

# weekenders

HUDSON VALLEY, NY

• TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

• MONTREAL



Scallops with corn, romanesco succotash, and curry *gastrique* at Butterfield.

## Meal by Meal Through the Hudson Valley

VISITORS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO UNPACK THEIR BAGS FOR GOOD IN THIS SLICE OF UPSTATE NEW YORK.

BY JESSEN O'BRIEN • PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT DUTILE

**T**he Hudson River spills from Lake Tear of the Clouds, in the Adirondacks, all the way down through New York City. Mountains almost appear to lap the river along the way, their crests and troughs as gentle as a lullaby. The last 150 miles or so of the waterway form the thorax of the Hudson Valley, which spreads out like butterfly wings from the river. Here the soil is rich, the water plentiful, and the farms a scant distance from the dinner tables—conditions ripe for breaking artisanal bread.

Many of the valley's restaurants are run by former weekenders, who are eager to chat, pointing out some dear friend of theirs at your next stop. The good mood is catching and best enjoyed while stuffing yourself silly with someone who's willing to give you a bite off their plate.

### FRIDAY: DATE NIGHT

If you're visiting the valley as a twosome, there's no better place to grin goofily at each other over candlelight than **Butterfield**, a Dutch Colonial mansion in Stone Ridge, on the Hudson's left bank. The restaurant is named for the lands around it, whose soil early settlers declared as rich as butter.

The food is lighthearted and stylishly presented. Most important, it's good. Your desire to eat every morsel may compel you to rip off chunks of bread to mop up leftover vinaigrette from the heirloom-tomato salad. (It's got to be true love if you wrestle over the breadbasket for this very purpose.)

**SATURDAY:  
THE COOKING CLASS**

To really dig into the local food scene, you'll need to get your hands dirty. In the town of Kingston, about 13 miles from Stone Ridge, you can take a cooking class at **Bluecashew Kitchen Homestead**. If the timing is right, sign up for the monthly Farmers Market Cooking Class, held on a Saturday morning. The session begins by walking two blocks to the Kingston Farmers Market, where dozens of local vendors hawk purple cauliflower, doughnut peaches, and homemade kimchi. Classes are small and a great way to meet locals. "People in the valley are hardworking and



content," says Bluecashew's co-owner JT McKay, who moved upstate after opening and running restaurants in Manhattan, London, Dubai, and more. "That's the spirit of Kingston. Everyone has their own point of view and a lot of support for each other." He and his partner, Sean Nutley, pick out much of what's for sale in the store—you'll probably spend part of class eyeing the pretty serving platters and serious-looking cookware that's built to last.

**THE CROWD-PLEASER**

At dinnertime, cross over to the right bank and into Rhinebeck. Even if you're traveling with picky eaters, nothing at **The Amsterdam** fails to please. You could order a burger or start with the pâté—made on-site using only what's local, from the duck to the bourbon it's flavored with—then move on to potato gnocchi with corn, chanterelles, and bacon. "I get my inspiration first from the season and what products are available to me locally," chef Alex Burger says. "But I don't



Clockwise, from left: An exhibit at the Thomas Cole National Historic Site; the Amsterdam's chef Alex Burger (far left), owners Howard and Chris Jacobs (center), and staff; espresso and apple tartlets at Le Perche; one of Hudson's pretty townhouses; the dining room at the Olana State Historic Site, the former estate of painter Frederic Church.

choose things just because they are local—it's about quality first and foremost." Luckily, there's no shortage of good ingredients nearby. Burger, who has cooked everywhere from Singapore to Spain, compares the valley to the Basque Country, because of both its bounty and the passion of its farmers and producers. The Amsterdam's founders, husband-and-wife team Howard and Chris Jacobs, are weekenders turned full-timers who fell for the area. "The Amsterdam is a love letter to Rhinebeck," Howard says. "Simplicity, honesty, and the celebration of the everyday. That's what I feel when I am in the valley, so we decided to channel that idea into everything we do."

**SUNDAY: BREAKFAST**

Hudson, a bit north of Rhinebeck, has a steeple on the main drag and



dozens of little shops that are hard to resist poking your head into. Before you get too distracted, duck into **Le Perche** for breakfast. The courtyard lies between the main building and the wood-burning bakery; sit there and you'll spend the meal breathing in the scent of fresh croissants, brioche toast, and other temptations.

**THE PICNIC LUNCH**

A cobalt sign hangs outside **Talbot & Arding**, marking the entrance to a treasure trove of edible goodies. Dried apricots, tomato relish, orange-and-Scotch marmalade, chocolate walnut cookies—and that's all before you reach the main attraction, placed coily in the back: the cheese. Load up with as much as you can carry. (Nearby **Hudson Wine Merchants** sells ramp- and rose-tinged spirits by local distillery Olde York Farm.)

To eat with a view, drive to Hudson River School artist Frederic Church's former home, **Olana State Historic Site**. You can picnic on the landscaped grounds, which overlook a



**BEYOND THE TABLE**

**HUDSON RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM** A master class in both the Hudson River and the vessels that have sailed upon it over the centuries. 50 Rondout Landing, Kingston; 845-338-0071; hmmm.org; admission, \$7

**THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** The Hudson River Skywalk will connect the estate of painter Thomas Cole with Olana State Historic Site by the end of 2019. 218 Spring St., Catskill; 518-943-7465; thomascollection.org; tours, \$14 a person

**HUDSON HALL** Travelers can take in concerts, plays, readings, lectures, or dance performances at the state's oldest operating theater. 327 Warren St., Hudson; 518-822-1438; hudsonhall.org; ticket prices vary

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Above: A bartender serves a Queens Park Swizzle and a Bourbon Sour at Wm. Farmer and Sons.

staggering 250 acres. Don't miss a tour of the remarkable home, its design shaped by Church's travels to the Middle East, Europe, Mexico, and other places.

## DINNER WITH FRIENDS

Back in Hudson, gas lamps greet passersby outside **Wm. Farmer and Sons**. Inside, there are exposed brick walls, copper lights, and vintage Naval Academy chairs. The late Sasha Petraske, of Milk and Honey fame, built the cocktail program, which draws on midcentury bartending manuals and recipes from New York City speakeasies. The food is ideal for sharing among friends; order a slew of starters and a couple of entrées then split the lot. Don't despair if there's something you didn't get to try—if you're anything like the others, you'll be back in the valley soon enough. 🍷

**+** Find recipes and more tips in the *Endless Vacation*\* magazine app. See page 2 for details!

## weekenders

### GUIDE TO THE HUDSON VALLEY

#### EAT

**The Amsterdam** 6380 Mill St., Rhinebeck; 845-516-5033; [lovetheamsterdam.com](http://lovetheamsterdam.com); dinner for two, \$38\*

**Butterfield** 3805 Main St., Stone Ridge; 845-687-0887; [butterfieldstoneridge.com](http://butterfieldstoneridge.com); dinner for two, \$62

**Le Perche** 230 Warren St., Hudson; 518-822-1850; [leperchehudson.com](http://leperchehudson.com); breakfast for two, \$20

**Wm. Farmer and Sons** 20 S. Front St., Hudson; 518-828-1635; [wmfarmerandsons.com](http://wmfarmerandsons.com); dinner for two, \$58

#### EXPLORE

**Olana State Historic Site** 5720 State Rte. 9G, Hudson; 518-828-0135; [olana.org](http://olana.org); grounds visits, free; house tours, \$12 a person, reservations recommended

#### SHOP

**Bluecashew Kitchen Homestead** 37B N. Front St., Kingston; 845-514-2300; [bluecashew.com](http://bluecashew.com); cooking classes, from \$85 a person

**Hudson Wine Merchants** 341½ Warren St., Hudson; 518-828-6411; [hudsonwinemERCHANTS.com](http://hudsonwinemERCHANTS.com)

**Talbott & Arding** 323 Warren St., Hudson; 518-828-3558; [talbottandarding.com](http://talbottandarding.com)

## STAY

### RCI® AFFILIATED RESORTS WITHIN 40 MILES OF HUDSON VALLEY INCLUDE:

**Wind in the Pines** 1903  
These studios and one- or two-bedroom units make for a convenient home base. 949 S. Main St., Great Barrington, MA  
**MEMBER REVIEW:** "Quaint, well-cared-for rooms."

**Vacation Village in the Berkshires** 6057  
Get your laps in at the indoor pool. 276 Brodie Mountain Rd., Hancock, MA  
**MEMBER REVIEW:** "Staff was very helpful."

**Berkshire Mountain Lodge** D567  
Well-appointed condominiums offer modern appliances and cozy living areas. 8 Dan Fox Dr., Pittsfield, MA  
**MEMBER REVIEW:** "Great location!"

\*Estimated meal prices do not include drinks, tax, or tip.

### Holiday Inn Club Vacations Oak 'n Spruce Resort 1243

Adventurers will love being close to the Appalachian Trail and Tolland State Forest. 190 Meadow St., South Lee, MA

**MEMBER REVIEW:** "Beautiful scenery with loads of activities."

**For complete member reviews (as member reviews have been condensed) and additional resort listings, visit RCI.com or call 800-338-7777 (Weeks) or 877-968-7476 (Points). Club Members, please call your specific Club or RCI telephone number.**

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### NON-RCI AFFILIATED RESORT:

#### Wm. Farmer and Sons

Each room is different, but all are charming in this family-run boarding house. 20 S. Front St., Hudson, NY; 518-828-1635; [wmfarmerandsons.com](http://wmfarmerandsons.com); one-bedroom suites from \$229 a night