



Welcome to Connecticut, Andy and Erica!



Since you're new here, we asked CT Mirror members to share some places in the state they love to visit, eat and explore.

Here's what they say should be on your
Connecticut Bucket List...



“You'll hear all about the specific things, such as the Podunk Bluegrass Festival, the Festival of Arts and Ideas, the New Britain Museum of American Art — all wonderful. But I want to recommend that you **simply wander — "shunpike" — around the state in your car.** Explore every corner on the back, back roads. Go to the little town historical societies, the bakeries and cheesemakers, the antique stores, the maple syrup makers, the country fairs. Try the wine, art, beer, and other "trails." Follow the little signs to the tractor museum or the grotto shrine. Download farm, maple, and fair lists and maps at the CT Dept. of Agriculture, and ctagfairs.org. Most of all, get a paper map that shows the scenic "blue roads," and just drive!”

Personal note: *“Welcome to Connecticut! We Mirror readers are happy that you are here. This is such a wonderful state, and I hope that you fall in love with it as I did.”*

- Llyn Kaimowitz, West Hartford resident



“Explore Connecticut - we have 169 cities and towns. If you run, there’s a group called the **Run 169 Towns Society** who run races in every single town. Connecticut’s state parks are wonderful places to explore - DEEP has a **“Sky’s The Limit” hiking challenge**. There’s an **ice cream trail, winery trail**, and I think a **new beer trail**. We have great sports teams. **Dunkin’ Donuts Park** in Hartford is the best minor league ballpark.

Newington, CT has the **smallest natural waterfall in the USA** at Mill Pond Park. **Rooster Company** on Main Street in Newington has great chicken. **Goldburgers** (also Main St, Newington) has excellent burgers. If you like fireworks, our town’s **Extravaganza** in mid-July is great.”

Personal note: *“WELCOME TO CONNECTICUT - I look forward to reading what you report on. Andy, if you’re looking for topics to investigate, I have a few ideas :) Erica, I hope that CT is truly about to launch the comeback we need & deserve.”*

- Kathy Flaherty, CT Legal Rights Project



“North of Route 80 on Route 77 is an idyllic area of farmland. **Truck farms** offer fresh-picked vegetables. There's **Lake Quonnipaug** and beach in the summertime. At **Lakeside Farm Stand**, there's a farm shop with local meats and vegetables - ice cream, too. A few alpacas on hand. **The Little Store** just north of Route 80 is much more than "little." Fun place for neighbors to gather and catering. A beautiful drive all the way up to Durham.”

- Ellen Creane, Guilford resident



“Kayaking around the **Thimble Islands** and visiting **Outer Island** (Branford). Hiking in the **Timberland Preserve** in Guilford.”

Personal note: *“Welcome to the Nutmeg State.”*

- **Kenny Foscue, Department of Public Health**



“Eat at **Jimmy's of Savin Rock** in West Haven and stroll along the **beach on the boardwalk.**”

- **Linda Greenhouse, NYT/Yale University**



“Far and away the best culinary experience is **Arethusa Farm Dairy**, best ice cream in the state and arguably in the world. I just got back from Paris and could barely stand their pathetic excuse for ice cream. Doesn't matter what flavor, but strawberry, choc chocolate chunk and raspberry are my favorites. Their **Tavolo restaurant in Bantam, CT** is in the running for best restaurant in the state, but hard to get a reservation.

Finally, the **hiking and nature walking in the Northwest corner** is spectacular!”

Personal note: *“Welcome aboard to a great team.”*

- A. Douglas Stone, Yale University



“Places to eat - **Flanders Fish Market** in East Lyme Flanders area. My wife and I especially like their Lobster Alfredo over penne pasta. Other favorite places are **Filomena's** on Boston Post Road in Waterford, any of the **Shack Restaurants** (East Lyme, Waterford, Groton).

Places to visit - **Fort Trumbull Museum** in New London - a hidden gem. The **Submarine Force Library and Museum** including USS NAUTILUS, world's first Nuclear Submarine - Just outside the entrance to the Submarine Base in Groton. **Harkness Park and Mansion** in Waterford; **Avery Point** in Groton. Take the **Thames River Boat trip** off of the New London Waterfront.”

Personal note: *“Welcome to Connecticut. We are a small diverse State. I always tell persons settling in SE CT - “If you like large cities we are less than two hours from Boston or New York; if you like medium sized cities, we are less than an hour from Providence, RI, Hartford and New Haven; If you like small cities we have the booming metropolises of New London, Groton, and Norwich; and if you like the country, just drive for five minutes.” I am looking forward to your fresh look at the “Land of Steady Habits.” You will find the varying forms of government in the 169 municipalities confusing and fascinating.”*

- **John W. “Bill” Sheehan, Waterford resident**



“Hiking: **Case Mountain**, Manchester, Connecticut. You can look back at Hartford! Cheeseburgers and ice cream: **Shady Glen**, Manchester, Connecticut.”

Personal note: “Welcome to Connecticut! You can see a Caravaggio at the Wadsworth, beautiful parks and woodlands, interesting geological formations, and there is a LOT of good food. Go to the shoreline for a lobster roll if that’s your thing! Just don’t ask about affordable housing or restrictive zoning. Hope you have a lot of fun! Thank you for joining us. The truth matters.”

- Cynthia Barlow, public defender



“If you like hiking, the **Rail Trails** throughout the state are excellent. We usually hike on the **Airline Trail** from downtown East Hampton, CT.”

Personal note: “Welcome to Connecticut. Good and accurate journalism is very important to our democracy.”

- Mary Brown, adult education teacher



- **Sherwood Island State Park**, Westport
- **Rocky Neck State Park**, Old Lyme
- **Mianus River Park**, Stamford
- **Bartlett Arboretum**, Stamford
- **Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art**, Ridgefield
- **INI Sips Coffee and Tea**, New Britain

Personal note: *“Welcome to CT! I look forward to reading your great work.”*

- **Catherine Bradley, Ridgefield resident**



“Here are a zillion ideas -- brought to you by the Facebook Group,
Connecticut Wonderful:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1353036221412641>

Hosted by Eric Hahn, it has been the source of info for many folks new to CT, offered by many of us who participate in the group.”

Personal note: *“Welcome to CT! You're joining a great organization.”*

- Julie Vecchitto, Harwinton resident



“Going to plays at **TheaterWorks** in Hartford. Yoga at **Fuller Yoga** in Glastonbury. Bike riding on different bike trails in CT. Getting ice cream at **Robb's Farm** in Glastonbury. Summer corn from farm stands in CT. Christmas Day walk at **Hammonasset Beach** in Madison. **Greater Hartford Jazz Festival** in Hartford. Buying cheese at **Cato Corner Farm** in Colchester. Breakfast at **Ken's** in Glastonbury. Lunch at **Seed Bagel** in Glastonbury. Dinner at **Salute** in Hartford.”

Personal note: *“Welcome to CT. I hope you enjoy living and working here.”*

- Anne Bowman, Glastonbury resident



“**Hammonasset State Park, Lenny & Joe Fish Tale** restaurant and **RJ Julia Bookstore** in Madison. **Mystic Seaport. Long Wharf and Yale Rep theatres** in New Haven, as well as many good restaurants.”

Personal note: *“Welcome Erica and Andy to CT. The pandemic has shaken up the state in what may turn out to be good ways.”*

- **Maureen Lopes, Madison resident**



“I love volunteering for the **Art League of New Britain** and participating in the many exhibitions held in our 1870's 2 story carriage house. www.alnb.org. Also - I love visiting **Hammonasset State Park** and walking the trails at **Meig's Point** there. You can see some of my paintings of Meig's Point at www.kcsmitsgallery.com. The **New Britain Museum of American Art** is a world class museum that is a must see. And you can walk around **Walnut Hill Park** designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, just outside the doors.”

Personal note: *“Welcome to Connecticut! It's a good place to live, lots to see and do.”*

- Kathleen Curran Smits, artist



“**Collinsville Farmers Market** on Sundays and especially coffee/lunch at **Lasalle Market** next to it after **walking along the Farmington River**. But the very best time to go to Collinsville is when they have regularly scheduled events on Main Street with music and booths. In the fall, they are known for huge town-wide **Halloween party / parade**. Collinsville is a "must visit".

Hiking the uncrowded and more remote trails in CT is my favorite — but I am not saying where!

New Britain Museum of Art has an incredibly eclectic collection and has frequent special exhibits. A great, lesser-known museum experience rivaling anything in the state (and they do weekly happy hours and music on the patio!)”

Personal note: *“Can't wait to see what you write about!”*

- **Lori Brown, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters**



“Paddle the many bays, tributaries and estuaries of the **lower Connecticut River** and the **shore of Long Island.**”

- **Bill Neale, Westbrook resident**



“**West Hartford Center** — **A'Vert** and **Zohara** both serve fantastic food. And A'Vert's happy hour is quieter than most in the Center and they offer very good wines and small plates as well as cocktails.”

Personal note: “*Welcome to CT. We are the Land of Steady Habits, but that's not all bad!* 😊”

- **Sandra Morgan, University of Hartford**



“Visit **Mystic, CT** — especially **Sift Bakery** and **Young Bun Donuts!**”

Personal note: *“Welcome to CT — enjoy the great cities and small-town charm, too. Get out and explore.”*

- Marie Ann Smith, Tolland resident



- **Mark Twain House**
- **Harriet Beecher Stowe House**
- **CT Science Center**
- **Mystic Seaport**
- **Salute Restaurant**

Personal note: *"Welcome aboard!"*

- Kathy Kopacz, special education paraprofessional



- **Wadsworth Atheneum** - Hartford
- **Smokin' with Chris** - Southington (Southington has a million great restaurants!)
- **Flanders Nature Center** - Woodbury
- **For plants:** Natureworks (Northford), Broken Arrow (Hamden), Earth Tones (Woodbury)
- **Gillette Castle** - East Haddam
- **Farmington River Canal biking trail** (Granby to New Haven, with a small gap in Plainville/Southington)
- **Elizabeth Park** - Hartford/West Hartford
- **Castle Craig** - Meriden

Personal note: *“To Erica: A Big Bi-Co welcome from members of the BMC class of 2003 and the HC class of 2003!”*

- **Erica Roggeveen Byrne, CT Senate Democrats**



- **Branford Folk Music Society**, Branford
- **The Sounding Board** folk coffeehouse, West Hartford
- **Irish-American Home Society**, Glastonbury
- **Lapsley Orchards**, Pomfret
- **Salem Creamery**, Salem
- **Farmington River Canoe Rental**, New Hartford & Collinsville
- **Willimantic Brew Pub** (in old bank bldg), Willimantic
- **Flanders Fish Market**, East Lyme
- **Old Orchard Farm** Sunday bluegrass, East Lyme (Scott Rd)
- **Litchfield Jazz Festival**, Goshen
- **Arethusa Cafe**, Bantam & West Hartford
- **Pasticheria d'Italia**, Bloomfield
- **Elizabeth Park**, Hartford/W Hfd
- **Keney Park** (Pond House), Hartford
- **Peoples Forest State Park**, New Hartford
- **White Memorial Foundation**, Litchfield
- **Sharon Audubon Society**, Sharon
- **Mohawk Mountain** (views from car), Cornwall
- **Kent Falls State Park**, Kent
- **Inn at Lake Waramaug**, Preston
- **Metacomet Trail to Heublein Tower**, Simsbury/Bloomfield
- **Lost Acres Winery** & food, North Granby

Personal note: *“CT is small but varied! I haven't even begun to list the events in greater Hartford, where we live. Welcome!”*

- Ed Savage, Bloomfield resident



“**Riverfront Park**, riding a **bicycle from East Hartford to South Windsor** through Main Street. Eating at both high-scale restaurants and local foods, e.g. **El Mercado** on Park Street.”

Personal note: *“Welcome to Connecticut and the Greater Hartford area where you will be able to connect with so many community assets and hidden gems the area offers.”*

- **Estela Lopez, State Board of Education**



“I’m a co-founder of a group that runs races in all 169 towns. If you run, walk, or hike, you can join our group called **Run 169 Towns Society**. We have over 3,000 members, and our goal is to visit and run an official race in all 169 towns. After each race, our members then visit local restaurants or coffee shops. It is free to join our group. There are too many places to see and hike. We hike the **highest point in the state Bear Mountain** once in a while. For more information, please visit our page. www.run169towns.org”

- Adam Osmond, State Department of Housing



“**Trout Brook Valley** hiking; **art museum** in New Britain; **Montgomery Pinetum** in Cos Cob; **White Flower Farm** and **Arethusa Farm** in Litchfield; lunch at **Mayflower Inn** in Washington, CT; visit **Essex.**”

Personal note: “*Welcome to CT!*”

- **Luisa Francoeur, Westport resident**



- **Dinosaur State Park** (Rocky Hill)
- **Hammonasset State Park** (Madison)
- **Cockaponset State Forest** (Deep River)
- **Elizabeth Park** (Hartford)
- **Lake Waramaug State Park** (New Preston)
- **UCONN Puppet Theater** (Storrs)
- **TheaterWorks** (Hartford)
- **Hartford Stage** (Hartford)
- **Lime Restaurant** (Norwalk)
- **Bombay Olive Restaurant** (West Hartford)
- **Food & Books bookstore/restaurant** (Union)
- **Whitlock's Book Store** (Bethany)

Personal note: *“Welcome and happy roadtripping in CT.”*

- **Juliet Meyer, Hartford resident**



“Favorite places to eat - Jamaican food downtown Hartford: **The Russell, Dunn's River Restaurant, Benjie's**, etc.

Things to do - **drive-in movie** in Mansfield, **hike in Bloomfield/Simsbury** line, enjoy **Middletown** downtown, I love **Keney Park** but Hartford/the state do not love it enough to take care of it the way other states take care of parks. **Elizabeth Park** is gorgeous, of course, with plenty of seating and green space.”

- **Renae James, Bloomfield resident**



“**Haddam Neck Fair** - the size of a postage stamp but still awesome; held Labor Day weekend in Haddam (by the) Neck, CT.

Modern Pizza, New Haven - damned good pizza.

Hike/walk in the woods - LOTS of great places, such as **Goodwin State Forest**, Hampton; **Salmon River/Day Pond**, Colchester; **Mount Higby**, Meriden; **Chatfield Hollow**, Killingworth... and many, many more.

Chester/Hadlyme ferry and **Gillette's Castle**, East Haddam

Apple picking - **Lyman's Orchard**, Middlefield; **Dondero's**, South Glastonbury.”

Personal note: *“Welcome to CT, Erica and Andy! We're happy that you have chosen to join us in this small, complicated, endearing place we call home. A few tips:*

- Counties only matter for jury duty. Otherwise it's 169 separate towns, for better and for worse.*
- There is an unwritten rule that one must either lean toward New York or Boston, but not both.*
- Give it a few decades and you, too, will be able to call yourself a Nutmegger! (Joking on this last one... mostly ;)*

Wishing you many happy, healthy years with us!”

- Deb Battit, Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut



“Kayaking or rafting down the **Housatonic River** (with Clarke Outdoors, West Cromwell); exploring **Litchfield County** in general; boating around the **Thimble Islands** in Branford; visiting the **Yale Center for British Art** in New Haven, along with other great Yale attractions (**Sterling Library, Beineke**, etc.); theater and concerts at Yale; **Sally's Pizza** in New Haven; **"The Place"** outdoor seafood in Guilford; **Bloodroot Vegetarian Restaurant and Bookstore** in Bridgeport; shows and concerts at the **Fairfield Theater Co** in Fairfield; **Pho Nha Trang** - great Vietnamese food on the Fairfield/Bridgeport border; **Layla's** in Stamford, Westport, or Fairfield for really excellent middle-eastern food; **Two Roads Brewery** for great beer and a fun night out; **Union League** in New Haven for a special dining night out (v. expensive!).”

Personal note: *“Welcome to lil ole Connecticut. It may be small (and a little expensive in places) but there's a lot to see and do and it's a great launch pad for day/weekend trips to NYC, Boston, Vermont, NH, and Maine. Enjoy!”*

- John Warburg, venture capitalist



“Connecticut cities and towns have excellent **public libraries**, and you can use your library card at any of them.”

- Christie Fountain, Stamford resident



“Go to the **Stony Creek Brewery** in Branford.”

- Mary Waldron, Greenwich resident



1. **Sunset at the parking lot**, Stonington Boro past the lighthouse
2. **Walk to Bluff Point for a swim**, Groton
3. **Jonathan Edwards Winery**, North Stonington
4. **Press On sandwich shoppe**, North Stonington, Rt 2 near the post office
5. **Pequot Seapos Nature Center guided walk**, Mystic, Stonington
6. **River Road across the river from Mystic Seaport**, Mystic, Groton
7. **Gungywamp, an archaeological site**, Groton (ask Pequot Seapos when they tour)
8. **Griswold Inn Thanksgiving dinner**, Essex
9. **Mouth of the Connecticut River**, Old Saybrook
10. **Eagle tour (boat)**, Connecticut River (one of the most beautiful rivers in the world)
11. **Ferry (the slow one)** ride to Fishers Island from New London
12. **Mystic Seaport** (at least once)
13. **Tour of Ledge Light at the mouth of the Thames River** (ask at the Custom House, New London or at Avery Point campus, Groton)
14. **Harkness State Park**, tour of house and gardens
15. **Fort Griswold and Monument**, Groton
16. **Florence Griswold Art Museum and grounds**, Old Lyme
17. **Northwest corner of Connecticut**, Cornwall, waterfalls
18. **Historic Main Street**, Glastonbury
19. **Historic Norwichtown and cemetery** including the small French cemetery, Revolutionary War, Norwich
20. **Amistad auto tour**
21. **Nautilus** 1st atomic submarine, Groton (I include this because my father was on the design team and my grandfather worked on the drafting. It's different than all the other places to visit.)
22. **The WPA murals** in the New London Post Office
23. **Garde Theatre** (go early and admire the restoration work), New London
24. **Courthouse Square**, Norwich
25. **Museum at Norwich Free Academy**, Norwich
26. **Noank** for lobster...not Abbots
27. **Farmington River tubing**
28. **Carousel**, the park at the Capitol, Hartford
29. **LWV tour of the Capitol Bldg**, Hartford
30. I left out about 100 more, but I have to get back to work.

Personal note: *"Our state has a lot to offer and a lot of tax money to take away."*

- Chris Chrissos, North Stonington resident