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ROAD WARRIORS

8
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Extremes

Of hospitality—from the vast to the intimate.

BY KELSEY HARRISON

To get a feel for Maine's resorts, why not use a stadimeter as well as a microscope to discover the very largest and very smallest? In the simplest terms, which five Maine hotels have the most guest rooms?

Bar Harbor Regency

With 278 guest rooms, the Holiday Inn Resort Bar Harbor, Acadia National Park, also known as the Bar Harbor Regency, is the largest hotel in the Pine Tree state.

"We have a heated outdoor pool and jacuzzi, putting green, lighted tennis courts, fitness room, and free local transportation on the Island Explorer," says general manager Eben Salvatore. There's a gated marina in Frenchman's Bay. On-site restaurants are La Bella Vita with fancy Italian and a Stewman's Lobster Pound for the shore dinner experience.

800-234-6835, barharborregency.com

Anchorage Inn, York Beach

"Our outdoor pool is located directly on Long Sands Beach with a view of Nubble Lighthouse," says Caitlynn Ramsey. "We're family oriented," and quite near York's Wild Kingdom and Kittery Premium Outlets. "Room prices depend on the date range, but in-season August rates range from \$207 to \$605 per night plus tax." There are 202 rooms, suites, and lofts here; two indoor pools, a whirlpool spa; a children's pool; and a fitness center.

"The most popular entrees at our Sun & Surf Restaurant are Maine boiled lobster, baked stuffed lobster with seafood stuffing, and a surf & turf of lobster and steak."

363-5112, anchorageinn.com

Wait a second. Shouldn't there be extra credit for cute and cozy? Let's look at three boutique hotels that are among the tiniest in the state.

Belfast Bay Inn, Belfast

1

"It's the start of our sixth season," says Judy Hemming-sen, who owns and operates the handsome in-town **Belfast Bay Inn** with her husband Eddie. "We really love this building. We spent two-and-a-half years renovating it and turning it into a hotel." The six suites and two rooms are furnished with Sterns & Foster 'pillow-top' king beds, Bose radios, flat-screens, and WiFi; stays include breakfast served in-suite and optional massage services.

"In summer, we serve breakfast in the courtyard—guests love this. We make all the breakfasts—we use local yogurt and farm eggs, and we have a baker for our breads, muffins, and scones. We do tremendous repeat business. When we first got here, a lot of the storefronts in town were empty. Now they're all full with a great mix of shops and galleries. And we're a two-minute walk to the town pier and the new walk that goes along the entire 1.1-mile length of Belfast Harbor. Guests usually start their day with a run or walk there. It passes through Front Street Shipyard, and there are fabulous yachts there in the summer." Accommodations run \$258 to \$398 during peak season, but spring and Mother's Day packages are available through May 21 starting at \$178.

338-5600 belfastbayinn.com

ROAD WARRIORS

Harborside Hotel, Spa & Marina, Bar Harbor

“We’re the only four-diamond [hotel in the area] directly on the water with a private beach,” says general manager Chris Torrey. “We’ve got a marina connected to the property. You can have brick-oven flatbread pizza delivered hot to your yacht, where you overlook the Porcupine Islands in Mt. Desert Narrows.” There are 193 guest rooms here, a heated pool, hot tub, lighted tennis courts, fitness center, and full-service spa.

The historic Bar Harbor Club is part of Harborside, where all the events and weddings are held, overlooking Frenchman’s Bay. We have our own shopping village—quaint little shops. They lead to our pound, Stewman’s Lobster Pound.” And if you want to be out on the bay: “We’re also partners with the Bar Harbor Whale Watch company, a few steps from the hotel.”

La Bella Vita serves a rustic stew of Maine lobster and seafood with grilled ciabatta and saffron rouille. “My favorites are the two-pound, butter-poached jumbo Maine lobster and the brick oven pizettes,” says Torrey.

“We’ve got a rustic Italian hand-cut pasta dish, Pappardelle Farnese,” says executive chef Ryan Phillips. “We braise short ribs with Barolo wine, wild mushrooms, and veal stock to make a ragu for the pasta, and we finish the dish with unfiltered olive oil and shaved pecorino.”

288-5033, harborsidehotel.com

Samoset Resort, Rockport

“Our resort overlooks Rockland Lighthouse on Penobscot Bay and the 18-hole golf course is championship level,” says Cornelius “Connie” Russell, general manager. The links attract celebrity athletes. “We’ve had Bobby Orr, K.C. Jones, Pat Riley, Tommy Lasorda, and Ted Williams as guests. Also John Travolta, Mel Gibson, Stephen King, Joan Benoit Samuelson, and Joe Biden.”

Here you’ll find 178 guest rooms, indoor and outdoor pools; a full-service spa; and an ‘Ultimate Back Yard’ with on-site Samoset Kids Club, offering morning and evening hours of child supervision. There are tennis and volleyball courts and a nine-hole disc



The Samoset’s golf course is one of its star attractions. There’s also a separate ‘disc-golf’ course.



While big hotels come with large-scale amenities like heated oceanside saltwater pools (see Harborside’s below), sometimes nothing beats a cozy fire like this one at the Pomegranate Inn.



golf course. The resort is in the same OPAL Collection of hotels as the Harborside.

La Bella Vita is the on-site restaurant headed by executive chef Tim Pierce; there’s also an Enoteca Lounge, and a Club-house Grille.

594-2511, samosetresort.com

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Andrew Wyeth, *The White Dory*, 1944, watercolor on paper, 14 5/8 x 21 inches, Collection of the Farnsworth, museum purchase, 1944.421, © Andrew Wyeth.

This exhibition is sponsored in part by Lie-Nielsen Toolworks and the Wickham Skinner Fund. Primary media sponsor is Maine Home+Design.

Farnsworth Art Museum → 16 Museum Street, Rockland, ME 04841 • 207-596-6457 • farnsworthmuseum.org

2 The Pomegranate Inn, Portland

Innkeepers Steve Spampinato and Kaitie Welch run the inn, which is in the Lark hotel group (other Larks can be found in Camden, Kennebunkport, Portsmouth, Newport, and Nantucket). “We serve a three-course breakfast, all made in-house—a fruit course, then pastry, and then something like an egg dish. Kaitie is really quite talented.”

The rooms appear to have the most fanciful wallpaper. But in fact, “the walls are all hand-painted by various artists,” says Steve. “There’s so much art here.”

“We’re open year-round, so we see repeat guests. We get a surprising number of guests from Texas, and from England, for some reason. But the majority of our people come from Massachusetts.”

Eight guest rooms (including 1 suite). Rates, depending on timing, range from \$149 to \$399.

772-1006, pomegranateinn.com



Cliff House Resort & Spa, Ogunquit

“The views are fantastic,” says general manager Gerard Kiladjan. “Every room [there are 166] has an ocean view—our guests leave their balcony doors open at night so they can hear the waves crashing

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on the rocks. And the views get even better in bad weather!”

You’re perched on the edge of Bald Head Cliff on 70 oceanfront acres with two indoor and two outdoor pools; two hot tubs; fitness center; tennis courts; full-service spa; and a 150-seat amphitheater. Rates range from \$150 in the off-season to \$415 in peak season for a Spa room.

The spa experience is a specialty. “Our



Spa rooms are the best, with a fireplace in every room,” says Kiladjian. Guests may

opt for treatments in the spa or schedule an in-room massage. Dine at the Cliff House Restaurant and Ocean Terrace Lounge, or head into Ogunquit and explore.

361-1000, cliffhousemaine.com

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3 Blair Hill Inn, Greenville

“It’s worth the trip,” says innkeeper Ruth McLaughlin, who with husband Dan has owned and operated Blair Hill Inn for 18 years. “The sun’s out today, and I can see from Canada to Sugarloaf.”

The hotel overlooks Moosehead Lake; amenities include complimentary breakfast and in-room spa services. There are gardens, a greenhouse; and a catch-and-release trout pond on the grounds.

Blair Hill is open from mid-May to the end of October. “Our guests come for the beauty, and they come from all over—England, France, Norway, Australia, Israel. We had two women walk in once—as soon as you walk into the inn the lake is right there in front of you—and one of them said, ‘Oh! I feel so ashamed!’ I ask her what on Earth for, and she said, ‘We live in southern Maine and we had no idea how beautiful it is here.’”

“Our guests like to hike; kayak; canoe; and take seaplane tours, pontoon boat cruises, and cruises on the historic *Katahdin* steamboat. Moosehead is the largest lake east of the Mississippi that’s contained within one state.” The inn contains a fine-dining restaurant that opens in mid-June and welcomes the public Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights.

There are 8 guest rooms, 9 starting in July; \$325 to \$475 per night.

695-0224, blairhill.com ■



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