



WASHINGTON Parent™

the trusted source for parents in dc, www.washingtonparent.com
September 2011

Boy, Oh Boy Parenting a Band of Brothers

Healthy Homework Habits
Tips to Start the School Year Right

The Play Lady
One Woman's Commitment to Children

Unplugged
Setting Limits on Your Kids' Screen Time

Private School Open House Directory



Ira Kerns photo courtesy of The Preservation Society of Newport County.



Girls Go Back to the Gilded Age in Newport, Rhode Island

By Karen Kullgren

You'd have to stay a week to fit in all of Newport's famous mansions, even if you never set foot on a boat, but somehow, my friend Beth and I managed to hit the highlights in a long weekend. You'll have your own ooh and aah moments, but here are a few of mine.

The Breakers

The Breakers is the 70-room summer home of 19th-century millionaire Cornelius Vanderbilt.

The kitchen is huge, larger than my home's whole first floor. Along one length of wall is a cast-iron stove and a massive range island that holds about 30 copper pots of all sizes. There's a sideroom with cupboards containing an array of molds from birds and hearts to shells and sand castles, and antique kitchen implements cooks or history buffs will love. Oh, and of course a dumbwaiter and a phone/bell system for calling "the help." A butler's pantry

has amazing sets of dishes and glasses in cupboards that are two stories—yes, stories!—high.

Vanderbilt's own room has a closet that would have done Carrie Bradshaw proud. His wife Alice's quarters have the feeling of command central, with an arch-shaped bedroom and office with a row of buttons to summon various servants, two desks, including a beautiful secretary, a bookcase, a vanity, fireplace and two walk-in closets. The Vanderbilts had seven

children. The room of Gertrude Vanderbilt—socialite, feminist and artist—has many charming family photos. Preservation society researchers spent nearly a decade reviewing archival documents, articles, photographs, and letters, as well as interviewing people who lived and worked in the house and their descendants, to develop a more complete and intimate picture of life there.

The bedroom of Countess Széchenyi (Vanderbilt's daugh-

Shopping

Le Maison de Coco: sells exclusively tea-infused chocolates

Beach House Newport LLC in Middletown: quintessential cottage and coastal style furnishings and accessories

Primavera on Bowen's Wharf: funky fine arts and crafts, much of it by local artisans

Preservation Society gift shops in some of the Newport mansions

Bites and Sips

Tea at the Hotel Viking

41 North: For splurging, the elegant dockside dining at The Grill emphasizes seafood, including a fine raw bar, and supports local sustainable agriculture. Christie's is more playful, with Asian-fusion and global tapas on the tables and funky retro décor, including a mural of bathing beauties and swing seating. 41 North offers lots of stools and other seating both indoors and out where you can enjoy some dandy signature cocktails. 41north.com

Details

The Preservation Society of Newport County offers ticket packages for mansion tours, Newportmansions.org

Gonewport.com

Going before the summer season keeps costs (and crowds) down. If you're visiting in fall or winter, check websites for off-season closings and reduced hours.

ter Gladys) is one of (relatively) understated elegance—a case with gorgeous vanity accessories in silver and cut glass, a handsome fireplace, an inviting settee, a huge claw-foot bathtub in the adjoining bathroom. The Breakers has 20 bathrooms, including one with a tub cut from a single enormous slab of marble, elaborately carved, so thick and deep and cold that the tub had to be filled and drained with hot water four times before it would be warm enough to bathe. I learned that socialite women in Newport

changed clothes five to seven times a day and men three to five times a day; sheets were often changed twice a day and people bathed a couple of times a day.

Chateau-sur-Mer

One of the highlights of the Italianate Chateau-sur-Mer, built 40 years before the Vanderbilts moved to the island, is a magnificent weeping beech out front. In a room that used to be the kitchen is a huge fireplace, with Arts-and-Crafts-style Minton tiles,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 57

The longest running Wine Festival on the East Coast



Wine & Food Productions



FREE seminars
crafts and fine arts!
VIP Food and
Wine Pairing
Tickets
& more

Come select,
taste and stock
your cellars from
Virginia Wineries
featuring over 300
Award-Winning
Wines!

36th ANNUAL VIRGINIA Wine FESTIVAL®

Daily
11am-6pm

featuring

The BEST in
Classic Soul, Blues
and Jazz featuring
Tito Puente JR & His
Orchestra, The Contours
featuring Sylvester, Patti
Abbey Road LIVE
Orchestra in Bossa
Beck's the Balloon Lady, and more!

Adult Tasting
Tickets just
\$25 in advance
+ include FREE Wine
glass and Tasting!

Worry Free Shuttle
available from Vienna Metro
Station via Reston Limousine

September 17 & 18 2011

Ball Park Special Events Center, Centreville, VA

www.VirginiaWineFest.com

Purchase your tickets online
or at these fine outlets:
Opera House in Manassas
Norm's Beer & Wine in
Vienna, VA

Discounted Designated
Driver and Kids passes
also available.

888-VA-FESTS
(823-3787)

which picture women representing the four seasons, and more tiled paintings on the interior of the fireplace.

Rosecliff

Rosecliff has an unbelievable ballroom with soaring window drapes that swoop and fall gracefully. Around the edge of the ceiling are cast plaster garlands of roses and mythical beasts, while the center of the ceiling has a painted sky giving the feeling of an open courtyard. New this year, Rosecliff has an audio tour with entertaining and informative personal stories and first-person remembrances that add a lot to your visit.

Blithewold

One of our favorite places wasn't in Newport proper but in nearby Bristol. The 33-acre Blithewold Mansion Gardens & Arboretum is one of the first garden estates in New England. The great lawn slopes down to Narragansett Bay, and the flower gardens and

fantastic trees make you want to dally all day. We were lucky to be there during their annual Daffodil Days but there are horticultural delights most every month. (The grounds are open through October.)

Staying

The style of the waterfront boutique hotel where we stayed is befitting of the glam of Newport's historic playground of the rich and famous, but with distinctive modern design and high-tech amenities. 41 North has its own marina, should you be looking for a spot for your yacht. But no matter the reason for your visit, you'll appreciate the chic, contemporary design, luxury linens, deluxe showers and soaking tubs, free Wi-Fi and an iPad in every room for eco-friendly paperless services. Tempur-Pedic beds, pre-loaded iTouches and libraries of books color-coordinated to the rooms are among the over-the-top touches. The hotel



Photo courtesy of 41 North.

is LEED-certified because of features like recycled wood on the walls and floors. We stayed in a simple but stylish cottage on the property which gave us a little den daybed so we had two sleeping areas.

Karen Kullgren is contributing editor for Washington Parent, and she is also a freelance writer. Follow her at twitter.com/gracengrayareas. Read her blog, "Grace in the Gray Areas: Reflections on Life's Journeys & Joys, Books & Other Blessings" at karenkullgren.blogspot.com. Contact Karen at karen@washingtonparent.net.

The Path to Success Starts Here.

The Event Management Professional Education Program

If you aspire to work in the exciting fields of special events and meeting planning, take the next step to change your future. Enroll in GW's Event Management Certificate Program.

Gain industry insights and learn practical tools from leading experts. You will be exposed to the best practices in Event Management, Green Meetings, Event Marketing & Coordination, Event Protocol and much more.

Move Ahead. Call 1-877-498-4477 to personalize your schedule or visit www.gwtourism.org/eventmanagement for more information.



Event Management Certificate
The George Washington University School of Business

Learn what the Experts Practice