

TRAVEL

48 hours in Boston

Beantown is an epicentre of excellent new restaurants, sleek boutique hotels and amazing art

BY DANIELLE GROEN | NOVEMBER 6, 2019



With cobblestone streets, the oldest major-league ballpark in America and Revolutionary War battle sites littering downtown, Boston can feel like a city locked in history. But it's also buzzing with new energy: a street-food market serves snacks from Brazil, Poland, the Philippines and everywhere else, and a contemporary art crawl has taken over the emerging Fort Point neighbourhood, right on the harbour. Then there are the swanky hotels and microbreweries drawing visitors to overlooked, sort-of-suburban locations like Somerville. So pack your wannabe Harvard sweatshirt—and, for the love of the locals, leave your faux-Boston accent at home.



Throwback Digs

The Row Hotel at Assembly Row, Somerville

This hotel on Assembly Square nods to the area's old Ford Motor Company factory with auto-gear artwork, tables balanced on levers and a salvaged factory lift beside the check-in desk. It never tips into kitsch, though, thanks to sleek rooms with soft-grey textiles, a bright indoor pool with cabanas, and rain showers well stocked with goodies from C.O. Bigelow, America's oldest apothecary. For locavore sweet teeth, the hotel jars its own honey from a rooftop beehive. *360 Foley St., 617-628-1300, therowhotelatassemblyrow.com.*



Pooch Palace

Staypineapple Boston, *South End*

Sitting prettily amid the grand brownstones of South End, this mid-rise hotel takes its commitment to canine-friendliness seriously—doggie bowls, beds and treats are available for those travelling with furry friends. (Those without can cuddle up to the stuffed husky waiting in each room.) Housekeepers also borrow a practice from Scandinavian hotels, where they top king-sized beds with a pair of twin duvets, so there's no risk of blanket-hogging at night. 26 *Chandler St.*, 857-444-6111, staypineapple.com.



Aperitifs & Pasta

Fox and the Knife, *South Boston*

James Beard winner Karen Akunowicz spent a year in Modena, Italy,

learning the finer points of pasta making before debuting her buzzy neighbourhood spot in South Boston. Her fried chili chickpeas and crispy grilled broccoli under a blanket of parmesan pair perfectly with amaros and spritzes. But her Italian training really pays off with her wild boar bolognese and the mafaldini with spring mushrooms and truffle butter. 28 W. Broadway, 617-766-8630, foxandtheknife.com.



Street Food

Bow Market, Somerville

Many of the food and drink vendors clustered around this open-air courtyard got their start at pop-ups and farmers' markets; Bow Market in Somerville, just north of Cambridge, is their first shot at permanent digs. Between the hulking roast beef sandwiches and the veggie miso-mushroom poutine, the

Filipino noodles and the Brazilian whitefish soup, the pierogis and the bibimbap, it's absurdly easy to eat well on the cheap. *1 Bow Market Way, bowmarketsomerville.com.*



Wine Time

Nathálie, *Fenway*

At this Fenway spot, it can be hard to choose between a seat on the intimate outdoor patio or a perch on the velvet banquette across from the bar. It can also be hard to choose from the natural wine list—70 per cent of which is the work of female producers, as owner-sommelier Haley Fortier will proudly attest. Happily, if oenophiles commit to buying two glasses, knowledgeable servers will open any bottle. *186 Brookline Ave., 857-317-3884, nathaliebar.com.*





Art

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, *Fenway*

At this art gallery modelled on a Venetian palazzo, pencils and paper are

stacked everywhere to encourage spontaneous sketching of its classic and contemporary art. Visitors can also behold the empty frames that hang where Rembrandts and Vermeers used to live—13 pieces worth \$500 million were stolen in 1990 and never recovered. *25 Evans Way, 617-566-1401, gardnermuseum.org.*



Family Fun

Peabody Essex Museum, Salem

An hour's drive north of Boston—and easily accessible by rail—this light-filled, Moshe Safdie–designed museum is especially kid-friendly. There are scavenger hunts to take, winged beasts to fashion at the build-a-bird art table and strollers to borrow from the coatroom, free of charge. Through January 2020, kids and parents alike can

join in on *Kimsooja: Archive of Mind*, an interactive exhibit that invites visitors to mindfully mould balls of clay. *161 Essex St., Salem, 978-745-9500, pem.org.*



Movie Night

Brattle Theatre, Cambridge

This red-brick rep theatre in Harvard Square bills itself as Boston's unofficial film school, and they have a killer curriculum—spaghetti westerns one week, Claire Denis films another, then a stint playing host to Boston's LGBTQ film fest, *Wicked Queer*. Check the calendar to catch a gloriously awful straight-to-VHS flick on one of the theatre's raucous monthly Trash Nights. *40 Brattle St., 617-876-6837, brattlefilm.org.*