

Getaway gifts for Mother’s Day, two ways

From Boston luxury to seaside resort



ROCHELLE LASH
CHECKING IN

Have you gifted for Mother’s Day? If you are choosing a mini-vacation, May 11 might call for a destination loaded with grandeur that would sweep Mom away from the everyday. For others, the second Sunday in May is all about family, all ages having fun on a moderate budget. Here are two ideas in New England: the Fairmont Copley Plaza, a sophisticated landmark of Boston, and Ocean Woods Resort, a budget-conscious, child-friendly seaside getaway.

Even historic hotels shake things up to stay on trend.

The Fairmont Copley Plaza has stylish new features in addition to its splendid neo-classical architecture and ornate interiors. The Copley has been a favourite of the establishment since 1912, a home away from home for dignitaries, and virtually every U.S. president since the 1930s has visited, including Clinton, Nixon and F.D.R. It’s still A-list. Christian Bale, Amy Adams, Kate Hudson and Taylor Swift are among the celebrity sightings.

Since its 100th birthday, the Copley has been unveiling modernizations, including a comprehensive rooftop fitness centre with an outdoor deck and a new lobby lounge with a major see-and-be-seen quotient.

The hotel also redecorated its nearly 400 luxurious rooms with elegant residential-style decor in a regal plum and blue colour scheme, and it created themed suites around Boston’s institutions, such as the Boston Pops and the Freedom Trail. Guests enjoy all the right stuff: pod coffee makers, flat-screen televisions and iHome docking stations. The exclusive Gold Floor Lounge, also recently renovated, takes it up a notch with welcome perks — a private concierge, all-day refreshments and an honour bar.



A stunning model of classic luxury, the Fairmont Copley Plaza added cool new features for its 100th anniversary, including themed suites related to Boston’s institutions.

My idea was to gift Mom with a sleepover at this opulent hotel, yes, but also to experience the updated take on food and drink.

The clubby, patrician Oak Bar has been reincarnated as the more fashionable OAK Long Bar + Kitchen, arguably the hottest and most chic brasserie this side of Boston’s Charles River. It is a gorgeous room with towering arched windows, 100-year-old stained glass and a huge fireplace, all a classical backdrop to the trendy new open kitchen and burnished copper-topped bar.

Fresh farm-and-sea dinner fare includes clam chowder, Yankee pot roast, Kobe meatballs, lemon sole, grilled duck

and crab cakes. Brunch features a morning-after cocktail of vodka, hazelnut and espresso, plus a menu of wagyu beef burgers and short ribs, as well as old faves like blueberry pancakes and chicken pot pie. Opening this month will be OAK’s sidewalk café, facing Trinity Church and the action of Copley Square.

The Fairmont’s location is impeccable, especially if Mom likes to shop. Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman-Marcus are a few blocks away, and Catie Copley, the hotel’s canine ambassador, would be delighted to go for a stroll.

A world away from the urban fray, the Ocean Woods Resort in the peaceful en-

viron of Kennebunkport, Maine, beckons with bracing sea air and an atmosphere of summer-cottage comfort.

Ocean Woods is operated by a family, for families. It’s a rambling white clapboard hotel one kilometre from a beautiful stretch of Goose Rocks Beach on the Atlantic Ocean.

Owners Kathleen Spang and her partner, Peter Morton, assisted by Spang’s five children, manage 32 guest rooms, a swimming pool and a pub, PJ’s Spirits and Sports. A throwback to a kinder, gentler time, Ocean Woods has lawn games like shuffleboard, tetherball and horseshoes. And generations of guests return year



OCEAN WOODS RESORT
The Ocean Woods Resort in Kennebunkport, Maine, has a down-home feel and family-friendly features.

IF YOU GO

Fairmont Copley Plaza: 866-540-4417, 800-441-1414, 617-267-5300, oaklongbarkitchen.com, fairmont.com/copley-plaza-boston; 138 St. James Ave., Boston, Mass.; pet-friendly, \$25 per night. Price: Rooms start at approximately \$389 U.S. and suites start at \$689 U.S. per night, for two, including health club, concierge. Extras: parking, Wi-Fi, babysitting/cribs, 24-hour business services. Internet is free on Fairmont Gold floor or Fairmont Presidents Club.	Ocean Woods Resort: 866-967-1928, 207-967-1928; oceanwoodsresort.com; 72 Dyke Rd., Kennebunkport/Goose Rocks Beach, Maine. Price: May 3 to June 18 and Sept. 1 to Oct. 20, \$95-\$145 U.S.; June 19 to Aug. 31 (high season), \$165-\$195 U.S.; incl. continental breakfast, Wi-Fi, newspaper, pool, lawn games and beach gear. Pay 10 per cent less for five nights. Children 18 and under stay for free. Apartments with kitchens rented Sat.-to-Sat. Extras: bikes, \$10; kayaks and canoes, \$20; beach parking, \$10.
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after year to make memories and fill Facebook pages with youngsters splashing in the pool and building sandcastles until the tide rolls in.

“We have a quiet country setting near the beach,” said Spang, “and the hotel has a real down-home feeling.

“We’re an attraction for what I call ‘the sand-pail set.’”

Goose Rocks Beach is protected by a reef, so the surging Atlantic waters are relatively calm. And you don’t have to lug your beach gear in the car from home. Ocean Woods provides everything — towels, umbrellas, boogie boards, chairs and, yes, sand pails, plus a buggy to get everything to the shore.

Spang and Morton have steadily upgraded in recent years. The pool is surrounded by a new patio, and the guest rooms all have been refurbished with pastel decor, fresh carpets and colonial-style furniture. All rooms have coffee machines and cable television, and some have gas fireplaces and mini-

refrigerators — so handy in summer, especially with children. I particularly like the ground-floor rooms with walkout patios.

Prices here can’t be beat. Until June 20, rates start at about \$110 U.S. for a family of four in one room with two queen beds. For more space and privacy, I recommend the two-room suite.

PJ’s, the pub at Ocean Woods, knows its mission: casual fare, accessible prices, a kids’ menu, beer and cocktails. Lobster rolls and steamed lobster are on the menu, as well as steak tips, haddock and sports-bar staples like pizza, tacos, onion rings and nachos. You can watch the sun set on the outdoor deck or pull up a tavern chair and tune in to the Boston Red Sox on a big screen.

There is life beyond the beach. Ocean Woods is about eight kilometres from the shops and harbour of downtown Kennebunkport. The hotel organizes sport-fishing, boat cruises and golf.

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