

Berkshires



union
side
leav-
agel, a
l.

Bar

SPICE

297 North St., Pittsfield, 413-443-1234, spice-restaurant.com

Pittsfield, once derided as the underarm of the Berkshires, has made a turnaround in recent years, thanks in part to its revitalized North Street. The hippest on the block is the much-hyped contemporary American eatery Spice. The place is at its liveliest after the dinner rush, when the band packs up and an energetic young crowd assembles in the roomy backlit bar for sipping and mingling.

Breakfast

MARTIN'S

49 Railroad St., Great Barrington, 413-528-5455

The Martin's formula—cozy atmosphere plus simple, delicious food—lures regulars out of bed to feast on crisp veggie omelets, buttery-rich French toast, and grilled muffin specials (the oatmeal cinnamon is stellar). Paper mats and crayons top the wooden tables, and the waitstaff often plucks up the best drawings and tacks them to the diner's bulletin boards. Despite repeated attempts, we've never made the wall, but we'll happily continue to get full trying.

Day Spa

SEVEN SALON SPA

7 South St., Stockbridge, 413-298-0117, sevensalonspa.com

Just off the road that Norman Rockwell called home, year-old Seven presents itself as an unassuming yellow house that turns

out to be far from ordinary inside. On the ground level, where wood floors glow under recessed lighting, the stylists buzz around hair and manicure stations stocked with Panga Organics and other all-natural products; pedicures take place on suede benches raised above deep tiled tubs. Upstairs, among a handful of spacious treatment rooms, Alex Vinogradov—a former go-to masseur for Kirov ballerinas—works knotted muscles back into shape.

Ice Cream

SOCO CREAMERY

26 Housatonic St., Lenox, 413-637-9192, sococreamery.com

Despite its metropolitan moniker, this year-round treat shop brims with local flavor. The homemade ice cream is churned out in myriad varieties, including velvety black raspberry, cake batter, and mint chocolate chip; this year the creamery also debuted zesty gelato in hazelnut, tiramisu, and amaretto. And because it stays open until midnight during the summer, you can drop in for a cone after dinner, then come back for a fresh-baked brownie, cookie, or pie to enjoy as a bedtime snack.

Lunch

GREAT BARRINGTON BAGEL COMPANY

777 Main St., Great Barrington, 413-528-9055

The best bagels north of New York come in a dozen flavors at Marvin and Judy Lieberman's indoor-outdoor bagelry. There

are also 17 spreads made in-house—including not just staples like light cream cheese but also more-exotic options like light chicken liver—to go with. But the GBBC's star shines brightest at lunch, when fresh daily soups, leafy salads, and two-handed sandwiches like

Restaurant, French

BLANTYRE

16 Blantyre Rd., Lenox, 413-637-3556, blantyre.com

It's easy to forget, in our world of PDAs and ADD, that drawn-out dining can be a thing of delight. Everything at this hotel restaurant, from its jacket-and-tie requirement and exacting service down to its immaculate china and crystal settings, speaks to a serious attention to detail. The Gallic-inspired

BERKSHIRES, CONTINUED ON PAGE 253

HOTEL | THE PORCHES INN



Fleeing the city seems an idyllic notion, until you find yourself bunking down among doily-strewn antiques and overpowering potpourri at a B&B advertising bucolic "charm." A rare exception is the Porches Inn, set in a row of renovated multi-colored Victorians in North Adams. Its 50-odd rooms are done up in modern décor and feature high-speed Internet and smart service. Out back are a pool and sauna; out front, the stylish Mass MoCA complex. Those still craving a little counterculture can kick back in one of the dozens of rocking chairs that sit on the inn's verandas.

231 River St., North Adams, 413-664-0400, porches.com