



Passport Newsletter

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New England Ramble [back to top](#)

What better way to bring summer to a close than a leisurely week or two driving through Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, shunning the interstates in so far as possible and stopping wherever and whenever the scenery, the shops, the restaurants and the B&B inns attract you? That's exactly what we did last month, taking advantage of the post-Labor Day reduced traffic and smaller number of tourists.



Our route wasn't intended to be efficient. Rather we wanted to visit or revisit a number of quintessentially New England towns and attractions. This was one of those satisfying holidays where almost everything turns out to be as good as you remembered or hoped it would be. One warning, however: If you use Mapquest for route planning, don't assume the detailed directions in and around towns will always be correct; take along a good road atlas as well.

MAINE—After landing at Portland, Maine's International Jetport, we made straight for the coastal city of **Rockland**, a drive of less than two hours. Rockland, which is the western gateway to Penobscot Bay, bills itself as the lobster capital of the world and, indeed, these unlikely looking delicacies have shaped the local culture and economy for centuries. Each August, the town hosts a lobster festival that draws thousands of visitors. Two important environmental organizations have a significant presence in Rockland—the **Island Institute**, which assists local efforts on Maine's 15 year-round island communities, and **Project Puffin**, a National Audubon Society initiative dedicated to the conservation of these colorful sea birds that nest on rocky outcrops in the Gulf of Maine. Both organizations are worth visiting, as is the nearby **Maine Lighthouse Museum**.

Of Rockland's several first-class B&B accommodations, we chose and were delighted with the **LimeRock Inn**, a 19th century Queen Ann Victorian home with a beautiful wraparound porch and eight period-style guest bedrooms with private baths. All of the rooms—named for Maine coastal islands—are bright and comfortable; one of the nicest, Grand Manan, has a fireplace and a whirlpool tub. Seguin has a small, private annex with a comfortable bed—convenient if you're traveling with a child. Public rooms feel as if they are intended to be used and enjoyed, and guests are welcome to use the office computer for e-mail and Internet. The innkeepers, Frank Isganitis and P.J. Walter, are genuinely welcoming and helpful. Their breakfast service is outstanding—scallion popovers, shirred eggs in fluted phyllo cups with tarragon cream, fresh fruit and juices—something different every day. Doubles from about \$125, including breakfast. 96 Limerock Street. Tel: 800-546-3762. www.limerockinn.com.