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Have a sweet escape with these romantic Valentine getaways in New England



Luxury waterfront Gurney's Resort & Marina offers a Valentine's feast for the senses. *—J Public Relations*

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With Valentine's Day falling midweek this year, you've got two options: call in "love sick" and steal away on V-Day proper, or make it a weekend-long celebration of love later this month. No matter which fits your schedule, we found sweet deals in hot spots.

Paint the Town Red

Maine's coastal resort area known as the Kennebunks — Kennebunkport, Kennebunk and Arundel — is letting its love-light shine (quite literally) with "Paint the Town Red," a weeks-long celebration of love aimed at showcasing area romance.

Dock Square, the bustling hub of downtown Kennebunkport, will be aglow with red twinkling lights, and its shops, galleries, boutiques, and eateries offering "red plate" specials and events. A good resource for deals and happenings: lovekpt.com

Smack in the middle of Dock Square, The Kennebunkport Inn offers a "Love KPT" package: a two-night stay, complementary red wine and chocolate-covered strawberries upon check-in, three-course dinner for two, and a late check-out at noon. One Dock Square, Kennebunkport. Rates vary; call 207-967-2621.

kennebunkportinn.com

You'll find the same sweet deal weekends at Boathouse Waterfront Hotel, (21 Ocean Ave., Kennebunkport. 877-266-1304. boathouseme.com); The Grand Hotel, a boutique hotel with an art gallery (1 Chase Hill Road, Kennebunk. 877-455-1501. thegrandhotelmaine.com); and starting Feb. 15, at luxury oceanside Cape Arundel Inn & Resort. 208 Ocean Ave., Kennebunkport. 855-346-5700. capearundelinn.com.

Need help planning? Ask Cupid. Couples staying at resorts mentioned above in February can call the Cupid Concierge to deliver flowers, book a couples massage, deliver dessert in bed, and other romantic gestures. 207-967-1517.

Feed your passion

Foodies, find paradise at Hartstone Inn & Hideaway, a B&B in picturesque Camden, Maine, on Penobscot Bay — think water views and pristine woods. At Hartstone, the way to the heart is through the stomach. Their Valentines' deal includes a two-night stay, complementary Champagne and homemade chocolates, multi-course breakfasts each morning, and five-course dinner. Breakfast on the porch may include prosciutto sheered eggs, house-smoked salmon and roasted vegetable frittata, Maine lobster Benedict with lobster and asparagus quiche; Maine blueberry and almond pancakes, rum raisin Belgian waffles, banana foster crepes and more.

Dinner menu changes often, but sample fare: Maine lobster with risotto primavera, pan-seared salmon with pomegranate-ginger glaze and jasmine rice, and chocolate ganache tart with homemade salted caramel ice cream. From \$342 according to Web site. 41 Elm St., Camden. 207-236-4259. www.hartstoneinn.com

In Newport, R.I., luxury waterfront Gurney's Resort & Marina offers a Valentine's feast for the senses Feb. 14-18. Nab a bottle of Champagne upon arrival, then wine and dine at onsite Scarpetta with a four-course prix fixe Valentine's Dinner, including cauliflower soup, crudo, braised short ribs, duck and foie gras ravioli, lobster tagliatelle, black cod, seared scallops with chestnuts. For dessert? French chocolate cake with butterscotch and caramel gelato, or perhaps coconut panna cotta with caramelized pineapple. Wake to linger over breakfast in bed — avocado tartine, eggs Benedict, and lemon ricotta pancakes are sample fare. From \$750 per couple. 1 Goat Island, Newport. 401-849-2600. www.gurneysresorts.com

The key to your art

Salem isn't just for Halloween. Art lovers can take in the exhibits at the Peabody Essex Museum, a North Shore gem currently showing a Georgia O'Keefe retrospective, among other exhibits. (161 Essex St., 978-745-9500. \$20 per adult. www.pem.org) You might stay nearby at The Hotel Salem, an eye-popper of a retro-vibed boutique hotel that recently opened in the middle of downtown's bustling scene. The "Month of Love" package includes homemade sweets, a bottle of bubbly, and a book of love poems. Through Feb. 28. Rates vary. 209 Essex St. 978-451-4950. www.thehotelsalem.com

The Rhode Island School of Design Museum in Providence, R.I., is an underrated treasure of an art museum with free admission Sundays, plus onsite cafe. (20 North Main St., 401-454-6500. risdmuseum.org) View the van Goghs, then hop to Hotel Providence, where the Valentine's deal includes a bottle of Champagne, chocolate-covered strawberries; rose petal turndown service, and dinner and breakfast at Backstage Kitchen + Bar. Through Feb. 18. Rates vary. 139 Mathewson St. 401-861-8000 www.hotelprovidence.com

Stowe away

Stow away with your ski bunny at Stoweflake Mountain Resort in Stowe, Vt. The resort offers a Valentines package through Feb. 15 — snag Vermont chocolates, complimentary dessert after dinner at onsite Charlie B's Pub & Restaurant, and complimentary upgrade from king accommodations (from \$228 per night). Add a couples massage with lunch and Champagne (\$279.) www.stoweflake.com

Take a romantic horse-pulled carriage ride at Gentle Giants Sleigh Rides & Carriage Rides. Ride by woods and stream, a covered bridge, and to meadows with a spectacular view of Mount Mansfield. (\$40 per adult. 4000 Mountain Road, Stowe, Vt. Must call to reserve: 802-253-2216. www.gentlegiantsrides.com) Snuggle up nearby at Green Mountain Inn, where their two-night romance package includes coupon to a local jeweler, a bottle of Champagne, and chocolate-dipped strawberries, tea and cookies in the afternoon, and full Vermont country breakfast by the fireplace. Rates vary. 800-253-7302. 18 Main St. greenmountaininn.com