

TRAVEL TIPS

## Weekend Getaways: 5 Luxurious Northeast Destinations For Autumn

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*Combining scenic destinations and fall flavors*

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**+ ENLARGE**

Virginia's 35-year old Washington Inn is as iconic and remote as ever.



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Vermont's Topnotch Resort recently underwent a \$15 million renovation.



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Photo: Noah Fecks

The Golden Pheasant Inn is a family-run establishment in a scenic spot near the Delaware River.

Whether you're seeking a quick escape, a scenic destination to enjoy fall's brilliant colors, or heartier fare to sync with the season's brisk temps, here are **five terrific East Coast spots** that serve as the perfect getaway (if your perfect getaway includes amazing food).

### **Topnotch Resort (Stowe, VT)**

After an ambitious \$15 million renovation, Topnotch Resort (which originally opened in 1959) reopened this summer looking, well, nothing short of top notch. Many of the resort's famed amenities, including the guest rooms, tennis facilities, spa and restaurants, were updated with smart, slick touches. Yet everything manages to feel familiar and cozy (like your favorite ski lodge). Just don't forget to request a room facing the mountains, as the views are especially breathtaking this time of year. One of the resort's new restaurants, The Roost, sports a relaxed vibe with its ceiling-to-floor windows, shuffleboard table and indoor/outdoor setup. You can linger outside by the pools or fire pit, or gather indoors around the bar or at a table. To keep in line with the casual, cool feel of the restaurant, Chef Steve Sicinski created a menu of signature "Nibbles": savory, creative small plates that play particularly well with many of the Vermont beers on offer. Standouts include the chewy, handmade fennel and farmer's cheese pierogis, fat wedges of deep-fried avocado topped with cashew sauce and clam shells over-stuffed with tarragon butter, breadcrumbs and fresh clam meat. While intended for sharing, Sicinski's "Nibbles" are so spot-on and packed with flavor you won't want to. *Rates from \$195 per night. 4000 Mountain Road, Stowe, VT, 802-253-8585, [topnotchresort.com](http://topnotchresort.com)*

### **Golden Pheasant Inn (Erwinna, PA)**

Bucks County locals have long cherished this family-run fieldstone inn, discreetly tucked away between the Delaware River and Canal. And after undergoing an elegant renovation (completed last fall) under the care of sisters Blake, Brittany and Briar — who inherited the storied structure from their parents, Michel and Barbara Faure — Golden Pheasant feels more modern and alluring than ever. In addition to the four rooms, the menu has also been revamped. At the restaurant, Brittany and Briar run the front of the house while Blake, a graduate of Le Cordon Bleu, heads the kitchen and taps into local Pennsylvania and New Jersey farms to lend her classic cuisine a seasonal touch, on display in dishes such as beet and goat cheese salad; onion soup (Blake still uses her French father Michel's 26-year old recipe); and grilled Lancaster strip steak with bearnaise. All four rooms offer impressive views and refined touches, including marble baths and European linens, but we say book the Tohickon Room: overlooking the Delaware River, it floods with natural light in the morning. After

the inn's housemade breakfast (which is on the house), borrow one of the inn's bicycles and cruise along the towpath for more natural sightseeing (and calorie torching, while you're at it). *Rates from \$175 per night. 763 River Rd, Erwinna, PA, 610-294-9595, [goldenpheasant.com](http://goldenpheasant.com)*

### **Otesaga Resort Hotel (Cooperstown, New York)**

Overlooking Lake Otsego and nestled between the Catskills and the Central Leatherstocking region, this grand, 104-year-old hotel matches hearty, continental cuisine with countless ways to take in the crisp air and turning foliage. You can tee off at the hotel's 18-hole Leatherstocking Golf Course, charter a fishing boat on the lake, kick back at the resort's new outdoor fire pit or stroll through town to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. After spending a day in the great outdoors, head down to Otesaga's The Hawkeye Bar & Grill. First, warm up with one of the resort's specialty fall cocktails. Made of bourbon, calvados, apple cider and fresh thyme, the Apple Thyme conjures up some of the season's best flavors. Then dive into some of Chef Michael Gregory's classic, straightforward comforts, from seared scallops topping an apple-fennel slaw to tournedos of beef tenderloin with bordelaise and whipped potatoes to quinoa-stuffed roasted acorn squash. Round out the evening down the hall at the Templeton Lounge with a proper nightcap. *Rates from \$430 per night, suites from \$595. 60 Lake St, Cooperstown, NY, 607-544-2502, [otesaga.com](http://otesaga.com)*

### **The Ocean House (Watch Hill, Rhode Island)**

An iconic beachfront resort perched high on a bluff overlooking the ocean, The Ocean House offers both breathtaking views of the Atlantic and an ambitious culinary program. Going beyond the farm-to-restaurant movement, the resort also employs an on-site food forager named Janice McEachen. In addition to leading on-site cooking classes, McEachen manages relationships with dozens of local farms and markets to make sure the resort's cuisine showcases a diversity of of-the-moment ingredients. In fact, the resort is so widely regarded for its culinary chops, that last fall it released its first cookbook, *Ocean House: Living and Cooking Through the Seasons*. After wining and dining at one of the property's five restaurants, retire to one of the 49 rooms or 16 suites, all of which are elegantly appointed with soft, soothing colors, feather-top beds and original pieces of New England art. If you need more than restful sleep to seriously unwind, book a warming Beach Stone Massage at the award-winning OH! Spa. And because the local area is exceptionally vibrant in autumn, The Ocean House offers a special "Autumn in New England" package, good through October 31. *Rooms from \$695 per night, suites from \$1,515. 1 Bluff Avenue, Watch Hill, RI, 401-584-7000, [oceanhouseri.com](http://oceanhouseri.com)*

### **The Inn at Little Washington (Washington, VA)**

The success and reputation of chef and owner Patrick O'Connell's iconic inn and restaurant, which opened 35

years ago in the Virginia countryside, is nothing short of a miracle. The location is so remote, that even today you won't have mobile access (unless you're on Sprint). The interiors, meticulously designed by London set designer Joyce Evans, are decked out with lush tapestries, wallpapers and furnishings. While the overall look tilts Old English, nothing feels stuffy or dated; just warm, charming and intimate. The restaurant, which has been sourcing local ingredients from day one — milk was the only ingredient that could be delivered back in 1978, prompting O'Connell to build alliances with nearby farms — continues to stack up accolades, in addition to fans, from all over the world with its extravagant yet whimsical prix-fixe menus. It's no surprise, then, that this property remains a favored destination for even the most seasoned traveler and eater (regulars range from Presidents to actors) seeking a getaway that's as magical as it is memorable. Go big and book the Alice Waters Suite (all the rooms and suites are named after prominent culinary figures): it's split into two levels and drips with a striking mishmash of bold colors and fabrics (think Alice in Wonderland). Obviously, this sort of rare experience comes at a steep cost, but surprisingly, the worst part isn't paying the bill. It's leaving. *Rates from \$650 per night, suites from \$860. 309 Middle St, Washington, VA, 540-675-3800, [theinnatlittlewashington.com](http://theinnatlittlewashington.com)*