

A Touch of Romance

Making Life Grand in New Hampshire and A Fall Frolic in Vermont

Aviator Bruce Hutchings likely isn't one to throw his wow's around without reason, so when his squawk went like this – wow, what a place! – Pilot Michael knew he had a yowza! of a fly-in favorite destination. “We heard a lot about a ‘grand hotel’ in northern New Hampshire that had just completed a major renovation,” radios Bruce, “so my wife and I decided to fly up for a weekend getaway.” Watch, now, here's his wow. “Wow!” he says, “what a place!” By this the awed aviator means the Grand Hotel in Whitefield, a historic 400-acre White Mountain resort that since 1865 has indeed been wooing the wows out of visitors just like Bruce with its 18 holes of golf, couples-focused spa and luxurious ambiance.

“When you first arrive you are greeted by a very large main lobby with fireplace and overstuffed leather chairs,” enthuses Bruce, who goes on to wow about the “excellent” dining, challenging golf and the spa, which features a sky-high Japanese-style Ofuro tub with 360-degree panoramic view. “Our first morning we had coffee on the hotel's veranda and marveled at the beauty” all around, he adds, no doubt also referring to the resort's recent \$20 million makeover. Given that the Grand Hotel started life in 1865 as a farmhouse whose owner hospitably took in a pair of travelers

whose stagecoach had overturned in a mud hole, the elegant but aging grande dame of the White Mountains probably was due for a nip and tuck or two. Wow! reveals the resort's website photos (www.mountain-viewgrand.com), you should see this babe now. For antiquing in the area; for hiking and biking and reveling in the Great Outdoors, fellow-flyer Bruce and his wife think the Mountain View Grand is grand indeed. “The Mt. Washington Regional Airport (HIE) is a great place to fly into,” he adds. “Although it's a pretty quiet place (don't expect anyone to answer you on Unicom), the runway is long and wide with good instrument approaches, and fuel is cheap.” Well, how about that wow?

Meanwhile, northeastern neighbor Aviator Dave Baldwin squawks-in with all manner of misty reminiscences of his Vermont love, the Basin Harbor Club on

Lake Champlain. “Long days, soft nights and children's laughter all coalesce to bring a relaxing ambiance” to this 700-acre Adirondack idyll, he says. Dave raves over the impeccably landscaped gardens, championship golf and marvelous restaurants. The resort's site is a wildlife wonder: “Various warblers and Great Blue Herons join chattering chipmunks, Canadian geese and redtail hawks in vying for your attention,” he says, and is tickled to recommend the oh-so-romantic accommodations – private cottages scattered throughout the glorious lakeside property. “Everyone,” he says, “is eager to be in or on the lake” boating, kayaking or otherwise loving life.

The Basin Harbor Airport in Vergennes (B06) is the field of dreams for this Vermont hottie for fall frolics among the blazing, changing foliage. (www.basinharbor.com) ✕

New Hampshire's grand Mountain View Grand resort (above); fall's blazing, changing foliage is enjoyed lakeside at Basin Harbor in Vermont (right)

