

On the Road with
a Country Vet

7 Delicious
Cider Recipes

A Day of Exploring
in Shelburne

YANKEE

Our Vermont

FALL 2019

*Celebrating the people, places,
and traditions that make
the Green Mountain State so original*

SPECIAL
*Cider
Issue*



It Never Gets Old

To me, *village* is one of the most lyrical words in our language. I hear it and think of sturdy homes that have seen a few centuries unfold ... smoke trailing from chimneys ... tranquil, narrow streets ... children riding bikes down country lanes ... shops with bells that tinkle when customers enter.

This is why, from the time my boys were young children, and ever since, autumn for me has meant a meandering drive along Route 30 as it follows the West River from Brattleboro through the painterly villages of Newfane and Townshend, with their tidy greens bounded by white colonials and country churches. The day always brought

adventure when we searched out detours down dirt lanes, wondering what might be around the bend. Getting lost on a cool fall day, with the colorful maples and birches and oaks lining the road, became a happy ritual. In time, we'd find our way along the Rock River through South Newfane.

The beauty of that drive lingered from one October to the next, when we'd repeat it all over again. Once on the trip home we saw a double rainbow arching over the West River; we pulled over and, in those days before cellphone cameras, simply

watched as it grew more intense by the minute. And even now, though my sons have grown up and moved away, I return to this drive each fall the way you might re-read a beloved book. It never gets old.

Writers often describe fall in fierce language. Colors *erupt*, *explode*, *blaze*, *catch fire*. But in fact, the season emerges quietly, subtly, with some trees clinging to green while others in the same landscape are glowing scarlet and gold. It is how Vermont's beauty sneaks up on you, works its way into you like music.

The best way to hear that music is to follow those dirt roads—and Vermont has over 7,000 miles of them. I think there should be a rule for the few weeks of autumn: no GPS. No electronic voice telling you to turn right or left, no "recalculating." Do this, and I promise that the stories you tell of your trip will be about what you stumbled upon when not following a plan, but simply being alert to what you might find. Those roads may lead to an unexpected orchard or farm, or artist's studio—or even a village.



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Contents



If taking a wagon ride on a beautiful farm is on your to-do list, make plans to visit Shelburne this fall. See p. 24.

Changing Seasons

4 Shining Through

In the kaleidoscope of fall color, the white birch is a quiet beauty.

Local Flavor

5 Pour It On

Celebrate the return of apple cider season with these sweet and savory recipes from *Yankee's* archives.

12 Sweet Success

After more than 40 years, a famed Waterbury Center cider mill is still finding ways to grow its appeal.

Plus: A sampler of great orchards across the Green Mountain State.

15 Say Cheese

As part of a series spotlighting Vermont's small producers, we pay a visit to Consider Bardwell Farm's award-winning creamery.

Destinations

17 Shifting into Fall

When the leaves turn, there's no better time for driving Vermont's highways and byways.

20 Corn-fed Fun

On some family farms, October is a time for pumpkins, hayrides ... and a few stray ghouls. **Plus:** Four kid-friendly corn mazes to try.

22 A Gift of the Glacier

Exploring the natural wonder that is Quechee Gorge.

24 Star Attractions

Welcome to Shelburne, home to a famously eclectic museum and New England's most elegant farm.

26 Out & About

Our statewide roundup of fairs and festivals not to miss this season.

Made in Vermont

28 King of the Hill

To meet the man brewing the best beer in the world, just follow the crowds to Greensboro.

Vermont Icons

31 The Wheel Deal

The case for Subarus as an unofficial state symbol.

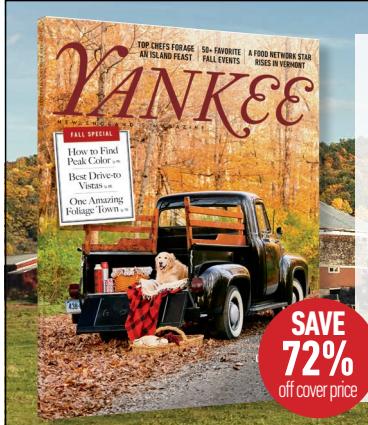
33 A Farmer's Best Friend

Being a country vet means practicing patience and kindness—and that's just with the owners.

One Last Thing

37 The Long Stretch

An appreciation of the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge.



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Shining Through

*Amid the brilliant colors of autumn,
the white birch emerges as an unexpected star.*

If the forests of New England had lacked the white birch tree (*Betula papyrifera*), then our painters, photographers, and other visual artists would have been obliged to invent it. The white or paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*) is by no means a flamboyant, show-offy tree, but by its unique coloration and habit of growth, it makes its presence very welcome.

Birches don't so much add to an outdoor scene as construct it. If you're on a bushwhack in southern Vermont, where I live, you may find the forest around you hard to grasp: a shifting, blending curtain of greens, shading into one another, largely unrelieved save by the birches, whose familiar white trunks mark out the perspective that lets you know where you're going.

Some of America's best-loved painters—Winslow Homer, Frederic Edwin Church, John Singer

Sargent—made good use of the white birch's aptitude for creating focus in landscape. The alabaster trunk, white and smooth as schoolroom chalk, with its black bands and patches where the bark has been removed or injured, makes a vivid stop for the eye. The birch, like a kind of natural plein air still life, seems to insist on being painted. This tree makes Impressionists of us all.

None of this is to say that the white birch's value is confined to the artistic. Not at all. We are talking about one of the most useful, most versatile trees in our woods. The birch is popular with woodworkers for its natural satiny finish and fancy grains similar to

the maple's. For its light weight, it's an unexpectedly strong wood that makes excellent veneer and interior plywood, including for skateboards, kitchen cabinets, even light aircraft.

Another of the birch tree's beneficial applications? As food and medicine. Birches can be tapped like maples and their sap enjoyed as syrup or as birch beer. And various preparations of birch leaves have been used as a sleeping draft, a diuretic, a wash for skin

lesions, a solvent for kidney stones, and a specific for gout, rheumatism, and arthritis. The white birch is the apothecary shop of the northern woods.

But although the birch tree is generous in its gifts to us, it's not alone in bestowing those gifts. Other trees supply wood for our many projects; still others please our palates and minister to our complaints. To conclude our

celebration of the white birch tree, we come around again to considerations of art.

The white birch is not a rich maker of autumn color. Its leaves turn a pale, subdued yellow. They concede the brightest display to the sugar maples, poplars, and sumacs that dominate the hillside palette. It's when other trees' leaves have gone that the birches' shining trunks show forth to do their work of perfecting the season by repeating in the woods the classic white clapboards and black shutters of our hamlets and villages. The white birch tree is much loved in New England because it shows New England to itself. —*Castle Freeman Jr.*





Pour It On

These recipes show why apple cider is our favorite flavor of fall.

Of all the traits that New Englanders share—thrift, self-reliance, ingenuity—an aversion to clear, pale yellow apple juice must surely be a minor core value. We'll take ours cloudy and brown in a gallon jug, thank you very much. That's the real stuff, and there's nothing better than fresh-pressed juice straight from the source.

Here in Vermont, orchards are taking cider to the next level, offering special blends made from flavor-packed heirloom apples such as Northern Spy and Baldwin. We've also seen the reemergence of hard cider as a staple. In the early days of the United States, people drank more cider than any other beverage because it was affordable, easy to brew, and safer than most drinking water. These days, it's something to savor, like wine.

But whether you enjoy your cider sweet or hard, the following recipes from the *Yankee* archives show that both are endlessly adaptable. —Amy Traverso

Homemade Apple Cider Doughnuts

These doughnuts have apple cider added right into the batter, lending a touch of sweetness and a subtle tang that most people find dangerously addictive.

- 1 cup granulated sugar**
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature**
- 2 large eggs, at room temperature**
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour, plus extra for work surface**
- 1¼ teaspoons table salt**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- ½ teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg**
- ½ cup low-fat buttermilk**
- ⅓ cup boiled cider (cider syrup)**
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract**
- Canola or safflower oil, for frying**
- Cinnamon sugar (1½ cups sugar mixed with 3 tablespoons ground cinnamon)**

In a large bowl, beat together sugar and butter until mixture is pale and fluffy, 4 to 6 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating a minute after each. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg; set aside.

Pour buttermilk, boiled cider, and vanilla into egg mixture. Mix well (and don't worry if the mixture looks a bit curdled; it'll smooth itself out). Add flour mixture and combine gently until just fully moistened.

Line two baking sheets with waxed paper or parchment paper and dust generously with flour. Turn dough out onto one baking sheet and pat gently into ¼-inch thickness. Sprinkle dough with additional flour, cover with plastic wrap, and place in the freezer for 10 minutes to firm up. Remove dough from the freezer; use a lightly floured 3-inch doughnut cutter (or two concentric biscuit cutters) to cut out about 18 doughnuts with holes. (You may gather the scraps and roll again as needed, but you may need to chill the dough more to firm it up.) Place cut doughnuts on the other baking sheet as you go; then transfer to the freezer for 5 minutes to firm up again.

Line a plate with a few layers of paper towels and set it nearby. In a Dutch oven or large pot, heat 3 inches of oil to 370°. Drop 3 or 4 doughnuts into the oil, being careful not to crowd the pan. Cook until browned on one side, about 1 minute; then flip and cook until browned on the other side, about 1 minute longer.

Repeat with the remaining dough (if you find that it's getting too soft, pop it into the freezer for 10 minutes). When doughnuts are cool enough to handle but still warm, sprinkle all over with cinnamon sugar. Serve immediately. *Yields about 18 doughnuts.*



Apple Cider Pancakes with Walnut Compote

This recipe from the Inn at Shelburne Farms is a great way to make use of local ciders and maple syrup.

For the compote:

- 4 cups apple cider
- ½ cup maple syrup
- 1 cup walnut pieces, toasted
- ½ cup dried currants
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom

For the pancakes:

- 3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 large eggs
- 2 ½ cups apple cider
- 3 tablespoons salted butter, melted, plus more for cooking
- 3 large red-skinned apples, cored and cut into ¼-inch-thick slices

First, make the compote: In a small saucepan, boil the cider and syrup until about a quarter of the liquid remains, 20 to 30 minutes (you can begin making pancakes during this time). Turn off the heat and stir in remaining ingredients. Let sit for 10 minutes.

Preheat oven to 175°. Next, make the pancakes: Stir dry ingredients together in a large bowl. In another bowl, whisk together the eggs and cider. Pour the wet mix into the dry with 3 tablespoons melted butter, and stir gently with a rubber spatula. Ingredients should be just combined (batter should be a bit lumpy).

Heat a little butter on a griddle or two nonstick pans over medium-low heat. Add a scant ⅓ cup of batter for each pancake, and cook until the pancakes are set at the edges and bubbling on top, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip and cook until the batter is set, about 1 minute. Move the finished cakes to the oven to keep warm.

After all the pancakes are cooked, put about 1 tablespoon of butter into each pan, set the pans over medium-high heat, and divide the apple slices between them. Sauté the apples until tender and golden brown at the edges, about 6 minutes. Serve pancakes topped with apples and compote. *Yields about 24 pancakes.*



Autumn Apple and Squash Salad

You can find apple cider syrup, also called boiled syrup, at farm stands and gourmet markets, or make it yourself by boiling 1 cup cider until it's reduced to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. Substitute this for the water and cider syrup in the dressing recipe.

For the salad:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup pumpkin seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sweetened dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 medium delicata squash, unpeeled
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for baking sheet
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pound Brussels sprouts, ends trimmed
- 3 tart apples, cored and roughly chopped
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup loosely packed mint leaves

For the dressing:

- 4 tablespoons Greek yogurt
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon boiled cider (cider syrup)
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 small clove garlic, minced
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Preheat oven to 400° and set a rack to the middle position. To prep the salad, toast the pumpkin seeds over medium heat until they begin to turn golden and pop in the skillet. Remove and set aside to cool.

In a small bowl, combine the dried cranberries with the cider vinegar. Soak for about 20 minutes.

Cut each squash in half crosswise and use a spoon to reach in and scoop out the seeds. Slice into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick rings, then toss them in a bowl with the olive oil, salt, and pepper. Spread evenly on a lightly oiled rimmed baking sheet and roast until tender and lightly browned, about 15 minutes.

Next, make the dressing: Put all ingredients into a lidded jar and shake vigorously to combine.

Finally, make the salad: Using a food processor, shred the Brussels sprouts and transfer them to your serving bowl. Add the apples and soaked cranberries. The salad can be made up to this point a day ahead and stored in an airtight container.

To serve, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dressing, pumpkin seeds, and fresh mint leaves, and toss well. Taste and add more dressing as desired. Arrange slices of roasted squash over the top. *Yields 4 to 6 servings.*



KRISSEY O'SHEA

Cider-Braised Pork with Pearl Onions and Apple

This recipe highlights the flavor that hard cider can bring to a dish. Here it lends a wine-like richness, but with a bit of sweetness that goes perfectly with pork.

- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons plus $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ –4 $\frac{1}{2}$ pound boneless pork shoulder (pork butt or Boston butt), excess fat removed
- 1 pound whole pearl onions (frozen and thawed, or fresh)
- 10 ounces sliced button mushrooms
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 5 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 cups hard cider
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 3 large apples, any variety, skin on, cored and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes

In a shallow bowl, stir together flour, salt, and pepper. Roll the pork shoulder in flour mixture to coat; shake off any excess.

Preheat oven to 325° and set a rack to the middle position. Set a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the oil and let it heat for a minute, then add the pork. Brown the meat all over, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Remove pork and all but 3 tablespoons of fat from the pot. Set the pork aside and discard the excess fat.

Add the onions to the pot and increase heat to high. Cook, stirring often, until browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove half the onions with a slotted spoon and set aside. Add the mushrooms to the pot and cook, stirring often, until nicely browned, 3 to 5 minutes. Add the allspice and thyme and stir. Add the cider and chicken broth, stir, and return the pork to the pot. Bring to a simmer, then cover and transfer to oven.

Cook 2 hours, then remove and add apples and reserved onions. Stir, and return to the oven. Cook 30 minutes more. The pork should now be very tender when poked with a fork; if not, cook 15 minutes more. Remove the pork from the pot, transfer to a carving board, and tent with foil. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the apples and onions to your serving bowl.

Slice or shred the pork, then transfer to your serving bowl with the onions and apples. Pour the sauce over all, garnish with fresh thyme, and serve over polenta, noodles, mashed potatoes, spaetzle, or couscous. Yields 6 to 8 servings.

Shaker Cider Pie

Made with boiled cider and maple sugar, this traditional dessert is bold, sweet, and full of old-fashioned flavor.

- ½ cup boiled cider (cider syrup)**
- 1 tablespoon butter**
- 1 cup maple sugar**
- ¼ cup water**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- 2 large eggs, separated**
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg**
- 1 unbaked 9-inch pie shell**

Preheat oven to 350° and line a 9-inch pie plate with pastry. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine the boiled cider, butter, maple sugar, water, and salt. Bring to a simmer, then cool slightly. Add the beaten egg yolks, then whip the egg whites to soft peaks and gently fold them into the boiled cider mixture. Pour into the prepared unbaked pie shell, top with freshly grated nutmeg, and bake 30 minutes, or until the custard is well set and the crust browned. Serve at room temperature with fresh whipped cream, if desired.



Hot Buttered Rum with Cider

A drink beloved by our colonial forebears, hot buttered rum is ideal for cozying up with by the fire after the kids have gone to bed.

- 1 cup** boiling water
- ½ cup** fresh apple cider
- ⅓ cup** firmly packed light brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons** unsalted butter, softened
- ½ teaspoon** ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon** ground nutmeg
- Pinch** table salt
- ½ cup** light rum
- 4 sticks** cinnamon, for garnish

In a blender, mix the water, cider, brown sugar, butter, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt until combined. Add the rum and blend. Divide between two mugs. Garnish with the cinnamon sticks and serve.

Gingered Apple Cider

This subtly spiced apple cider is the perfect holiday beverage or winter warmer.

- ½ gallon** apple cider
- 2 tablespoons** freshly grated ginger
- 1 cinnamon stick**
- 1 star anise pod**

In a large saucepan over high heat, combine ingredients; bring to a gentle boil. Remove from heat and let steep 20 minutes (longer if you like more intense flavors).

Pour through a coffee filter and discard solids. Reheat to desired temperature or cool to room temperature; then refrigerate.



BARN DANCE

Sweet Success

After more than 40 years, a famed Waterbury Center cider mill is still finding ways to grow its appeal.

Cold Hollow's very first hard cider, Barn Dance, is still a popular pour at the cider mill's taproom.

ORSINI STUDIO



If the mythical Sirens had used scent instead of song to lure the unsuspecting, it would be the aroma you detect even before you step through the doors of Cold Hollow Cider Mill: a buttery, sugary, spicy, apple-y blend rising from the cider doughnuts that *Gourmet* magazine once hailed as national treasures. During foliage season, throngs of hungry leaf-peepers keep the mill's four mechanical "doughnut robots" busy turning out as many as 800 dozen per day.

The doughnuts' winning flavor owes directly to Cold Hollow's flagship product: fresh cider, made on-site from apples harvested in the Champlain Valley, a region legendary for its concentration of orchards. A house blend of mostly McIntosh and a few other favorites is ground up and fed into a vintage cider press at an impressive rate: At its busiest time, from mid-September to mid-December, the mill can go through two tractor-trailers' worth of apples a day. That can add up to close to 8 million apples a year.

Fresh cider and cider doughnuts have been staples from the earliest days of Cold Hollow, which was founded by Eric and Francine Chittenden (the same family from which Vermont's first governor hailed). And the 19th-century former dairy farm in Waterbury Center that the couple bought in 1976 is still the base of operations today.

But current owners Gayle and Paul Brown, who took over in 2000, have steadily added to the offerings, which now include such gourmet concoctions as cider honey vinegar, cider vinaigrette, cider-chipotle barbecue sauce, and an intensely flavored cider jelly—not to mention maple syrup, cheese, honey, and candy. There's an in-house bakery where you can load up on apple pies and apple crisps; for more substantial dining, check out the Apple Core Luncheonette, which has been serving hearty breakfast and lunch fare since 2012. (Between all this tasty food and the self-guided factory tours and souvenir-packed retail shop, it's little wonder that Cold Hollow draws an



estimated 300,000-plus visitors per year.)

Recently, the Browns have even ventured into the world of hard cider. Their efforts kicked off in 2015 with the semi-dry Barn Dance, made with Cold Hollow sweet cider infused with cider syrup. After that came the dry Soul Shifter, the sweet and crisp Good Attitude, and Grateful Sled, a seasonal mulled hard cider with spices galore. All four hard ciders are available in the cozy new tasting room that Cold Hollow debuted earlier this year, as well as being offered for take-home purchase. We'll raise our glass to that. —*Kim Knox Beckius and Jenn Johnson*

FROM LEFT: The cheery entrance to the cider mill; Paul and Gayle Brown, who worked in Vermont's ski industry before becoming the owners of Cold Hollow in 2000.

When You Go

Cold Hollow Cider Mill is open 8 a.m.–6 p.m. daily except for Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Free self-guided tours available. 3600 Waterbury-Stowe Road, Waterbury Center. coldhollow.com

TOP PICKS FOR APPLE LOVERS

Where to find a peck or a pint in the Green Mountain State.

Autumn is a magical time of year for many reasons, but one of the best is trekking into the orchards and gathering up as many apples as you can carry. And luckily, there are dozens of wonderful orchards in every corner of Vermont, offering not just fresh fruit but everything from cider doughnuts to hay rides to pumpkins.

In her visits to orchards across New England, Amy Traverso, *Yankee* senior food editor and author of *The Apple Lover's Cookbook*, found two favorites in Vermont: Champlain Orchards in Shoreham and Scott Farm in Dummerston, which she says stand out for the number of apple cultivars they offer. "In the early 1900s, the USDA surveyed apple growers around the country and counted about 14,000 different varieties in production," she says. "Since then, that number has shrunk dramatically. But orchards like these keep this history alive in every sense."

Champlain Orchards, a family-owned farm overlooking Lake Champlain, is one of the oldest continuously operating orchards in Vermont. Bill Suer and Andrea Scott grow more than 100 varieties of apples, along with berries and stone fruits, in ways that minimize the use of pesticides. Pick your own or load up at the farm's market, which also carries its award-winning hard ciders. *3597 Rte. 74 W., Shoreham; champlainorchards.com*

In southern Vermont, don't miss a chance to visit **Scott Farm**, a 626-acre property owned by the nonprofit Landmark Trust USA. It produces 130 varieties of "ecologically grown" heirloom and unusual apples, such as Roxbury Russet, Belle de Boskoop, Winter Banana, and Hidden Rose. Trivia alert: The film *The Cider House Rules* used this pick-your-own farm as the setting for its orchard scenes. *707 Kipling Road, Dummerston; scottfarmvermont.com*

Below is a sampler of other worthy Vermont orchards to check out this fall; to find even more, visit the **Vermont Tree Fruit Growers Association** website (vermontapples.org).

Southern Vermont

Mad Tom Orchard: Originally planted in 1940, this scenic orchard in the mountains has been restored and planted with new varieties including Zestar and Blondee, though Macs and Cortlands



Champlain Orchards
in Shoreham

abound too. *2615 Mad Tom Road, East Dorset; madtomorchard.com*

Wellwood Orchards: Pumpkins, a petting zoo, fresh apple cider, and 60 acres of apple varieties: Lodi, Vista Bella, Red Astercan, Gravenstein, Wealthy, and many more. *529 Wellwood Orchard Road, Springfield; wellwoodorchards.net*

Whitman Brook Orchard: From America's oldest apple, the Roxbury Russet, to an 1800s variety born in and named for Bethel, Vermont, heirlooms get plenty of love in Whitman Brook's lineup of 100-plus types. *Wheelock Road, Quechee; whitmanbrook.com*

Central Vermont

Burtt's Apple Orchard: Compact, walkable orchard packed with more than 40 different varieties (including Grimes Golden and Arkansas Black) and views of the Green Mountains. Fresh cider doughnuts and cider slushies will hit the spot. *283A Cabot Plains Road, Cabot; burttsappleorchard.com*

Happy Valley Orchard: Sixteen acres with u-pick trees, a farm stand with cider doughnuts and local produce, and a cider mill churning

out sweet nectar for visitors as well as for Burlington's famous Citizen Cider. *217 Quarry Road, Middlebury; happyvalleyorchard.com*

Northern Vermont

Allenholm Farm: Vermont's oldest commercial apple orchard (founded c. 1870) has all the greatest hits—Empire, Gala, McIntosh, etc.—plus cider, homemade applesauce, crab apple jelly, and other goodies. (Note: Located just up the road is the much younger but equally worthy **Hackett's Orchard**, with nearly 50 varieties of apple on offer.) *111 South St., South Hero; allenholm.com*

Chapin Orchard: Fifteen-acre orchard and a retail barn selling fruit, Vermont products, and cider made on a century-old press, which stars in special "crush" events for DIY hard-cider types. *150 Chapin Road, Essex Junction; chapinorchard.com*

Shelburne Orchards: Overlooking Lake Champlain, this 60-acre beauty was named one of the country's 10 best orchards by *USA Today* readers. Look for the ginger apple cider and the potent apple brandy. *216 Orchard Road, Shelburne; shelburneorchards.com*

Creamery director Leslie Goff Tyminski in one of the aging caves at Consider Bardwell Farm (c. 1864), Vermont's very first cheese-making co-op.



Say Cheese: Consider Bardwell Farm

As part of an ongoing series, we meet up with small producers bringing the bounty of Vermont to our table.

It's not an exaggeration to say that Vermont cheese is having a moment. At last year's American Cheese Society (ACS) Judging and Competition, producers from the Green Mountain State took a whopping 36 ribbons. Four of those, including a pair of first-place awards, went to Consider Bardwell Farm in Pawlet, which began operations in 1864 and went on to become the state's first cheese co-op. Today, its small-batch raw-milk cheeses are made under the direction of its 29-year-old creamery director, Leslie Goff Tyminski. We caught up with Tyminski—who started at Bardwell as a farmhand when she was still a teenager—as she made her rounds inside the creamery's headquarters, a revitalized 1920s dairy barn.

Why do you think Vermont cheese is getting so much attention these days?

The support of the Vermont Cheese Council has really helped. They get behind the state's farms and local creameries. It's just incredible how many great farmstead and artisan cheeses are out there. All over the state, you can find these microcreameries, where a husband-and-wife team may be milking 10 cows and selling their cheese only at the local farmers' market, but that's what they love to do: farm and make cheese.

How has the demand changed at Consider Bardwell in your time here?

I think in our first year [2004] we produced about 15,000 pounds of cheese. Now we're making 120,000 pounds. We're selling more regionally, around the Northeast, and we're in several farmers' markets in New York City.

What do awards like the ones from the ACS mean to you and your team?

They're huge. We really bust our butts—making the cheeses, moving the cheeses—so to get honored like that makes it all worthwhile.

What are some of the challenges of your work?

It's easy to romanticize making cheese: how it's made, how it's aged, how the cows and goats roam in the pretty pastures. That's all wonderful, but there's a lot of daily things you need to control. Maybe some of the goats got out, or it's raining and you can't get the hay up. You just have to roll with it.

It's also physical work. Especially here, because we do everything by hand. The curds are taken out of the vat by hand, the cheeses are all turned by hand, they're

washed by hand. You're on your feet for eight or nine hours a day, and it's physically demanding work. Then there's the cleaning—the cheeses, the racks, the rooms—there's so much of it.

What makes a Consider Bardwell cheese special?

Everything here is a raw-milk product. Nothing is pasteurized. And we're making a local product. We get our cow milk from two partner dairy farms that are just a mile from here. Also, our goats are still "farmstead," which means they live here, they're milked here, and of course we make the cheese from their milk here.



Wheels of Pawlet, a mild, sweet cow's-milk cheese whose awards and accolades have included a 2018 *Yankee Editors' Choice Food Award*.

What's your personal favorite of the cheeses you make?

The Pawlet. It's so versatile. It's a great table cheese to snack on, but also great for melting.

In your opinion, what are people missing out on if they've eaten only American cheese or the occasional cheddar?

Well, they're missing the chance to support local farmers. But there are also so many flavors to explore—and once you do, you probably won't go back to American.

Shifting into Fall

When the leaves turn, there's no better time for driving Vermont's highways and byways.



At the Rock of Ages granite quarry in Barre, sheer granite walls rise above water that mineral runoff has turned a brilliant turquoise. **INSET:** Richmond's Round Church, a rare 16-sided meetinghouse.

Vermont has more designated scenic highways (made more beautiful by the lack of billboards, of course) than any other New England state except Maine. Add in the fact that nearly half of its woods are made up of red and sugar maples—both showstoppers for autumn color—and you've got an unbeatable destination for an autumn driving tour.

Here's a meander across Vermont that features some of the most unvarnished and underpopulated nooks in the land o' leaves. Over the two days you'll see miles of colorful vistas, the world's largest granite quarry, the country's smallest state capital, and Vermont's first national park.

Day One

The adventure begins at the Vermont–New Hampshire border, in **Wells River**. This town is the start of the Bayley-Hazen Military Road, built from 1776 to 1779 as a hedge against the Revolutionary War spreading to the northern border. A scenic walk on this road leads from the granite marker on Main Street to a clearing above Tickle Naked Pond ("Tickenecket" in the original Algonquin), which offers views of the White Mountains.



Take 302 west to explore Vermont's granite history: Southeast of **Barre** lie the famous quarries in which workers mined a lode of granite so vast and deep that by the 1960s they could boast there was a piece of Barre in every city in the nation. You can turn south on Route 14 to visit the Rock of Ages, the world's largest quarry of its kind; or turn north to see Hope Cemetery,

where stonecutters have painstakingly carved granite sculptures for themselves and their families.

Zipping west on Route 2, note the golden dome of the state capitol as you pass by **Montpelier**: It's topped with a statue of the Roman goddess of agriculture, Ceres, who is holding, appropriately, a sheaf of autumn leaves. About 30 minutes later you'll reach the town of **Richmond** and its famous Round Church. Built in 1812, the meetinghouse (which actually has 16 sides) is a don't-miss photo op.

Next it's off to Mount Mansfield via Jericho Road and other byways, but pause on your way north to see the marker on the **Jericho Center** green commemorating Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley, a turn-of-the-century Jericho farmer who took the first pictures of snowflake crystals. Then it's on to **Underhill**: Head straight through town to Pleasant Valley Road, watching for a sign (a mile north) for Underhill State Park, where some of the best Mount Mansfield hiking trails begin. A ramble along the old Civilian Conservation Corps Road or Cantilever Rock Trail offers a way to see the colors at less than highway speed.

Returning to Pleasant Valley Road, follow it north through woodlands and meadows, eventually bearing right onto Upper Valley Road, which delivers you to **Jeffersonville** by way of some fine Lamoille River Valley views. On Main Street you'll find lovely galleries, including the Bryan Memorial Gallery, known for its landscape paintings. If you're tempted to call it a day, check out the Smugglers' Notch Inn, an 18th-century village inn that has been hosting guests since long before skiers descended on the area.

For a bit more nightlife, though, take a detour south about 15 miles to **Stowe** and its shops, restaurants, and bars, and three-screen cinema. For an overnight in Austrian style, book a room at the mountaintop Trapp Family Lodge, founded by the family whose story inspired *The Sound of Music*.

Day Two

In the morning, motor south on Route 100 to **Waterbury**, home to the Ben & Jerry's Factory Store



ABOVE: Middle Bridge, one of three covered bridges in the postcard-perfect town of Woodstock in east-central Vermont. **BETWEEN:** A view of Route 100, a highway that runs some 200 miles from Massachusetts to Lake Memphremagog, and which *Yankee* has called the best foliage drive in Vermont.

and Cold Hollow Cider Mill [see p. 12]. But don't linger too long. In terms of sightseeing, the real treats lie ahead, because Route 100 is widely considered the best foliage drive in the state.

Soon you'll be in the magnificent Mad River Valley, bordered to the west by some of the highest peaks in the

Green Mountains. At the top of the valley, **Waitsfield** is an inviting place to pause, with its c. 1833 wooden covered bridge (one of the state's oldest) and tasty refueling spots like the Mad Taco and Three Mountain Café. Farther south, Route 100 traces the eastern edge of the Green Mountain National Forest for nearly 40 miles—which means trees, trees, and more trees out your car window.

At **Killington**, you'll join up with the Crossroad of Vermont Byway (Route 4), which bisects the state from east to west as it passes through a number of classic Vermont communities. Perhaps the most famous of these is **Woodstock**: Though a showcase of a town at any time of the year, in autumn it is stellar, and it's as a fitting a place as you could want to end a foliage drive. Highlights include impeccably maintained historic architecture; a classic town green lined with sugar maples; Billings Farm & Museum, a circa-1890s farmhouse and modern farm; and Vermont's first national park, the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park. —*William Scheller*



Corn-Fed Fun

Fall farm visits mean pumpkins, hayrides ... and a few stray ghouls.

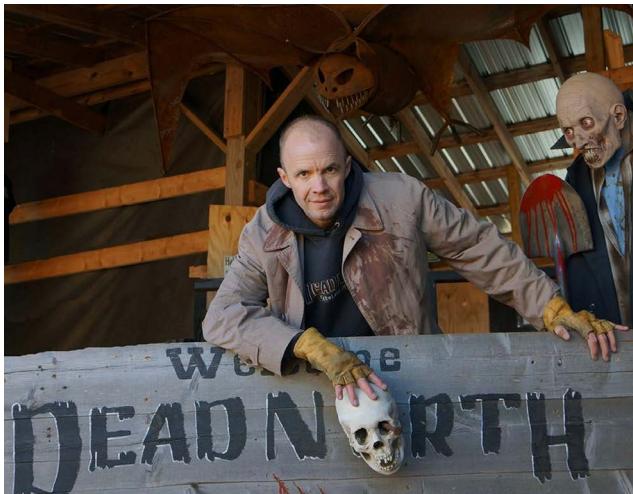


Danville's Patterson Farm is famous for its Great Vermont Corn Maze—but also, come October, for a spine-tingling attraction called Dead North.

Every fall, working farms across the Green Mountain State invite visitors to come celebrate the harvest season by offering everything from hayrides and pumpkin patches to meet-and-greets with barnyard menageries. Less common but hugely popular are corn mazes, those living labyrinths created by ingenious planting on the farmer's part, which can provide hours of brain-bending diversion in a beautiful rural setting.

When October rolls around, though, some farm visits become less about fun and games, and more about having the living daylights scared out of you.

Take, for example, the Patterson Farm in Danville, home to the Great Vermont Corn Maze. This family dairy farm has devoted 24 acres to New England's largest corn maze—and quite possibly its most challenging one, too. From midsummer to mid-October, thousands descend on this Northeast Kingdom property to tackle a mind trap that takes an average of nearly three hours to complete.



"You have to arrive before 1 p.m. to do it, because I'm not going to hold your hand in finding your way out [before closing time]," says Mike Boudreau, who operates the farm with his wife, Dayna.

Diabolical as the Great Vermont Corn Maze is, the farm turns downright sinister in early October, when it stages a Halloween event called Dead North. Boudreau launched the haunted attraction in 2001 with a small generator, a few costumes, and a patch of cornfield. Today, it's morphed into a mile-long journey of terror through cornfields and various farm buildings, complete with special effects, animatronics, and live actors.

Friends and volunteers donate their time every autumn to making Dead North a fright night to remember: building sets, playing characters, and making the kinds of noises that, in the pitch dark, on a farm at the end of a dirt road, can easily make a grown man scream (many, many times). It's no surprise the production has achieved legendary status, and tickets for its four-night run sell out quickly.

Something similarly spooky can be found in the

Patterson Farm owner Mike Boudreau gets into the spirit of Dead North, whose terrifying thrills have become a hit: Tickets go on sale months in advance and sell out every year.

When You Go

Dead North: 7:30–9:30 p.m. Oct. 4, 5, 11, 12. Tickets go on sale in mid-July; see website for pricing or to purchase. *1404 Wheeck Road, Danville. vermontcornmaze.com/buytix.html*

Vengeance in the Valley: 6:30–10 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays in October. Hayride only, \$12; corn maze only, \$10; combo ticket, \$20. *6343 Coolidge Hwy. (Rte. 5), Guilford; hauntedgainesfarm.com*

COURTESY OF GREAT VERMONT CORN MAZE

HAVE A FIELD DAY

FOUR FAMILY-FRIENDLY CORN MAZES TO TRY.

Hathaway Farm Corn Maze

Navigate 12 acres of corn while answering trivia. And if you get lost? There's an app for that. Really. *741 Prospect Hill Road, Rutland; hathawayfarm.com*

Percy Family Corn Maze

Longtime dairy farmer Paul Percy transforms part of his Bouchard Farm into a fun-filled adventure that generally takes visitors 40 minutes to complete. Goat and calf petting is optional but highly recommended. *2919 Mountain Road, Stowe; facebook.com/percyfarmcornmaze*

Whitcomb's Land of Pumpkins and Corn Maze

Over four compact acres, visitors can hunt for a candy jackpot or locate a special ear of corn to win a free pumpkin. *347 Fay Lane, Williston; whitcombslandofpumpkins.com*

Sam Mazza's Corn Maze

Two different mazes are on offer here, and visitors who track down the 12 punch card stations will be eligible for end-of-the-season prizes. *277 Lavigne Road, Colchester; sammazzafarms.com*

southern Vermont town of Guilford, where Gaines Farm, one of New England's oldest family farms, hosts Vengeance in the Valley on weekends throughout October. Visitors have a choice between a terrifying walk (or, more likely, sprint) through the cornfield and a haunted hayride that explores the supposed "horrifying history" of the property.

For those who want something more subdued, Gaines Farm's seven-acre corn maze is open for twilight strolls on the last two Saturdays of September. It's also open during the daytime on weekends until the end of October.

Likewise, the Great Vermont Corn Maze offers non-scary fun seven days a week till mid-October. But Boudreau finds something especially rewarding about the work that goes into its spooky sibling, Dead North.

"There comes one moment, [usually around] the second weekend, when everything is running smoothly, and there is nothing but screams coming out of the field," he told the Vermont news outlet NewsLinq. "And for every scream, there is a smiling face later." —*Ian Aldrich*



A Gift of the Glacier

Quechee Gorge is a year-round natural wonder that becomes a masterpiece when painted in autumn colors.

The Ottauquechee River as seen from the top of Quechee Gorge, 165 feet above the rushing waters.



One of the most memorable autumn day-trip destinations in Vermont has its beginnings some 13,000 years ago. That's when a glacier more than a mile tall flowed ever so slowly south from Canada, scouring the landscape, leaving lakes and rivers in its path. When it moved across what is today Windsor County, it also carved the 165-foot Quechee Gorge, the deepest in the state. Centuries later, the Ottauquechee River still flows through the gorge, creating a landscape that is at once stunning and, given that it's just 15 minutes east of Woodstock, very accessible.

Many dub the gorge "Vermont's Grand Canyon," but that hyperbole misses the true appeal of Quechee Gorge. It's more intimate than grand—something you realize as you see families picking their way down the fern-lined path from the visitor center to the river itself. It's an easy trek to reach the wide, sun-warmed rocks that make perfect spots for picnicking or simply sitting and listening to the river rush by.

And while the beauty of the gorge remains the enduring attraction, the hiking trails and campgrounds in the surrounding 600-acre-plus Quechee State Park have made this a destination where you can linger for hours or days. More diversions can be found just outside the park in the town of Quechee, with its many shops and restaurants. Quechee is where an Irish artisan named Simon Pearce set up his glass workshop in a brick mill by the Ottauquechee River falls, whose tumbling waters powered what would become one of the nation's most famous creative factories. The town is also home to the Vermont Antique Mall, a 17,000-square-foot barn packed with more than 400 booths of vintage treasures, and the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, where visitors can watch as injured raptors and other wild birds get a second chance at life.

Back at the gorge, you may see kids with fishing rods, and kayakers sliding by. Certainly you'll see camera-toting tourists making their way to the Quechee Gorge Bridge to photograph the glacier's artistry from above. And, most magical of all, you may even see a hot air balloon or two gliding high over the river, courtesy of a few local tour operators who offer visitors a ride they'll never forget. All this, and the most colorful fall leaves in the world.

Take that, Grand Canyon. —*Mel Allen*

Just up the river from Quechee Gorge is a restored brick mill that houses the workshop, flagship store, and namesake restaurant of master glass artisan Simon Pearce.

When You Go

Quechee State Park: Season runs May 17–Oct. 20. Open for day use 10 a.m.–sunset. Facilities include 45 tent/RV campsites and seven lean-tos. *5800 Woodstock Road, Hartford; vtstateparks.com*

Simon Pearce: Open 10 a.m.–9 p.m. daily (glassblowing hours end at 8 p.m.). *1760 Quechee Main St., Quechee; simonpearce.com*

Vermont Antique Mall: Open 10 a.m.–5 p.m. daily in the Quechee Gorge Village complex. *5573 Woodstock Road, Quechee; vermontantiquemall.com*

Vermont Institute of Natural Science: Open 10 a.m.–5 p.m. daily in summer (10 a.m.–4 p.m. winter). *149 Natures Way, Quechee; vinsweb.org*

In a marvel of engineering effort, in 1955 the retired steamship *Ticonderoga*—a vessel weighing nearly 900 tons—was hauled two miles overland from Lake Champlain to its resting place at the Shelburne Museum.



Star Attractions

New England's most elegant farm and a famously eclectic museum make Shelburne a must-visit destination.

Route 7 flows south to Shelburne, Vermont, from busy Burlington, past shopping centers and mom-and-pop shops that back onto fertile fields. The commercial congestion thins out closer to Shelburne, and then the road swings into town past an appealing jumble of cafés and shops, skimming along the edge of the **Shelburne Museum** and offering tantalizing glimpses of its campus.

It's surreal, this sprawling museum right in the heart of town. Thanks to founder Electra Havemeyer Webb's obsession with Americana, the collection includes 38 buildings, a carousel, more than 400 quilts, Impressionist masterpieces, 22 gardens, and a 220-foot steamboat, the *Ticonderoga*, now permanently moored in a field.

Although you can't see neighboring Lake Champlain from downtown Shelburne, its sparkling waters can be glimpsed here and there around town, where you least expect it. Or where money bought it: Seeded with a Vanderbilt fortune, 1,400-acre **Shelburne Farms** overlooks the lake from its classic 19th-century country house turned inn (tucked away off the beaten path, with a sign so discreet you could easily miss the turnoff).

Shelburne Farms is a Frederick Law Olmsted masterpiece, a working farm, a National Historic Landmark, and a model of sustainability, but it takes top prize for best barnyard: From mid-May to mid-October, kids can milk an extremely patient Brown Swiss cow, groom a donkey, meet a sheep, and more.

Speaking of family-friendly fun, just a mile south of the village is the Vermont Teddy Bear Factory, where a free tour gives a peek at the folks who hand-craft these iconic cuddlers (plus you can check out the company's "Bear Hospital" repair facility). In town, there's the Shelburne Country Store, with its jars of old-fashioned candy; Jamie Two-Coats' Toy Shop, filled with kids' clothes and playthings; and the Flying Pig, which began life as a children's bookstore and still remains kid-centric, with 80 percent of its 30,000 books for wee ones.



PAT PIASECKI (BARN); JULIE BIDWELL (STAGECOACH)



Refueling options likewise abound. On the casual side, Folino's serves up hearty wood-fired pizzas; it's BYOB and, luckily, you can pick up homegrown suds from Fiddlehead Brewing Company right next door. Self-described "craft eatery" Rustic Roots, meanwhile, is known for inspired breakfast and lunch fare, as well as upscale dinners by reservation only. For dessert, it's hard to beat handmade ice cream, which is the specialty at The Scoop (look for both dairy-based indulgences, such as Kahlua fudge brownie, and vegan options). —Annie Graves

ABOVE: Shelburne Farms' grand 19th-century Farm Barn, now an education center.
BELOW: Among the artworks, artifacts, and oddities at the Shelburne Museum are nearly 200 vintage stagecoaches and other horse-drawn vehicles.

When You Go

Shelburne Museum: From May 1 to Oct. 31, the entire campus is open 10 a.m.–5 p.m. daily; admission is \$25 (good for two days), with discounts for seniors, youth, military, and others. (Hours, access, and admissions vary during other seasons—see website for details). *6000 Shelburne Road, Shelburne; shelburnemuseum.org*

Shelburne Farms: Open from mid-May to mid-October, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. daily; admission is \$8, with discounts for seniors and kids. This includes access to walking trails, children's farmyard, and cheese making in the Farm Barn. The visitors center and farm store are open free year-round (hours vary by season—see website for details). *1611 Harbor Road, Shelburne; shelburnefarms.org*

Out & About

To help you make the most of fall, we round up favorite Vermont events that are worth the drive.



AUG. 23–SEP. 1

Essex Junction

Champlain Valley Fair

Expect loads of classic fair fun with 4-H events, horse pulls, cooking contests, and the judging of everything from home-brewed beer to Christmas trees. champlainvalleyfair.org

AUG. 31–SEP. 1

Bennington

Garlic & Herb Festival

Gardeners and garlic lovers are invited to come chat with growers and enjoy garlic jelly, garlic ice cream, and other garlic-laced foods. lovegarlic.com

SEP. 1

Randolph

New World Festival

A tribute to the vitality of small-town Vermont and the Celtic/French-Canadian heritage of northern New England, this full-day event brings downtown Randolph alive with music, storytelling, and dance. newworldfestival.com



SEP. 6–8

Burlington

South End Art Hop

Visit the city's original arts district and discover thousands of works of art as well as outdoor sculpture,



*Garlic & Herb Festival,
Bennington*

performance art, workshops, kids' activities, and a fashion show. seaba.com

SEP. 12–15

Tunbridge

Tunbridge World's Fair

Founded in 1867, this heritage event includes harness racing, horse pulls, a swine show, and a classic carnival. tunbridgeworldsfair.com

SEP. 21

Shelburne

Harvest Festival

Grab the family and head to historic Shelburne Farms to revel in Vermont's forest, farm, and food traditions. Among the highlights are children's activities, entertainers on multiple stages, and traditional artisans sharing their skills. shelburnefarms.org

SEP. 21

Stowe

Stowe Foliage Art on Park

This downtown market is filled with the handiwork of

local artists, specialty foods, and fall beverages. Plus, amateur bakers are invited to try their hand at the Blue Ribbon Pie Baking Contest—yum! stowevibrancy.com

SEP. 28

Burke

Fall Foliage Festival

Autumn in a small town doesn't get any better than this: horse-drawn wagon rides, a parade, a petting zoo, crafts, music and food, and a tag sale—not

to mention a live raptor show presented by the bird experts at VINS. burkevermont.com

SEP. 29–OCT. 5

Northeast Kingdom

Fall Foliage Festival

Come for not one but seven festivals in seven days, each in a different town: Marshfield, Walden, Cabot, Plainfield, Peacham, Barnet, and Groton. From church suppers to parades and live music, the lineup changes but the appeal remains the same. nekchamber.com

OCT. 4–5

Weston

Weston Antiques Show

A benefit for historic-preservation projects in the heart of Weston, this long-running event at the Weston Playhouse draws dealers from across the nation to present Americana, silver,



Weston Antiques Show

furnishings, and other treasures. Note: A preview gala will be held Oct. 3; see website for details. westonantiquesshow.org

OCT. 4–6

Manchester

Fall Art & Craft Festival

At this annual kickoff to fall, the Riley Rink at Hunter Park plays host to more than 150 exhibitors selling everything from pottery and jewelry to gourmet food and spirits. craftproducers.com

OCT. 5

St. Johnsbury

Dog Party

Four-legged friends and their two-legged companions are invited to have a romping good time at Dog Mountain, with live music, food trucks, vendors, dog contests, door prizes, and more. dogmt.com

OCT. 5–6

Tunbridge

Vermont Sheep & Wool Festival

Small farms and natural fibers are the focus as more than 70 vendors offer fleece and yarn, fiber crafts, and other homespun wares. Plus: herding and shearing demos. vtsheepandwoolfest.com



OCT. 11–14

Stratton

Harvest Fest

Foliage views from the summit of southern Vermont's highest peak are just for starters. How about a chili cook-off, hayrides, live music, and a brewfest with craft ales, beers, and ciders too? stratton.com



OCT. 12–13

West Dover

Oktoberfest

German culture comes to a head at Mount Snow, where attractions include not only fine brews and food, but also a keg toss, oompah music, and a "Gulp and Gallop" 5K. mountsnow.com

OCT. 13

Dummerston

Apple Pie Festival

Head to the Dummerston Congregational Church for homemade apple pies (they bake at least 1,500 each year!), along with cheese, hand-cranked ice cream, and cider. dummerstonchurch.org

OCT. 17–20

Brattleboro

Brattleboro Literary Festival

Since 2002, this festival has been bringing big names to town—including winners of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award—for readings, panels, and other bookish events. brattleboroliteraryfestival.org

OCT. 17–27

Burlington

Vermont International Film Festival

Venues around the Queen City light up with the best independent feature films and shorts from around the world. Look for panel discussions, special events,



and a Vermont filmmakers' showcase. vtiff.org

OCT. 26

Wardsboro

Gilfeather Turnip Festival & Contest

At this townwide party, the state's official vegetable—the Gilfeather Turnip—is the guest of honor. Sample turnip treats, see would-be prize winners, and snag a turnip T-shirt to show your tuber pride. friendsofwardsborolibrary.org

OCT. 27

Woodstock

A Family Halloween

Billings Farm & Museum offers a treat for the kids (and kids at heart) with a day of delightful activities, from doughnuts-on-a-string and pumpkin carving, to costume parades and wagon rides. billingsfarm.org

Made in Vermont

King of the Hill

*To meet the man brewing the best beer in the world,
follow the crowds to Greensboro, Vermont.*



In the Northeast Kingdom town of Greensboro, Hill Farmstead Brewery sits on property that has been held by generations of the Hill family—and which now is largely conservation land.

BOB M. MONTGOMERY IMAGES/HILL FARMSTEAD BREWERY



Wednesdays are supposed to be the slow day at Hill Farmstead, the cult brewery in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, but on this steamy summer day there were already 50 cars when it opened at noon. Inside the taproom, the wait to fill growlers stretched an hour.

No one seemed to mind. Tunes thumped on the speaker system, beer flowed, and the room slowly filled with the roar of happy people drinking and anticipating. Many Hill Farmstead beers are available only at the brewery, and making the pilgrimage to Greensboro is on the life list of every beer geek.

Next door, in the brewery itself, founder Shaun Hill was leaning against the gleaming steel tank where the wort for a batch of Edward, one of his best-loved beers, was being siphoned from the spent grain husks. This actually *was* a slow day, he told me. Back in 2013, when he ran the brewery out of his garage and was fresh off his first crowning as Best Brewery in the World by the website RateBeer, he would look out the window of his farmhouse at 7 a.m. and see people who had arrived the night before, sleeping in their cars.

In 2015, as it became clear that the crowds were not going to stop, Hill opened this state-of-the-art brewery and taproom right next to the old farmhouse where he grew up, at 403 Hill Road, on land that's been in his family for eight generations. Hill Farmstead is now a thriving business with 19 employees in a corner of Vermont where jobs are like truffles, and it has won Best Brewery in the World the past five years in a row.

That's already way beyond anything Shaun Hill ever

expected to achieve. When he first conceived of the idea of a brewery, he said, it was just a means for him to be able to stay at 403 Hill Road and live a life of the mind, reading and writing. He thought he could count on selling one growler a week.

Then things got crazy.

Hill was always a soul-searcher. In high school his friends called him "Zen Master," and by the time he left to attend Haverford College on a full scholarship he was deeply interested in Buddhism. But Haverford was a culture shock to a poor-as-dirt kid from rural Vermont. "I remember this conversation with my freshman roommates," he said. "The son of the lawyer said he felt like if he could make \$400,000, he could be comfortable. The son of the doctor said he'd be OK with \$200,000. The son of the public works director came in at \$100,000. And little ol' Shaun said \$30K. I felt like if I could make that, I could live a good life."

Sure enough, a few years later Hill landed his first job as a brewer at the Shed, a popular Stowe brewpub. "I got paid \$33,000 and had everything I needed or wanted. I had creative freedom; I just had to keep the beer going."

His big break came in 2008, when he got a job at a brewery in Copenhagen. Unlike Germany and England, which were wedded to their traditional styles, the Danes were

"Most of my identity has been wrapped up in beer since I was 18 years old," says Shaun Hill, whose namesake brewery recently topped a field of 34,000-plus contenders to claim the title of world's best brewery (for the sixth time).



up for anything. Hill was hired because he was young and American and not afraid of big, bold experiments. The experience—along with the ensuing World Beer Cup medals he won—gave him the confidence to come home to Greensboro and launch Hill Farmstead in 2010.

Success was instant. Hill's beers were intense, delicious, creative, and impossible to get—the perfect formula for the beer craziness of the time. You had to haul your own empty bottles to a dirt road in the middle of nowhere, and people did.

But with that success came problems: Unbearable lines. Unhappy customers. Fired employees. People told Hill to take the pressure off by contracting with other breweries, a suggestion that still irritates him. *"This is Hill Farmstead. This is our farmhouse beer. How does that work if you don't have a farmhouse?"*

Instead, he borrowed a ton of cash and built the big brewery. With it came more employees and more responsibility for people's livelihoods, so Hill devoted himself to becoming a better leader. He hired an executive coach, read business books like *Small Giants* and *Zingerman's Guide to Good Leading*, taught himself to delegate and to empower others, and built a model small business. Financially, he's at Year 150 of his original business plan.

Hill's cutting-edge brewery is a far cry from his early days brewing 400 gallons a week in an unfinished garage.

Now, after all the years of striving to build a stable business and make the best beer, he's got time to take stock. And he still sees work

Now, after years of striving to build a stable business, Hill has time to take stock. And he still sees work to do.

to do. "Brewing allowed me to be obsessive and to have a deep, intense focus, and I thought those things would make me feel good," he said. "But all of the qualities that make me a great brewer—the ability to control an environment, to utilize the scientific method, to constantly engage in dialectic and experimentation—are the opposite of the things you need to be happy and to accept what is."

When I last visited Hill Farmstead, in late August, nobody had seen Hill. Despite a line of cars that crested the hill and disappeared down the other side, the place was running so smoothly that it hadn't even occurred to anyone that he was missing.

I finally found him next door, painting his farmhouse. He admitted that he loved the meditative nature of it, the instant gratification of making something better. The subtext, of course, was that Hill can suddenly afford to spend 80 hours painting his house. He'd put great people and great systems in place and it was all working. The brewery that he'd raised from birth was mature and successful and didn't need him so much anymore.

Hill said that after years of making company-focused lists of daily goals, he wanted to try something different. "What if I had a checklist in my pocket that was my three goals for the day: Make eye contact with every person I speak to, stand up straight with my heart exposed and vulnerable, and be patient and loving? And then I checked back with myself at the end of the day? That's the stuff I'm most interested in right now."

And with that, he squeezed the extra paint from his paintbrush, picked up his can, glanced one last time at the hordes of happy beer lovers, and disappeared behind the front door of 403 Hill Road.

—Rowan Jacobsen



CORREY HENDRICKSON

The Wheel Deal

Vermont has a state bird, a state flower, and a state mammal, but in terms of symbols it's hard to top the ubiquitous Subaru.



A 1996 Outback is shown earning its keep hauling a harvest of winter squash. "I'll bet we loaded at least 500 pounds," recalls its former owner, author Ben Hewitt, "but that's being real conservative."

PENNY HEWITT

I bought my first Subaru when I was still a teenager. It was a dun-colored 1977 GL wagon, and it cost me a whopping \$300, which I'd earned by serving as head broom-wielder on a small carpentry crew. This was in 1988 or thereabouts, before Subarus had spread to every corner of Vermont. Indeed, these days it is not uncommon to emerge from the supermarket and climb behind the wheel of someone else's same-colored Subaru wagon. (Yes, I've done this. Twice.)

I drove that '77 for about as long as one can reasonably expect to drive a \$300 car. Later, when I was an adult with a young family, I became the owner of a 1995 Legacy wagon that had spent most of its life in Rhode Island, where the roads are not bathed in salt on a regular basis and cars do not disappear before your eyes as rust consumes them. By my family's modest standards, this car was in exquisite condition (meaning we could not watch the road unfurl beneath us through a hole in the floorboard) and replete with all manner of luxury options (meaning it boasted a working heater and a cassette deck). Best yet, it had a mere 107,000 miles.

We loved that car. I'm not going to say it never failed us, because that would be a lie, but it was very, very good to us. We drove it for nearly five years. We filled it with building materials, piglets, lambs, more piglets, hay bales, and still more piglets.

When the '95 eventually succumbed to rust, I did what any Vermonter worth his patched woolen long johns would do: I parked it in the woods behind the house and immediately bought another 1995 Legacy wagon, allowing me to strip parts off the old car as they were needed on the new one. Over the span of a couple of years, I snagged the alternator, the heater core, both hatch struts, and the driver's-side mirror.

We've had a few other Subarus since then—a beater Forester, an early-2000s Outback, and something else I'm not quite remembering—and we are now driving the nicest of the lot, a 2005 Legacy wagon that my

wife's folks passed along to us when they quit driving a few years back. It's a very, very nice car, with more amenities than I'd even known existed. For instance, did you know that some cars these days have these little buttons between the seats, and that a few minutes after you push the button that correlates to your seat, your rear end gets hot? I know, I know: It sounds crazy, but it's true.

Grateful as I am for our current rig, if I'm to be perfectly honest I'm not nearly as fond of the newer Subarus as the older models. I miss the utilitarian simplicity of those old Legacys, and even more so that GL, with its crank windows, its AM/FM radio, and the little handle between the vinyl seats that you had to tug on to engage the four-wheel drive.

Of course, every modern automaker equips its cars with all manner of technological gewgaws; if it didn't, it'd be out of business in a heartbeat. A friend of mine just bought a spanking-new Chevy

pickup; included in the \$65,000 (!!!) price tag was an option for air-conditioned seats. When my friend commented to the salesman about the array of features in his new truck, the salesman grinned. "Buddy," he said, "this thing's one button away from wiping your butt." The interaction of vehicles and heinies seems to be the new frontier in automotive luxury.

We'll drive our current Subaru until the point we drive all of our cars, which is to say until the point it will drive no more. Hopefully, that'll be another year or two. But in the meantime I've got my eye out, because what I'm looking for is becoming rare. What I'm looking for is any Subaru made before 1997, when the head gasket-hungry 2.5-liter engine was introduced. It needs to be in running condition, relatively free of rust, and, ideally, fitted with a cassette deck so that I can expose my children to the collection of mid-'80s classic rock I'm perennially stubborn to part with.

And I'll even pay extra for crank windows and manually adjusted seats. —*Ben Hewitt*

We filled our '95 wagon with building materials, piglets, lambs, more piglets, hay bales, and still more piglets.

A Farmer's Best Friend

In tending to patients weighing half a ton, a country vet must practice patience and kindness—and that's just with the owners.



MARK FLEMING

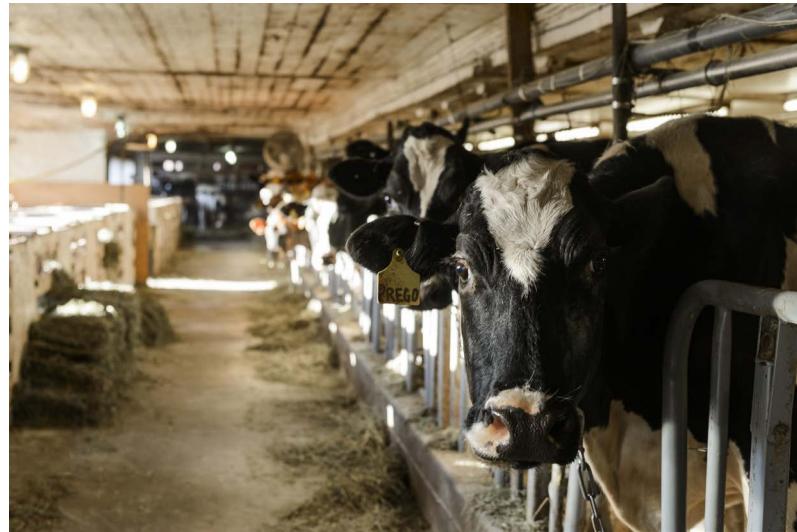
Farm vet Tom Stuwe gathers equipment from his rolling clinic, a Chevy Silverado filled with supplies and customized with a refrigerator, a heater, and hot and cold running water.

The morning was cold and damp, the colors of the central Vermont landscape a muted collage of grays, dull greens, and browns. The falling precipitation was either rain that was almost snow, or snow that was almost rain. An undecided day in an undecided season.

I rode in the passenger seat of a Chevrolet pickup truck piloted by Tom Stuwe, a large-animal veterinarian who has been driving these graveled roads for nearly 40 years, the back of his truck loaded with the tools of his trade: medications and lotions, scalpels and syringes, a portable x-ray machine.

Just before 8 a.m., we swung left and began to climb a steep, frost-rutted hill toward a dairy farm where a Jersey heifer labored futilely to deliver her first calf. After a few minutes, the farm came into view: low barn, listing sawdust shed, two New Holland tractors parked at odd angles in the barnyard.

Inside the barn, we found the heifer on her side, two small hooves protruding from beneath her tail. She'd been struggling for a couple of hours and was clearly exhausted. After we'd tried and failed to get her to stand,



the farmer—his name was Ben—unhitched her, and we dragged her into the aisle for better access.

Stuwe stretched out across the floor and slid an arm deep into the birth canal while Ben braced his boots against the heifer, trying to hold her in place. When the calf was positioned to Stuwe's satisfaction, he wrapped pulling chains around the protruding feet and he and Ben heaved. Once. Twice. Three times. On the fourth pull, the calf slid onto the barn floor.

LEFT: Stuwe had intended to become a small-animal vet until a chance encounter with Alf Wight—the British farm vet better known as James Herriot—inspired him to focus on large animals. **ABOVE:** Holsteins at a Tunbridge dairy farm await Stuwe's attentions.

I rode with Stuwe for five days over the course of three seasons, long enough to get a sense of the scope and rhythm of his work. I learned that being a country vet means spending a lot of time driving: Stuwe drives nearly 40,000 miles annually, pinballing across Vermont's back roads, which he knows intimately (not once did I see him use the GPS feature on his phone). I learned, too, that much of Stuwe's work is repetitive and not terribly exciting. For instance, during one visit he vaccinated 25 horses in a row, two straight hours of needle pricks. "Does it get monotonous? Yes, it does," he said. "But it gives me a chance to see animals I wouldn't otherwise see, and sometimes that lets me pick up on problems the owners haven't noticed."

Stuwe is tall and just slightly stoop-shouldered, and he speaks in a calm, deliberate manner that conveys competence—which might have something to do with the fact that he's accustomed to working with large animals, which he's done since 1978.



It should be said here that Stuwe is a Christian—not that this is unusual, but it seems clear to me that his faith serves as framework for guidance in a world that is often confounding in its unfairness. “Sometimes it feels like I fix these animals, and they live a little longer, and then they’re dead anyway,” he said. “Sometimes you know you’ve done everything right, and things go bad no matter what you’ve done.”

Stuwe also knows what I suspect every good veterinarian knows: The job is 10 percent animal and 90 percent human. This ratio is variable, of course: Farmers who rely on their stock for income generally need less hand-holding than, say, a family who keeps a couple of horses for weekend trail rides. But there is a human component to almost all of his calls, including one of the first I attended.

It was mid-April and raw. I’d arrived at Stuwe’s home at 6:45 that morning to find him already in action, arranging his day’s supplies on a workbench in his garage. After he stocked his truck, we set out for a small hill farm about 30 minutes to the south. There, we walked across a winter-brown pasture; a large dog trailed behind us, limping. The tumor in her back was plainly visible, at least the size of a softball. Still, she trotted along gamely.

“She’s putting on a good show for you,” the dog’s owner said. His name was Eric.

Stuwe nodded. “They often do that.”

We walked another dozen steps or so. Stuwe laid down his supplies and prepared the injection that would transition the dog into death. “I commend you for doing the right thing,” he said to Eric. There were tears in Eric’s eyes. He patted the dog softly as he cried.

I saw the syringe in Stuwe’s hand and turned away. It was quiet for a short period, then I heard Stuwe speak. “I’m so sorry for your loss,” he said.

We retraced our steps back across the pasture, stopping briefly at the truck before continuing across the road to a small livestock barn. It was just a few minutes after 8 a.m.; already Stuwe had euthanized a beloved pet suffering from untreatable cancer. Now it was time to remove the testicles from a year-old bull.

Thanks to the hands-free mobile phone in Stuwe’s truck, I was privy to both sides of the conversation during the many calls he received while driving. Often I was struck by the extent to which these calls veered from animal care and into more personal terrain.

Late one afternoon, Stuwe received a call from a dairy farmer inquiring about mastitis test results. But within

Stuwe preps for minor surgery on a mare in Marshfield who has injured her eyelid. As the number of dairy farms in Vermont has gone down, it's horses, rather than cows, that now make up most of Stuwe's large-animal visits.



minutes, the conversation had shifted. “We’re really tight on cash right now,” I heard the farmer say. “I’m scratching my head, saying, ‘How’s this gonna work out?’” Stuwe murmured in a sympathetic fashion. “We’re losing lines of credit,” the farmer continued. “I talked to the bank, and they’re saying we should still be OK, but I don’t know.” Stuwe murmured again.

“That man’s 50 years old, living in a mobile home with eight kids, and trying to borrow \$500,000 to buy a farm when milk’s at \$14,” Stuwe told me later (he was referring to the price of milk on the commodity market, which is priced per 100 pounds; generally speaking, it costs the farmer about \$17 to produce 100 pounds of milk). “He’s a hard worker, but I don’t know if that’ll be enough.”

Although the demand for large-animal veterinarians is declining as dairy farms disappear and new technologies reduce the need for in-person calls, the supply of large-animal vets seems to be declining even faster. Stuwe charges \$120 an hour for a call, which seems a pretty penny until one considers the many unpaid hours he spends driving each day, along with the approximately \$300,000 it costs to complete the required schooling. “There’s not much money in large animals anymore,” he said. “Everything’s changing so fast. I understand why no one wants to be a farm vet anymore.”

At 67, he says, “I already think about retirement all the time. I’m ready.” To this end, he recently took on a

partner, a 36-year-old woman named Emily Comstock, who’d grown up with horses and accompanied Stuwe on his rounds when she was just 12. “It’s not easy,” Stuwe said. “This is a male-dominated profession, and she’s got a lot of debt from school. But I think it’s going to work. I really do.”

Stuwe chats with a client at a Waitsfield farm before climbing back into his trusty Chevy and heading to his next appointment. In a year, he racks up about 40,000 miles in farm visits across Vermont.

Last call of the day. A dairy farm in central Vermont, a cow off her feed. We entered the barn through a barrage of cluster flies, into the sweet smell of silage and the warmth of all that bovine flesh. The cow was lying down, but she rose quickly when prodded—a good sign.

Stuwe donned a long rubber glove and ran his arm into the cow, extracted a handful of manure. Examined it. “This is an easy one,” he said, sounding pleased. Reticulitis is an injury to the reticulum, the first chamber in the alimentary canal of ruminant animals, here caused by small pebbles scraped from the ground with a loader full of feed. “This has a good ending,” he told the farmer, a 50-ish man named Frank. “She’s going to be just fine.”

We pulled out of the barnyard. Stuwe was grinning ever so slightly. “I like it when things end well,” he said. —*Ben Hewitt*

The Long Stretch

A closer look at the record-setting, odds-defying Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge.



The fourth time was the charm for one of New England's best-loved covered bridges.

In 1866, with the North having recently won the Civil War, a can-do spirit was running high on the Vermont–New Hampshire border. Although three previous bridges at the same location had been destroyed by floods (in 1796, 1824, and 1828), builders were undeterred and started construction anew. Their optimism was rewarded with the successful completion of the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge, which has straddled the Connecticut River between Windsor, Vermont, and Cornish, New Hampshire, ever since.

Built using a lattice truss system patented by Connecticut architect Ithiel Town, the Cornish-Windsor bridge cost about \$9,000, which translates to about \$145,000 today. From end to end it measures an impressive 449 feet, 5 inches—which once earned it the title of the longest covered bridge in the U.S. (a modern-built span in Ohio now claims the top spot), and which today still has it ranking as the longest two-span covered bridge in the world.

There was a bit of controversy at the very start, when the Cornish-Windsor bridge opened as a privately owned toll bridge. Windsor was a teetotaling town back

then, and Cornish was not. According to the *Boston Globe*, it was agreed that people crossing from Windsor to Cornish would pay two cents, but those coming the other way would have to pay three cents (presumably to dissuade Vermonters from ducking across to have a quick nip).

Today the bridge is owned by the state of New Hampshire, which purchased it in 1936 and operated it as a toll bridge until 1943. The span, which has remained essentially original in structure, was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

Though it has survived several major floods over the years, more recently the bridge has had to withstand a different kind of battering: careless or clueless drivers. Last July, for instance, a man who was blindly obeying his GPS device attempted to drive an oversize box truck through the bridge, causing thousands of dollars in damage. (It has since been repaired.)

For more than a century and a half, the Cornish-Windsor Covered Bridge has withstood the whims of Mother Nature—and with luck, human error will take no further toll. —*Joe Bills*

The Cornish-Windsor Bridge, whose lattice-truss design allows weight to be distributed more evenly across the span, is considered by engineers to be a major early step in the evolution of American wooden bridges.



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