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OLD WORLD CHARM
The 101-year-old Mayflower Grace hotel sits on 58 acres of gardens and woodlands.

HISTORIC HIDEAWAYS

City slickers are escaping to these iconic winter retreats—all less than five hours from NYC—offering luxury treatments and exquisite dining experiences. —CD

The Mayflower Grace

Nestled in the remarkable Litchfield Hills, this 101-year-old oasis (that's also a Relais & Châteaux property) is engulfed by 58 acres of pristine gardens and woodlands. Highlights at the 30-room hotel include the 20,000-square-foot spa house, where guests can unwind after snowshoeing or cross-country skiing; The Mayflower Grille, serving classic New England dishes with fresh local ingredients; and the Tap Room, a casual spot that has live piano music on Saturday nights. 118 Woodbury Road, Washington, Conn., gracehotels.com

The Sagamore This enormous estate, first opened in 1883, completely encompasses Lake George's Green Island. The Victorian hotel has private luxury suites, condominiums and even a 12-guest home rental. There are luxurious spa and salon services, but food lovers

will revel in the resort's eight unique dining venues, with themes ranging from Old World Italian to a modern steakhouse to an Irish-style pub. New to the property this season is The Glacier Ice Bar & Lounge (open on the weekends of Jan. 22 and Jan. 29), an outdoor venue made of 18,000 pounds of frozen water, where you can sip a creative cocktail in glassware made of solid ice. 110 Sagamore Road, Bolton Landing, N.Y., thesagamore.com

Twin Farms Author Sinclair Lewis and journalist Dorothy Thompson bought this 300-acre property for \$10,000 in 1928, and political and literary figures have stomped these grounds ever since. Winter activities include ice-skating on the pond, sledding and bonfires, but the property's real gem is the high-end wine cellar, which houses a whopping 20,000 bottles. Bonus: Food, wine and spirits are part of an all-inclusive,

per-night rate, so wine tastings and meals can be customized for foodies and oenophiles. 452 Royalton Turnpike, Barnard, Vt., twinfarms.com

White Fences Inn Originally built in 1740, the rooms and suites at this newly renovated Hamptons-based inn have been completely modernized and luxuriously appointed with gas fireplaces, soaking tubs and Frette & Matouk linens. Co-owner (with her husband, Eric) Liz Brodar prepares breakfast every morning, using fresh local ingredients to whip up everything from homemade scones and orange cardamom French toast to asparagus-avocado egg sandwiches. Foodies looking to explore their surroundings can indulge in a variety of special deals offered by the B&B, including tasting tours at Wölffer Estate Vineyard and Widow's Hole Oyster Farm. 371 Montauk Highway, Water Mill, N.Y., whitefenceswatermill.com

Saxon + Parole Michelin-touted chef Brad Farmerie's reimagined space takes its name from two prizewinning New York thoroughbreds that garnered national acclaim. All bets are on the American menu, which is fittingly complemented by a bourbon-heavy cocktail program featuring the house-label Parole whiskey. In a novel twist, barman Naren Young creates a Manhattan with whiskey and vermouth dispensed from a tap. 316 Bowery/Bleecker St., 212.254.0350 \$\$\$

SOHO/NOLITA

Balthazar The iconic jewel of Keith McNally's empire remains one of the most stylish spots to relax with a cappuccino and a pain au chocolat. The French bistro's offerings—like duck confit—are surprisingly refined, but any desire for quiet or personal space is best checked at the door. Prepare for star sightings—you might see Victoria Beckham or Katie Holmes. 80 Spring St./Crosby St., 212.343.1274 \$\$

& Williams, this handsome restaurant is an ideal setting for chef Andrew Carmellini, who put together a menu spanning different regions of French brasserie fare, like the standout duck au poivre with organic grains, radish and smoked bacon. *380 Lafayette St./Great Jones Street and Broadway, 212.533.3000 \$\$\$*

La Esquina What's the secreto of La Esquina? Could it be the walk-in taqueria, with its somewhat limited menu, or the clandestine brasserie? Either way, what you'll encounter in the low-light subterranean space is a warmly lit lounge with a fun, insidery vibe. La Esquina's hosted everyone from Miley Cyrus and Gisele Bündchen to Woody Harrelson and Anne Hathaway. *114 Kenmare St./Centre St., 646.613.1333 \$\$*

WEST VILLAGE/ GREENWICH VILLAGE

Babbo Celebrity chef Mario Batali continues to enjoy gastronomic and business success with Babbo, the undisputed spicy meatball in his coast-to-coast Italiano empire. The boisterous yet sophisticated ambience and elevated Italian classics keep this international dining destination white hot. Go, and convince your tablemates to spring for the delectable pasta tasting menu. *110 Waverly Place/MacDougal St., 212.777.0303 \$\$\$*

Blue Hill Blue Hill chef Dan Barber has helped revolutionize the trend toward socially conscious high-end cuisine. The Greenwich Village flagship is supported by the Stone Barns partner farm upstate, from which almost all the restaurant's produce, poultry and pork comes.

Let the kitchen take you through the tasting menu and show you the pleasures of a simple nugget of cauliflower. *75 Washington Place, 212.539.1776 \$\$\$*

Blue Ribbon Bakery

Although the breads here are indeed terrific, this is far more than a bakery. Good luck finding better finger food (if foie gras terrine, beef marrow and a soulful duck breast can really be considered such) come 11:30 on a Saturday night. The service may be rushed, and conversation can be hard over the noise, but patrons never leave disappointed. *35 Downing St./Bedford St., 212.337.0404 \$\$*

Carbone Mario Carbone, Rich Torrisi and Jeff Zalaznick created Carbone in celebration of the Italian-American eateries of mid-20th century New York, conceiving of a simple menu of unpretentious yet refined Italian-American comfort food. For lunchtime, try Mario's meatballs, and for dinner go for the always-popular veal Parmesan. *181 Thompson St./Bleecker and W. Houston streets, 212.254.3000 \$\$\$\$*

Dell'Anima Since opening, this little Italian effort has prompted "Oh, you have to try" recommendations among downtown diners. The inventive antipasti signaled that chef Gabe Thompson knew how to maximize flavor, and his pastas compete for best in the city. *38 Eighth Ave./Jane St., 212.366.6633 \$\$*

Il Mulino The service may be gruff at this hushed, hallowed temple of traditional Italian cuisine, but the food is otherworldly. *86 W. Third St./Thompson St., 212.673.3783 \$\$\$\$*

L'Artusi L'Artusi is the spot where former IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn chose to celebrate his release from house arrest. We can only