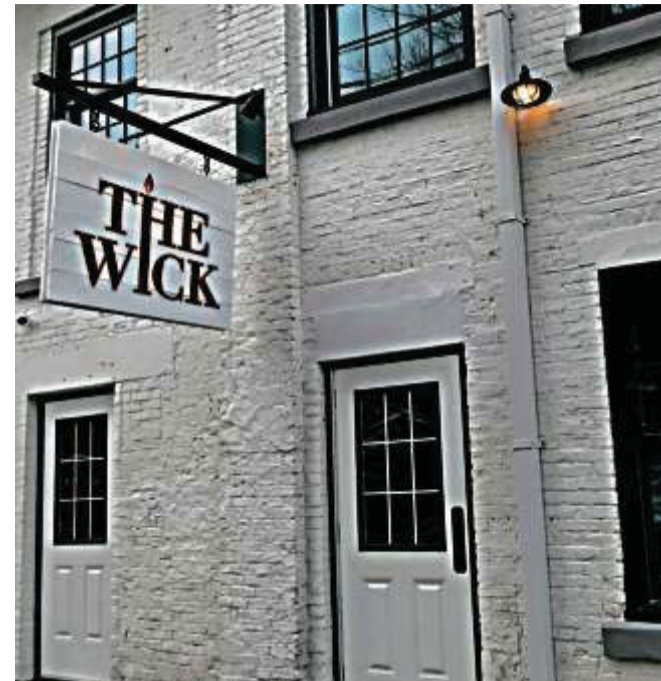
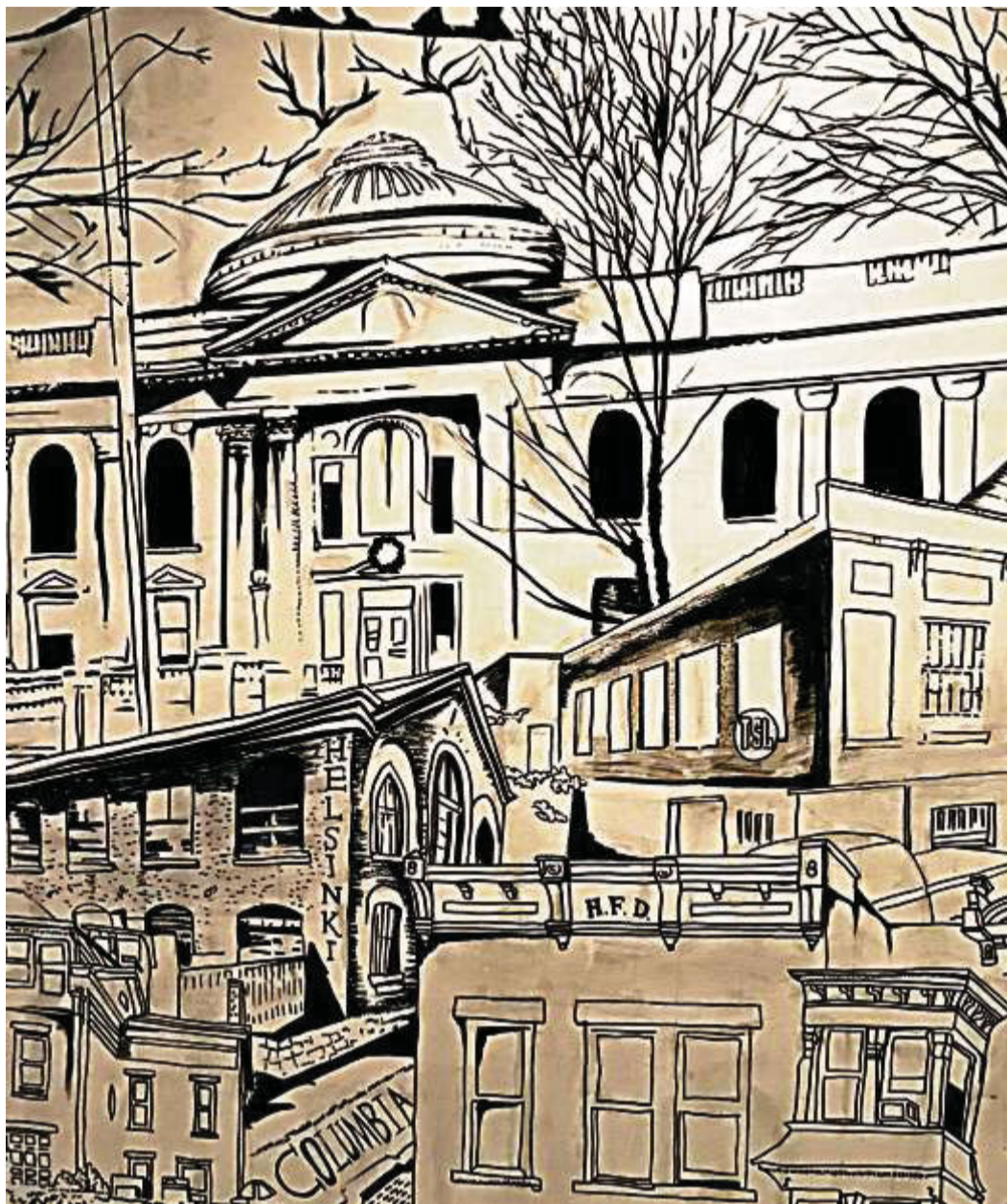


# The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD



PHOTOS BY DIANE BAIR FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

## A WICK(ED) GOOD TIME

BY DIANE BAIR AND PAMELA WRIGHT | GLOBE CORRESPONDENTS

**W**hen the word got out that a Marriott International-branded Tribute Portfolio hotel was opening in Hudson, N.Y., the city was abuzz. This small community of 6,700 in the Hudson Valley is decidedly non-chain — no Starbucks, no Subway — and proud of its independent spirit and its eclectic mix of architecture, arts, and organic eateries. “We’re a baby Brooklyn,” as one resident put it, “but just the good parts.”

Happily, The Wick feels like a good fit. Opened in December, the 55-room hotel is set in a former candle-and-soap-manufacturing facility. There’s nothing cookie-cutter about the property, located within walking distance of Hudson’s c.1874 brick Amtrak depot (the third busiest train station in the state) along the east side of the Hudson River. Sections of the building were built in the 1860s, 1920s, and 1950s. Turning it into a comfortable, modern hotel was no easy feat. The designers restored the original hardwood floors and brick details, honoring the building’s industrial past with exposed mechanicals and using blueprints of candle-making equipment as art. They also brought in images by original Hudson River School painters, and work by modern landscape artists currently working in the Hudson Valley. Paintings by Jane Bloodgood-Abrams grace the lobby, and her cloud images are integrated into the glass screens in the bar area. The lobby opens to a bar-restaurant area where signature cocktails and small bites are served at night. A complimentary Continental breakfast is offered daily. (For

\$7, opt for a full hot breakfast.) For lunch, or those hopping onto an Amtrak train, there are grab-and-go wraps, pastries, and salads.

Hallways sport denim wallpaper; guest rooms feature leather headboards, white-painted brick, and artwork galore. The art extends to the 24/7 fitness center, where a local muralist painted a cityscape in black and white. An on-site spa is scheduled to open shortly, a mini version of Hudson’s Bodhi Holistic Spa. (Will paraffin treatments be on the menu? We hope so.)

Of course, you’ll want to get out and explore this lively, funky burg — a favorite weekend getaway for New Yorkers looking to escape the bustle of the city. (In fact, many Brooklynites have relocated to Hudson, and launched businesses here.) The Wick will shuttle you around in a six-person electric shuttle to Warren Street and environs, chock-a-block with antique shops (skewed toward mid-century modern, natch), boutiques, restaurants, and the Hudson Opera House. In nice weather, this grid-like city is quite walkable, with the Hudson River rolling through its backyard, and the Catskill Mountains rising in the distance.

Chat people up a bit (or pick up a local history guide in Spotty Dog Books & Ale), and you’ll discover intriguing bits about Hudson’s past: that whaling ships (towing their catch) once plied the Hudson River, even though the ocean is 120 miles away; and that this artsy enclave was once famous for piracy, prostitution, and other unsavory activities. For a fun window into Hudson’s past, head over to Hudson Brewing Co. ([www.hudsonbrew.com](http://www.hudsonbrew.com)), located in a warehouse row of antique shops; their brews are named after infamous local folk like Shadie Sadie (a female pirate) and Wayward Woman (after a local reform school.) In fact, every beer can tell a

story — researched for authenticity — relating to Hudson’s history.

For a quick primer on the Hudson River School of artists — plus the region’s most stunning views — visit Olana ([www.olana.org](http://www.olana.org)), the Persian-style palace on a hillside. Landscape artist Frederic Church once lived in this mansion (now a state historic site), and his paintings are hung throughout.

And you’ll surely be tempted by Hudson’s food scene. There’s Grazin’ Diner ([www.grazinburger.com](http://www.grazinburger.com)), home of organic burgers (the only certified Animal Welfare approved restaurant in the country) and Wm. Farmer and Sons Boarding & Barroom ([www.wmfarmerandsons.com](http://www.wmfarmerandsons.com)), a super-buzzy spot for lunch, dinner, and drinks (where venison carpaccio mingles happily on the menu with ham and biscuits.) Or snag a coveted table at Fish & Game ([www.fishandgamehudson.com](http://www.fishandgamehudson.com)), a former blacksmith shop. Here, 2016 James Beard award semi-finalist Zak Pelaccio (of NYC’s Fatty Crab and Fatty Cue) whips up fire-roasted seasonal delights (say, rabbit cooking on a spit) using two custom-made wood burning fireplaces.

Is all of this worth a three-hour or so drive from Boston? Absolutely — especially in summertime, when the hiking trails of the Catskills beckon, and pleasure boats ply the Hudson River. Don’t forget to pack a sketchpad.

**THE WICK**, 41 Cross St., Hudson, N.Y.; 833-THE-WICK; [www.thewickhudson.com](http://www.thewickhudson.com). 55 rooms, including seven suites. Rates from about \$149.

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### HERE

#### ARTISTS OPEN STUDIOS TOUR

Celebrate the arts and support artists at the Cape Ann Artisans Spring Tour (June 2-3; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Now in its 35th year, the self-guided tour features 23 artisans at 20 locations in Gloucester and Rockport. Studio visits allow visitors to chat with artists, and observe up close how they create their work, including jewelry, wearable art, mosaics, paintings, sculpture, drawings, fiberarts, and more — all set against the scenic backdrop of these seaside communities. If you miss this weekend tour (or if you love it and want an encore performance) a Fall Tour will encompass the entire three-day Columbus Day Weekend (Oct. 6-8). Printed brochures with studio descriptions and tour map are available at all studios, the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce, the Rockport Information Booth on Route 127, and many other public venues. Or download a PDF on the Artisans’ website. [capeannartisans.com](http://capeannartisans.com)

#### RESERVE GUIDED TOURS TO MOUNT WASHINGTON

Loathe to tackle the scenic 6,288-foot summit of Mount Washington in your own vehicle? Why not leave the driving to experts, and sign up for seasonally available guided tours along the Mount Washington Auto Road. (May 26 through Oct. 21) Not only will you spare your car the effort, you’ll also learn about the history and ecology of the mountain through stories and anecdotes provided by knowledgeable guides. These tours have always been available on a first-come, first-served



basis, however — new this summer — guests have the opportunity to reserve online a specific time for their two-hour tour. Travel to the summit in 12-passenger vans; includes 60 minutes at the summit, and complimentary access to the interactive Extreme Mount Washington exhibition located inside the Visitor Center. Rates \$16-\$36. [603-466-3988](http://603-466-3988), [mtwashingtonautoro.com/guided-tours/2-hour-guided-tours](http://mtwashingtonautoro.com/guided-tours/2-hour-guided-tours)

### THERE

#### INTIMATE LUXURY BARGE TOURS IN FRANCE

Luxury barge cruises in Europe just got a whole lot more interesting with the debut of European Waterways’ new experiential tours. A cruise operator for more than 35 years, the company aims to create memorable moments in its 2018 offerings. Examples from trips in France include: a private tour of the moat-encircled Château de Commarin, accompanied by Count Bertrand de Vogue whose family has been in

continuous residence since the 13th century (on 12-passenger L’Impressionniste); a private tasting at the Alexandre Bonnet Champagne House in Les Riceys, an off-the-beaten path and unspoiled part of the Champagne region (on 12-passenger La Belle Epoque); a visit to a local oyster farm, and the Camargue National Park, renowned for its wild horses, pink flamingos, and lush green wetlands (on the 8-passenger Anjodi). Rates from \$3,890 per person. 877-879-8808, [www.europeanwaterways.com](http://www.europeanwaterways.com).

#### SCENIC TRAINS TO MACHU PICCHU

There are now four distinct ways to travel by train from Cusco to Machu Picchu on Inca Rail: 360° Machu Picchu Train, Private Machu Picchu Train, First-Class Machu Picchu Train and Voyager Machu Picchu Train. The elegantly designed carriages with new features and amenities include sleek

panoramic windows to view the passing scenery, including the roaring Urubamba river valley, cloud forest draped peaks and Inca ruins. The new 360° Machu Picchu Train, considered the crown-jewel of panoramic journeys, consists of six carriages and features a stand-out observation deck with a bar and outdoor viewing platform. Amenities include a light meal with organic ingredients from the surrounding Sacred Valley; and complimentary, GPS-activated informative audio guide. One way \$83; roundtrip \$191. [incarail.com](http://incarail.com)

### EVERYWHERE

#### PREMIUM WIRELESS HEADPHONES

In this noise-filled world, a great pair of headphones is a necessity when traveling. RHA, an independent audio company based in Glasgow, has released MA750, their newest premium wireless Bluetooth in-ear headphones. The sophisticated stainless steel design features a 12-hour battery, remote to control all smart devices, and LED

battery level indicator and power saving auto function so you won’t run out of juice on long-haul flights. Over-the-ear hooks and multiple ear tips create a secure, noise-isolating fit to drown out the snoring of your sleeping seatmate. Sweat and splashproof to IPX4. Magnetized aluminum on the earbuds allow you to clip them together when on the go. Three-year warranty. Free delivery. \$169.95.



#### TECHNO RUNNING TEE FOR MEN

Summer running, hiking, and trekking gear receive a techno boost with Rhone’s new “Run Seamless” short-sleeve Celliant shirt. By using thermo-reactive fabrics, Celliant naturally traps body heat — promoting a temporary increase in blood flow — and safely recycles it back into your body to increase endurance and performance. Additionally, SilverTech threads reduce bacteria and odor. Featherweight seamless construction allows for breathability in this anti-chafing and moisture wicking four-way stretch fabric. Easy to pack; dries quickly. Available in four colors. \$74.

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