzard of snow falling on the yard. "Dogs are just like people wearing fur coats and I really enjoy their different personalities," says Jim. "For them to work well as a team, you have to be careful how you mix them. Each animal has its place in the hierarchy of the pack, but when I'm around, you could say I'm the top dog."

Once in position, the huskies begin to howl – a chorus that only stops when Jim barks the command and they set off. "I think of it as singing," says Jim. "They're joyful because they love to run." As the dogs follow a familiar route into the forest, their tongues loll and their panting creates clouds of mist in the cold, their powerful

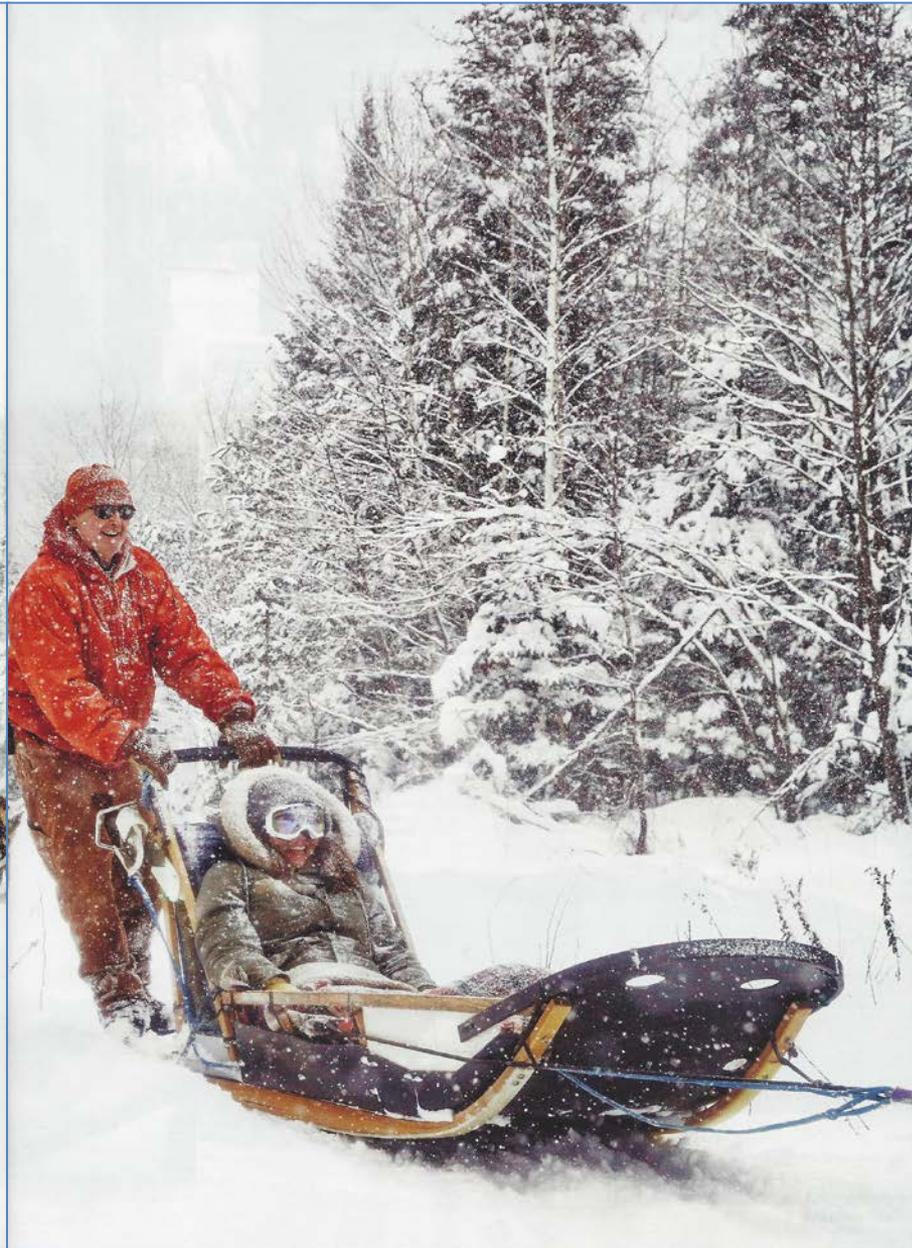
legs repeatedly disappearing into deep drifts. The empty landscape and the sound-dampening effect of the snow mean the journey is preternaturally quiet. The only noises are those of canine exertion and Jim's calls: 'gee!' for right and 'haw!' for left. I sit swaddled under tartan blankets as the sled glides smoothly along a carefully maintained network of paths. Jim designed motocross courses before he moved to Vermont to begin racing dogs competitively.

His kennel is home to several national champions but, unusually, he allows his 40-strong pack to run freely about the property. During the colder months they mostly congregate indoors, basking on the sofas beside Jim's woodburner. Two particularly affectionate dogs, Rusty and Arrow, nuzzle my hands as we warm up after the ride. "It's important to me that they're happy, cradle to grave," says Jim. "And I learned early on that they're not happy chained." His empathy is heartfelt – unsuited to a life chained to a desk, Jim's need for freedom, to spend his days roaming the hills, is as real as that of his animals. It is a thread that unites many who live here – a certain independence of spirit that's distinctively Vermont. ☺

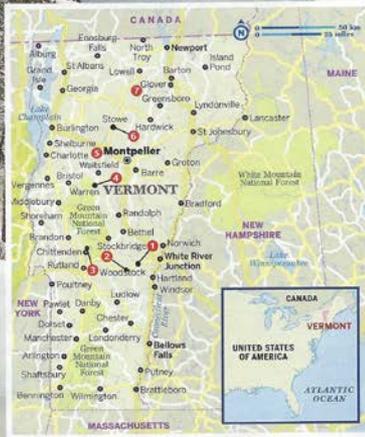


ORLA THOMAS is our features editor, currently on maternity leave. She was six months pregnant when she went on her first husky sled.

Writer Orla takes a ride pulled by Alaskan husky Wes, a champion sprint-racing sled dog and a valued lead in musher Jim Blair's pack in Eden, northern Vermont



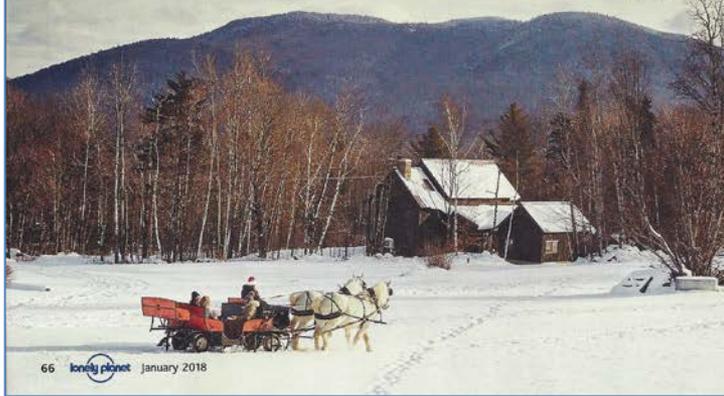
Don't go home without some Vermont maple syrup. **RIGHT** Woodstock is the quintessential Vermont town



Moose Meadow Lodge's Treehouse is set among the woods



A horse-drawn sleigh ride should be on your must-do list. **RIGHT** Try a flight of beer at von Trapp Brewing Bierhall in Stowe. **ABOVE RIGHT** Apprentice-made spoons at ShackletonThomas



MAKE IT HAPPEN

Vermont

Your road-trip itinerary

ESSENTIALS

GETTING THERE & AROUND

The easiest way to get there is to fly to Boston with airlines including BA, Virgin Atlantic and Norwegian (from £324; norwegian.com), from where it's a 2½-hour drive northwest to Woodstock. Alternatively, you can fly to the Vermont city of Burlington with a stopover. Renting a car is essential for visiting rural locations and you'll need a 4WD to navigate the winter roads (from £80 per day; enterprise.co.uk).

VISA

Many UK citizens don't need a visa to visit the USA, but make sure your ESTA visa waiver is up to date (esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta).

WHO CAN HELP

America As You Like It offers a seven-night holiday to Vermont for the Woodstock Wassail weekend, from £1,110 per person (based on two sharing), including flights to Boston with British Airways, seven days' fully inclusive SUV hire, one night at the Townplace Suites Boston Airport, two nights at Eden Mountain Lodge in Eden Mills, two nights at On the River Inn in Woodstock and two nights at the Moose Meadow Lodge in Waterbury (americasyoulikeit.com).

FURTHER READING

For more information, see vermontvacation.co.uk. Lonely Planet's *New England* guide (£15.99) includes a detailed section on Vermont or you can download the relevant chapter as a PDF (£2.99; shop.lonelyplanet.com).



1 Make 506 On The River Inn your base in Woodstock. Its classic rooms overlook the Ottauquechee and are furnished with reclaimed local antiques – plus, there's a pool and games room (£130; ontheriverwoodstock.com). The Wassail Weekend takes place every year in early December. Many events, including the parade, are free, but the Holiday House Tour is ticketed (£25; woodstockvt.com). The Woodstock Inn offers a warm retreat – choose from a fireside cup of hot cider or dinner in the Red Rooster, where local food is on the menu and local artwork is on the walls (mains around £20; woodstockinn.com). Visit nearby Billings Farm & Museum to discover how Vermont Christmas traditions have changed over time and learn about the state's rural history (£11; billingsfarm.org).

2 Pick up one-off souvenirs at ShackletonThomas, which also offers free tours of its furniture-making and pottery workshops (enquire ahead of your visit; Pottery starts at £36 for a mug; shackletonthomas.com). Nearby is their friend and fellow British expat, glassmaker Simon Pearce, whose shop is in Quechee. Check out the glassblowing demonstrations, pick up a tree ornament, and have lunch overlooking a waterfall and covered bridge (ornaments around £40, lunch mains around £10; simonpearce.com).

3 Take a scenic detour to the Mountain Top Inn & Resort, near Chittenden, for a horse-drawn sleigh ride. This old-fashioned vehicle glides sedately through the resort's peaceful and partly forested surrounds, bells jingling. The inn's restaurant has views over the Green Mountains and locals rave

about their burgers (burgers from £10; 30-minute sleigh ride £30 per adult; mountaintopin.com).

4 Connect with Route 100 to drive north through snowy Vermont countryside and small towns (yourplacainvermont.com/scenic-route-100). Stop by Warren Store to warm up by the wood-burning stove with coffee, deli subs and whoopee pie, and pick up local souvenirs, including maple syrup and peanut butter (sandwich with sides around £8; warrenstore.com).

5 Stay the night at Moose Meadow Lodge & Treehouse, a log-cabin B&B run by Willie Docto and Greg Trulsson. The lounge is full of taxidermy, such as stuffed bears, and themed rooms are decorated with rustic ephemera, from retro ice skates to antique fishing baskets. Guests are free to explore the surrounding 86 acres, which feature the Treehouse and the Sky Loft: a gazebo with 360-degree views (from £150; moosemeadowlodge.net). In nearby Waterbury is Hen of the Wood, considered by many to be the state's best restaurant. Its seasonal menu uses the finest local produce in simple, flavour-packed dishes, such as brussels sprouts cooked with pear and bacon (small plates from £5, larger dishes from £15; henofthewood.com).

6 Take a two-stop beer tour of the nearby town of Stowe. Begin at the Alchemist to sample new brews

and stock up on supplies of their prized Heady Topper (four pack £10; alchemistbeer.com). End at the von Trapp Brewing Bierhall, run by the direct descendants of Maria von Trapp of *The Sound of Music* fame. The company makes Austrian-style beers, which they serve in traditional mugs alongside bratwurst and smoked cheeses (flight of beers £5, bar snacks from £5; vontrappbrewing.com).

7 Finish your Vermont road trip at Eden Mountain Lodge, where cosy wooden cabins have beds spread with handmade quilts. Spend days exploring the snowy surrounds on one of Jim Blair's husky-sledding tours, before hunkering down for evenings playing board games by a warming stove (two-night minimum stay in a cabin that sleeps four costs from £250; alternatively, a one-night 'stay and sled' package costs from £450 for four; edenmtnlodge.com).



BEHIND THE SCENES

Photographer Mark Read and I decided shooting a sleigh ride would add a nice perspective. Five minutes into our journey at Mountain Top Inn & Resort, fellow passenger Christopher Veza dropped knee and, whipping out a ring, proposed to girlfriend Hayley Bray, who was cradling the couple's baby. Thankfully, she said yes – or the rest of the ride would have been very awkward. *Orla Thomas*

