

Traveling with Jewish Taste[®]

Vermont

By Carol Goodman Kaufman



Joel and I love taking drives with no particular agenda, and we find wonderful surprises wherever we turn. One of our favorite places to do this is a straight drive north to Vermont.

Its name, the French for “green mountain,” couldn’t be a more accurate moniker.

One stop on a recent trip was the Vermont Historical Society in state capital Montpelier, where we learned about Vermont’s fascinating history – everything from Revolutionary War hero Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys to the development of the ski industry. Though Allen was a famous military, political, and commercial figure on the colonial scene there are no authenticated images of him painted from life.

Jews have had a presence in Vermont history from Colonial times, and have organized congregations and communities from the mid 1800s, though the state’s Jewish population has never been large.

Even today, only about 5,500 Jewish souls call the place home. In the later part of the nineteenth century, pogroms forced Russian Jews to seek freedom from the Czars.

A clandestine network helped Jews escape the massacres through Germany and flee to European and American havens. Among those who came to America, Russian Jews started Burlington’s Jewish community in the 1870s. They often worked as peddlers, and many built businesses in the area, as well as Vermont’s first synagogue.

Also in the 19th century, German Jews immigrated to the Poultney area, where many became peddlers.

While not nearly as remote as Alaska’s “Frozen Chosen,” many of Vermont’s Jews have relocated to this rural setting from New York and other urban areas, and now make their lives in a decidedly independent, pioneering way, from organic farming to kosher maple syrup processing.

However, Jews still want community – and life in Vermont today features Hadasah, Chabad, synagogues of every stripe scattered among the major population centers, and The Carolyn and Leonard Miller Center for Holocaust Studies at the University of Vermont which promotes, through publications and lectures, scholarship, education, and public awareness about the events that brought about, comprised, and continue to issue from the Holocaust; while the University offers a minor in Holocaust Studies.

Vermont is truly a state for every season. In winter skiers and snowboarders flocking to the snow-covered mountains can choose from twenty different ski areas.

But, you don’t have to be a downhill skier to enjoy Vermont in winter. Snowshoeing or cross-country skiing are other, more earthbound, pursuits.

Throughout the year, quaint country inns and B&Bs welcome guests. There’s nothing quite as welcoming as coming home to a roaring fire in a cozy inn after a day of winter sports.

Just as the winter is beginning to lose its icy grip on the state, maple sugaring season gears up.

When the weather zigzags between freezing and thawing, the sap begins to flow in the state’s sugar maples, and you can see buckets hanging from tapped trees along the roads.

It would be worth your time to go to a sugaring house to view the process of making maple syrup. You can choose from among small, traditional sugarhouses deep in the woods, to large, high-tech facilities.

The process will be the same, however. Boiling the sap evaporates the water and leaves the concentrated syrup. And, it takes a lot of sap to make the stuff we pour on our pancakes. It takes about thirteen gallons of sap to make one single



In Burlington, built in 1885, Ohavi Zedek Synagogue, which is now home to Congregation Ahavath Gerim, is the oldest synagogue in Vermont



From a traditional tree tap, a drop of maple sap – it takes about thirteen gallons of sap to make a quart of syrup



The towering Bennington Battle Monument provides a dramatic backdrop for a statue of Vermont hero Colonel Seth Warner



At work at ‘Bennington Potters’



Revolutionary War hero Ethan Allen, a portrait painted from written description rather than life

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Maple Apple Pie

Nothing says “Vermont” like an oven-warmed slice of apple pie, served with a thick slab of sharp cheddar cheese. This recipe incorporates three of Vermont’s most famous products: apples, maple syrup, and cheese. As an alternative, or as an additional decadent fourth, serve with a scoop of Ben & Jerry’s Smooth Vanilla ice cream. All the brand names included are certified kosher.



- Ingredients:**
- Double pie crust
 - 9 to 10 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and thinly sliced
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
 - 2 tablespoons flour
 - 3/4 to 1 cup maple syrup

- Directions:**
- Preheat oven to 425 degrees with the rack in the middle of oven.
 - Peel, core, and slice apples. Place them in a large mixing bowl. Add cinnamon and flour and stir to mix.
 - Arrange one quarter of the apple mix in the pie dish. Drizzle one quarter of the maple syrup over the apples.
 - Repeat this until all the apples are heaped in the dish.
 - Top off with the remaining maple syrup.
 - Place upper crust on top and pinch the two crusts together. Poke several vent holes in upper crust with a fork. Place pie dish on cookie sheet and place in oven.
 - Bake fifty minutes.
 - Halfway through the baking, cover the piecrust edges with foil to prevent burning.
 - Turn the oven off and leave the pie in for another forty-five to sixty minutes. Remove from oven and serve with Cabot sharp cheddar cheese and/or vanilla ice cream.

Please note: You are welcome to make your own crust, but I happen to be pastry-challenged. I also happen to think that “Oronoque Orchards” makes a very respectable frozen crust.

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quart of syrup.

At the sugaring house, or just about anyplace else in Vermont, you can purchase a bottle or two of syrup and maybe even a leaf-shaped maple sugar candy, my personal favorite. Another real Vermont treat is a maple syrup-drenched snow cone – made with real snow.

One summer day we drove up to Bennington and discovered the Bennington Battle Monument, towering 307 feet above the town. There, while looking out over the spectacular scenery of three states, we learned about the key Revolutionary War Battle of Bennington – which, on August 16, 1777, actually took place about ten miles away in Walloomsac, New York – during which British General John Burgoyne attempted to capture much-needed stores of food and weapons but was defeated by General John Stark, leading New Hampshire and Massachusetts militiamen, and Colonel Seth Warner, now the leader of Vermont's Green Mountain Boys.

That day we had a bit of added excitement when a huge electrical storm blew in suddenly, forcing us to evacuate before we had a chance to view the various artifacts on display. Drenched from running back to our car, we dried off while shopping at the famous Bennington Potters, and then had lunch at the Madison Brewery on Main Street.

This microbrewery offers a wide assortment of the most delicious vegetarian sandwiches I have ever tasted. I would drive back to Bennington just to dine there again. For the antique lover, Vermont is home to many dealers throughout the state. The



The Vermont Antiques Dealers Association Show: History reflected by a myriad of material culture



Her foot crushing Hitler's Mein Kampf, Norman Rockwell painted his famed "Rosie the Riveter" in Arlington, Vermont, in 1943



Snow sports are a staple in Vermont



"The Holocaust Personal Accounts," published by the Center for Holocaust Studies at The University of Vermont in 2001

highlight of the antiquing year is the annual Vermont Antiques Dealers Association Show in July. With over five dozen dealers displaying their wares, you will be sure to find something to buy, or at least to admire.

In the fall, magnificent foliage attracts leaf peepers from all over. While we in the Berkshires are no strangers to beautiful fall foliage, Vermont offers a magnificent display of autumnal colors on the steep mountains and in deep ravines that greet the traveler at every turn.

As if the scenery and sports weren't enough, Vermont also offers culture. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, artists and writers began to settle in Vermont, taking inspiration from the natural beauty surrounding them.

This group included itinerant portrait painters, engravers, and folk singers. Iconic illustrator Norman Rockwell, whom we Berkshires-ites consider one of our own, lived and worked in Arlington for over a decade before he moved his family to Stockbridge in 1953.

Today, you can find art galleries and festivals throughout the state. I highly recommend a visit to the Frog Hollow Vermont State Craft Center, in Burlington. This unique shop is a venue for the display and sale of art and crafts designed specifically by Vermont artists.

So, if you find yourself with a free day – or more – take a drive north to Vermont. No matter the season, you will find something to delight all your senses.

Carol Goodman Kaufman, an organizational psychologist and writer, is the author of Sins of Omission: The Jewish Community's Reaction to Domestic Violence (Westview Press, 2003). She serves on the National Board of Hadassah and chairs the Jewish Community Relations Council of Central Massachusetts. Kaufman divides her time between Worcester, West Stockbridge, and the world.

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Writing with directness about her anger, sadness, and confusion in hopes that others may avoid the many pitfalls she faced, Tierney notes, "I wish this story were fiction, but it is not, it's both a love story and an attempt to reach out to others who are living through – or who will live through – a similar tragedy."

Having penned eight books, Tierney is also a trainer, consultant, and lecturer in Communications and Management. In the United States she has been a school administrator; abroad she has taught at the University College Dublin, Ireland, and at the Center for University Studies of Galicia in Spain.

For further information concerning Tierney's program, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, Program Director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15.

Information regarding the "Older Adult Kosher Hot Meal Program" is available only by calling Cindy Bell-Deane, Director of Food Services, at (413) 442-2200.

Monthly PJ Pals Programs

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and The PJ Library invites toddlers and preschoolers, ages 2 to 4, their parents/caregivers, and siblings of all ages to join in first-Monday-of-each-month PJ Pals Programs.

Each one hour session highlights a different PJ Library book and features a variety of fun-filled art, movement, music, and cooking activities.

Sessions are free and led by Vivian Newman, a highly experienced Jewish early childhood educator and children's book author. No pre-registration is required.

All programs take place from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., at the Church On The Hill Chapel, 55 Main Street, Lenox – the small brown building between Lilac Park and the Lenox Academy. Participants are asked to please enter the building through the front door and proceed to the back parlor on the first floor.

Free parking is available along Main Street or any of the side streets.

The January 2 program is "Kindness to Kritters," an exploration of the Jewish value of kindness to animals, which will be accompanied by the reading and re-enactment of *Noah's Bark* by Stephen Krensky.

The February 6 offering is "Trees and Treats for Tu B'Shevat," a celebration of the Jewish holiday of Tu B'Shevat ("The New Year of the Trees") with a reading of *Apple Tree's Discovery* by Peninnah Schram and Rachayl Eckstein D. Davis.

The session will include the learning of new songs, participation in "tree-mendous" craft projects, and sampling of tasty fruit snacks.

For further information please contact Susan Frisch Lehrer, The PJ Library Coordinator, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires at (413) 442-4360, ext. 14 or jfb.volunteer@verizon.net.

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cumulative benefit.

Having completed a five-hundred hour course, Jane Rosen is a Certified Ageless Grace Educator who also teaches yoga and Nia classes in Pittsfield.

Rosen, a Black Belt Nia instructor and Professional Level Kripalu yoga teacher, is a retired elementary school teacher who teaches movement classes in her home studio in Pittsfield, at Williams College in Williamstown, and at Congregation Knesset Israel in Pittsfield.

She also offers yoga classes in schools throughout Berkshire County for children and teachers through the "Yoga Goes to School Program" supported by the Kripalu Yoga Center.

For further information concerning Rosen's 'Ageless Grace' series, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, Program Director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15.

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