




FASHION ▾ ART & DESIGN ▾ CULTURE ▾ ENTERTAINMENT ▾ THE SB TEAM

Search 

DESTINATION | KENNEBUNKPORT

by SCOTT KEARNAN on MARCH 12, 2015 · [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)



Paint the Town Red – Kennebunkport Inn Kennebunkport, Maine

Falling in love is all about fateful timing: being in the right place at the right time.

Like most native New Englanders, I suspect, I've always enjoyed visiting Kennebunkport in the summer. (Warm days and fresh lobster on the Maine coast — how can you not swoon?) But as anyone in a relationship can tell you, it's during life's little storms — not under its fair skies — when love really reveals itself. Kennebunkport was walloped with a winter storm this Valentine's Day, while me and my other-half were celebrating with an off-season weekend getaway. It could have been a disaster — but as fate would have it, it was just what we needed: a reason to slow down and soak in the sweet charm of a quintessential New England resort town. The place has a lot of heart.



Front view of the Paint the Town Red Inn

If you haven't bothered to visit Kennebunkport in its quieter season, now's a good time. (In fact, during the weekend of Friday, March 13, the town is hosting a series of "Valentine's Do-Over" promotions and events. More on that momentarily.) Kennebunkport in the off-season is quiet — very quiet. That's part of the appeal, of course, though we didn't expect it would be entering such serious hibernation mode when we checked in to the Kennebunkport Inn on Friday, February 13. As unluckiness would have it, a major winter storm — predicted to dump about two feet of snow amid hurricane-strength winds — was swiftly moving in, scheduled to hit Saturday night. The inn was ready to receive overnight lovebirds: a sparkling red "Valentine's" tree (more tasteful than it sounds) glowed in the parlor, and a stack of souvenir pins reading "Love KPT" awaited at check-in. But several guests had already cancelled their stay, said the front desk clerk as she processed our arrival; hopefully, she added, we won't lose power.

Uh-oh.

The good news was: if there was a place to be snowed in — it was here. The Kennebunkport Inn is part of the Kennebunkport Resort Collection, a portfolio of properties with distinct identities but a common, contemporary sheen that runs throughout. The Kennebunkport Inn is housed in a stately, rambling structure built in the 1890s but recently renovated. Our room — 214, perhaps not coincidentally for a Valentine's getaway — had a casual elegance, as though Ralph Lauren had signed on board for an HGTV-aired interiors makeover show.



A vibrant palette of reds, white and blues made it a warm and welcoming space to nest after a filling dinner at One Dock, the inn's restaurant and lounge housed in what feels like an ample living room. We dug in to contemporary American plates of mussels, bourbon-glazed pork belly and red wine-braised short ribs as a fireplace flickered to one side and a pianist tickled ivories to the other. After fighting Friday evening traffic out of Boston, this is just the right way to unwind.

Winter might be overstaying its welcome, but at least that allows for extended opportunity to enjoy some of New England's snow-filled fun — and the Kennebunkport Inn can help guests make arrangements for everything from snowshoeing to sleigh rides. With a blizzard about to bear down, we weren't in the position to take advantage. But there's plenty to do and see even while keeping it low-key, from ducking into adorable art galleries and shops that line Dock Square (check out Minka and Abacus in particular for art, fashion accessories and gifts) to taking a sip from the area's craft brew scene: upstairs from the Kennebunkport Brewing Company is Federal Jack's, a casual neighborhood eatery for grabbing topnotch chowder and clam rolls alongside a pint of suds. Afterwards we took a quick drive to neighboring Kennebunk for treatments at The Spa at River's Edge. I wouldn't exactly call myself a spa snob, but I indulge often enough to offer strong context — and I was pleasantly surprised to find that my facial was one of the best I've had, period, in or outside of Boston's higher-end Back Bay spots. (And at a predictably lower price point too, even if you add on the extra eye treatment. You should, by the way.)

By the time we slipped out of our robes and back into street clothes, the storm was starting to pick up the pace. So it was back to the Inn for a quick sip of bubbly before our dinner reservations at David's KPT, the sleek, modern American at sibling property The Boathouse Waterfront Hotel, just across the Dock Square.



Interior shot of David's

The three-minute trudge through swirling snowflakes was just long enough for a laugh before battenning down in the window-lined riverside dining room that bustled with cocktailing couples (younger, compared to some of the other restaurants) for the standout meal of the weekend. The New England-inspired fare included a tender filet mignon with a perfect cauliflower-parmesan mash, skewers of citrus- and truffle-inflected shrimp and scallops, and plenty of fresh oysters from the raw bar. Outside the window, inches accumulated on a docked ship; it looked like something phantom Arctic pirates might hijack. But inside we were warm, rosy from wine and five years of Valentine's Days. We hadn't been counting on this interfering snowstorm, but in a world of constant digital connection – buzzing phones, rapidly refilling email inboxes – we were suddenly grateful for Mother Nature imposing upon us a moment to stop, slow down, and appreciate what was right in front of us. The timing was just right, and I found myself in love with Kennebunkport in a whole new way.



An exterior shot of David's — from the summer of course.

Visit DestinationKennebunkport.com to check out winter packages and special rates. Try to make it up for the “Valentine’s Do-Over” weekend on March 13-14, which also coincides with Maine Restaurant Week.

Tagged with: [boston](#) • [casual](#) • [colonial architecture](#) • [dates](#) • [Design](#) • [Drinks](#) • [Elegance](#) • [food](#) • [food & drink](#) • [gourmet dining](#) • [hgtv](#) • [hotels](#) • [Interior Design](#) • [kennebunk port](#) • [leisure](#) • [lobster](#) • [love](#) • [maine](#) • [new england](#) • [one dock](#) • [paint the town red kennebunkport](#) • [red](#) • [restaurants](#) • [sbonline](#) • [scott kearnan](#) • [snow](#) • [snowed in](#) • [spas](#) • [style](#) • [styleboston](#) • [travel](#) • [Valentine's Day](#) • [valentines re-do](#) • [victorian architecture](#)

<http://blog.styleboston.tv/12154/culture-2/leisure/destination-kennebunkport/>

marlo