

LIFE, TRAVEL & HEALTH



TWO'S COMPANY

Dial up the romance by taking a weekend trip to a nearby winery, luxurious spa, or waterfront town. Turn the page to find your next couples getaway.



Relax by the water or in the well-appointed spa at the Lodge at Woodloch.

closer. An infinity whirlpool is heated year-round for an outdoor soak—even in winter—with views of the bucolic surroundings. For a unique bonding experience, heat up in the sauna before heading to the flurry-filled Snow Room, the only cold-therapy space of its kind in the country. **Where to dine:** Guests can grab a seat near the fireplace at the luxury resort's Tree restaurant, which serves a farm-to-table menu with an extensive wine list. The restaurant can also package dishes for an intimate en suite dinner or a fireside picnic on the patio. **Distance from DC:** 279 miles.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF BICYCLISTS AND WATER COURTESY OF THE LODGE AT WOODLOCH; BEDROOM COURTESY OF THE INN AT LITTLE WASHINGTON

CULINARY CAPER

For couples who want: A main-event dinner at a table for two and other food-centric diversions. **Where to head:** Virginia's Rappahannock County, where a set of pastoral towns are the backdrop to a flourishing food scene. To go all out, book an opulent suite at the Inn at Little Washington, which includes a guaranteed table in the award-winning restaurant. Or, for a more secluded stay in the town of Washington, the contemporary White Moose Inn has a standalone cottage with a private deck. Nearby Blue Rock inn offers five rooms with breakfast in bed. **What to do:** Toast the weekend at Rappahannock Cellars, settling next to the winery's fire pits for flights and a cheese plate. In neighboring Sperryville, peruse the retro Corner Store for treats (try the Park Ranger Cookies) and Wild Roots Apothecary, where syrups and shrubs are made



PHOTOGRAPH OF GAZEBO COURTESY OF THE INN AT PERRY CABIN; THE INN AT LITTLE WASHINGTON BY GORDON BEALL; TREE HOUSE BY AIDE DAWITT; POOL BY PETER FRANK EDWARDS

in-house. Take a drive along Skyline Drive before dinner, pulling off at Signal Knob Overlook for a sunset panorama. **Where to dine:** Make a reservation at the Inn at Little Washington, the only three-Michelin-star restaurant around DC, serving a whimsical menu with theatrical presentations. Alternatively, head to the Restaurant at Blue Rock, helmed by former Pineapple & Pearls chef Bin Lu, for a New American dinner with special add-ons such as caviar. Three Blacksmiths, a 20-seat gem with a single dinner seating, puts together a five-course menu using ingredients from local farmers. **Distance from DC:** 69 miles.

SMALL-TOWN CHARM

For couples who want: A Hallmark movie in the making—a shoreside inn, hand-in-hand antiquing, and plates of seafood to share. **Where to head:** The quaint nautical town of St. Michaels on

The Inn at Little Washington is known for its award-winning restaurant and lavish rooms.



COUPLES RETREATS

Enjoy side-by-side massages, cozy winetastings, outdoor adventures, and more at these nearby romantic getaways

By Jacqueline Mendelsohn

SPA OASIS

For couples who want: Massages, plush robes—and no kids around. **Where to head:** The adults-only Lodge at Woodloch, one of the country's best destination spas, on 500 wooded acres in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. There are 59 guest rooms, each with a private veranda and oversize marble bathroom. A romance package includes credits for the spa, sweets made in-house, and a bottle of red wine picked by the sommelier. **What to do:** The massive spa offers opportunities to decompress together, such as Perfectly Paired, a side-by-side aromatherapy massage in the couples suite, or a joint reiki session designed to bring duos



Experience romance by the shore at the Inn at Perry Cabin.

Maryland's Eastern Shore. You might stay at the Inn at Perry Cabin, where suites include a gas fireplace, a clawfoot soaking tub, and Miles River views, plus chef-crafted treats at turndown. Or try the Wildset Hotel, a boutique newcomer with 34 modern minimalist rooms. Both offer cozy fire pits with complimentary s'mores kits. **What to do:** Sip a Ceremony Coffee Roasters latte while you peruse shelves of boutique beauty and home products at Wildset's Sundry and Coffee Shop. For a brush-up on local history, head to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum before browsing the boutiques on North Talbot Street. Spend the afternoon playing chess at Purser's Pub or luxuriating in a couples treatment at the Spa at Perry Cabin. **Where to dine:** Ruse at the Wildset serves reimagined Chesapeake cuisine with an extensive raw bar, while Stars at Perry Cabin highlights local purveyors on a rotating three-course menu. Couples can also head into town to dine at Bistro St. Michaels or grab Mediterranean dishes from Plates at 208. **Distance from DC:** 81 miles.

LOST IN NATURE

For couples who want: To feel like the only people for miles, surrounded by nature, with high-energy activities by day and dreamy stargazing at night. **Where to head:** Primland Resort, a remote property along the Dan River Gorge in Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains. The two-story Celestial Suite in the lodge's Observatory Tower has wraparound

windows for beautiful bedside views. You can also opt for the Tree Houses or Dan River Suites for seclusion in the leafy canopy. **What to do:** Adventurous pairs can explore the forest on foot, horseback, or RTV—weather permitting. Up the ante and try out archery or tomahawk throwing. After a day in the outdoors, warm up in the spa with the Moon and Sun Duo treatment, which includes a private Jacuzzi soak and massage for two. Snuggle up in the observatory at nightfall to view the constellations through the resort's telescopes. **Where to dine:** On the property, head to the fine-dining restaurant Elements for candlelit dinner and regional cuisine. Grab a pint at 19th Pub or Southern cuisine at Stables Saloon, which hosts bluegrass bands on weekends. **Distance from DC:** 304 miles.



Swim in the heated pool at Primland Resort after exploring the wooded property.



CITY AESTHETE

For couples who want: To enjoy some fine art, theater, and other cultural treats before retiring to a luxurious room. **Where to head:** Our neighbor to the north, Baltimore. There, the Ivy Hotel offers complimentary breakfast, afternoon tea, unlimited cocktails, and black-car service within three miles. Suite 18—a stunning duplex with its own elevator—is a private retreat. For harbor views, stay at the Four Seasons Hotel or Sagamore Pendry. **What to do:** Begin with the diverse flora at Rawlings Conservatory and the latest exhibits at the Baltimore Museum of Art. Then head to the unconventional American Visionary Art Museum before walking through the Fells Point historic district. End the night with the latest touring Broadway production at the historic Hippodrome Theatre or visit the intimate Everyman Theatre to watch the resident troupe perform plays and musicals. **Where to dine:** The culinarily curious might like Foraged, a “hyper-seasonal eatery” with dishes such as crispy pig ears and vegan crabcakes. Other Charm City standouts include Venezuelan-influenced Alma Cocina Latina and the locally sourced

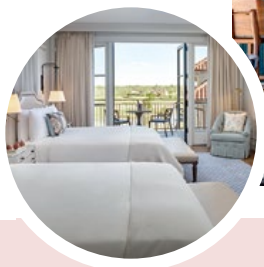
A stay at the Ivy Hotel in Baltimore comes with free-flowing cocktails.

bistro Magdalena. After dinner, sip a Prohibition-era cocktail at the 1920s-inspired W.C. Harlan or dance the night away at BLK Swan. **Distance from DC:** 41 miles.

PERFECT PAIRINGS

For couples who want: To channel the romance of Provence in Virginia wine country with scenic tastings and French cuisine. **Where to head:** Charlottesville and surrounding Albemarle County,

Keswick Hall and the onsite restaurant Marigold by Jean-Georges are a short drive from downtown Charlottesville.



where vineyards and wineries dot the landscape. The Clifton hotel’s Manor House Suites are spacious, with soaking tubs and garden views. Down the road lies Keswick Hall, a recently renovated 80-room resort with a spa plus a bar overlooking the verdant golf course for a sunset glass of wine. **What to do:** Start the day with a stroll around the historic Downtown Mall in Charlottesville, swinging by Mudhouse Coffee for an organic roast. Oenophiles can make a reservation on the winterized terrace at Merrie Mill Farm & Vineyard, a five-year-old winery with eclectic style, then stop by Keswick Vineyards for build-your-own wine flights. Looking to sample cider and craft beer? Enjoy a tasting by the fire pit at Castle Hill Cider or embark along the Charlottesville Ale Trail. **Where to dine:** Seasonal dishes are matched with upscale cocktails and local vintages at 1799 Restaurant in the Clifton. At Keswick Hall’s Marigold by Jean-Georges, the Michelin-starred chef forages from the property’s garden to curate menus. Or dine on moules frites at Brasserie Saison on Charlottesville’s Downtown Mall. **Distance from DC:** 116 miles. 

Jacqueline Mendelsohn is a travel writer and the author of The Mod Traveller, an online journal covering destinations, travel products, and advice. On Instagram, she’s @thomodtraveller.



PHOTOGRAPH OF IVY HOTEL ROOM BY KINDRA CLINEFF; COCKTAILS COURTESY OF THE IVY HOTEL; BOTTOM PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF KESWICK HALL