

SHORT AND SWEET: 5 GREAT SPOTS FOR A MINI MOON

BY LAURIE WILSON | GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Trending in honeymoons are mini moons, when couples alter their post-altar plans, opting for a quickie to a nearby romantic inn or resort, rather than indulging right away in a long vacay in a far-flung destination. A mini moon is especially appealing to busy brides and grooms and exhausted newlyweds because it doesn't require a lot of planning (and can be planned late in the game) and is typically drivable or a short plane ride away. But that doesn't mean these couples don't take that once-in-a-lifetime honeymoon, too — they do, but often postpone it for months or even longer for when it's more convenient, time or budget wise. But they take that mini moon right away.

Lauren Raps, Leisure Travel Planner at Travel Prospect, an affiliate of Travel Experts, a Virtuoso Agency in Southport, Conn., says she has seen an uptick in requests for mini moons. “There is always a new trend, but I think with couples having dual incomes and dual demanding careers, and so long as the economy allows people to take two honeymoons, we don't see it going away anytime soon,” says Raps. “It's a very practical way to have a celebration of your marriage and then your dream trip.”

These five spots in New England are especially engaging for an off-season mini moon — they are mostly adults-only, and feature romantic amenities like couples' massages, rose petal turndowns, in-room champy, fireplaces, and gourmet meals for culinary-focused newlyweds. Note: There are some weeks when they might be closed briefly.

“While New England is gorgeous all year round, nothing can top a cozy fall or winter New England getaway,” says Raps.

Rabbit Hill Inn

Mountain-loving couples will want to hole up at Rabbit Hill Inn — an adult spot (no kids under 15) that's off-the-beaten-path in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, but on the map as one of Vermont's most romantic intimate inns, seducing with candlelight breakfasts, turn-down candle-glow service, afternoon pastries, and an intimate Irish pub. Outdoor-loving newlyweds will also embrace the mountain biking, snowmobiling, and Nordic skiing in this neck of the woods. Room rates begin at \$189 per night (breakfast, afternoon sweets, and gratuities included). Add on the one- or two-night Romantic Getaway Package for \$190 and you'll get bubbly, Vermont chocolates, and a three-course couples' dinner at the inn's gourmet-yet-unpretentious farm-to-table restaurant. www.rabbithillinn.com

Castle Hill Inn

This Relais & Châteaux property in Newport, R.I., features the adult-oriented Agassiz Mansion (kids under 13 years old not allowed), and it is a charmer. Book the second-floor Mrs. Agassiz's Room for its panoramic views of Narragansett Bay, a loveseat and gas fireplace, as well as a second fireplace and two-person soaking tub in the bathroom. The two-night Retreat to Romance package pours it on with a bottle of Rosé Champagne, fresh flowers, and chocolate-dipped strawberries upon arrival; a Massage à deux in The

Retreat at Castle Hill spa; and a three-course dinner for two in the Dining Room — as well as the complimentary breakfast and afternoon tea offered daily to all guests. The two-night package rate begins at \$1,510 per couple. www.castlehillinn.com

Twin Farms

This five-star, all-inclusive, adults-only hideaway tucked in the woods in Barnard, Vt., will cost you, but it's that bucket-list kind of escape. There are 20 spacious cottages spread over 300 acres; book the romantic two-story Aviary, with its floor to ceiling windows and enormous stone hot tub in front of the fireplace. Foodie couples will love that there is no set menu, you design your meals — prior to your arrival you'll fill out a form with your food likes. Meals are paired with wine, there are cooking classes, and mini-mooners will get a mini cake: Newlyweds are greeted with a miniature replica of their wedding cake (48-hour notice required). In winter, there are private, groomed trails for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, and pond bonfires to warm up with hot cocoa and s'mores after a skate. There is also a spa, or you can succumb to in-cottage couples' massages, with a rose petal bath and bottle of champagne. Aviary all-inclusive rates begin at \$2,950 per couple per night. www.twin-farms.com

Chatham Bars Inn

Sea and spa: Check into one of the 12 Spa Suites in the spa wing of this sprawling historic Cape Cod resort and you'll never leave ("adult-only," must be 16 or older). Your suite will feature a huge hydrotherapy tub, a sau-

na, a steam shower, built-in massage table (for side-by-side massage), and a gas fireplace — flirt with the idea of ordering champagne and chocolate-covered strawberries for your in-room rub. And you can also relax in the elegant spa — botanicals used in the treatments are sourced from the inn's farm, as well as honey from on-site beehives and salt from the sea. You'll want to surface from your suite eventually to indulge in tableside lobster flambé for two at the inn's Stars restaurant, and for strolls to the beach and darling town of Chatham. Spa room rates begin at \$595 per night. www.chatham-bars-inn.com

Cape Arundel Inn & Resort

For uber romance at this "adult only" Kennebunkport mansion resort, retreat to one of the six, 400-square-foot Rockbound Bungalows next to the inn's Main House — each bungalow features front-porch views of the Atlantic, gas fireplaces, velvet headboards, and a breakfast bar. Book the two- or three-night romance package and you'll get bungalow accommodations; a four-course meal for two at apt-named Ocean, which overlooks the Atlantic and specializes in locally sourced ocean and farm dishes; chilled bottle of French Champagne; petit fours; and gourmet breakfast for two. Package rate begins at \$469 per night; add on chocolate fondue for two in the lounge for added flame. www.capearundelinn.com

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Left: Rabbit Hill Inn in Vermont.
Below: Mrs. Agassiz Room at Castle Hill Inn (left) in Newport, R.I., and Aviary Cottage at Twin Farms in Barnard, Vt.

JUMPING ROCKS PHOTOGRAPHY



CASTLE HILL INN



TWIN FARMS