



Watery Scenes and Edible Greens

A Two-Day Visitor Itinerary On the Champlain Islands

Trip Summary

Maps and Guides

- [Lake Champlain Islands Map & Business Guide](#)
- [Lake Champlain Bikeways Booklet](#)
- [NFCT Map Section 4](#)
- [A Kayaker's Guide to Lake Champlain](#)

Paddling Options

- City Bay to Knight Island
- Alburgh/LaMotte Passages
- Circumnavigate "The Gut"

Other Recreational Activities

- Cycle tour Isle La Motte
- Fossil hunting in Fisk Quarry
- Beach time at Alburg Dunes

Local Farms

- [Allenholm Farm](#)
- [Snow Farm Vineyard](#)
- [Hacketts Orchard](#)
- [Island Farmers' Market](#)
- [Savage Gardens](#)
- [Darby Farm](#)
- [Pomykala Farm](#)

Places to Stay

- [Allenholm Orchard Suite](#)
- [West Shore Cabins](#)
- [Shore Acres](#)
- [Grand Isle State Park](#)
- [The Maples](#)
- [Ferry Watch](#)
- [North Hero House](#)

Where to Eat

- [South End Cafe](#)
- [Hero's Welcome](#)
- [Harborside Harvest Market](#)
- [Wally's Place](#)
- [Shore Acres](#)
- [Ransom Bay](#)
- [Blue Paddle](#)
- [Ruthclife Lodge](#)

Outfitters and Guides

- [Vermont Farm Tours](#)
- [Allenholm Farm](#) (Bike Rentals)
- [Hero's Welcome](#) (Boats)
- [Grand Isle State Park](#) (Boats)

Last updated 12/6/2012

No other place in Vermont is like the Champlain Islands!

With incredible scenery and a laid-back vibe, the Islands have long been a destination for visitors seeking to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life. At the same time, thanks to their rich soils and temperatures moderated by Lake Champlain, the region is home to some of the most productive farmland in the state. This itinerary provides a visitor with a guide to making the most out of the paddling, cycling, hiking, and local food experiences the region has to offer. Have a great trip!



Evening Arrival



Make the most of a two day stay by arriving the evening prior.

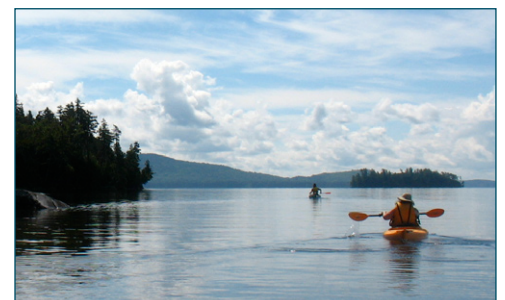
There are several overnight accommodations available. Budget travelers should look to [The Maples](#), with its pleasantly simple cottage rentals, [West Shore Cabins](#), five cozy bungalows on the shores of Lake Champlain, or the endearing [Ferry Watch Inn](#), a historic B&B with a private beach in Wilcox Cove.

Want to experience a farm stay? Reserve Pam and Ray Allenholm's "[Orchard Suite](#)" and enjoy the entire first floor of their home overlooking a beautiful apple orchard. Looking to splurge? Guests staying at [North Hero House](#) or [Shore Acres](#) are rewarded with high class accommodations and private beaches. Happier in a tent? Three of the island's ten Vermont's State Parks ([Grand Isle](#), [Woods Island](#), and [Knight Island](#)) accommodate overnight stays, and offer everything from cozy cabins to remote, boat accessible only campsites.

For an affordable evening out, pack a picnic desert and ride as a passenger on an "sunset cruise" aboard the double-decker [Champlain Ferry](#), which makes the trip between Grand Isle and New York's Cumberland Head every fifteen minutes.

Morning Kayaking On "The Lake Between"

With over 100 miles of shoreline, beckoning coves, stony beaches, and cedar-lined cliffs, the islands are a kayaker's paradise. With sweeping view of the Adirondack Mountains to the west and Vermont's Green Mountain to the east, you'll quickly realize why the Abenaki's word for the waterway means "the lake between".



Consider paddling the 6-mile loop from North Hero's City Bay out to Hubbard Point and around Knight Island. Another choice is to circumnavigate "The Gut," a scenic bay dividing Grand Isle and North Hero. Alternatively, launch from Alburg Dunes state park and explore Alburg Passage and the protected eastern shore of Isle La Motte. Plan to spend 2-4 hours for any of these trips. Need a boat? [Grand Isle State Park](#) or [Hero's Welcome](#) have kayaks available for rent. **A word of caution:** Lake

Champlain can quickly become wind-swept and choppy, be sure to check the [Lake Champlain Recreational Forecast](#) before embarking on a trip, and stay within your skill level.

Afternoon Farm and Winery Visits

It is worth spending an afternoon exploring the rich local ag scene. A good starting point is the [Champlain Islands Farmers' Market](#), where vendors set up shop at Grand Isle's St. Joseph's Church on Saturdays, from 10am-2pm, and at South Hero's St. Rose of Lima Church on Wednesdays from 4pm-7pm. The market hosts an impressive range of local vendors selling fresh vegetables, fruits, grass fed beef, free-range eggs, artisan breads, pies, hand spun yarns, and hand crafted jewelery.



Next, stop in at the [Allenholm Farm](#), situated on a 300-acre orchard in operation since the 1870s. With twenty different apples varieties to chose from, visitors are invited to "pick their own" from mid August through October. Warning: their freshly baked pies are irresistible! If you are traveling with kids, be sure to stop by the farm's petting paddock, home to Wille and Sassafra (donkeys) and Fergie (a Highland Cow), among other colorful characters. Not to be outdone, [Hackett's Orchard](#) (across the road) hosts 47 varieties of apples, as well as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, cider donuts, and hot apple crisp.

If fermented fruit is more your thing, swing by South Hero's [Snow Farm Winery](#). Vermont's first commercial winery, the business has received national acclaim for its ice wine, made from grapes harvested while still frozen. In addition to offering wine tastings, the vineyard hosts a popular free music series every Thursday evening, with acts ranging from classical performances to classic rock jam-fests.

Pressed for time? Make an abbreviated farm visit by swinging by the [Savage Garden's Farm Stand](#) in North Hero. This small, diversified farm is noted for its organic veggies, fruits, pastured chickens, and free-range eggs. Prefer a guided tour? Connect with Chris Howell, owner of [Vermont Farm Tours](#), whose highly recommended customizable bike tours combine memorable farm, vineyard, and art studio visits in a 10-25 mile loop.



Morning "Cycling Through Time" In Isle La Motte

Fuel up with breakfast at the [South End Café](#), whose cooks make the most out of the local foods the region has to offer, and **get ready for a morning of exploration on Isle La Motte!** Part of the ancient Chazy Reef, the island is world famous for its 480-million year old fossilized corals. Bicycling is a wonderful way to explore the island. Consult the [Lake Champlain Bikeways Guide](#) to help plan your ride. If you need to rent bikes, inquire at [Allenholm Farms](#).



A 12-mile ride combines sweeping views of the Adirondacks with geologic explorations at the [Fisk Quarry](#) and the 81-acre [Goodsell Ridge](#), two nature preserves that permanently protect the island's fossilized artifacts. Please remember that while quiet observation is encouraged, fossil collecting is strictly forbidden.

Afternoon Beach Loafing

A visit to the islands wouldn't be complete without some **bonafide beach time**. Finish your trip by stretching out in the sun at [Alburgh Dunes State Park](#), a little known gem that is home to a half mile long natural sand beach - one of the longest in the state!

