

FEATURE > TRAVEL

Plenty of Jewish flavour when visiting New Hampshire

Mike Cohen
Tribune Travel

NEW HAMPSHIRE – The state of New Hampshire offers a variety of excellent year-round vacation destinations.

New Hampshire is the home to a small, but vibrant Jewish community. According to Jeff Fladen of the Jewish Federation (www.jewishnh.org), there are about 10,000 Jews, representing 0.8 per cent of the population. There are 18 synagogues and temples

spread across the state.

Recognized as New Hampshire's commercial and industrial leader, as well as its largest city and the home of nearly 10 per cent of its population, Manchester (www.manchestercvb.com) is only 58 miles from Boston. We have always enjoyed staying here on the way to or back from trips to other parts of New Hampshire, Maine or Massachusetts. La Quinta Inn and Suites (www.lq.com) is the new kid on the block here in terms of accommoda-

tions. Wayne Goldberg is the president of the national chain. The four-floor Manchester inn has 109 rooms, including three suites.

This marked our first time in the Portsmouth area (http://www.portsmouthnh.com). Because this is the home of the naval shipyard, accommodations can be hard to come by anytime. So we opted to stay near the pretty little town of Dover and a wonderful Homewood Suites (www.dovernh.homewoodsuites.com), part of the well-regarded Lafrance Hospitality Group.

Scott Goldberg, 29, manages this property and one of the two others nearby under the Lafrance banner, a Comfort Inn. Goldberg got his first job as a manager in Rhode Island. He was only 19 at the time and studying hotel management.

There are about 900 Jews in Portsmouth and Dover – about 600 in the former and almost 300 in the latter.

Some of the main chain grocery stores do carry some kosher products.

There are Temple Israel's in both towns – conservative and reform respectively.

According to historian George Sherman, Abraham



Scott Goldberg, 29, manages this Homewood Suites near Dover, NH, as well as two other nearby properties.

and Rachel Isaac were the first Jewish settlers in Portsmouth around 1780. They came to America from Prussia. Isaac became an auctioneer and later started a china shop.

There are no kosher restaurants in the area, but plenty of dining establishments specialize in fish such as the Portsmouth Oar House at 55 Ceres St. at the edge of Portsmouth's old harbour. Portsmouth is also the home of Water Country (www.watercountry.com), New England's largest water park. You are allowed to bring your own coolers inside, a bonus for folks keeping kosher.

Portsmouth's Seacoast Repertory Theatre (www.seacoastrep.com) puts on first-class productions, sometimes those with Jewish themes. The Orchard Street Chop Shop (www.orchardstreetchopshop.com) is the place to dine in Dover. Owner and chef Chris Kozlowski runs one of the top steakhouses in northern New England.

Dover and Portsmouth are not far from the Maine beach towns of Kittery, York, Ogunquit and Wells.

For almost 40 years, a *chavurah* has operated here. Lesley Matthews explains that it all began when some members of the Jewish community got together for a service during Rosh Hashanah. During the years numbers grew and the programming shifted to Jonathan's, a local restaurant. Following the prayers everyone takes part in a potluck supper. These days, at least once a month, members gather on a Friday evening at different homes for services, dinner and discussions.

North Conway is home to some of the best shopping outlets in New England. Visitors here have many activities to choose from, which span all four seasons including some of the finest skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, golfing, fishing, canoeing, camping, family attractions, scenic tours, shopping and leaf peeping. A great place to stay is the Hampton Inn and Suites (www.hamptoninnnorthconway.com), which welcomes many Jewish guests. There are 97

other impressive amenities.

The closest Jewish community to North Conway is Bethlehem. It is about a 45-minute drive.

Since 1919, the Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation (www.bethlehemsynagogue.org) has maintained a house of Jewish worship to serve the religious, social, cultural and educational needs of New Hampshire's North Country. There are some 200 Jewish residents in Bethlehem, Littleton, Mount Washington Valley, Franconia, Easton and Sugar Hill.

rooms and suites here, an indoor water park, free hot breakfast and all kinds of

Maine beach towns offer Jewish flavour – and a lot of fun

Mike Cohen Tribune Travel

PORTLAND, MAINE – The New Hampshire towns of Manchester, Portsmouth and Dover are just short drives from the popular Maine beaches.

Maine is home to about 11,000 Jews, 8,300 of whom reside in Portland.

Jews have been living in Maine since the 1800s. Portland represents an excellent base if you are looking to spend a few days in Maine.

The Embassy Suites Portland hotel is centrally located and right next to the Portland Jetport. Each of the 119 suites have refrigerators and microwave ovens. A nearby Shaw's grocery store carries some kosher products while the hotel can arrange for kosher meals to be brought in. This is a popular spot for out of towners to stay when attending bar and bat mitzvahs.

One of the city's most popular dining establishments, David's Restaurant (www.davidrestaurant.com) at 22 Monument Square in the arts district, is owned by a Russian Jew named David Turin. He is an award-winning chef and artist in residence. The menu contains a variety of excellent fish items for those who do not wish to eat meat.

Extending 12 miles into the open ocean, rimmed by craggy shores and sandy beaches, the Maine town of Cape Elizabeth marks the entrance to spectacular Casco Bay. While there, check out the Inn by the Sea, a boutique beach-side resort just 15 minutes from Portland frequented by many Jewish guests and a popular site for Jewish weddings. Its Sea Glass restaurant offers panoramic views of Crescent Beach from an intimate dining room or al fresco deck. Chef Mitchell Kaldrovich features the best of Maine's oceans and farms in his seasonally appropriate menus.

Old Orchard Beach is home to Palace Playland, New England's only beachfront amusement park. It is owned by Jewish businessman Joel Golder and it's a family affair.

His son Paul serves as executive vice-president and his brother Fred handles business affairs. Paul's wife Silvia works with him at the park. So do his mom Harriet, sister Stacey and Fred's wife Caron. His Aunt Carole operates two food stands as a tenant in the park. Her son Adam works with her, along with his wife Thea.

This year the park has added two rides, Riptide and an upgraded kiddie Frog Hopper. Another new addition for the kids is called Dizzy Dragon. It was previously operated at an indoor entertainment centre. The new ferris wheel offers a spectacular light show.

Old Orchard is an easy 25-minute drive from Portland. Many of the beach shops next to Palace Playland and the Pier are operated by Israelis during the summer months.

Described as an "orthodox synagogue on the beach," the Congregation Beth Israel Old Orchard Beach (www.cbisrael.com) is at 49 East Grand Ave. President Eber Weinstein said that in the winter no more than eight people usually attend services on Shabbos mornings. In the summer that number grows to as high as 60, with people coming from Wells, Ogunquit, Portland, Bangor, Boston and New York.

Hebrew for Adults

Summer Session

Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Levels

For further information and to determine your level

please contact Gila Leaman,

905-761-0737 or 416-723-0175.



A Program of B'nai Brith Canada's
Commission for Jewish Culture

DR. MAX & GIANNA GLASSMAN

Senior Outreach Centre

Programs to meet the needs of Jewish seniors



Monday Aug. 13 Chair Yoga

Tuesday Aug. 14 Building Your Family Tree

Wednesday Aug. 15 Fitness Fun

Thursday Aug. 16 Bingo

Friday Aug. 17 Shabbat Ruach

Hours: 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. at 15 Hove St.
A light lunch is served.

To reserve your spot, please call by 9:30 a.m. each day
416.633.6224 ext. 134