

# WINTER WONDERLANDS

**N**ot all couples flock to the sun for their honeymoon. Some prefer the quietude, seclusion and awesome natural beauty to be found in the winter wonderlands of North America. Picture the two of you snuggled up in front of a cozy fireplace, sipping cognac and gazing out through frosty windowpanes at scenery that is nothing short of breathtaking. What a perfect romantic setting to stage the event of a lifetime—your honeymoon.

In the U.S. and Canada, extraordinary locales beckon honeymooners—charming New England, the majestic Rocky Mountains, the cozy Poconos and the awe-inspiring Laurentians. Their allure, particularly if you are planning a winter honeymoon, is magnetic for several reasons: their remoteness and seclusion afford honeymooners the opportunity to spend intimate time together; they are affordable and accessible; and for winter sports enthusiasts, these regions offer an incredible array of things to see and do.

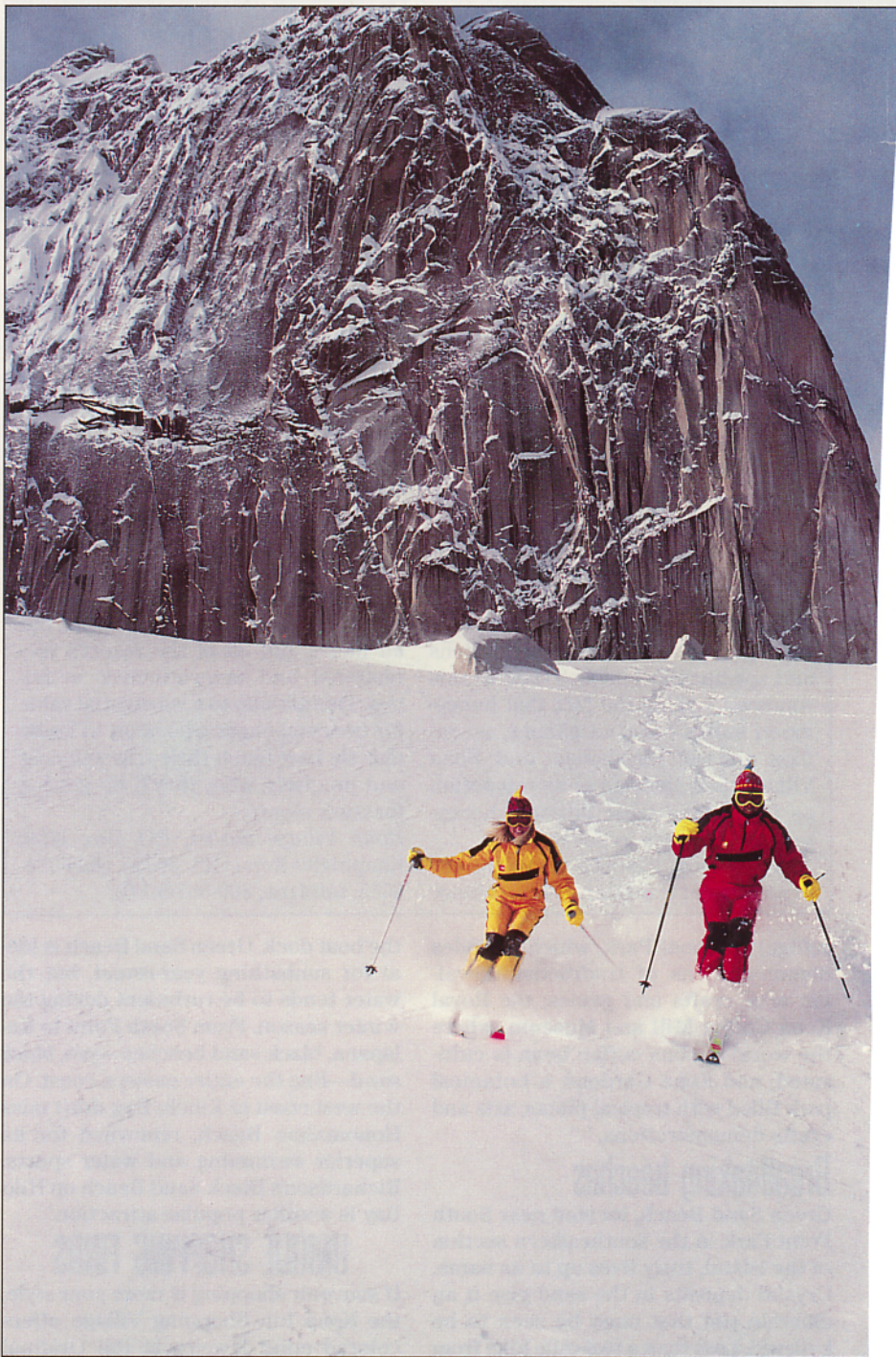
## NEW ENGLAND

No region in the U.S. is quite so renowned for its storybook country inns and intimate bed and breakfast establishments. Here you will find no hurried pace, just the simple pleasure of being together in a relaxed, romantic setting.

### The Berkshires of Massachusetts

Situated midway between New York and Boston, the soft, rolling hills and sleepy colonial towns of the Berkshires offer honeymooners an abundance of privacy—and plenty of activity, too. The quaint, impeccably restored towns of Lenox and Stockbridge, near the world famous Butternut Basin ski resort, are gold mines for browsers, antique shoppers and arts and crafts enthusiasts.

Stockbridge is the home of the Norman Rockwell Museum, where more than 50 of the artist's paintings are on display. Don't miss Hancock Shaker Vil-



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lage, in nearby Pittsfield, for teas, stencils and reproductions of historic Shaker furniture. In Lenox, L&R Wise Goldsmiths offer custom goldwork and gem sculptures; the Arcadian Shop sells and rents a full range of ski equipment. For complete ski information, contact Butternut Basin, Route 23, Great Barrington, MA 01230 (413-528-2000).

## Romantic Inns and Bed & Breakfasts

*The Inn at Stockbridge*, Stockbridge, MA (413-298-3337) offers classic bed and breakfast accommodations within the relaxed, dignified ambiance of a converted Georgian mansion. Each room is unique; decorated in a cozy, comfortable style. A sumptuous breakfast is included in the daily room rate, which ranges from \$60 to \$160 per couple.

*Haus Andreas*, Lee, MA (413-243-3298), built by a Revolutionary War soldier, offers elegant rooms—some with fireplaces—and breathtaking views of the countryside. Including continental breakfast, rooms range from \$60 to \$150 per couple. Haus Andreas is sister inn to The Gateways in nearby Lenox.

*Wheatleigh*, Lenox, MA (413-637-0610) is a stately manor reminiscent of an Italian palazzo—a wedding gift to the bride from her father. Stay in one of the terraced rooms with fireplace. Rates range from \$90 to \$350 per night, including continental breakfast.

## The Rural Towns of Vermont

Located near the southern boundary of the state, Ludlow, Belmont and Weston form the hub of winter ski activity and offer an assortment of dining, shopping and sightseeing opportunities.

*Parameter House*, Belmont (802-259-2009) is a Victorian beauty providing luxury and comfort within a modest price range. Enjoy afternoon tea amid antique paintings or relax in the living room in front of a crackling winter fire. Honeymooners receive complimentary flowers and champagne. Room rates, including expanded continental breakfast, are \$50 to \$70 per night.

*Black River Inn*, Ludlow (802-228-5585) is another charming, romantic hideaway. The room rate of \$110 per night includes full breakfast and dinner. Weekend honeymoon packages are also available.

## ROCKY MOUNTAINS: Aspen

Once a rugged outpost populated by gold miners, today's Aspen is a chic, cosmopolitan resort that offers some of the finest skiing in the world. Begin-



ners will find Buttermilk Mountain one of the least intimidating, where you can learn the sport at your own pace; Snowmass attracts the majority of visitors; and for accomplished skiers, Aspen Mountain offers some truly challenging runs. Cross-country skiing is another popular sport, with free trails on the Aspen Golf Course. Be sure to visit Krabloonik, where you can take a whirlwind dog sled ride before lunching on wild game in the adjacent restaurant. *Sterling Homes* (800-642-4210) offers home, condo and apartment rentals. Renting your own condo would certainly be the ultimate in privacy—yet the complex is centrally located, in the heart of the action. The amenities are impeccable, with full room service. Rates vary according to the type of accommodations.

*Maroon Creek Lodge* (303-925-3491) has a heated pool and winter sauna; some units include kitchen. Maroon Creek Lodge offers direct trails between the resort and the slopes. Rates range from \$60 to \$100 per couple.

—by Ron Patrick

## THE POCONOS

**T**he Pocono Mountains delight honeymooners with a natural wonderland of scenic riches, with each season ushering in a change of mood. Nestled in the lush hills of the Pennsylvania mountain region, the Poconos are a stateside retreat.

Most Poconos resorts are plainly set up for honeymooners. Where else will you find champagne glass-shaped whirlpool baths and private indoor steam rooms that allow an escape from the rest of the world?

But true to their eclectic personality, the Poconos also offer an endless array of other public activities. Winter brings a kind of outdoor paradise—test your skills on the panoramic slopes, cross-country ski across endless expanses or enjoy indoor and outdoor ice rinks.

Nighttime heats up with celebrity talent, elegant dining, dancing until dawn and plenty of time for moonlit strolls.

## A Taste of Superior Lodgings

There are countless resorts from which to choose, including elaborate modern sites, hidden away intimate settings and rustic, romantic ski lodges. Nearly all Poconos resorts offer honeymoon packages and amenities like heart-shaped tubs, private balconies and breakfast in bed. That means one price pays for all (lodging, meals, entertainment, sports equipment), and you won't have to concern yourself with pinching pennies. Packages usually range from \$800 to \$1,700 for a week.

Here are four of the Poconos' most romantic resort choices. Be sure to let the resort know you're honeymooning—you'll get the best treatment.

*Birchwood*, located in Tannersville (717-629-0222), is a 400-acre quaint mountain estate. The resort offers daily social programs and intimate dining and dancing at the Red Baron Den Disco. For outdoor fun, there's cross-country skiing, a hill for sledding and skating on their own frozen lake.

*Brookdale on the Lake* (located in Scotrun, 800-233-4141) is Caesar's Resorts' newest property, with 260 acres surrounding a private lake. Brookdale is the ultimate in romantic seclusion, with small cottages and chalets spaced far apart to provide the utmost in privacy. For snow enthusiasts, activities include snowmobiling, indoor and outdoor ice skating and tobogganing.

*Pocono Gardens Lodge* in Paradise Valley (800-441-4410) is a European-style estate displaying the height of elegance; graceful statues and sparkling fountains dot the grounds, and dining is conducted in high style. Honeymooners staying at the Pocono Gardens are entitled to three delicious meals daily—including breakfast in bed. Twirl on your ice skates on a magnificent frozen lake.

*Mount Airy Lodge* on Mount Pocono (800-441-4410) is a year-round wonderland, offering the best in skiing in wintertime, with five slopes on the property, double-chairlifts and complete snow-making equipment.

*Penn Hills* (Analomink, 800-233-8240) is a modern, fully equipped lodge that lies in one of the region's most scenic areas. The breathtaking Rainbow Falls are located right on the resort's property! The facilities include an indoor Ice-A-Rama, 14 ski trails, tobogganing and even its own ski mountain—Alpine—with a 500-foot vertical drop.

—Catherine Whitney

## THE LAURENTIANS

**S**himmering lakes and valleys covered in a veil of white—that's the Laurentian range. The region falls between Montreal and Mont Tremblant—the highest peak in the Canadian province of Québec.

It's interesting to note that the region was only settled about a century ago by farmers and would-be miners. When the land proved disagreeable to those pursuits, natives turned toward skiing to pull them out of an economic and spiritual slump. These days, the area's natural beauty, tasty cuisine, lovely accommodations and abundance of outdoor activities make it the perfect place to plan a romantic winter honeymoon.

### What to See and Do

Because of its immense size and natural attractions, there's always plenty to see and do in the Laurentians. In the winter, outdoor activities abound—including mountain climbing, romantic sleigh rides, snowmobiling, horseback riding, snowshoeing and luge. Of course, there's great downhill and cross-country skiing everywhere, not to mention an activity-filled winter carnival. Après ski and after dark, you'll find a European flavor added to the distinctive Laurentian style.

Across the northshore bridges from Montreal are the southern Laurentians. Along the Mille-Iles are watermills and old mansions that provide insight to a Quebec gone by. There is also an abundance of groomed cross-country ski trails just minutes outside the city.

Further north, you may want to visit St-Sauveur-des-Monts. Since it is only 30 minutes away from Montreal, the town is an attractive prospect for day-trippers. There are over 60 restaurants to choose from. In St-Sauveur, be sure to try Restaurant Marie-Philip (514-227-2171), a delightful little white stucco chalet with white lace curtains. After shopping at the many boutiques and specialty shops, choose between the slopes of Mont-Avila, Mont St-Sauveur, Mont-Habitant and Mont Christie.

East of St-Sauveur are the villages of Piedmond and Mont Rolland. Mont-Gabriel features two downhill mountains and a hilltop resort hotel with an indoor sports complex. The area, known as "Jack Rabbit Country," offers some of the region's best cross-country skiing.

In Ste-Adèle you will find a variety of lodges, motels, modern condos and luxury hotels. Downhill skiing, day or night, can be found on Le Chantecler—with



DAVID STOECKLEIN/STOCK MARKET

special provisions for beginners. If you're not in the mood to hit the hills, try skating on the beautiful lake or rent a snowmobile and take a run through the woods.

Fifty-one miles north of Montreal lies the village of Saint-Adolphe d'Howard, along the shores of Lake St-Joseph. Among 56 square miles and 85 lakes, you'll find a vast winter playground. Nearby is the beautiful town of Estérel, known for its 25 miles of groomed cross-country trails.

Only a few miles north is Val Morin and Val David, a paradise for cross-country skiers. Discover the beauty of nature while covering the miles and miles of trails. Alpine fanciers can choose between Belle Neige, Mont Sauvage and Mont Alta. Val Morin and Val David are also known for their excellent cuisine. The four-star restaurant in the Hôtel La Sapinière (819-322-2020) in Val David and the Auberge Far Hills Inn (PQ JOT 2S0, tel. 819-322-2014) in Val Morin rate among the Laurentians' best.

The final stop on a trip through the lovely Laurentians will bring you to the little village of St-Jovite, the gateway to the most famous ski areas of Eastern Canada—Mont Tremblant and Gray Rocks.

Great skiing is yours at Tremblant, the highest peak of the Laurentians. The vertical drop is 2,100 feet, but if you're a novice, there's no need to worry—there are slopes to suit the needs of every skier.

Gray Rocks proclaims itself the Dean of the Laurentian Mountain Resorts—with good reason. Virtually a community unto itself, the resort provides almost every form of entertainment—indoors and out—within its borders.

### Where to Stay

Lodging options are limitless in the Laurentians. There are quaint bed and breakfast inns, intimate chalets and

large, luxurious hotels—for whatever mood you hope to create on your romance-filled holiday. Some of the more interesting places include *Le Chantecler* in Ste-Adèle, which has its own ski trails. The *Far Hills Inn* in Val Morin, nestled in the hills, is the perfect spot for a hideaway honeymoon. Rates at this New England-style stone mansion are relatively moderate, and there are weekend packages that offer extra savings. In Val David, look into the *Auberge du Vieux Foyer* (819-322-2686), a comfortable Swiss-style inn—stop in for a Swiss-style fondue. A lakefront lodge called *Auberge Lac des Sables* (819-326-7016) is about a mile and a half from the center of Ste-Agathe-des-Monts and offers attractive rooms with a view. Mont Tremblant's most famous resort is *Gray Rocks* (on Lac Ouimet, 819-425-2771), the Grand Dame of the Laurentians, and offers so much to see and do that it would take a small volume to catalogue its pleasures. If you want everything at your fingertips—Gray Rocks is your resort. Instead of honeymoon packages, many of the best resorts offer special ski packages for couples at discount prices. For example, Gray Rocks' seven day, six night package offers 19 consecutive meals, unlimited use of the lifts and 22 hours of ski instruction, with use of video playback to critique your ski technique. In Ste-Marguerite is a rustic, Swiss-style resort called *Alpine Inn* (514-229-3516). Indoor and outdoor swimming pools are heated here, there's a curling rink, and all cross-country trails are marked according to their difficulty. Hôtel L'Estérel (514-228-2571) is known as the empress of Ste-Marguerite resorts. The hotel sits on a 5000-acre estate and offers virtually any imaginable activity and entertainment—and a lakefront view from your room. Contact the hotel of your choice for honeymoon packages and rates.

### Dining

As you might expect in the province of Québec, traditional food in the Laurentians is French. Restaurants cater to both moderate and expensive tastes, and just about every budget in between. Try specialties like canard aux pêches (duck with peaches), fresh trout stuffed with lobster or labin aux pruneaux (rabbit with prunes and cognac). And traditional Anglo-Saxon dishes like steak are served just about everywhere. Auberge St. Denis in St-Sauveur-des-Monts and the cozy fireplace ambiance at L'Eau à la Bouche in Sainte-Adèle are among the finer dining experiences.

—Lisa Arcella