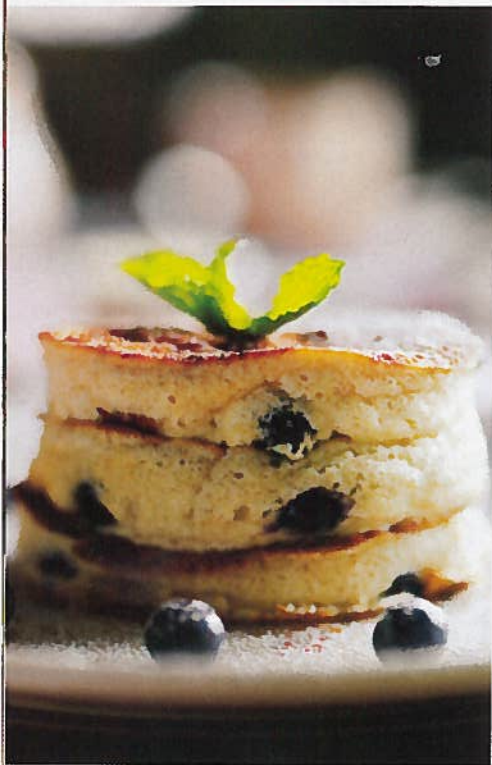


Journey Back to the Gilded Age

BLANTYRE
16 BLANTYRE RD // LENOX, MA
(413) 637-3556 // BLANTYRE.COM
Distance from White Plains: 2.5 hours



[Blantyre]

There was a time when men and women of a certain class would enjoy leisurely breakfasts on crisp white linens, take constitutional walks with proper walking sticks, play a gentlemanly round of croquet, spend a lazy afternoon listening to Brahms or Beethoven, get all dressed up for dinner, enjoy pre-dinner canapés in the parlor, and dine by candlelight on fine china. That time is now at Blantyre.

As you wend your way up the driveway to the imposing Tudor manor that is Blantyre, an exquisitely appointed luxury country inn in the Berkshires, you won't be faulted for thinking you've just entered an Edith Wharton novel or stepped onto a Merchant Ivory film set. This 117-acre turn-of-the-last-century estate, sporting dark towers, ornate turrets, and kind-of-scary gargoyles, is a wonderful testament to the good taste and good life our aristocratic ancestors (if we had had aristocratic ancestors) would have enjoyed. You know, thick, dark wood paneling; lead-oxide crystal chandeliers; tall

ceilings; marble fireplaces; grand four-poster beds; lush linens; overstuffed chairs; and, well, you did see Martin Scorsese's *The Age of Innocence*? (By the way, *The Age of Innocence* author's estate, The Mount, is just down the road from Blantyre. Do try to visit.)

There are eight rooms in the main house, all impeccably decorated, each with its own distinct style. Don't want to stay in the main house? There are three private cottages located a short walk away, and, some 200 yards away, 10 more guest rooms, each with a patio set with small tables and chairs, ideal for admiring the fall foliage or taking a long afternoon nap. The attention to details, down to the just-right silver butter knife, is awe-inspiring.

So is the service. When my not-at-all-aristocratic husband—who, though informed by the hotel way before arrival that a jacket and tie are required for dinner, still managed not to bring along either, or a dress shirt (“Oh, come on, in this day and age?”)—one staff member ever so politely reminded him of the house rule and, then, ever so discreetly found him a jacket and tie. He wore the tie around his collarless sweater. “He’s not the first,” she assured me sweetly. The staff, it is said, is one reason guests return to Blantyre again and again.

There are other reasons, too. Among them: four Har-Tru tennis courts, two championship bent grass croquet courts, one heated outdoor swimming pool, and the relatively new spa. And, of course, there’s Blantyre’s cuisine. It isn’t just delicious, but it’s so—there’s no other word for it—elegant.

Take dinner. What’s the rush? First, sip a glass of Champagne and nibble on some savory appetizers in the Main Hall while a pianist softly plays. When your first course is ready (you will be treated to five), a host will escort you to the stunning dining room. On the menu: New American French cuisine, served, as the *Zagat Survey* put it, “with Old World elegance.” As for breakfast? Fresh, hearty, scrumptious, served in the plant-filled conservatory. One morning we spotted Kurt Masur of the Boston Symphony Orchestra there. That afternoon, we watched him conduct at nearby Tanglewood. And, oh yes, we brought along a picnic that Blantyre just happened to pack for us (loved the lobster salad).

But, of course, summertime, when Tanglewood and the Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival take place in the Berkshires, is not the only or, for that matter, best time to visit Blantyre. The best time is really any time you want to journey back to that aristocratic past that never was yours. Now, for instance.

THE NITTY-GRITTY: Room rates range from \$675 to \$1,400 in the Main House, \$600 to \$900 in the Carriage House, and \$1,000 to \$2,000 in the cottages. Includes breakfast and use of facilities.

—ED



(Rox)bury Your Cares Away

THE ROXBURY MOTEL
2258 COUNTY HIGHWAY 41 // ROXBURY, NY
(607) 326-7200 // THEROXBURYMOTEL.COM
Distance from White Plains: 3 hours

Even from a distance, it’s easy to see that The Roxbury is not your average Catskill Mountain motel. The vivid green detailing on the white