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TRAVEL

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PHOTOS BY JOHN TULLY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

In N.M., a storied painter's past is well preserved

BY ALEXANDRA MARVAR

The stretch of desert north of Santa Fe, N.M. — cut through by the Rio Chama and the Rio Grande — is rich with history. Over centuries, many Native American and Spanish place names have identified its adobe villages and geological formations, and in the late 1980s, the state's tourism industry gave it yet another title: O'Keeffe Country, after American modernist painter Georgia O'Keeffe. With her New Mexico paintings, she helped introduce the region's surreal landscapes to the world.

In August, recently married and uncertain about where in this precariously divided America we should make a life, my husband and I embarked from our home in Savannah, Ga., on a Western road trip. O'Keeffe's New Mexico appealed to us not for the usual reasons a tourist might seek out O'Keeffe Country, but because in the life she built there and the reasons she built it, we saw our own hopes (and political

SEE NEW MEXICO ON F6

YOU'RE GOING WHERE?

Burlington

Vermont's Queen City has natural beauty, charm and (counter)culture to spare

BY MELANIE D.G. KAPLAN

Burlington, Vt., had so much of what I had always wanted in a vacation that I often forgot I was on assignment. ¶ Perched on Lake Champlain, just south of Canada, Burlington is the rare destination without a tourism office. A serene playground for those who enjoy cycling, hiking, water sports and winter fun (Smugglers' Notch, Stowe and Sugarbush are close), it's Boulder of the East, where the dress is more Prana than Prada, the international airport has a yoga room, bike paths are plowed in the winter for hardcore cyclists, and an annual performing arts center fundraiser involves 100 climbers rappelling nine stories down the side of a hotel. But 802'ers are hardly surviving on gorp. There's a sophisticated and diverse food scene: Locals pick up their CSA shares, shop for CBD confections and buy baguettes from a peddler on a bicycle. ¶ A college town with no major professional sports and few museums, Burlington is crunchy and counterculture — unsurprising in a state that started off as an independent, slave-outlawing republic in 1777. The Queen City is the birthplace of Ben & Jerry's and Phish, the community that called Bernie Sanders mayor for eight years and a socially conscious city, first in the nation to source all its power from renewable generation. ¶ When I visited in August, I unexpectedly extended my stay; clearly, I was falling for Burlington. After a week of paddling, biking and breaking bread with locals, I packed my bags. As I looked across the shimmering lake, I felt an unfamiliar tug in my heart — the sentiment that belongs to people (who aren't travel writers) when vacation is over. I savored it. Then I bought some bagels for the road, and I headed home.

SEE BURLINGTON ON F3

Lights, cameras and interaction at Chicago's Wndr

BY KATE SILVER

"Do you know anything about the Wndr museum?" I ask my nephews, as we're driving to Chicago's West Loop for our reserved 4:30 p.m. time slot.

"Nope. I've never even heard of it, to be honest," says Louie, who is 10.

Simon, 11, says he knows a girl who had been thinking about having a birthday party there but decided not to because it's expensive (at \$32 a person, plus tax, she's not wrong).

"Excellent. You're blank slates!" I tell them.

And that's exactly why I was bringing them along to the Wndr museum, Chicago's latest example of a nationwide trend: public spaces that are highly immersive, experiential and, above all, Instagrammable. I wanted to hear the reactions of two smart, open-minded but opinionated kids who don't have social media accounts or carry phones with them. I also wanted them to bring their sense of, yes, wonder along so that I, their some-

SEE WNDR ON F5

NAVIGATOR

Seat recliners, armrest hogs and other annoying airline passengers. F2

TOP: Church Street in downtown Burlington is a four-block pedestrian shopping and dining center that boasts a mix of chain and independent retailers and restaurants. You'll also find the headquarters for Bernie 2020 there. **ABOVE LEFT, RIGHT:** Honey Road is a two-year-old Eastern Mediterranean restaurant that has received James Beard recognition; Cameron Kowall and Emma Levy leave Myer's Bagels, which produces up to 5,000 bagels a day.

WELLNESS

How to survive — and maybe even enjoy — a long-haul flight. F5

Vt. city offers a breath of fresh air

BURLINGTON FROM F1

Go

Local faves

Whether the sun is shining or flakes are falling, Burlingtonians head to **Oakledge Park**. Located on the Island Line Trail and Burlington Greenway, this large regional park has an accessible treehouse and playground; tennis, basketball, volleyball and pickleball courts; and stand-up paddleboard rentals through Paddlesurf Champlain at Blanchard Beach. Oakledge Cove (head south through the main parking area to the second parking lot) offers a secluded rocky beach; in summer, locals picnic on the beach and jump from the rocks for a swim. (Grab provisions at nearby City Market and Switchback Brewing Co.) In the winter, parking is free and Oakledge offers small hills for sledding (even better hills at Calahan Park). The sides of the plowed Greenway are used for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Check enjoyburlington.com/winter-outdoors for updates on ice skating and winter trail activities. For groomed skiing trails, head to the Intervale Center, a 360-acre campus of farmland along the Winooski River, open 365 days a year.

No surprise that the email address for **ArtsRiot** is destroyapathy@gmail.com. Considered the heart of the South End Arts District, this Pine Street music venue, restaurant and community hub opened in 2013 and has been a major force in the revival of the South End, which — as one local put it — was an “industrial wasteland” not long ago. The recently expanded venue hosts 130 nights of live music a year (Cracker performs Dec. 5); other nights, you might catch the Moth Radio Hour, an Ethiopian food pop-up, trivia night, a drag show, a magic show or a poetry reading from the local elementary school. Every summer Friday, ArtsRiot hosts a popular free block party called Truck Stop. Also in the neighborhood: Lake Champlain Chocolates’ factory for sweets, Speeder & Earl’s for coffee, Citizen Cider or Dedalus for drinks, and the Great Northern for dinner. The city’s biggest event is South End Art Hop, a September weekend festival that stretches from Pine Street to downtown. Pick up the alternative weekly Seven Days to find out what’s on for the week.

Guidebook musts

Day trip! Sweet **Shelburne** is just seven miles from downtown Burlington, and for a rural town, it’s packed with fun for all. Start at Shelburne Farms, a nonprofit that’s a 1,400-acre working farm, forest and National Historic Landmark. Located on Lake Champlain, the land once belonged to a Vanderbilt couple, who created a model agricultural estate with a Frederick Law Olmsted-designed landscape. In the offseason, walk your dog on the old carriage trails. In the summer, see farm animals and cheesemaking, buy lunch at the farm cart, and tour the historic Inn at Shelburne Farms. (Better yet, dine or stay overnight at the inn: Sit on the back porch, gaze out to the lake and channel your inner master/mistress of the universe.) Shelburne Museum is a quirky and vast collection of Americana and folk art, where you’ll find the 220-foot side-wheel steamboat Ticonderoga. The exhibit “Creature Comfort: Animals in the House” opens in February. Stop by Shelburne Craft School and Vermont Teddy Bear Company, and fuel up at Folino’s Pizza, where you can BYOB from Fiddlehead Brewing Co. next door or Shelburne Vineyard across the street.

Who needs major professional sports in Vermont when there’s **University of Vermont hockey**? Every winter, students and locals pack the noisy Gut (Gutterson Fieldhouse, once home to the NHL Rangers’ preseason training camp) to watch the Catamounts heat up the ice. Tickets to men’s games, which often sell out, start at \$10; women’s, \$5. What’s a catamount, anyway? A legendary mountain cat found in the Green Mountains of Vermont, long extinct from the region. If you’d rather enjoy the university’s hat trick of artsy options, head to the UVM Recital Hall for Lane Series concerts (ticketed) or student recitals (free); the Royall Tyler Theatre (“Jesus Christ Superstar” in December, “Shakespeare in Love” in February); or the Fleming Museum of Art, which houses the



TOP: Shelburne Farms is a nonprofit 1,400-acre working farm, forest and National Historic Landmark located about seven miles south of Burlington. The town of Shelburne also has a museum nearby filled with a vast collection of Americana and folk art. **MIDDLE:** Outdoor Gear Exchange — known as OGE by locals — is a wildly popular spot where outdoor enthusiasts can find new and secondhand apparel and gear to buy or rent. **ABOVE LEFT, RIGHT:** Food, drinks and music are readily available at ArtsRiot, which opened in 2013 and has been a force in the revival of Burlington’s South End; Penny Cluse Cafe, known for serving breakfast all day, has been a city institution for decades.

state’s most comprehensive collection of art and artifacts (admission \$5). UVM, always progressive, is tobacco-free and doesn’t sell bottled water.

Eat

Local faves

The best \$10 you can spend in Burlington is for a baker’s dozen at **Myer’s Bagels**, and I’d understand if you didn’t share them. Located in a barely identifiable warehouse building down a gravel road in the South End, Myer’s makes Montreal-style bagels, which owner Lloyd Squires explained are rolled by hand, boiled in honey water, then cooked on a wood fire for a crispier exterior. (Try the Montreal spice flavor for a little kick.) Squires is the real deal. He learned the craft as a Montreal teenager from a Holocaust survivor, then opened his Burlington shop in 1996, driving daily from Montreal until he got his green card. Now he opens the shop at 4:30 a.m. and makes 3,000 to 5,000 bagels a day. He’s also hiring and paying enough to give a freelance writer pause.

At **Misery Loves Co.**, high-end comfort food means beautifully plated, clever combinations of some unusual ingredients, served, at times, on an outdoor picnic table. Much about this popular spot, which is small and kid-friendly, is relaxed. But the innovative kitchen takes its food and cocktails seriously, starting with the MLC Margarita with smoked agave and sea salt. When I visited, I ordered the vegetable lasagna from a summer menu, and it arrived covered in edible flowers — from In the Weeds, the owners’ small farm. The fried chicken is a perennial favorite, as is grilled cheese for kids. The fall menu also features grilled plums, pot-roasted sunchokes, a whole lubina for the table and cheddar bread pudding for dessert. Sunday is disco brunch, a DJ’s alternative to church, and the award-winning Bloody Marys are served with pickled mustard seeds and fresh horseradish. Walk off your meal along the river and falls. Nearby and less expensive: Tiny Thai.

Guidebook musts

Scrambled egg tacos, where have you been all my life? **Penny Cluse Cafe**, a Burlington institution for decades, is a favorite for its all-day breakfast and extensive and creative menu — including gingerbread pancakes, polenta and eggs, Sleepy Nate’s biscuits and gravy, tofu scram, homemade granola, Bucket-o-Spuds, avocado salsa, smoothies, and, of course, the tacos. The chery diner has specials on a chalkboard and a long counter, where I sat with a couple of students and a gentleman wearing a suit — the only such attire I saw during a full week in town. The sound of clinking plates and mugs was nearly as comforting as the food. The restaurant opens for us early birds at 6:45 weekdays and fills up quickly.

Honey Road is all the buzz. The lively two-year-old restaurant on Church Street serves Eastern Mediterranean small plates and has already earned James Beard recognition: semifinalist for Best New Restaurant and Best Chef: Northeast for Cara Chigazola Tobin, who owns the restaurant with Allison Gibson. I sat at the copper bar and ordered the kale salad with tahini,

SEE BURLINGTON ON F4



BURLINGTON FROM F3

feta and crunchy quinoa (the quinoa, seriously, was nearly as much fun as Pop Rocks); hummus with roasted cherry tomatoes as sweet as candy; and an amazing za'atar-garlic knot, which I peeled apart like a pecan swirl. Other plates are grilled broccoli with pickled raisins, muhammara with toasted walnuts, sweet harissa chicken wings and spiced fried chickpeas. "Honey time," from 4 to 5 p.m., includes drink specials and \$1 wings; that's a good time to grab a table before the crowds. Save room for housemade walnut baklava and the chocolate tahini ice cream bar.



Shop

Local faves

I'm embarrassed how long I spent trying on consignment and clearance apparel at **Outdoor Gear Exchange**, known by locals as OGE. How refreshing to find an outdoor store that walks the green walk, featuring a colossal basement filled with secondhand and sample puffers, hoodies, technical shirts and pants, dog leashes, skorts, snow pants, toddler threads, sunglasses, ski goggles, bike jerseys, and rash guards from major brands. The dog-friendly store (bustling when nearby Eddie Bauer, Athleta, L.L. Bean and Lululemon were deadsville) sells new apparel and gear upstairs. You can come to town unprepared to bike, kayak or snowboard and walk out of OGE with all the used gear and clothing a weekend warrior would want (the store also rents gear). And more: They'll price-match competitors. Other secondhand gems: Battery Street Jeans, Dirt Chic, Crow Bookshop and Speaking Volumes, which carries vinyl, books and stereo equipment.

Conant Metal & Light is a feast for the eyes — dazzling lighting, decorative metalwork and art made from repurposed objects, like canning jars, wrought-iron ice tongs and telephone pole insulators. All the products in this South End Arts District gallery are manufactured in the adjacent workshop. Be sure to explore the Soda Plant, the old ginger ale bottling plant that houses Conant and recently added a collection of start-up maker companies. Steve Conant, who owns the store and building, prefers "makers" over "retailers." "I want to attract brands that actually create and make things," he said. A sampler: Pitchfork Farm & Pickle, Brio Coffeeworks, Shacksbury Cider, Rack & Ruin Jewelry, Thirty-Odd (featuring 30 local artists), Tomgirl (juices and healthy bowls) and Venetian Ginger Ale, owned by the great-grandson of the original plant's founder.

Guidebook musts

Walking through the **Church Street Marketplace**, you might think you're in Boulder on Pearl Street. Then you'll hear yet another French-speaking tourist, a friendly reminder that, en réalité, you're just a couple of hours south of Montreal. Church Street, the city's pedestrian-only shopping district, offers an impressive density of shops — both chains and indies — and the headquarters for Bernie 2020. Along with OGE and Crow Bookshop, there's Vermont Violins; Frog Hollow, featuring the work of more than 200 Vermont artists; Slate, with felt Mac-

Book cases, eco finger paint, and beautiful wood and copper serving pieces; the Canadian brand Little Blue House, with deliciously thick moose-pattered flannel union suits for kids and adults; and Sweet Thing, where you can buy wax lips and Lego-shaped can-

dy. Leunig's Bistro & Cafe, with service "jour & nuit," is a favorite for Francophiles. (Nearby are the trendy taqueria El Cortijo, with more than 30 types of tequila, and the bohemian teahouse Dobra, where my server had a handlebar mustache and tattoos on his

palms.) Around the corner is more fun indie shopping: Home & Garden Vermont and Common Deer.

To fully appreciate the craftsmanship showcased at **Simon Pearce**, start at Pearce's flagship store 90 minutes southeast, in Quebec. Here, you can watch

artisans make glassware in the studio, which sits on the banks of the Ottawaquchee River near a covered bridge. Pearce, born in Ireland, began as a pottery apprentice at 16 and trained with glassmakers in Europe before opening his Quebec studio and,

later, his Burlington store. His pieces are exquisite and classy — martini and whiskey glasses, dessert bowls, crystal ice cube tictac-toe sets and handblown cheese domes. A perfect pottery souvenir: the Burlington Moss Glen cereal bowl. One of Simon's sons, Andrew, works with wood and creates hand-turned bowls from New England hardwood, available at the store; another son, Kevin, is a snowboarder who sustained serious injuries while training for the Olympics.

Stay

Local fave

Hate when you book a night in Burlington and forget your flannel PJs? **Hotel Vermont** to the rescue. The downtown boutique hotel has an extensive bedtime menu (aromatherapy or hot toddy, \$18; PJs, \$95; bedtime stories, complimentary) and a lively events calendar. Every week, there's trivia and three nights of live music, and summer brings pizza oven night on the terrace. The beautifully designed hotel, just blocks from the lake, is pet-friendly and has bedroom windows that actually open for fresh Vermont air. Other features: complimentary, locally made titanium bikes or custom-made snowshoes, depending on the season; Peloton bikes in the fitness center; an in-house massage room and daily yoga (fees apply); and an in-house restaurant, Juniper, with local food, beer, wine and spirits. Rates start at \$189. Hen of the Wood, among the city's top restaurants, is next door.

Guidebook musts

Let's take this moment to be grateful for Burlington somehow getting a pass to do something a little hipper with its chain hotels. Take the five-year-old **Hilton Garden Inn**, located in a 1904 National Guard armory building, upstairs from the Vermont Comedy Club. Centrally located, a short walk from the lake and Church Street (and close to delish August First bakery and Pizzeria Verita), the modern and colorful hotel has an indoor pool, a lobby fireplace and the Armory Grille and Bar. Request a room with a lake view. Pet-friendly; rates start at \$149. For the loveliest lake views, try the equally hip Courtyard Burlington Harbor (home of the popular Bleu Northeast Seafood) or the adjacent Hilton Burlington Lake Champlain. In warmer months, the Burlington Hostel offers beds starting at \$39.

Explore

Local fave

The **Old North End** has some stories. The ethnically diverse, tightknit and beautifully gritty neighborhood also has some restaurants worth checking out, a new wave of small businesses opening up just north of city center. The ONE, as it's known, has welcomed new Americans for more than a century, and refugee resettlement has helped fuel recent growth, supporting international markets and dining spots. I walked by an 1885 synagogue and popped into Knead, a plant-based bakery that serves all-day breakfast: cinnamon rolls, challah French toast, caprese toast with housemade cashew cheese. (I picked up a \$3 loaf of sourdough for a dinner party that night, and it was the best bread in a week of eating out.) Start on North Winooski at Old Spokes Home, a community-minded bike shop, and Pho Hong, a popular Vietnamese restaurant. Walk south and you'll pass a couple of yoga studios, Butch + Babe's (Mac and cheese pancakes! For dinner!) and, opening soon, Jake's Market and coffee bar, the first full grocery in the neighborhood. You'll also find Taco Gordo, Asian and African markets, and Drifter's for tapas. Battery Park is a great spot to watch the sunset.

Guidebook must

Any time in life you have the chance to bike or walk into the middle of a massive lake and ride a tiny ferry to the other side, take it. The **Island Line Trail** is a breathtaking 14-mile path along the water that goes right into the middle of Lake Champlain, via the narrow, three-mile Colchester Causeway. Surrounded by water and mountains, you'll see New York's Adirondacks to the west and Vermont's Green Mountains to the east. In the summer, take the bike ferry across the 200-foot cut to South Hero Island, where you can bike to a community of 800 birdhouses across from White's Beach and visit Snow Farm Vineyard for a tasting (live music in the summers). Heading south from the causeway, take the ILT across the Winooski River, past Leddy Park, North Beach, A-Dog Skatepark and the waterfront, ending at Oakledge Park. Rent bikes at Local Motion's Trailside Center or buy a used one at OGE or Old Spokes.

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PHOTOS BY JOHN TULLY FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

TOP: The Colchester Causeway runs three miles across Lake Champlain and is a scenic place to go bike riding.

UPPER LEFT, RIGHT: Misery Loves Co. serves up high-end comfort food that often includes a clever combination of unusual ingredients; Paul Stellato and Christine Vargas, of Burlington, look over Lake Champlain from Oakledge Park.

MIDDLE: With no major professional sports in town, the UVM men's hockey team regularly sells out games; tickets start at \$10.

ABOVE LEFT, RIGHT: The pet-friendly Hotel Vermont is just blocks from the lake and has bedroom windows that actually open; the Hilton Garden Inn is located in an old National Guard armory and is upstairs from a comedy club.