



Trip Idea: Cultural Offerings in the “Birthplace of America”

New England’s culture is one that is vibrant and varied. Many traditions go back to the 17th and 18th centuries when Europeans first settled here and earlier. This itinerary provides a small sampling of the many cultural activities there are to do and see throughout six New England states.

Trip ideas and itineraries are meant as suggestions only. They are intended as ideas and to highlight all there is to see and do in New England.

Massachusetts

In Boston’s harbor, visitors can experience first-hand the Boston Tea Party and its role in the start of the American Revolution by visiting the Boston Tea Party Ship & Museum. This floating historical museum brings its guests back to the day of the event for a multi-sensory and interactive exhibit.

The Edward Gorey House in Yarmouth, near Cape Cod, is where the famed illustrator and author, Edward Gorey, once lived. It has now been turned into a museum dedicated to celebrating his work — odd and fantastical.

New Hampshire

Heading north from Cape Cod to New Hampshire, you can visit the Strawbery Banke Museum in Portsmouth. This outdoor living history museum has 40 restored buildings on more than 10 acres in one of the oldest neighborhoods in New Hampshire. Explore the gardens and interactive exhibits to learn about the early days of New England. The only active Shaker community is in Maine but the Enfield Shaker Museum, in Enfield, New Hampshire, shares the complex history of the Enfield Shaker Village — once home to three “families” of Shakers, a unique and progressive religious sect.

Maine

The ocean has always played a key role in the culture of Maine but there is far more to the Pine Tree State than just its delicious lobster and seafood. The Maine Maritime Museum in Bath provides a scenic campus to learn nearly everything about the state’s seafaring history. Be sure to check out the schedule for their lighthouse and nature boat cruises.

The sea has been artists’ inspiration for centuries and the Farnsworth Art Museum in Rockland celebrates American artists and their relationship to Maine. The Museum’s Wyeth Center houses a vast collection from all three Wyeths — NC, Andrew and James. Visitors can learn

about Maine's Native American culture, art and history while visiting the [Abbe Museum](#) in Bar Harbor, a museum dedicated to the Wabanaki People and the many millennia they have lived in Maine.

[Rhode Island](#)

Two hundred and fifty years of social, architectural and landscape history is on display at the [Newport Mansions](#) in Rhode Island through the Preservation Society of Newport County, which cares for 11 historic properties and landscapes, seven of which are National Historic Landmarks. These mansions are perfect examples from the Colonial, Victorian and Gilded Age — they are the extravagant summer homes of the nation's wealthiest families. In stark contrast, the nearby [Casey Farm](#) built in 1750 is a well-preserved working farm and museum that offers tours illustrating a simpler way of living.

[Connecticut](#)

Mystic Seaport is one of New England's most popular attractions. In this recreation of a 19th-century seaport community, you can watch craftspeople at work, go aboard the [Charles W. Morgan](#), the last remaining wooden whaling ship, and much more. The charming town of Essex is known for the [Griswold Inn](#), a 235-year-old tavern, and the informative [Connecticut River Museum](#) on the waterfront. Essex makes an excellent base for exploring the lively and historic communities at the mouth of the Connecticut River. Nearby is Old Lyme — this pretty village is the home of American Impressionism; find out more at the [Florence Griswold Museum](#).

[Vermont](#)

Vermont's culture is celebrated year-round as the seasons change. During spring, Vermont's sugarmakers produce more [pure, sweet maple syrup](#) than any other state, and many offer tours and tastings. Vermont is a skiing and snowboarding paradise; explore the [Vermont Ski and Snowboard Museum](#) to immerse yourself in mountain culture. The [African American Heritage Trail](#) spans the state and introduces travelers to Black Vermonters and their contributions throughout history. The hills come alive with not only music, but also local dairy, cheese, and craft beer at [Trapp Family Lodge](#), the home of the descendants the famed von Trapp family of Austria.

- Explore an eclectic and extensive collection of American folk art, as well as restored buildings, covered bridges, and a steamboat, at [Shelburne Museum](#).
- More than 100 [covered bridges](#) dot the Vermont landscape, connecting historic downtowns across picturesque rivers
- Vermont has more [craft breweries](#) per capita than any other state.