

NORTH JERSEY WOMAN

getaways

Finding Serenity

A GREAT ESCAPE IN **BUCKS COUNTY**

We couldn't get out of town fast enough! Two stressed out urbanites, having lived through a particularly grueling few months, the lure of a laid back weekend at a cozy, romantic inn and the scenic beauty of Bucks County, PA, was palpable.

Having planned an advance itinerary, including a winery pit stop en route, we arrived at Sand Castle Winery, Erwinna, PA, for a tasting and guided tour. High on a hilltop overlooking acres of vines, and modeled after a Bratislava castle, the view is marvelous, the tour and collection of vino impressive. Lucky one of us (not me) was designated driver. A bottle of "Alpine Spice," a delicious Chardonnay/Riesling blend in tow, we backtracked the winding road, heading toward Stockton, New Jersey and the historic, 1792 stone manor that would be home base to explore Bucks County. www.sandcastlewinery.com

A Tranquil World...

Pleasantly greeted at the Woolverton Inn and happily ensconced in our third floor room were the warm glow of a fire, a mug of hot chocolate from the self-help bar, double whirlpool tub and a Queen featherbed were welcome indulgences. Suffice to say, unplugged from the telly (no TV's at the inn) in peaceful bliss we contentedly whiled away time before dinner. www.woolvertoninn.com

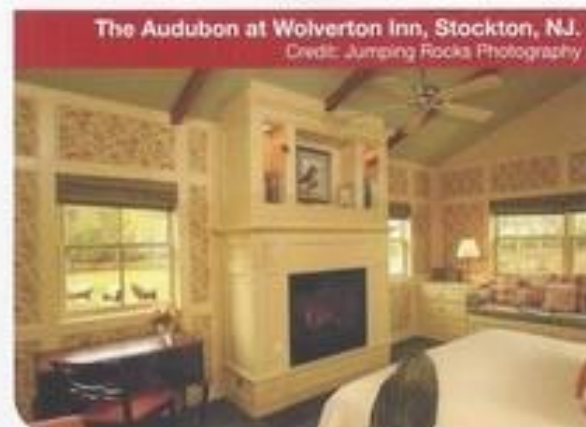


Bowland's Tavern, our eventual choice for supper, did not disappoint. Convivial atmosphere, live music and wholesome, upscale tavern food (standouts: cucumber and hummus appetizer; dry aged steak), it's a chill place to enjoy a good meal and a little nightlife—which we did. Working on a full day's journey into night, however, when that feather bed and sweet tranquility called, we answered.
www.bowmanstavernrestaurant.com

Awaking to the aroma of fresh coffee brewing Joe and I made our way to the sun-drenched patio, where we met our delightful innkeepers Mary and Mario, for whom the Inn is a labor of love. Breakfast—a rare treat not to be missed—consisted of 3 courses all fresh, homemade specialties. Our choices included Pina Colada Scones, Oatmeal Raspberry Pancakes... A delicious way to start the day by any measure.

Out and About in Bucks County

From spectacular foliage to festivals, galleries, theatre and more, Bucks County is the perfect decompressing destination, especially when autumn's stunning hues pepper the landscape. The county boasts spectacular covered bridges. Photo buffs inclined to take the wheel to check out 10 of them will find directions at
www.visitbuckscounty.com



The Audubon at Wolverton Inn, Stockton, NJ.
Credit: Jumping Rocks Photography

Next Stop... James A. Michener Museum and a must-see exhibit—George Sottler Light and Shadow running through December 2017. The museum showcases the artist's masterful landscapes and extraordinary work in stained glass. Do give yourselves ample time here, as they also house an amazing permanent collection of Pennsylvania Impressionist works and an outdoor sculpture garden, the latter being a wonderful space to enjoy lunch from the Terrace Café's farm to table seasonal cuisine. We did just that and were overjoyed!
www.michenerartmuseum.org

Snow at Pearl S. Buck House
Photo courtesy of Pearl S. Buck House



The home of Pearl S. Buck was up next. An amazing humanitarian, tireless champion for children of mixed race and the first woman to receive both the Pulitzer and Nobel prizes for literature, Ms. Buck's award-winning gardens and farmhouse are a day well spent. What a thrill to see the desk where she penned "The Good Earth," along with original furnishings, paintings from renowned artists, and intriguing photos of luminaries like president John F. Kennedy and Eleanor Roosevelt to name a few.
www.pearlsbuck.org

Back at the Inn to feed treats to the resident sheep herd and relax before taking in a superb theatrical production at Bucks County Playhouse (BCP). One of the country's most famous regional theaters, some of the biggest and brightest names in show business have graced the BCP stage, including the likes of Grace Kelly, Robert Redford, and Merv Griffin. Visit
www.bcptheater.org for current productions.

Our last morning at the Inn, savoring coffee, we sit mesmerized by the idyllic setting and serenity pool and find ourselves laughing a little more, feeling rested, recharged and ready to tackle the real world again. Thank you, Bucks County!

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