

New Hampshire

travel guide

You'll Love it Here

by *Becky Ferrero*

New Hampshire is known as a great place to view magnificent foliage in the fall, but the Granite State is also bursting with tour and FIT possibilities throughout the year.

According to Lori Harnois, domestic marketing manager for the New Hampshire Division of Travel & Tourism Development in Concord, the state is filled with soft adventure ideas — ranging from dog sled-

ding to biking to kayaking — as well as wildlife tours, agritourism, cruises and many scenic trains.

Visitors can learn the process of making the new General John Stark apple-based vodka at the Flag Hill Winery in Lee or take an unforgettable springtime moose viewing tour in the White Mountains. For the adventurous, there are winter sight-seeing tours up the Mt. Washington Auto Road on SnowCoaches — nine passenger vehicles that travel just above the treeline.

Receptive tour operator Susan Logan, president of New Hampshire Tourism Network in North Conway, said these action-packed tours are very popular with group travelers. “The groups tend to be younger seniors. We’re finding more of an age range, [travelers] from 40- to 80-years-old, who want to have hands-on experiences while enjoying the state’s natural beauty,” said Logan.

And, according to Harnois, the state’s modest size — just 100 miles at its widest point and only 200 miles from north to south — makes it easy to pack a lot into a tour without too much of driving.

CENTURIES OF HISTORY

Historic sites are among New Hampshire’s most popular tour components, and new updates to these attractions can be found throughout the state. In the seaport city of Portsmouth, the living history museum, Strawbery Banke, recently opened the new Tyco Visitors Center and gift shop. Strawbery Banke preserves more than 300 years of the city’s history, and the visitors center explores the state’s oldest waterfront neighborhood.

In 2005, Portsmouth celebrated the centennial of the treaty that ended the Russo-Japanese War and won President Theodore Roosevelt the Nobel Prize. The city is continuing the festivities with the exhibit “An Uncommon Commitment to Peace,” which explores the critical role local citizens played during the 1905 nego-

tiations, on view at the John Paul Jones House Museum.

The state's aeronautical history can be discovered at the new Aviation Museum of New Hampshire. Located in the 1937 terminal building of the Manchester International Airport, the museum houses a model of the plane flown by Robert Fogg, the first pilot to land at the airport in 1927.

Fans of art and architecture will be pleased to know that while Manchester's internationally renowned Currier Museum of Art is closed for expansion, Currier Downtown will house the Museum Shop, which features merchandise related to the collections as well as unique, handcrafted art. The museum also owns the Zimmerman House, the only Frank Lloyd Wright-designed residence open to the public in New England. Tours are available from March through January.

WHITE MOUNTAIN MEMORIES

New Hampshire's White Mountains have been a skiing and tourism mecca for many years, and Mikey Duprey, of the White Mountains Visitors Bureau, North Woodstock, offers this explanation. "We all look

for constants in our lives, and the White Mountains don't change," he said. "We have attractions that have been here for 50-plus years. We also have spectacular scenery, shopping in a tax-free state, quaint restaurants and friendly people — the whole package!"

One exciting new development in the White Mountains is the 2006 return of the Highland Games to

Loon Mountain, after they were held downstate for three years. This popular gathering of Scottish clans games is held each September and has attracted more than 20,000 spectators per day.

Many visitors love to discover the White Mountains' panoramic views on its scenic railroads, including the historic Mt. Washington Railway Company in Mt. Washington and the Conway Scenic Railroad in North Conway. The scenery doesn't stop when visitors settle in for the night at New Hampshire's resorts. The Margate Resort in Laconia is located on the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee, and Indian Head Resort in Lincoln has the White Mountain National Forest in its backyard.

While the splendor of the White Mountains draws visitors, NTA tour operators also play an important role in repeat business to the area. "We've been NTA members for 30 years," said Sandra Garick, director of marketing, Indian Head Resort, "and I attribute a great deal of our success to NTA tour operators, many of whom have brought us business for more than 20 years. I don't know what we would do without them." ■

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The following company has placed advertising in support of this travel guide.



The New Hampshire Highland Games feature more than 60 Scottish clans and societies.

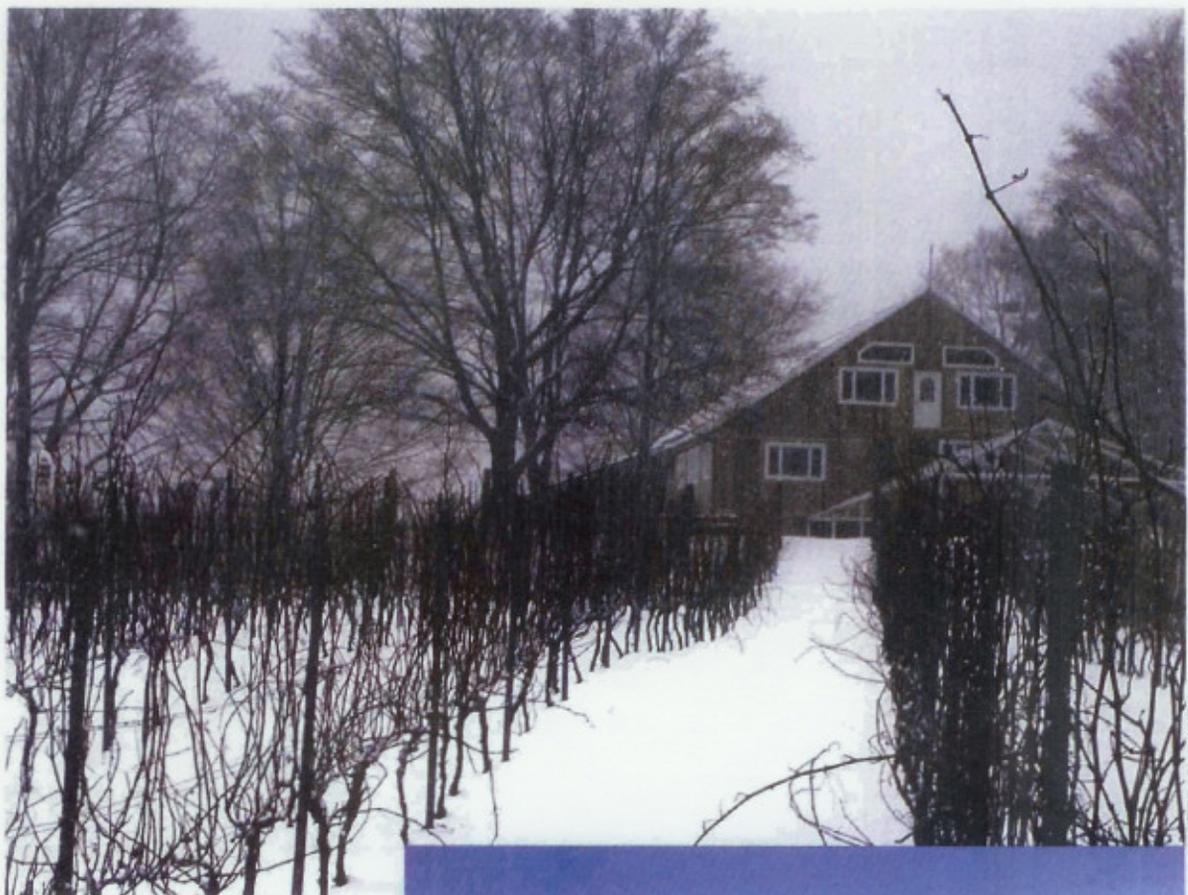
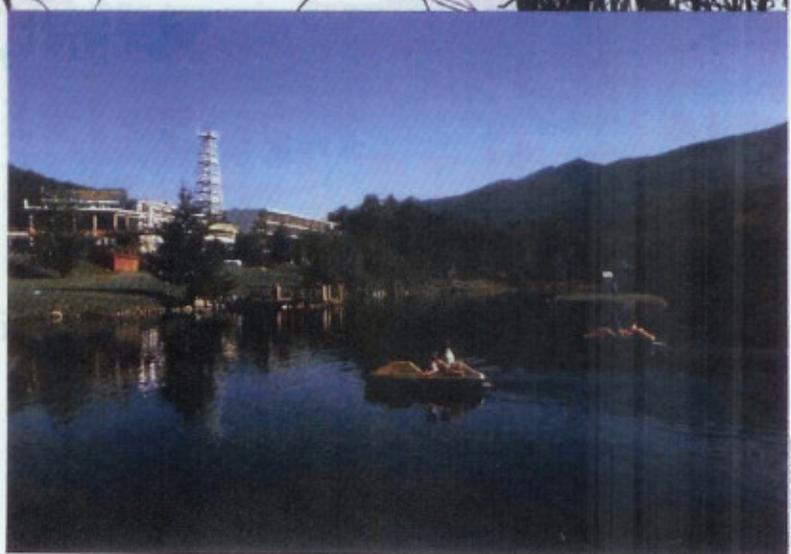


PHOTO: FLAG HILL WINERY

Grapevines in winter at Flag Hill Winery in Lee. Summer view of Indian Head Resort from Shadow Lake.

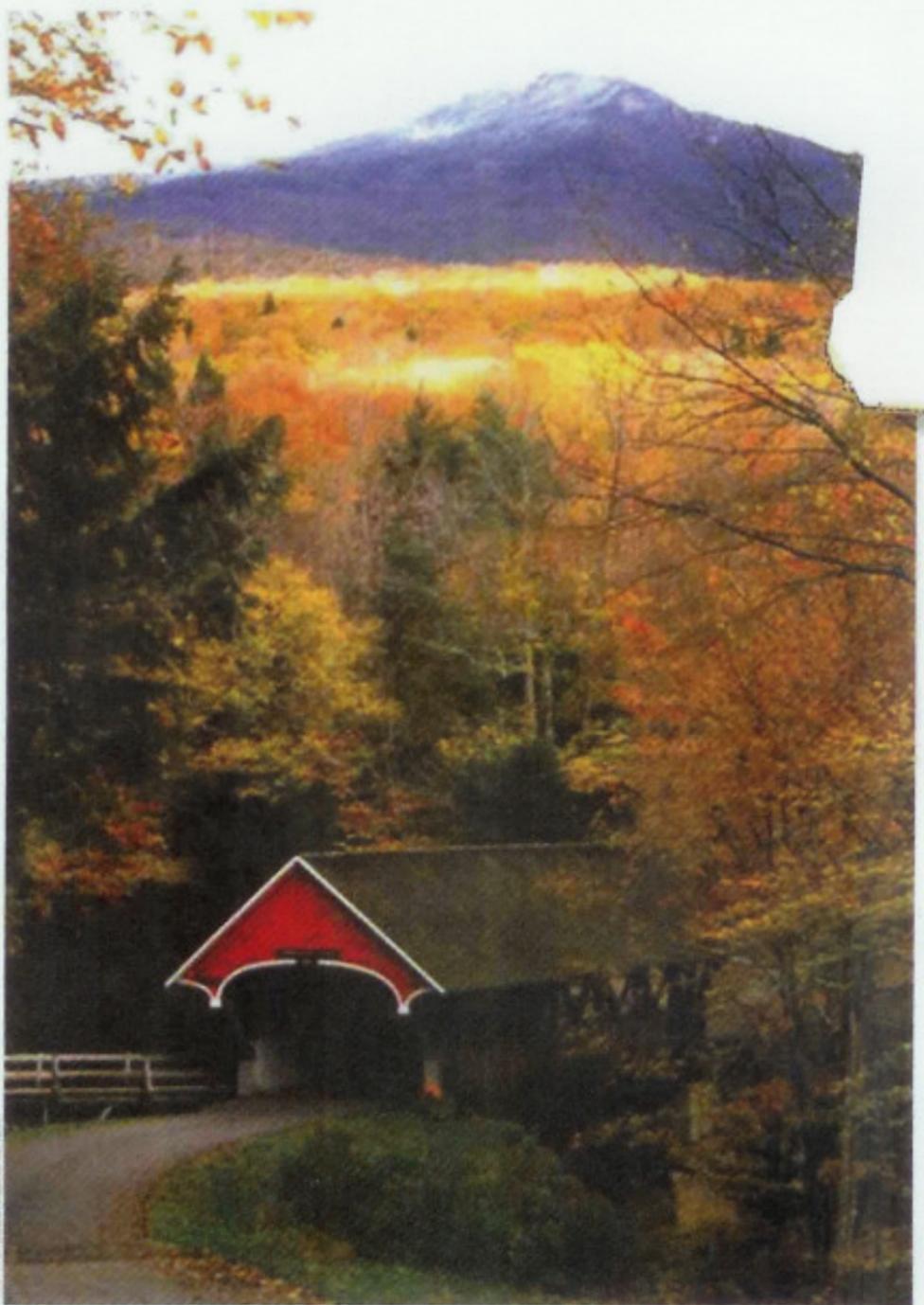


INDIAN HEAD RESORT



NHDTTDLOON MOUNTAIN/SKI NEW HAMPSHIRE

Skiers and outdoor adventurers continue to flock to the White Mountains.



New Hampshire's scenic countryside provides all kinds of sightseeing options, from hiking and biking to fall foliage and agritourism.





Jewell Towne Vineyards and Swan Chocolates are stops on the "Chocolate, Wine & Lobster" tour package.

Surprising Southern New Hampshire

"Visitors come to southern New Hampshire for many reasons," said Mel Tye, CTP, president/CEO, Tye's Top Tour & Travel, in Merrimack. "It's easy to hub and spoke here, because attractions are close in proximity, allowing people to stay in a resort-type atmosphere while visiting different attractions each day."

And, according to Tye, southern New Hampshire is filled with surprising attractions. "We have more than 100 award-winning restaurants, wineries and breweries, which provide interesting venues for culinary tours," he said.

In fact, culinary tours are Tye's biggest sellers, specifically "Chocolate, Wine & Lobster," which features the award-winning Jewell Towne Vineyards in South Hampton, Swan Chocolates in Merrimack and a lobster lunch. "We are also the only tour company that offers a medieval ban-



SWAN CHOCOLATES

quet, complete with an original score, which is incorporated into many of our September tours," he added.

Tye said another big draw to the area is its many sporting venues, where visitors enjoy regional sporting events, as well as an abundance of hotel rooms with lower rates than in surrounding states.

"We also have great architecture and art here, as well as historic cities like Portsmouth," said Tye, whose company is approximately 50 percent receptive and 50 percent outbound. "There is just so much here that is really interesting."

For more information, contact Mel Tye, Tye's Top Tour & Travel Inc., 603.424.4043, www.tyestravel.com, member since 1996. — B.F.