

VIRTUOSO

THE MAGAZINE

Scene Setters

Where we want to eat now.





Nordic Model

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIS POINT TO WINTER'S QUIETER WONDERS. **BY JEN ROSE SMITH**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY OLIVER PARINI

WHEN THERE'S fresh snow to hush the woods, a pair of cross-country skis barely whisper underfoot. Tracing a newly groomed ski trail across Vermont's Twin Farms resort, I could hear chickadees in the treetops and maples creaking with cold. Nearby, an old apple orchard bowed under a sheath of ice. To my left and right, smaller trails disappeared into a latticework of frozen branches, but the crisp map in my pocket pointed the way to Post Road Camp, where I'd soon find a small fire blazing at the mouth of a canvas tent. A hearty picnic waited inside with wine the color of winter sunshine, a feast to banish any afternoon chill.

Not that I was cold in particular. Nordic skiing warms from within, even while earning skiers entrance to the privileged locales where birdsong passes for background noise. No whirring ski lifts, no crowds. On my skinny skis I've entered craggy New Hampshire

valleys and climbed to alpine huts high in California's Sierra Nevada. It was that endless search for pristine trails – plus a craving for après-ski pampering – that inspired a weekend getaway at Twin Farms, where nine miles of private tracks weave across a 300-plus-acre Green Mountains estate once owned by the novelist Sinclair Lewis.

New England forests reward slow exploration. In the winter, active guests crisscross Twin Farms on skis, snowshoes, and a fleet of snow-ready “fat-bikes.” Yet I'd arrived at the same time as a cold front that brought to mind all manner of ways to stay indoors instead. At the eighteenth-century, art-filled Main House, frost crept up old-fashioned windowpanes. Wool-clad guests lingered over backgammon in the cozy games room. I sipped Champagne fire-side and turned a poached, steamy pink during private soaking sessions at the glass-enclosed Japanese *ofuro* tub hidden away in the property's woods.



Snow-dusted days at Vermont's Twin Farms.



Discover the best of the West with Princess®

Get a taste of sunny beaches, vibrant fiestas and rich flavors in Mexico. And savor wine tasting, fresh cuisine and world-class attractions on the California Coast. Enjoy the best the West Coast has to offer when you sail with Princess.



VIRTUOSO.
PREFERRED

Please contact your Virtuoso Advisor for details.

Winter winnows New England's wooded landscape into austere, nearly architectural grace; trees stripped to silhouettes reached at the darkling sky.

But like the Scandinavians whose ancestors invented cross-country skiing a few thousand years ago, I'm convinced crisp air is a key to winter contentment. Nordic people remain passionate skiers, and in Norway the term *friluftsliv* – fresh-air living – captures a local devotion to enjoying nature no matter the forecast. Surely they're onto something – the region regularly tops lists of the happiest places on earth. When I'm there, I've rarely regretted an inclination to bundle up and follow the residents' ruddy-cheeked lead.

So on my final evening on the mountain estate, I traded fireside comforts for a twilight ski, climbing slowly through forest filtering views of distant ridges. The trail map, now creased, led to a height of land where a diminutive lift-operator's shack is the sole trace of a long-ago rope tow. Winter winnows New England's wooded landscape into austere, nearly architectural grace; trees stripped to silhouettes reached at the darkling sky. Standing just outside the lift shack, I watched an evening star blink on above a nearby mountain. Fairy lights within illuminated wine and canapés carefully laid across a table for two – one last reward for venturing out in the snow.



Skinny-Ski Destinations

VERMONT Ten freestanding cottages at **Twin Farms** ensure absolute privacy on the sprawling estate, where there's also a four-suite farmhouse and a two-suite lodge. Find four additional spacious rooms in the art- and antiques-decked Main House, a convivial gathering place from morning coffee to cocktail hour. Winter activities go beyond the trails: Dabble in ice skating, curling, and sledding between warming trips to the fire or *ofuro*. Exemplary dining, including at the reimagined stand-alone spot *Twiggs*, features sommelier-paired wines, leisurely meals, and ingredients from Vermont's artisans and organic farms. *Doubles from \$2,550, including all meals, beverages, and activities, and a farm-to-table gift set.*

ALASKA Glide through birch and spruce forest on 100 miles of groomed cross-country ski trails at the all-inclusive, six-room **Winterlake Lodge** on the Alaska Range's western edge. Watch the aurora borealis blaze above the snow on a night ski through the rolling 15-acre property, arriving at a lakeside bonfire with live music and warm drinks. Track lynx, wolf, and fox on the valley floor, or hop the lodge's helicopter to a nearby mountain ridge to Nordic-ski untracked snow with sweeping views across the surrounding mountains. *Three-night stays from \$5,800 per person, including all meals and house wine and beer, some activities, a 50-minute massage for two, and a \$100 gift shop credit.*



Seasonal sweet spots, indoors and out, at Twin Farms.

NORWAY Combine Nordic skiing with urban energy in Oslo, where 1,600 miles of groomed cross-country ski trails wind through evergreen forest within and just beyond the city limits. Locals hop the über-efficient metro right to trailheads, gliding between cabins beloved for their cakes and crispy waffles. Find views of Oslo Fjord from the top floor of the 151-room **Hotel Continental Oslo**, a stroll away from the new-in-2022 National Museum, the largest such institution in the Nordic countries and home to Norway's biggest collection of art. Or stay in for drinks or a meal at the hotel's art nouveau-inspired Theatercaféen. *Doubles from \$409, including breakfast daily and a \$100 dining credit.* 📍

THE BARCELONA COLLECTION



A gastronomic offer cooked over a low heat by world-renowned chefs, bringing together 29 Michelin stars.

A wide range of culinary experiences which includes show cooking, gastronomic tours of local markets, wine and food pairings, and glamping in the vineyards.

Discover the haute cuisine revolution with a new generation of chefs with personal and unique restaurant projects in the city who carry on the DNA of Catalan cuisine.

Taste it at
[visitbarcelona.com](https://www.visitbarcelona.com)

Barcelona Premium, unparalleled experiences await in Barcelona

[barcelonapremium.com](https://www.barcelonapremium.com)