

THE BERKSHIRES ***The Hills Are Alive!***



By Laurie Bain Wilson

The hills are alive with the sound of music here, especially in August, with Tanglewood in full swing. And there's big news in this neck of the woods: Tanglewood is now a year-round experience.

For years, the loved music center shuttered once fall hit. But now you can experience this celebrated cultural getaway in the fall, winter and spring. The Tanglewood Learning Institute (TLI) debuted earlier this summer, a hub for cultural enrichment with year-round workshops, concerts with renowned and unconventional artists, immersion weekends, open rehearsals and master classes. TLI is housed in the New Linde Center for Music and Learning, a stunning four-building complex with a café, too, where you can mingle with the musicians and artists. Upcoming events include a three-day Film Weekend in late August featuring convos with legendary conductors and composers about the topic of how "music is both a core element and a central subject of drama." And you can expect a full lineup of events and activities throughout the year. Info: tli.org.



Red Lion Inn

Of course, there are other compelling reasons to visit The Berkshires. The museums are world-renowned, and farm-to-table restaurants are the real deal. Also, the inn and resort scene are turning heads.

Here's where to eat, stay and play in a destination that nurtures heart and soul.

EAT

There is a handful of restaurants that are Berkshire favorites and have been for decades. And, there's also a somewhat newer crop of restaurants, too, namely farm-to-fork spots that are in tune with the land.

Nudel It's all about sustainable food in the Berkshires. The menu changes nightly because the food is uber-local, and ingredients depend on what's growing. Expect dishes like White Bean and Artichoke Heart Hummus and Seared Joyce Farms Chicken Thighs. Info: nudelrestaurant.com.

Cantina 229 In rural Marlborough sits this barn-turned-cantina tucked behind a farmhouse with a daily-changing-menu that shows off ingredients that are grown on property or raised locally. Come for the popular Taco Tuesdays and pair house made guac and those tacos with a signature margarita, and there are lawn games and summertime bonfires. Info: cantina229.com.

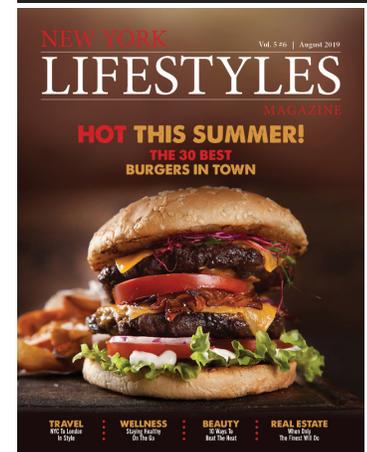
Lion's Den An iconic spot in town to listen to music, sip a local craft beer and snack on wings, truffle mac 'n cheese and chicken pot pie. The pub is in the belly of The Red Lion Inn and locals and visitors have been bellying up to the bar for decades. Info: redlioninn.com.

Balderdash Cellars Cali meets the Berkshires at this winery in Richmond where you can get a sip in the tasting room and kick back for some live music. Info: balderdashcellars.com.

STAY

Seven Hills

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ARCHIVED ISSUES

Some of the Berkshire inns and resorts have been nurturing city slickers forever. And then there are the newer kids on the block.

The Williams Inn This 64-room modern farmhouse-style inn debuts on August 15th in Williamstown, a skip away from Williams College and The Clark Art Institute. The inn will also house The Tavern, with a bar and farm-sourced menu. Info: williamsinn.com.



The Red Lion Inn Known for its sprawling porch and rockers, the inn has been here for more than 200 years and is celebrating a big birthday this summer. It's been 50 years since the Fitzpatrick family reopened the inn, and you can expect season-long festivities including tribute porch pop-ups featuring dance, music and special sips. On summer days hang by the outdoor pool and hot tub (it's year-round and heated, too) Info: redlioninn.com.

Canyon Ranch Lenox One of the first wellness resorts in the country, this getaway opened 30 years ago. It's surrounded by 120 acres of woodlands and a former Gilded Age mansion houses the Health & Healing Center. Nice: Complimentary transportation to Tanglewood, Jacob's Pillow and other cultural hotbeds. Book one of the weekend workshops in August. Info: canyonranch.com/lenox.

Seven Hills Inn A 1911 Gilded Age beauty with a recent facelift is now a stylish boutique hotel with a new restaurant and bar, Plunkett Lounge. Located in Lenox, the inn holds court among 27 acres of gardens and lushness, and along pretty Route 7, aka Antiques Alley, and Edith Wharton's estate, The Mount, is a neighbor. Info: sevenhillsinn.com.

PLAY

The Berkshires harmonize beautifully with nature—the area is a landscape of rolling hills and iconic villages, a canvas for art, music, hiking, cycling and more.

Jiminy Peak The top summer attraction at this ski resort is the Aerial Adventure Park's self-guided aerial forest ropes course for kids and adults. The Mountain Adventure Park is also a hot spot with a Mountain Coaster, Alpine Super Slide and more thrill-seeker activities. And lift-served mountain biking is a thing—the Berkshire Express chairlift whisks you to the summit and you'll cruise down the mountain. Info: jiminypeak.com.



Jiminy Peak Aerial Adventure

The Appalachian Trail Lace up, this is hike territory. Ninety miles of the legendary Appalachian Trail snakes through Massachusetts. Nice: You can overnight on the summit of Mount Greylock here, the highest peak in the state. Info: appalachiantrail.org.

Tanglewood Picnicking at this lovely Lenox outdoor concert venue is taken to another level. Expect to see picnic spreads that include vases of hydrangeas, candelabras and serious picnic provisions. This is the summer home of The Boston Symphony Orchestra and is also the stage for special concerts like Yo-Yo Ma, Pat Benatar and Gladys Knight & The Spinners, Melissa Etheridge and Reba McEntire, all performing later this month. Info: bso.org.

Clark Art Institute Another museum that's all about the outdoors in the summer months is this 140-acre campus in Williamstown. Permanent and rotating exhibits inspire. Now through September 22nd is a special exhibit titled Renoir: The Body, The Senses. Info: clarkart.edu.

The Norman Rockwell Museum Stockbridge claims fame to the illustrator, author and painter who lived and worked at this spot that is now proudly home to the largest collection of his art in the world. You can spend an afternoon here admiring his paintings, visiting his studio and picnicking under the apple trees. Info: nrm.org.



Norman Rockwell Museum

Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA) Amazingly, The Berkshires are home to the largest contemporary art museum in America. In summer especially, there is a jam-packed roster of concerts and special events. You can also grab a Massachusetts brew from the microbrewery. Info: massmoca.org.

Jacob's Pillow This summer marks the 87th season of this iconic summer dance festival, known for its world premieres and cutting-edge performances, too—and many of them are free. The Pillow is a National Historic Landmark, and in addition to those indoor and outdoor performances, often with live music, you can take a tour of this cherished Berkshires spot, too. Info: jacobsillow.org.

For more information on **The Berkshires**, visit berkshires.org.