



PORTLAND, MAINE

Less than a two-hour drive from Boston (or take Amtrak's Downeaster from North Station), Portland, Maine, is home not only to some of the freshest seafood and hippest restaurants on the East Coast—whatever else you do, visit Street and Co. for a drink and some oysters—it's also a manageable city with both artsy and outdoorsy things to do. Schedule a romantic couple's massage at Nine Stones spa. If it's warm, you can sunbathe at nearby Crescent Beach State Park. Stroll through the galleries in downtown Portland or drive to Rockland to see the Farnsworth Art Museum. Freeport, just north of Portland, has great shopping, including outlet stores. Or take on the great outdoors with Northwoods Outfitters in Greenville, which offers both day and overnight excursions for every season—think dog sledding and white-water rafting. There's nothing like adrenaline to get the love flowing.

STAY The Portland Harbor Hotel (207-775-9090, portlandharborhotel.com; from \$169) is in the conveniently located Old Port neighborhood.

GREAT ESCAPES

Does the idea of planning a two-week honeymoon while also organizing a wedding leave you cold? Try a “minimoon” instead. **BY MARIAN DANIELLS**

THE TERM “MINIMOON” is cropping up on various wedding blogs, and even if the name is new, the concept is tried and true: a short trip the bride and groom take right after the wedding, with plans for a longer, perhaps more elaborate honeymoon later. It's the best of both worlds. You can lose the stress of planning a big trip on top of the wedding, but still spend those first few days relaxing together and celebrating being newlyweds. Here are five minimoons to consider in the Northeast.

NEWBURYPORT

Newburyport on the North Shore has its own lively boardwalk, numerous nearby beaches, and various boutique stores and art galleries—perfect for stocking up on pieces to transform two households into one home. Plum Island Kayak offers seasonal rentals of kayaks and stand-up paddle boards. If you time your minimoon just right, you can catch the summer Yankee Homecoming festival or swing by City Hall to see a performance by the North Shore's Symphony by the Sea. Just don't tell your wedding guests where you've gone, or they might crash your private party: The MBTA commuter rail gets you from Boston's North Station to quaint Newburyport in about an hour.

STAY The Garrison Inn (978-499-8500, garrisoninn.com; from \$190) has tasteful rooms, plus, for honeymooners, turn-down service with champagne and chocolate-covered strawberries.





BOSTON

Who says you have to leave town for some alone time? Quarantine yourselves in the Back Bay at the deluxe Eliot Hotel and feast on room service cooked at Clio, one of the city's finest French restaurants. Step outside your room, and try one of chef Ken Oringer's three tasting menus that are offered in the restaurant—choose from seven, 10, or 14 courses with wine pairings. Should you choose to venture beyond the hotel, play tourist during the day, strolling through the romantic Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum or just taking a walk along the Charles or through the Common. For even more pampering, schedule massages at Bella Sante on Newbury.

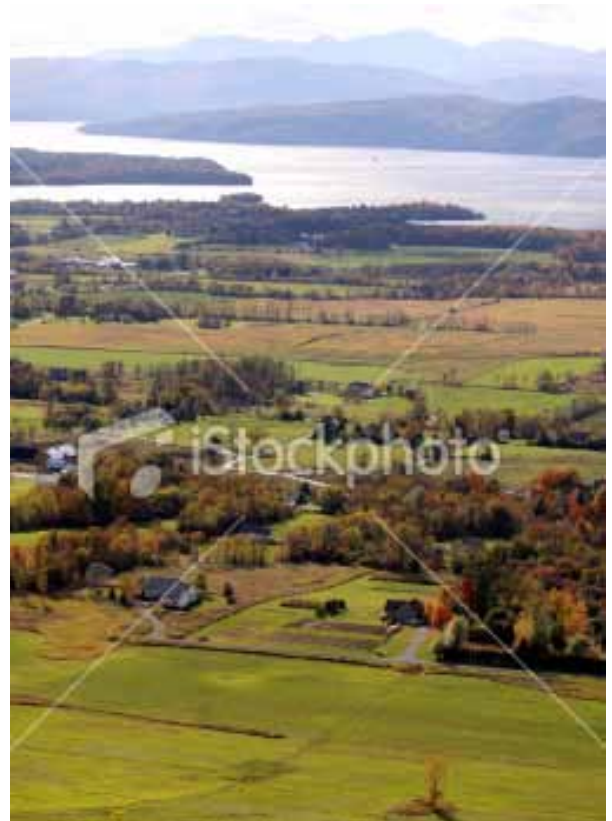
STAY The Eliot Hotel (800-443-5468, eliotothotel.com; from \$235 for a suite), situated on tree-lined Commonwealth Avenue, is known for its world-class service.



ATLANTIC CITY

Lucky in love? Then Atlantic City might be the perfect destination. Beyond the casino resorts, this beachfront New Jersey city offers a wide range of activities and attractions. (It's also recovering quickly from Hurricane Sandy's impact.) Check out the city's first batch of "Artlantic" outdoor art installations, then see a show or concert at one of the hotels or casinos. In the warm months, sign up for surfing lessons at Crystal Beach. The Boardwalk, originally built in 1870 to keep sand out of the ritzy waterfront hotels, is now the longest boardwalk in the world and the backbone of the city, with access to museums, hotels, and shops. If you need a night away from the slots, try the Pier Shops at Caesars. The luxury shopping center has a Vegas-style water, light, and sound show every hour on the hour.

STAY The Trump Taj Mahal (800-825-8786, trumptaj.com; from \$69), right on the Boardwalk, has a casino and a spa.



BURLINGTON, VERMONT

If you're looking for adventure, plan a few days in Vermont. Forget maple syrup tasting, though, and check out some of Vermont's many breweries instead. You can make a road trip of it, spending each night in a different place (the Vermont Brewers Association has a useful map on its website), or set up a home base in Burlington, which is central for many breweries. There you can also see Lake Champlain like a native with a ride along the Burlington Bike Path, stopping for a picnic at North Beach. Then head to Church Street Marketplace for casual dining and window shopping.

STAY The Willard Street Inn (800-577-8712, willardstreetinn.com; from \$150) is a restored Victorian mansion with 14 rooms and elegant English gardens. Plus, they'll deliver a plate of chocolate chip cookies to your room each day.

