



# ESCAPES NORTH AMERICAN INNS

**COWBOY LUXURIES**  
**RELAXING IN THE BERKSHIRES**  
**ROYAL INN VISITS**

## Romantic Seclusion at Couples Resort



THE BERRY MANOR INN, THE LIMEROCK INN, THE CAPTAIN LINDSEY HOUSE INN

### The Historic Inns of Rockland, Maine



Captain Lindsey House Inn in Rockland, Maine.

## SEA AND FUN-LOVING INNKEEPERS who could ask for more?

by Colleen Whitney Thompson

I'm dressed for a smart little cocktail party at the Captain Lindsey House Inn in Rockland, Maine, but I'm worried about my hat. It is red and has eyes, antennae, and two big moveable claws that bob when I try to make a serious point. One glance at the crowd gathered on the patio puts me at ease. The gaggle of innkeepers and business hierarchy of Rockland, Maine is all conversing under the same kind of haberdashery. Wearing a lobster hat seems to be de rigueur, at least for tonight, in this seaside town.

Antennae wiggling, I make my way toward Cheryl Michaelsen, owner, with husband, Mike LaPosta, of the magnificent four-diamond Berry Manor Inn where we are staying. From the moment we step onto the deep carpets and into the sumptuously furnished halls and parlours of elegant Berry Manor, we notice a hint of mischief lurking behind Cheryl's welcoming grin. Possibly, it is the casual mention of "the mothers" who preside over the kitchen. It doesn't take long to realize that the owners of the top three Rockport Inns - Berry Manor, Captain Lindsey House and Limerock Inn - share a sense of humour. A stay in any one of the wonderful, old historical mansions is definitely not boring.

Cheryl leads me to a keg of locally made beer and a huge pot of boiling lobsters, covered with kelp, tended by Captain Ken Barnes, who, with his wife, Captain Ellen Barnes, runs the 1832 Captain Lindsey House, named for its founder. Hanging over the fence of the upper deck, heads brightly clad in familiar red, I spy Frank Ignatius and PJ

Walter, the young, enthusiastic owners of another stunning Rockland accommodation, the Limerock Inn. The gang's all here and down East hospitality is about to begin.

We've come to Rockland, a small fishing village in mid-coast Maine, for just this kind of experience: lobster, lighthouses, luxury, and the seaside ambiance of a still unspoiled fishing village. Lobster boats chug out from the wharf and sailboats tack on the horizon. Old-fashioned schooners offer days at sea, and a ferry plies the waters to Monhegan Island. Lighthouses dot the coastline and a delicious saltiness hovers about shops, galleries and restaurants. Big attractions are the Farnsworth Museum, featuring the works of Andrew Wyeth, and the newly opened Lighthouse Museum. We had heard of Rockland's restaurants, such as the Amalfi, where we dine on our first night, rhapsodizing over Chef David Cooke's caramelized onion and goat cheese tart, apples and Gorgonzola salad, and roasted haddock filets. During March's Chocolate March, in which the three inns and town participate, chocolate soup is a featured dessert.

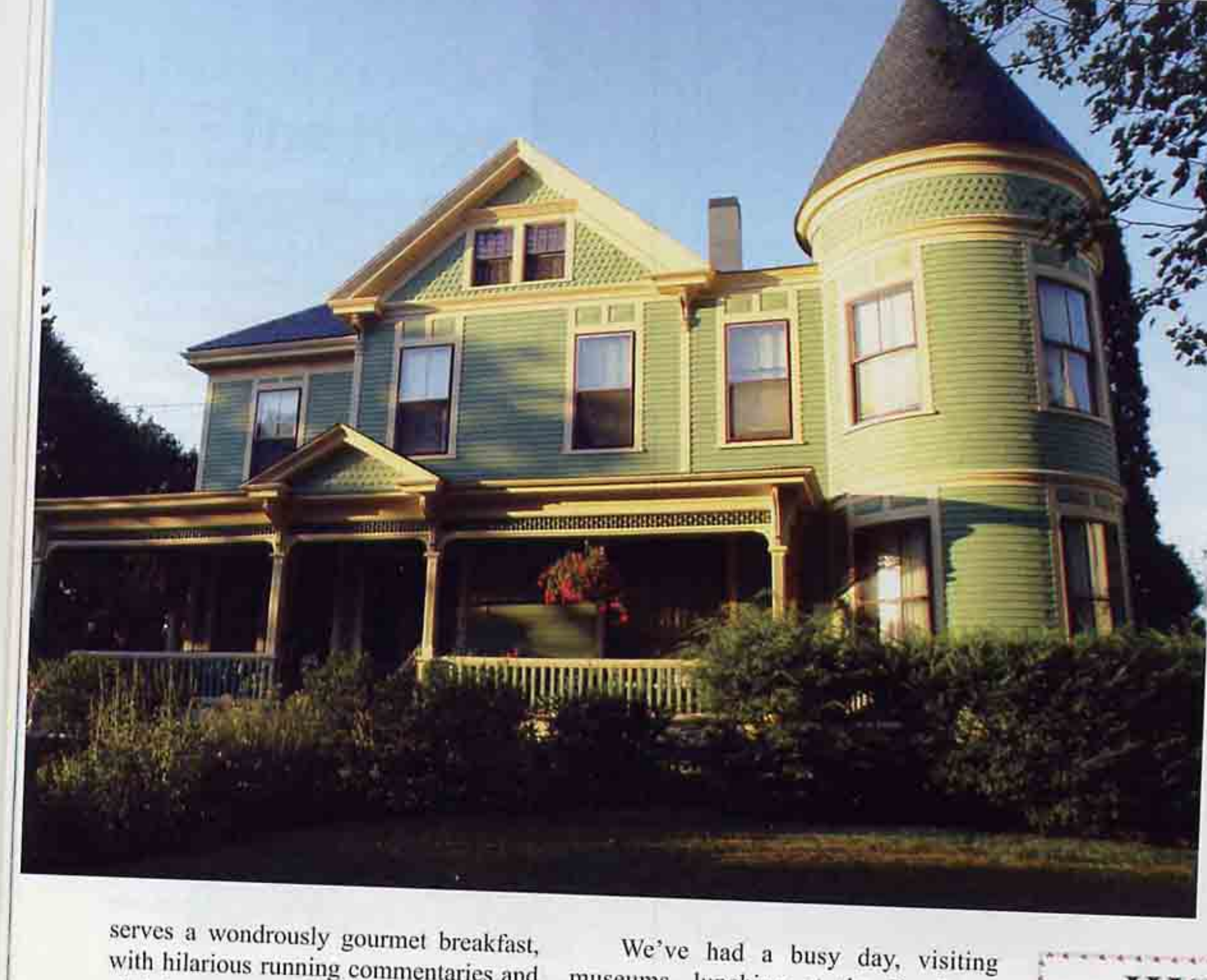


imagined. With porticoes and dormers softly rounded and glowing in a luscious berry-juice tint, it oozes a panache that comes with a century of distinguished inhabitants. Oriental rugs, glowing old wood, sublimely comfortable furniture, and the elegant suites and rooms offer the epitome of gracious living. Each room, exquisitely furnished and decorated, is tasteful, uncluttered, but still Victorian. Our suite at the top of the 1898 house, behind large, semi-circular windows, is palatial and inviting, with a king-sized bed lavishly covered with navy, gold and crimson. The couch in the sitting area converts to a full-sized bed and a fireplace flickers comfortingly. In the spacious bathroom, we find a cozy corner whirlpool-for-two beckoning behind a lavish pile of fluffy towels. We gaze longingly at the flickering fireplace; romantic comfort on a misty seaside evening. Wineglasses await a pre-dinner sip, and in the library, we discover a perpetual brew of fine coffee.

So, where do the "mothers" come in? Passing the kitchen, we hear laughter. It's Mike's mother, Janet, Cheryl's mother, Ally, and their life-long friend, Anne, cheerfully baking mouth-watering pies for any guest who cares to cut a slice. The trio also

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serves a wondrously gourmet breakfast, with hilarious running commentaries and slightly naughty recitations. The laughter from the dining room is better than any alarm clock. It's no wonder we skip down the steps and into the sunlight with a smile.

Frank Ignatius and PJ Walker, the young proprietors of a porch-wrapped mansion, the Limerock Inn, have invited us for coffee. Former businessmen with a flair for hospitality, they decided to change their lives, move to Rockland and buy the Queen Anne style home as a Bed and Breakfast Inn. It's been a successful dream. Tucked away on a quiet street, a step from the Farnsworth Museum, this turreted mansion is another historical gem; an exquisite example of the graceful lifestyle of a bygone era. We admire mellow wood, richly hued rugs and walls, the eight beautifully appointed guest-rooms, and the comfortable elegance of the seductive library and parlours. Its inviting atmosphere evokes thoughts of country weekends and autumn balls. We almost imagine PJ and Frank tripping the light fantastic in bow ties and tails.

We've had a busy day, visiting museums, lunching at the Penobscot Soup Company, and touring the pretty little town by trolley. Now, we head to Captain Lindsey House Inn where Captain Ellen shows us the luxurious rooms, complete with downy bedding, soft bathrobes, fresh flowers and fine toiletries. It's a magical blend of old country inn, nineteenth century Maine sea captain's home, and the Barnes's extensive collection of marine art. Ellen Barnes frequently touts her cookbook, A Taste of the Tabor, on the Food Network, so breakfast in the sunny, oak-paneled 'snug' is bound to be delicious.

Tomorrow, we'll cruise on the sunny bay with "Captain Jack" while he pushes lobster traps into the water. Seafaring is part of the talk tonight. Hosts Ken and Ellen captained the schooner Stephen Tabor for 25 years. CBS Sunday Morning showcased their final voyage. On the deck of this Inn tonight, lobster hats flutter, real lobsters turn rosy, and we thank the sea lure that led us to the Maine shore and these hospitable innkeepers.

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