

SOCIAL LIFE

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in the hamptons with

**NICOLE
SCHERZINGER**

FASHION, BEAUTY
TRAVEL, ART
EXCLUSIVE GALA PHOTOS

DAY IN THE SOCIAL LIFE

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Mill House Inn

Some places never get old. The Hamptons can be counted among them. Let's start with the shoreline here. This area offers world-famous beaches: one of America's Gold Coasts along with Palm Beach and Malibu. Main Beach in East Hampton, for example, is routinely ranked among the top ten in the country, providing the perfect blend of nature and an expertly constructed man-made environment. Wealthy summertime residents flock to beaches that are protected by a conservation easement dating back over 300 years. This makes Main Beach a great place for star-spotting, since many actors often visit this sandy stretch for its idyllic setting within a small village. Towering sand dunes and blue water are irresistible. Then there's the actual village of East Hampton. Voted "America's most beautiful village" by *National Geographic*, the approach from 27 begins with a lovely block-long pond, flanked by rows of historical inns, green acreage, specialty boutiques and, of course, a landmark windmill or two.

East Hampton hosts us this weekend. Luxurious B&Bs and beloved historical homes sit beside chic boutiques along Main Street, with galleries, antique shops, museums, and premium restaurants all adding dimension and vibrancy. Palatial estates and sprawling retreats blend seamlessly with coastal scenery



Mill House Inn

expressed through beaches and fragrant wine vineyards, making for a sublime destination. Before settling in, we stop along the way at Smokin' Wolf BBQ. This casual spot features such mouthwatering goodies as BBQ pulled duck with sautéed mushrooms and Asian sauce. For a more American classic choice, there's smoked BBQ ribs or an all-natural half BBQ chicken. For a big appetite, the combination BBQ meat platter with two sides and corn bread is perfect. Pulled pork, brisket,

smoked sausage, pulled chicken, turkey, a quarter BBQ or a quarter roasted chicken make for a feast. We opt to eat outdoors and people-watch. It's a fun way to bring in the weekend. Next, we head over to Main Street and straight into the driveway of the Mill House Inn, a boutique destination open year round. Upon entering, we are immediately charmed by the welcoming staff, fully poised to make every wish come to life. The décor is pristine white furnishings with a casual beach vibe and is graced with antique furnishings.

We awaken on Saturday morning and take stock of the brisk air wafting in from our open window; just perfect for a stroll to the beach. Breakfast is included in our rate, and is an event here. The menu offers tasty and inventive choices, with a variety of berries, fresh yogurt, and fruits beautifully plated. There are a variety of teas and coffees, the latter brewed in a way that is unique to the inn.

The Mill House provides an easy map with a walking trail that leads directly to the beach. As a gift, the inn provides delicious snacks: cookies made on the premises, kale chips, artisan cheeses, and meats such as duck salami and select smoked meats. The walk does us good and afterward, we complement it with a yoga stretch at KamaDeva Yoga, where we could choose among a number of yoga styles that vary in their emphasis of poses. Owned and operated by one of this country's yoga pioneers, Jessica Bellofatto, the studio runs scheduled sessions at all yoga levels. We note that Jessica also offers the only Boga Yoga floating studio in the Hamptons, where classes are held on stand-up paddleboards and combine traditional yoga postures while floating in flat water. Being novices, we enjoy an open-level class and stretch it out.

We have worked up an appetite, but we would like to continue our health-conscious morning with clean eating. In that spirit, Babette's is a perfect choice for lunch. A fun and eclectic restaurant, organic, local and seasonal foods are served here, with a lively and social vibe adding to the fun. We sample the falafel plate with fresh hummus and taboule atop tomato, onion, cucumber, and organic greens, served with grilled garlic sesame pita crisps. It's fresh and bountiful. We add a grass-fed organic beef burger (hormone and antibiotic free) on a multi-grain bun with tomato, greens, pickles, and onion. We have trouble deciding on the many extras we can add to our burger, but settle on gorgonzola and avocado. Our burger comes with a side of steamed seasonal vegetables and a choice of brown rice or sweet potato fries. Iced cold watermelon mimosas are refreshing and sparkly. A gluten-free menu is available too.

After lunch, we drive over to East Hampton's historical



Mill House Inn

district and arrive at our next lodging spot, The 1770 House, an 18th-century inn located right on Main Street, but as private as can be. Obvious in this landmark's architectural restoration is the skilled craftsmanship of its owner, Hamptons luxury homebuilder Ben Krupinski. Enter to find eight beautiful guest rooms, most appointed with fireplaces and all with private baths, allowing for both relaxed comfort and extreme pampering. Original steep wooden staircases, exposed beam ceilings, a wood-paneled and book-lined parlor with cozy an-



Babettes

tique furnishings all complete the ambiance with polish and authenticity. An intimate in-house dining room adds character to the mix, decorated with cream curtains and walls and high-back rattan chairs with colorful cushions. On clear and sunny afternoons, step outside into the inn's natural sanctuary, replete with a garden patio and quiet sitting nooks, ideal for a lazy afternoon's cat nap. In the garden, alfresco seasonal dining is offered, set around a fountain, with patio seating, and perfectly manicured landscaping. A quaint carriage house with an upstairs loft is another option in lodging, ideal for a romantic getaway. The 1770's intimate tavern in the basement, serving gastro-pub fare, offers delicious bites on the premises. The executive chef, Michael Rozzi, has developed a fine dining menu of New American cuisine while the wine director, Michael Cohen, sees to perfect wine pairings.

Bostwick's Chowder House



For dinner, we crave Bostwick's Chowder House and delight in the fun décor. This space features a casual atmosphere with a seaside theme. Light colors, exposed wood, and accents like surfboards and beach art on the walls contribute to the laid-back ambiance. The outdoor area features several tables with market umbrellas for guests to take in the summer air while enjoying fresh seafood. The seafood is fresh and plentiful and we enjoy a feast of it, sharing steamers, corn on the cob, and an order of clams on the half shell. Starters include New England or Manhattan clam chowder and lobster bisque. Locally sourced fried oysters with remoulade sauce, baked stuffed clams, calamari, and steamed mussels round out the menu choices. Fried seafood favorites abound: clam bellies, clam strips, shrimp, fish and chips, oysters, and flounder. Fresh whole lobsters are always available, gleaming bright red and overhanging the serving platters, and served with hot drawn butter, corn on the cob, and coleslaw. Daily blackboard specials feature fresh fish entrées, such as potato crusted halibut, grilled tuna, and more. Desserts feature tall root beer floats



Baker House 1650

and fresh soft-serve ice cream. Domestic and imported brews, wine by the glass, and a limited selection of bottled wine are also offered. Taking in the last remnants of fresh air, we sit outdoors in the casual patio area. We enjoy some soft-serve ice cream and after we try to count the stars, we head back into town, anxious to experience our final lodging spot. The refurbished Baker House 1650, with its magical arched entryway, awaits us in its entire splendor. This boutique hotel is stocked to the brim with luxe and contemporary enhancements: flat screen TVs, Bose stereos, iPod docks, minibars, wireless internet access, L'Occitane toiletries, Frette towels and robes, two-person Jacuzzi tubs, and antique claw-footed tubs, with most bedrooms offering wood-burning fireplaces. A luxurious common living room with a large fireplace makes for great socializing. A fully appointed dining room and a well-stocked bar and library add dimension. The onsite Baker Spa has a Jacuzzi tub, steam shower, and sauna and offers everything from facials to massages. We sneak a dip in the infinity pool, a teaser to the beach swimming we will do later this season, then enjoy a power nap.

The next day is spent lounging at the beach, enjoying a strong sun. For dinner we visit the Highway Restaurant & Bar. Referred to by regulars and locals as an "upscale diner," the



Baker House 1650

vibe is friendly yet not in the least compromised by this. The menu is innovative: honest contemporary American food with a strong and interesting Thai influence. We enjoy Thai basil beef massaman curry with sweet potato, perfect on this crisp night. We are seated right in front of a crackling fireplace and the warmth radiates around us. Pork and shrimp summer rolls with sweet chili and hoisin sauces cut the heartiness of our main course. Kale salad with carrots, radishes, and a ginger soy dressing do the same. Grilled rack of lamb with pea and quinoa, tabouli, and mint tahina add dimension in flavor and texture. The Highway offers food to-go for home, beach, or catering.

On Monday, it's time to depart. Looking for lunch, we stop at The Clam Bar. The casual, summery atmosphere here is perfect for a quick stopover or for lingering over a nice meal with friends. Featuring tables with umbrellas and a bar area with stools looking into the open kitchen, the chef/manager, Brian Mooney, is happy to schmooze with you and discuss his beloved local oysters as well as catch-of-the-day fish. The clams on the half-shell, steamers, and oysters are iced and tasty. The specials board reflects what is coming off the boats that day. The lobster roll is signature and popular: overstuffed with fresh lobster meat. Fried clams are perfectly seasoned and not the least bit greasy. A slice of key lime pie finishes our meal nicely.

Tonight we will dine at Winston's. Veteran local chef Winston Lyons offers a Caribbean-centric menu specializing in seafood and steak. Upon our arrival, this spot is already bustling with return diners as evidenced by the delightful banter exchanged between guests and wait staff. If you're lucky enough to get here while soft-shell crab is still in season, try a dish of it perfectly spiced and sautéed with some fried plantains on the side, or the jerk chicken, fresh and juicy with just the right amount of heat. Winston's signature coco punch with Shellback spiced rum, Finlandia coconut, Chambord liquor, and orange and pineapple juices is smooth and cuts the heat nicely. For dessert, be sure to order the signature bread pudding, worthy of a visit all for itself.

With sated appetites, sun-drenched tans, and a bunch of memories, we plan our return trip back to East Hampton, Montauk, Westhampton, Bridge, and Sag.

As I said, some things never get old.



Highway Restaurant & Bar



Highway Restaurant & Bar



Clam Bar