

escapes

Venture to Vermont

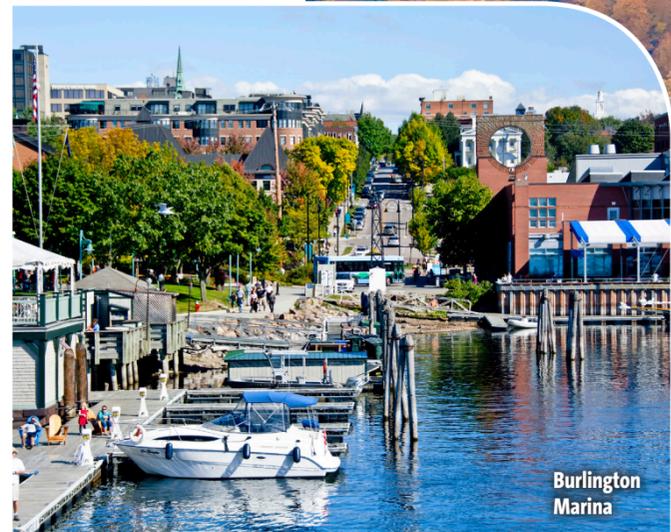
Fall in love with this pretty New England gem

Why go?

From hiking in the warmer weather to skiing in the winter, outdoor fans will love Vermont. With just over 400,000 people, this secluded east coast state is known as New York's green getaway – and for its stunning autumn foliage. With so many fun activities to fit in, combining a few places in one trip makes it a great holiday destination.

Our first visit was to the small, sleepy town of Stowe. Downtown, there are plenty of museums and good restaurants, but it's the idyllic mountain views that the town is famed for. We enjoyed a leisurely kayak down the Lamoille River on a Vermont Canoe & Kayak Water & Wine trip (Vermontcanoeandkayak.com). You can also experience Vermont's great scenery on one of Canada's largest zip lines, which spans almost two miles, at the Stowe Mountain Resort. If you prefer to ski or hike, head for Mount Mansfield – the tallest peak in Vermont (Stowe.com).

The second area we visited was Jay Peak, situated near the Canadian border. We stayed at Hotel Jay where we woke to spectacular mountain views. This area is known for its great golf courses, with natural waterways and beautiful greens. We were lucky enough to enjoy a golf lesson at the championship-level golf course (Jaypeakresort.com). In



Burlington Marina

the winter, there is a whole different feel to the resort, as the temperature plummets and the ski season gets underway. The Jay Peak Ski Club is known as a skier's paradise. The fun doesn't stop after dark, either. During the summer, Hotel Jay hosts a number of outdoor concerts and gigs. We had the pleasure of watching American musician Michael Franti perform under a beautiful starlit sky.

We'd also recommend a visit to the Montgomery Salt Cave and Halotherapy Center, a man-made cave formed from Polish rock salt. A 45-minute session in the cave will leave you feeling totally relaxed (Vtsaltcaves.com).

Lastly, we visited Burlington, Vermont's biggest city, which some say resembles a mini San Francisco. Take a stroll along the Island Line Trail or stop at the pretty marina to see the boats. We had great fun on a three-hour Bike and Brew Tour, where we sipped and cycled our way around this beautiful city.

On a warm day, you may want to take a dip in Lake Champlain, a freshwater lake that makes a natural border between Canada and America. We also enjoyed dinner at Bleu Northeast Seafood at the Courtyard by Marriott.

Make sure you book ahead as it's very popular, which isn't surprising as the food is fantastic.

Culinary treats

Vermont doesn't disappoint when it comes to dining, and foodies will love it here. In this micro state, farm-to-table food isn't just a trend, it's a way of life. And with more than 7,000 farms dedicated to providing home-grown meat and dairy products, you'll be treated with food that has been grown and prepared less than 30 miles away.

With plenty on offer to tantalise your taste buds, it's hard to mention just one food to try while you're here, but we'd highly recommend the Bayley Hazen Blue, a dense-yet-creamy blue cheese. The mouth-watering

treats don't stop at the savoury delights, either. Vermont has the most maple trees in any state, and is the largest producer of Golds Store Maple Syrup. Sweet-toothed travellers can also indulge in a scoop of Ben & Jerry's ice cream



at their factory in Waterbury, and do a tour to find out how they make the ice cream.

Where to stay

Located in the heart of Jay Peak, Hotel Jay is an ideal location for novice and expert skiers alike. Suite and studio rooms come fully equipped with a kitchen or kitchenette, so guests can prepare a treat while gazing out at the spectacular mountain backdrop. Rates start from £88 per night (Jaypeakresort.com).

Rustic, yet modern, Hotel Vermont is an airy and welcoming hotel. Prices start from £175 per night (Hotelvt.com).

Need to know

● Car hire from Boston Logan Airport with Hertz.co.uk costs from £196 for seven days. For road trip ideas, visit the Hertz Road Trip Planner and discover iconic and off-the-beaten-track routes, downloadable maps and insider guides.

● The Sun & Ski Inn in Stowe is an independent hotel situated just minutes from Stowe Mountain Resort and Stowe Village. It offers newly-decorated rooms and on-site amenities including 10-pin bowling and miniature golf. Rates start from £149 per night for a king room (Sunandskiinn.com).

What to pack



Canon Power Shot SX740 HS, £349.99



Trainers, £90, Dune



T-Shirt, £12, 8-18, George at Asda

Jeans, £25.99, 8-18, New Look



Kiehl's Ultra Light Daily UV Defense Sunscreen, £38