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# Boston Uncommon

Bust out a big time in superchic Beantown.

By Stephanie Davis Smith



Atlantans would do well to visit Boston. Take the similarities in temperament of the two towns: Both are baseball-obsessed, friendly to outsiders and packed with peeps sporting thick accents that others enjoy mocking (we'll take your "chowdah" and raise you a "y'all"). So whether you want to catch the Braves play the Sox or simply hit Boston's slick nightlife scene, head north in late summer or early fall knowing that, from hot hotels to icy bars, all bases are covered.

## Up Your Game

For the sports nut, it really doesn't get any better than a trip to Fenway Park. But while your posse is trying to scalp tickets, bunk at the **Hotel Commonwealth** in Back Bay, just steps from the ballpark. As hospitality's equivalent of a homerun, the hotel's Ultimate Bucket List package scores you overnight accommodations for two in the Baseball Suite (tricked-out in serious sports memorabilia);

two front-row tickets to a Red Sox game (facing the visitors' on-deck circle, no less); on-the-field VIP access to batting practice; a personal photo with the 2013 World Championship trophy; an overflowing welcome basket; and valet parking. (Yes, it starts at \$2,495, but with all the perks, it might as well be priceless.) Pre- or post-game, make new friends downstairs at hip **Eastern Standard Kitchen & Drinks** bistro, where you can enjoy upscale bites from the beautiful raw bar, as well as sample—sorry, have to!—wicked-awesome cocktails. The Commonwealth recently unveiled several other new themed suites—one fashioned after legendary rock club The Rathskeller (which once stood where the Commonwealth now is) and a high-ceiling urban artist's loft featuring local artwork. Major renovations in May mean that all 149 guest rooms were restyled



First-baseline seats at Fenway Park showcase the Green Monster.

by New York's Dash Design and is now Boston's only hotel to bestow each one with an in-room concierge app and tablet. How's that for connections? From \$288 per night, [hotelcommonwealth.com](http://hotelcommonwealth.com); [easternstandardboston.com](http://easternstandardboston.com); [@hotelcommonwlth](http://@hotelcommonwlth)



### Best Bites

If it's warm weather, outdoor dining is the way to go in Boston. The streets? Packed to the gills. South End hot spot **B&G Oysters**, from beloved Barbara Lynch Gruppo, is a hidden gem built into the side of a historic townhome. Along with lobster BLTs and a highly curated oyster list (Washington's Dabob Bays that sometimes make the menu are retrieved by divers who make a 30-foot descent to snag them) is a rockin' craft-beer lineup. All told, it's the perfect place for a boozy, I'm-on-vacation lunch. Smoked shrimp beignets with tomato sauce, bluefish rillettes and thin clam chowder with an unforgettable spicy crouton are the don't-miss appetizers. [bandgoysters.com](http://bandgoysters.com), [@blgrupp](https://twitter.com/blgrupp)

If you're near Beacon Hill, check out Cheers bar; the Boston Common; and, when hunger hits, swing by **Scampo**. Legendary chef Lydia Shire set up shop at the swanky Liberty Hotel (a former prison with, stay with me, loads of ambience) to show off her creative menu. In keeping with the behind-bars theme, Scampo means "escape" in Italian, but trust us, you won't want to leave—its handmade pastas shine. You also can't go wrong with a seasonal brunch including a croque madame with Gruyere, Muenster and Membrillo washed down with a refreshing Pesca (white peach puree and sparkling rose). [scampoboston.com](http://scampoboston.com), [@scampoliberty](https://twitter.com/scampoliberty)

On the other side of the law is a new offering on the Back Bay scene, **Precinct Kitchen + Bar**. Situated in the basement of the old city precinct, the bar is packed with the see-and-be-seen set. Blame the clam bake, with Wellfleet Cape Cod clams, PEI mussels and lobster, for the clamor. [precinctkitchenandbar.com](http://precinctkitchenandbar.com), [@loews\\_hotel](https://twitter.com/loews_hotel)



### Luxe Libations

For a truly unique experience, stop by for a Big Dig cocktail at **Frost Ice Bar**. Snuggle up in a complimentary fur-lined coat and sip from a glass made of the cool stuff at the world's largest permanent indoor ice bar. And while there's no hot food served here, The Silversmith cocktail with Old Ipswich Greenhead rum will warm you right up. [frosticebar.com](http://frosticebar.com), [@frosticebar](https://twitter.com/frosticebar)

Recently named one of the 25 Best Bars in America by *Esquire* magazine, **The Hawthorne** takes craft cocktails to the nth-degree of seriousness. Never-raucous, quiet pockets of people congregate in small groups throughout the space sipping on an ever-changing menu of stiff drinks made with the utmost care. Stop in for mild pre-gaming and down delish concoctions with out-there names like The Jungle Bird, The Tuxedo and Sleepyhead. Start the night right, we say! [thehawthornebar.com](http://thehawthornebar.com), [@bar500a](https://twitter.com/bar500a)



### Rooftop Revelry

If hunting for a funky crash pad, ubermod **The Colonnade Hotel** is a prime candidate. The four-diamond hotel in the heart of Back Bay just underwent a \$25 million makeover, giving its 285 rooms an artsy aesthetic that is more hip apartment than hotel room. And girls' night alert! Upstairs, The Colonnade boasts Boston's only rooftop pool, which hosts live music and happy hour when Mother Nature isn't in a mood. Downstairs is the hotel's anchor, **Brasserie JO**, a classic Parisian bistro perfect for date night, brunch or a power lunch. And, just like a proud baseball-crazed Bostonian, world-renowned French chef Jean Joho brings his A-game to this beloved eatery. From \$315 per night, [colonnadehotel.com](http://colonnadehotel.com), [@colonnade](https://twitter.com/colonnade)

### Hot Shops

Cynthia Rowley, Diane von Furstenberg, Kate Spade—need we go on? OK, the gang's all here! Fashionable **Newbury Street**, lined with beautiful Boston brownstones, plays host to every hot designer and retailer imaginable. And when we say "imaginable," we mean it—from high-end Burberry to cutting-edge Warby Parker to sexy La Perla, the historic street is lined with fabulous frocks, chic specs and lusty underpinnings. [newburystreetleague.org](http://newburystreetleague.org), [@newburystreet1](https://twitter.com/newburystreet1)