

Country Living

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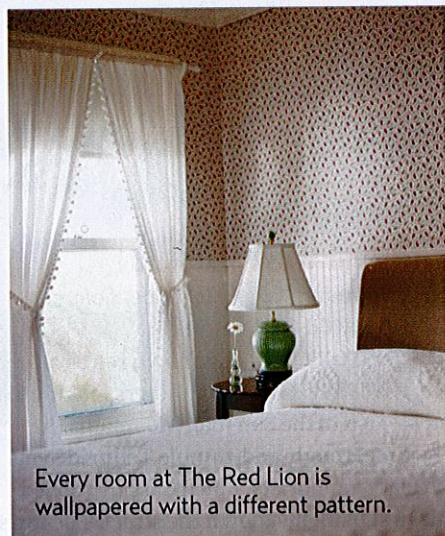


The Rockwellian Fantasy

The Red Lion Inn, Stockbridge, Massachusetts

OPEN SINCE 1773

THE HISTORY Once a stagecoach tavern, this Berkshires mainstay got an 1860s upgrade at the hands of hotelier Mert Plumb; her locally sourced finds—early-American furniture, porcelain teapots, and more—still grace the shabby-chic interior. For a current-day antiques crawl, head down Route 7 to nearby Great Barrington and Sheffield.



Every room at The Red Lion is wallpapered with a different pattern.

FUN FACT Norman Rockwell immortalized the picturesque inn in two paintings, *Stockbridge Mainstreet at Christmas* and *The New American LaFrance Is Here*.

RATES From \$135 (redlioninn.com)

The Southern Grande Dame

The Hermitage Hotel, Nashville

OPEN SINCE 1910

THE HISTORY This Beaux Arts stunner is a veritable fantasia of stained glass and pink marble. But in its early days, the downtown property put on modest airs, advertising rooms as “fireproof, noiseproof, and dustproof, \$2 and up.” Now guests can donate \$2 of their bill to a project that fuels the farm at Glen Leven, a nearby period garden that provides produce for the hotel’s stately restaurant.

FUN FACT Francis Craig, house bandleader from 1929 through 1945, wrote Nashville’s first-ever gold record, 1947’s “Near You.”

RATES From \$259 (thehermitagehotel.com)

The Cattle Barons’ Getaway

The Driskill Hotel, Austin

OPEN SINCE 1886

THE HISTORY A well-to-do rancher built this downtown gem, and his legacy lives on in its cowhide-covered chairs, copper ceilings, and the steer head mounted in the lounge. The site seems to inspire winning strategies: Reportedly, the heroes of the Alamo first met here, as did Texas Rangers before they ambushed Bonnie and Clyde. Hatch your own ingenious plan while ensconced in one of the lodge-like lobby’s deep leather sofas.

FUN FACT Lyndon B. Johnson and Lady Bird went on their first date, breakfast, at The Driskill in 1934.

RATES From \$249 (driskillhotel.com)

The Victorian Landmark

The Pfister Hotel, Milwaukee

OPEN SINCE 1893

THE HISTORY At first, the big draw at The Pfister was its newfangled technology: electricity. Today, it’s a time-honored ritual that makes a big impression—the establishment’s afternoon tea service. Take in sweeping views of Lake Michigan from the 23rd-floor lounge, where a harpist plays as teetotalers sip chamomile and nibble snacks, including scones with lemon curd.

FUN FACT The Pfister owns more Victorian art than any other hotel in the world.

RATES From \$159 (thepfisterhotel.com)



Learn all about Victorian high tea from one of The Pfister’s “tea butlers.”

The Founding Fathers’ Clubhouse

Beekman Arms, Rhinebeck, New York

OPEN SINCE 1766

THE HISTORY The oldest continuously operating hotel in the country, “The Beek” really can say that George Washington slept here. Though the decor is up-to-date comfy, one early tradition holds fast: Each room contains a complimentary decanter of sherry, so guests can turn in with a nightcap, just like America’s earliest statesmen did.

FUN FACT Rumor has it, a spat between Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton at the inn led to the rivals’ infamous duel.

RATES From \$145 (beekmandelamaterinn.com)



Thomas Wolfe’s novel *Of Time and the River* was influenced by a stay at Beekman Arms.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) TRICIA SHAY; JOY FISCHER; BUFF STRICKLAND