



THE SCOUT GUIDE

CITY CHEAT SHEET

A TRAVEL GUIDE FOR NORTHERN NEW JERSEY

from *The Scout Guide Northern New Jersey* editor Heather Cundey

**Please note that due to COVID-19 some of these businesses might be closed or have specific guidelines in place. We recommend calling ahead and/or visiting their websites for the latest information on their status, offerings, etc.*

WHEN TO GO

“Spring is magnificent in the Garden State when winter finally disappears and our abundance of cherry blossom, magnolia, dogwood, azalea, lilac, and more are in full bloom,” Heather says. “A little known fact: New Jersey has more cherry trees than Washington, D.C., and every spring we enjoy the largest cherry blossom collection in the U.S.” Branch Brook Park has more than 2,700 Japanese cherry blossom trees that burst into full bloom during the annual **Essex County Cherry Blossom Festival**. Fall is also a fantastic time to visit with the gorgeous foliage, especially in the rolling countryside of Somerset County. The **Far Hills Race Meeting**, considered one of the tri-

state area’s premier social events of the year, is an annual steeplechase held in October that is attended by as many as 75,000 people and has raised more than \$18 million to support local health-care organizations. Alternatively, the **Montclair Film Festival** takes place in February, and is attended by many well-respected names in the industry, and was named one of “The 25 Coolest Film Festivals in the World.”

WHERE TO STAY

George Hotel

*37 N Mountain Avenue,
Montclair*

Makeup mogul Bobbi Brown and her husband Steven Plofker transformed a once-forgotten Georgian Inn into a design-minded, boutique

hotel with historic bones and modern style.

Bernards Inn

*27 Mine Brook Road,
Bernardsville*

New Jersey’s only AAA Four Diamond and Forbes Travel Guide Recommended hotel and restaurant property, this historic hotel features 20 beautifully appointed rooms that were all recently renovated by local designer Jeff Haines.

MC Hotel

*690 Bloomfield Avenue,
Montclair*

Opened in 2019, MC hotel is in the heart of Montclair’s thriving artistic community and serves as a gallery for local artists and entrepreneurs. From the exclusive MC Pilsner created by Montclair Brewery,

to bath and body products from local handmade purveyor DollyMoo, and pressed juices and juice cleanses from local Juice Basin, the hotel has created an excellent local personality and vibe.

WHAT TO DO

Papermill Playhouse

22 Brookside Drive, Millburn

The Playhouse is “Broadway in your backyard,”

showcasing spectacular shows and impressive talent through the years, including Robert DeNiro, Anne Hathaway, Kristin Chenoweth, Liza Minnelli, Betty White, Jane Fonda, Lynn Redgrave, and Patrick Swayze.

South Orange Performing Arts Center

1 SOPAC Way, South Orange

This bastion of culture presents experiences through music, theater, dance, comedy, and family performances and arts education programs. The Herb & Milly Iris Art Gallery at SOPAC features accomplished visual artists.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

New Jersey Botanical Garden

2 Morris Road, Ringwood

This immense garden features 96 acres of specialty gardens surrounded by one thousand acres of woodlands.

Duke Farms

1112 Dukes Parkway West, Hillsborough

Doris Duke’s historic estate, offers gardens, outdoor activities, workshops, and natural habitats.

Van Vleck House & Gardens

21 Van Vleck Street Montclair

Greenwood Gardens

274 Old Short Hills Road, Short Hills

Thomas Edison’s Home and Laboratory

211 Main Street, West Orange

Learn all about America’s greatest inventor who changed our world forever.

Liberty Science Center

222 Jersey City Blvd., Jersey City

A 300,000 square-foot learning center where science and physics meet fun with 12 museum exhibition halls, a live animal collection with 110 species, giant aquariums, a 3D theater, live simulcast surgeries, hurricane and tornado force wind simulators, and the Western Hemisphere’s largest planetarium.

South Mountain Recreation Complex and Turtle Back Zoo

9 Cherry Lane, West Orange

A perfect place for a fun-filled outing for the entire family, the complex features the Turtle Back Zoo, Treetop Adventure Course, Safari MiniGolf, Educational Center, Codey Arena, the children’s Regatta Playground, paddle boating, a 1.7 mile walkway around the reservoir, and the Clipper Pavilion picnic shelter. It’s adjacent to the South Mountain Reservation, a 2,000 acre natural reserve which offers open space, picnic areas, barbecue sites, and hiking trails.

Wightman’s Farm

111 Mt. Kemble Avenue, Morristown

Where you can pick amazing produce on your own or shop in their store. Fall brings hayrides, a giant corn maze, rope maze, rock labyrinth, and pumpkin and apple picking.

TASTING OPPORTUNITIES

Beneduce Vineyards

1 Jeremiah Lane, Pittstown

Boasting an extraordinary setting, this winery/tasting room has live music every Saturday, food trucks all weekend, and special Sunday picnics. Dogs are welcome, too!

SCENIC MUSTS

Paterson Great Falls

National Historical Park

72 McBride Avenue Extension

In 1792, Paterson was established as America’s first planned industrial city centered around the Great Falls of the Passaic River, a prominent waterfall 77 feet high.

ICONIC MUSTS

Ellis Island and

Statue of Liberty

Liberty State Park Ferry, 200 Morris Pesin Drive, Jersey City

Ellis Island was the nation’s chief gateway during 1892 to 1924, and gave voice to the immigrants whose courage and determination enabled them to leave their homes and make the difficult trip to seek new opportunities. And of course, the Statue of Liberty, holding forth in New York Harbor, is one of our nation’s most iconic symbols.

WHERE TO SHOP

Urban Cottage

157 Main Street, Peapack

An adorable shop in the quaint town of Peapack filled with unique gifts, women's clothing (think brands like Johnny Was, Velvet by Graham and Spencer, Michael Stars), candles, home goods, and a great range of jewelry.

No 18 Boutique

4 Maple Street, Summit

Opened in 2014 by mother/daughter team Nancy and Brie Tammaro, this ultra-chic shop carries fabulous finds from top designers such as Dorothee Schumacher, Keri Rosenthal, IRO Paris, L'Agence, and Veronica Beard. This past summer they created The Gypset, a white glove concierge mobile boutique, and will soon release their own collection.

Great House

12 Beechwood Road, Summit

This boutique houses 3,200 square feet full of unique, ever-changing finds for the home, including original art, artisan lighting, rugs, accessories, gifts, and new, vintage, and antique furniture.

Hyssop Beauty Apothecary

674 Bloomfield Avenue, Nutley

Find all natural, small batch, handcrafted, skincare and beauty products here. The owner can personalize the products she carries to each customer's unique skincare needs.

WHERE TO EAT

Sunday Motor Co. Cafe

27 Kings Road, Madison

A 1950s gas station was renovated into a hip cafe with automotive touches and a Brooklyn vibe by husband-and-wife team Nick Vorderman and Renee Mee. The herbed avocado toast, soft scrambled eggs, and the pastries fresh daily from Balthazar are musts.

The Order

50 West South Orange Avenue, South Orange

Its owners, siblings and Harry Potter fans, named the chic and modern restaurant after the movie *The Order of the Phoenix*. Highly recommend the to-die-for pancakes and dirty fries (although probably not together!).

Millburn Deli

328 Millburn Avenue, Millburn

This 70-plus-year institution enjoys a cult following, evident by the lunch line out the door most days. They make and prepare everything in-house to guarantee quality, and it shows. Fan favorites include the Godfadda, the Gobbler, and a New Jersey-style Sloppy Joe.

Common Lot

27 Main Street, Millburn

Executive chef and owner Ehren Ryan has been called one of the most talented cooks in the state by *The New York Times*. The big draw is the wonderful multi-course chef's tasting menu called the "Kitchen Pass," and they have excellent vegetarian options. Book well in

advance—it can be tricky to get a reservation. BYOB.

The Ryland Inn

115 Old Highway 28, Whitehouse Station

A former country home built in 1796, the inn was beautifully restored to achieve a fabulous modern farmhouse look. They maintain an herb garden on premises and support local family farms. Truly a memorable experience from start to finish. A seafood fan? Try the spectacular paella.

WHERE TO DRINK

Boxwood Coffee Roasters

Multiple locations in Summit, Westfield, Florham Park

At this independent, "third wave" artisanal coffee shop owned by a husband-and-wife team, they roast in small batches and are passionate about the process and their offerings. Along with their delicious coffee, they have a selection of tasty gourmet breakfast and lunch items made fresh daily, and the shops have a great atmosphere—beautifully designed with refreshingly warm, friendly, and knowledgeable baristas.

The Juice Caboose

30 Beechwood Road, Summit

Family-owned for 20 years, this juicery has customizable options including vegan and gluten-free. In addition to juices, they serve smoothies, acai bowls, wheatgrass shots, wraps, salads, sandwiches, soups, high protein snacks, and healthy baked goods.

Boxcar Bar & Grill

25 Chatham Road, Short Hills

This historic and still functioning 1907 train depot was renovated to house a restaurant and fully stocked bar featuring 13 wines, sangria, 24 beers—including six on draft (some from local microbreweries), and several novelty drinks. Always a lively crew with live music twice a week and outdoor seating in warmer months.

Twin Elephant**Brewing Company**

13 Watchung Avenue, Chatham

Three founding partners turned their passion for

brewing craft beer into an exciting adventure. There is a great tasting room with plenty of seating, excellent music, and a small outdoor patio. Nine taps are on constant rotation, showcasing new brew offerings and old favorites. Shimmy Ye IPA is a favorite if you can get it—it sells out quickly.

LOCAL PRO-TIP

New Jersey has been called the “Armpit of America” on occasion. However, Northern New Jersey is made up of numerous small idyllic towns with quaint and tranquil

main streets and historic roots. “Our pastoral horse country in Somerset county is a mere 45 minutes from Manhattan, and is one of the largest equine communities in the United States where both Jackie O. and Brooke Astor had weekend homes,” Heather explains. “Not only are our towns an easy commute to NYC, beaches are equally as accessible, as are the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. Newark International Airport is an easy trip from Northern New Jersey, where there are direct flights to most domestic and international cities.”