

Find the Artist's Way at Black Point Inn



By Peggy Newland

I can't think of a better place to spend time than early spring at Black Point Inn. Surrounded by coastline and offering front row views of Western Cove and its white sand beaches, this is an escape that offers relaxation and an impression of staying inside a Winslow Homer painting. Especially if you take a stroll along the rocky paths that circle elegant Prouts Neck and come upon Homer's summer home/studio, which is now a member of Historic Artists' Homes and Studios, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

"There's an impromptu wine tasting this afternoon," a guest tells me as I'm checking in at the front desk. "On the sunset porch." I'm here for a relaxation weekend package and impromptu wine tasting sounds wonderful. After a tour of the Winslow Homer Studio.

I scheduled a tour through Portland Museum of Art which brings art lovers up close and personal to the brilliance of Winslow Homer's world—to his actual summer home. I'll be where Homer painted, surrounded by sea.

I hike past Checkley Point and meet up folks coming from Portland on PMA's "Homer Van." We are an excited bunch as we see the tiered studio, expansive lawns, and crashing surf over granite ledges. The wind chills our faces in an artistic way, and I feel like I'm one of the women in his paintings, hair and coats flying in the breeze by a tumultuous sea.

PMA was part of the renovation and restoration of this historic studio where Homer lived from 1884 until his death. Homer's Prouts Neck home is located on an outcropping of the Atlantic Ocean that offers up the sculptured power of the sea on granite and rock. He painted its roughness into the seafaring faces and saw it as beautiful, and as we walk the grounds, the waves seem to say, "look at me" and we do.

Unassuming in structure, simple in design, the second-floor balconies of

his studio bring the sea to his seclusion, with a focus on light. There are fireplaces with sitting benches, dark wood walls, and a simple bathroom with claw foot tub. The space illuminates peacefulness.

After the tour, I walk along the cliff line, the Atlantic thrashing on the right, elegant "cottages" on my left. The rocky path is filled with beckoning green patches over the granite slabs, and I sit often on rocks for views out to Richmond Island and Shooting Rock ledges.

Upon my return to Black Point Inn, I join the group for wine tasting as

we sit in seaside-facing chairs facing west to Pine Point Beach. Dinner that night is artfully inspired, multi-course plates of locally curated greens, cheeses, vegetables and "fresh caught" seafood. Think crab arancini with smoked gouda, fried whole belly clams, monkfish with artichokes, oyster mushrooms, and fennel. For dessert, of course it is wild blueberry pie upscaled with lemon ginger oat crumble, lemon curd and Chantilly cream.

I sleep with the windows open and listen to Homer's sea, taking in the breezes that might inspire a long summer in New England.



if you go

Black Point Inn, 510 Black Point Road, Scarborough, Maine. www.blackpointinn.com. 207-883-2500.

Come for the spring special rates and take in this artful getaway. Make sure to "walk the rocks" and see Homer's summer studio. Cuisine is locally sourced from local farms and fishing boats.

Portland Museum of Art, 7 Congress Square, Portland, Maine. www.portlandmuseum.org.

Winslow Homer Studio Tours are available April 2-November 8 and require reservations. Includes transportation to/from Portland Museum of Art, gallery visit, field guide, walking stick, umbrellas, binoculars, immersive installations, and time to explore the Cliff Walk surrounding Homer's Studio.