

# Country Roads: Vermont B&B a delightful mix of old and new

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE NOVEMBER 16, 2012



The inn's once-formal parlour now serves as a library, a breakfast corner and an afternoon tea room.

**Photograph by:** Hing A. Kur

---

Made Inn Vermont, a new B&B in a historic house in Burlington, centres on all things regional.

It's a quaint inn with a cute concept in which guests can sample Vermont foods, toiletries and artisan items. The crafts include the creative — Burton snowboards repurposed as creative garden benches — and the traditional, such as blankets from Johnson Woolen Mills, a 170-year-old company near Stowe.

The house is at the heart of a leafy neighbourhood of fine vintage homes, now mostly housing faculties of Champlain College. It's an elaborate manor built in the late 1880s, when Burlington's posh Hill Section was being settled. Part Queen Anne and part Italian villa, the B&B is adorned with fanciful

gables, cornices, arched windows, porches and a latticework skirt.

Rambling old houses are known for their nooks and crannies, and Made Inn Vermont has a beauty. If you can gear up for a three-storey walk to the top floor, you can curl up in the cupola, which has glass walls and panoramic views of Lake Champlain and the Adirondack Mountains in the distance.

Ironically, one of the few aspects of the inn that is not from Vermont is the owner, Linda Wolf. A bohemian art and music lover, Wolf hails from Washington, D.C., and has lived in Dallas, Palm Springs and Santa Fe, where she worked as an artist and a decorator. She has an irrepressible penchant for collecting and an offbeat energy that you can see and feel throughout her B&B.

Wolf invited me to spend the night and experience her new venture. She has transformed the once-formal parlour into a multi-tasking space, serving as a library, a breakfast corner and an afternoon tea room. It's filled with mounds of books and an imposing armoire brimming with memorabilia.

She has tossed in modern pieces and a dash of Victoriana along with the stately Queen Anne chairs and tables. And she has no limits. I spotted an abacus atop an old pharmacy cabinet and a Remington typewriter under a stack of well-thumbed 1950s magazines. Among the surprises are the paintings by her daughter, artist Shelly Voorhees, whose large-scale abstract works add emotion and a contemporary edge.

The three guest rooms are equally whimsical and eclectic with old and new contrasts. My room, No. 905, had a record player and a jazz connoisseur's assortment of 33-rpm LPs, plus an old school desk next to a low-slung modern leather chair. Tall windows, befitting the rather grand house, overlook the neighbourhood.

Wolf has a good sense of what a guest needs and has equipped the rooms with comfortable mattresses with gel-tops and HD flat-screen televisions fired up with HBO. She also supplies black terry bathrobes and flip-flops so guests can tip-toe down the hall to the bathrooms — one for each bedroom — or to the hot tub, which is outdoors in the back garden.

But back to the made-in-Vermont theme. The two largest rooms have butlers' pantries with snacks like maple cotton candy, yogurt from the Green Mountain Creamery in Brattleboro and Rosie's Vermont Beef jerky from Swanton, Vt.

Breakfast is a continental spread of homespun Vermont goodies such as Green Mountain Coffee, zingy cinnamon-pear jam from Sidehill Farm in Brattleboro, Vt., yummy maple apple topping from Gormey's in Chittenden and cheeses from Cabot Creamery Co-operative in Montpelier. On weekends, guest chefs from various Burlington eateries prepare more elaborate feasts like pecan pancakes or eggs Benedict.

The latest Made Inn Vermont collaboration is with Cynthea's Spa in downtown Burlington, which now custom-makes the B&B's all-natural shampoo, conditioner and body wash.

The Farmhouse Tap & Grill is another new and intensively local enterprise in Burlington. It's a terrific,

casual restaurant where blackboards list all the farms that supply meat, poultry and vegetables. I also counted nearly 100 kinds of ale, lager, porter and blondes brewed from Belgium to Vermont, plus a world-beat of wines.

The menu features big, juicy burgers made of grass-fed beef from LaPlatte River Angus Farm in Shelburne, topped with cheddar from Landaff Creamery in Landaff, N.H. There also are turkey burgers from Misty Knoll Farm in New Haven, Vt., and veggie burgers with cheese from Grafton. But my vote for most original is the portobello and white bean burger with feta, a satisfying protein hit and low-ish in fat.

The Farmhouse has a gourmet's selection of Vermont cheeses and other comfort classics like mac 'n' cheese, corn cakes, barbecued pork and fried chicken. And it wouldn't be Americana without good old-fashioned desserts like blueberry crumble pie and a root beer float. But The Farmhouse adds an inspired twist with pastry chef Samantha Madden's Vermont honey & chèvre pudding atop citrus shortbread.

Another don't-miss gourmand experience is the new Burlington Food Tour, a guided walking excursion that combines history, culture, local trivia and tastings. Former U.S. air force pilot Joe Joe Haedrich organizes his tours with passion for local food producers. Depending on the season, the tour alights at the Burlington Farmer's Market for nibbles and the East Shore Vineyards Tasting Room for sips, plus stops for granola, craft beer, cheeses, juices, olive oil, maple syrup products and chocolates.

## IF YOU GO

Burlington, Vt., is a 90-minute drive from Montreal via Highway 10 east, Exit 22 to Routes 35 and 133 south and Vermont Highway 89 south.

Made Inn Vermont: 855 -204-MADE (6233), 802-399-2788, [www.madeinnvermont.com](http://www.madeinnvermont.com); 204 S. Willard St., Burlington, Vt.

Price: \$195-\$255 for two, including breakfast, coffee corner and hot tub.

The Farm House Tap & Grill: 802-859- 0888, [www.farmhousetg.com](http://www.farmhousetg.com); 160 Bank St., Burlington, Vt. Children's menu available.

Burlington Food Tours: 518- 803-4181, 802-277-0150, [www.burlingtonfoodtours.com](http://www.burlingtonfoodtours.com); adults, \$45, by appointment.

[rochelle@rochellelash.com](mailto:rochelle@rochellelash.com)

Twitter: @rochellelash

© Copyright (c) The Montreal Gazette



The inn's once-formal parlour now serves as a library, a breakfast corner and an afternoon tea room.

**Photograph by:** Hing A. Kur

