

# Explore New England

NORTHAMPTON

## An eclectic, independent streak runs deep here

By Emily Sweeney  
GLOBE STAFF

NORTHAMPTON — Dubbed the “Paradise of America” in 1851 by opera singer Jenny Lind; “Lesbianville, USA” in 1992 by the National Enquirer; and often referred to as simply “NoHo,” Northampton is a vibrant, artsy community of 28,500 residents in Western Massachusetts. It’s a college town with a rich history, impressive architecture, and an easygoing, laid-back vibe that embraces creative types, and welcomes gays or straights, and everyone in between. A weekend visit is necessary to explore all that the city has to offer.

With plenty of places to stay, one well-known option is the **Hotel Northampton** (36 King St., 413-584-3100, [www.hotelnorthampton.com](http://www.hotelnorthampton.com), \$140-\$285 with continental breakfast). This grand old inn was built in 1927 and is home to the Wiggins Tavern, a circa 1786 structure that was relocated from New Hampshire and reassembled next to the hotel in 1930. Many famous visitors have passed through the hotel’s doors over the years — David Bowie and Melissa Etheridge among them. The rooms are spacious enough, and decorated with down-home country New England charm. There’s Wi-Fi throughout the hotel and an exercise room on the second floor. You can reserve a room online through the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Historic Hotels of America website ([www.historichotels.org](http://www.historichotels.org)).

Northampton’s pride festivities are held the first weekend of May, and plenty of other interesting events take place throughout the year. Last month the Miss Trans New England pageant was held at the Academy of Music Theatre and the city hosted Queer Carnivale: Mardi Gras in New England, featuring performers like Melissa Ferrick, All the Kings Men, and the Pioneer Valley Gay Men’s Chorus. The Out! For Reel LGBT Film Series — billed as the largest LGBT film series of its kind in the country — is based in Northampton and will kick off its third season Oct. 23 with a screening of “The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister” at the Academy of Music Theatre.

The town is known for its art galleries. While we were there, **R. Michelson Galleries** (132 Main St., 413-586-3964, [www.rmichelson.com](http://www.rmichelson.com)) was showing a collection of large-scale photographs by Leonard Nimoy. The exhibit runs until Oct. 31.

Quirky attractions abound. **Ye Ol’ Watering Hole & Beer Can Museum** (287 Pleasant St., NORTHAMPTON, Page M7



On Northampton’s Main Street, Sid Vintage sells retro-funky clothes and kitschy items.



A two-bedroom suite (left) at The Porches Inn in North Adams; the breakfast nook (above) and the Bernstein room (below) at Encore in Boston’s South End. The sprawling stone and wood farmhouse of Stonover Farm in Lenox (bottom) has a view of a duck pond.



KEVIN SPRAGUE (STONOVER FARM); KRISTIAN SEPTIMUS KROGH (THE PORCHES)

# FUSSY? NO WAY

Sleek and sophisticated retreats can indulge modern sensibilities

BY NECÉE REGIS | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

**P**ity the poor Modernist in search of a place to stay in New England. Oh, sure, there are many fine inns, tucked amid rolling hills or perched on cliffs with ocean views, but most share a quintessential New England style, a Victoriana aesthetic that seems to define the region. If you, like me, feel claustrophobic at the sight of floral wallpaper and doilies, and if teddy bears send you screaming for the latest issue of Wallpaper magazine, take heart. Contemporary styles and sleek designs are alive and well in Massachusetts. You just have to know where to look.

Modernist aficionados will swoon over the art, architecture, and furnishings at **The Guest House at Field Farm**. This Bauhaus-inspired house, built in 1948, is filled with period art and furnishings designed by midcentury luminaries such as Eileen Gray, George Nelson, Isamu Noguchi, Vladimir Kagan, Hans Wegner, and Charles and Ray Eames. Located on 316 acres of conservation land, the six-room guesthouse offers stunning views of Mount Greylock, as well as access to four miles of hiking and cross-country ski trails. 554 Sloan Road, Williamstown, 413-458-3135, [www.thetrustees.org/field-farm](http://www.thetrustees.org/field-farm), \$150-\$295

Any inn that combines the terms “retro-chic” and “boutique” on its website is worth considering as an alterna-

tive to Victoriana. At **The Veranda House** you’ll find a sophisticated and contemporary retreat located within a 19th-century structure. True, it’s more luxurious than many bed-and-breakfast inns, offering Frette bed linens and robes, subway tiled rainfall showers, flat panel TVs, and Wi-Fi access in its 18 rooms, but who’s complaining? It’s an easy walk to restaurants and shops in town, or you can enjoy old-fashioned harbor views from one of three wrap-around verandas. 3 Step Lane, Nantucket, 508-228-0695, 877-228-0695, [www.theverandahouse.com](http://www.theverandahouse.com), \$149-\$609

The South End neighborhood in Boston is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is the largest

existing Victorian residential district in North America. However, it’s possible to find contemporary digs in these historic brick buildings, such as those at the **Clarendon Square Inn**. This six-story, 19th-century townhouse has been meticulously renovated and restored, and the three guest rooms are outfitted with designer fabrics, limestone and tile baths, iPod docking stations, and original artwork hung on walls blissfully free of decorative patterning. The garden terrace is a sunny spot for morning coffee, though nothing beats stargazing from the rooftop Jacuzzi hot tub. 198 West Brookline St., Boston, 617-536-2229, [www.clarendonsquare.com](http://www.clarendonsquare.com), \$195-\$420

**Encore** is another cozy South End

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### Vermont



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NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION PROGRAM

# Casual elegance, contemporary design

► **MODERN INNS**  
*Continued from Page M5*

B&B offering classic contemporary furnishings in a historic 19th-century townhouse. Each of its three rooms, named after a 20th-century composer, playwright, or choreographer, has simple painted and exposed brick walls, sleek queen-size platform beds, flat-screen TVs, and Bang & Olufsen radios. With Philippe Starck Dr. No armchairs in the dining nook, as well as Marcel Breuer's Wassily chairs, Eileen Gray glass and chrome tables, and Italian-designed leather swivel chairs scattered through-

out, you might think you're vacationing in Europe. *116 West Newton St., Boston, 617-247-3425, www.encorebandb.com, \$140-\$240*

In the Berkshires, **Stonover Farm** is a contemporary oasis in a landscape awash with calico, taffeta, and lace. The owners lived in Los Angeles for 23 years before opening this B&B, which might account for the stripped down elegance of the decor and the first-class attention to details, such as bathrooms with two-headed showers, deep soaking tubs, and marble benches. The sprawling stone and wood farmhouse, circa 1900, has been completely renovated yet maintains a country feel with stone fireplaces, library, greenhouse, and breakfast room overlooking a duck pond. The inn can only accommodate 10 guests, guaranteeing a high pamper factor. A bonus: It's less than a mile to Tanglewood, and two miles from Lenox Village. *Stonover Farm B&B, 169 Under Mountain Road, Lenox, 413-637-9100, www.stonoverfarm.com, \$275-\$575*

► **UP TO DATE**  
Find alternatives to the Victorian aesthetic at [www.boston.com/travel](http://www.boston.com/travel).

Sand, sun, and the wide flat horizon where the bay meets the sky is what Provincetown is all about. The recently renovated **White Porch Inn** captures this spirit by combining casual elegance with contemporary design in a style they call "beachy-chic." The main house and carriage house date to the 1800s, and the nine rooms in this B&B retain the classic feel of old Cape Cod with tongue and groove beadboard paneling and polished hardwood floors. The property catapults into the 21st-century with spa tubs, free Wi-Fi, flat screen TVs, and luxury amenities such as pillow-top mattresses, goose down comforters, and beach towel service. Though not directly on the beach, the inn is steps away from the bay and some rooms offer water views. *7 Johnson St., Provincetown, 508-364-2549, www.whiteporchinn.com, \$99-\$399*

If you dine in Provincetown at **Enzo**, you might not realize the second floor houses a five-room B&B. Don't let the building's Victorian exterior, complete with turret, deter you from visiting. It's named after Enzo Ferrari, and the decor in each room reflects the sleek modern sensibilities of a racecar combined with the muted tones of the Province-



GINA RENZI



DAVID LYON FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE



CLARENDON SQUARE INN

From top: Outermost Inn in Aquinnah on Martha's Vineyard; The Guest House at Field Farm in Williamstown; and Clarendon Square Inn in Boston's South End.

town dunes. The five rooms, though small, have queen size beds with smooth blond headboards and luxury linens, and marble-tiled bathrooms. Each room also offers a distinctive amenity: One has a Jacuzzi tub, another a fireplace, a third offers

multiple showerheads. The location on Commercial Street, at the start of the West End, guarantees a lively atmosphere just outside the door. *186 Commercial St., Provincetown, 508-487-7555, www.enzolives.com, \$129-\$249*

The light-filled simplicity of

**The Outermost Inn** is the polar opposite of Victorian fussiness. The seven rooms in this contemporary structure have pale wood floors, doors, headboards, and bookcases, with area carpets and kilims, recessed lighting, and discreetly placed art. Think of a Shaker sensibility with fine linens and fluffy comforters. Located on the Gay Head Cliffs, the views encompass 20 acres of meadows and the sea, meaning you can hike, bird-watch, surf, swim, and fly-fish without needing to get in a car. The inn was designed and built, and is owned and operated, by Hugh and Jeanne Taylor. (Yes, *those* Taylors, as in James and Livingston, Hugh's brothers.) Aside from dust ruffles adorning the beds, it fits the bill for frou-frou-free lodging. *81 Light House Road, Aquinnah, 508-645-3511, www.outermostinn.com, \$310-\$430*

**The Porches Inn** seems unlikely to have contemporary interiors. Though not exactly modernist, it avoids Victorian clichés by infusing an ironic sensibility into its decor. Often described as "retro-edgy, industrial granny chic," this 47-room inn plays off its industrial past, and its proximity to the sprawling, 19th-century mill complex that now houses the Museum of Contemporary Art. Painted beadboard walls, wood and slate floors, luxurious bedding, linens, and padded headboards (all white) play against a self-consciously hip palette: avocado, periwinkle, ochre, gray, and peach. Quirky lamps and paint-by-numbers art are the icing on its retro-themed cake. *231 River St., North Adams, 413-664-0400, www.porches.com, \$130-\$245*

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