



The new La Quinta Inn and Suite is the only hotel in Manchester to have an outdoor pool.

Manchester: New Hampshire's largest city has good shopping and a new place to stay

By Mike Cohen
The Suburban

Recognized as New Hampshire's commercial and industrial leader, as well as its largest city and the home of nearly 10 percent of its population, Manchester (www.manchestercvb.com) is only 58 miles from Boston.

My family and I often make a point of stopping in Manchester, either on the way to or back home from a destination either elsewhere in New Hampshire or somewhere in Maine or Massachusetts. We usually head right to the Mall of New Hampshire, which has 125 specialty stores, four full-service restaurants and a 550-seat Food Court. Macy's, JC Penney, Sears, and Best Buy serve as the anchors and a Ruby Tuesday Restaurant pleases our taste buds. There is now a new attraction in the suburb of Merrimack as Premier Factory Outlets has set up shop there. There are 100 amazing

outlets here and let me tell you, this is enough of an attraction to add at least another full day for your stay.

Manchester first gained national fame in the 1800s as the home of the massive textile mill of the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company. Nearly five million yards of cloth were shipped weekly from the mill, which employed thousands of workers and covered more than eight million square feet. The mill thrived until the 1920s, when competition from southern mills and obsolete technology took their toll. In 1935, Amoskeag went bankrupt. Despite losing its major employer, Manchester rebuilt itself as a commercial and industrial center by diversifying industries.

Today Manchester is home to a melting pot of high tech companies, banks, business services enterprises, retailers, manufacturers and health care professionals. Commerce is just one part of Manchester's appeal. The city is also the focal point of the state's cul-

tural community and home to many of the region's eight colleges and universities. Cultural institutions such as the Currier Gallery of Art and Palace Theatre join with the new Verizon Wireless Arena and outdoor concert venues to attract world-class performers and exhibits to the city. Performances, exhibits, classes, workshops and lectures are offered to the general public at many of the area's institutions of higher education. Other city attractions include the Manchester Historic Association, Franco-American Centre and the SEE Science Center.

The region is made up of Manchester, the state's largest city, and nine surrounding communities, each with a unique personality. The delight of living in the Manchester region is that you don't have to sacrifice country living to work in the city, or vice-versa. From city apartments and historic row houses, to farms and country homesteads, the Manchester area has something

to offer everyone.

On our previous trips to Manchester we always stayed at a place called the Highlander Inn. Well, when I called recently to book a room the line kept ringing. When I could not find the website I knew something was wrong, so I googled the hotel name and sure enough it had closed – not due to bad business. The nearby airport needed the land.

While the Highlander may have closed, a brand new La Quinta Inn and Suites recently opened at 21 Front Street in the former Clarion Hotel

Located in the historic Millyard district, this hotel and conference center (that part known as the Falls Center) overlooks the beautiful Amoskeag Falls. There is a convenience store in the lobby, free high-speed wireless Internet access throughout the hotel, a fitness center, business center, seasonal outdoor pool, meeting facilities, an airport shuttle and pets are welcome. Guest rooms are furnished with La Quinta's signature pillow top mattresses, microwave, refrigerator and coffee maker, iron, ironing board, hair dryer, as well as a 32 inch flat panel HDTV with over 35 HD channels from which to choose. Breakfast here is free, including waffles, hot and cold cereals, bread and muffins, fresh fruit, coffee, juice,

pastries, bagels and milk.

This four floor facility has 109 rooms, including three suites. It is located off of Exit #6 of the I-293. You can call 603-669-5400 or go to www.lq.com. Rooms can start as low as \$79 a night. Following a multi-million dollar year and a half renovation, Alta Properties in partnership with Roedel Companies (roedelcompanies.com) officially opened the hotel in April 2012, complete with a ribbon cutting ceremony featuring the mayor, the head of the Chamber of Commerce and La Quinta executives.

Hotel official Steve Morabito shared with me the fact that this is actually the only hotel in Manchester with an outdoor pool and a beautiful one it is, complete with comfortable lounge chairs and tables with umbrellas. We happened to be there on a very hot day and ended up extending our stay just to enjoy the pool. As of this writing work was underway to add a conference centre and restaurant to the facility. David Roedel, a partner of Roedel Cos., explained that the improvements for The Falls Center and La Quinta Inn and Suites met the organization's original objective of improving the building's overall functionality. The site also offers the Greater Manchester community and those visiting

the Queen City a completely revitalized option.

"Designed as a sister property for our award winning Hilton Garden Inn Manchester, The Falls is virtually a brand new hotel with contemporary architecture and interior design," said Roedel. "It provides exceptional price value and excellent service that our guests will really enjoy."

Centrally located in the heart of the region's primary business and financial district, Manchester Airport is less than an hour's drive from the region's most popular ski areas, scenic seacoast beaches and peaceful lakefront resorts. Easy access, ample, inexpensive parking, competitive airfares and a growing schedule of non-stop and direct jet service to leading U.S. cities make Manchester Airport a grand first impression of our city and state.

Manchester Airport is served by Air Canada, American Eagle, Continental Airlines, Continental Express, Continental Connection, Delta Air Lines, Delta Connection-COMAIR, MetroJet, Northwest Airlines, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, U.S. Airways and U.S. Airways Express.

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