



# Shenandoah Surprise

By Kelly Magyarics, DWS

A tranquil inn, creative cuisine and world-class wines await in this region that's a pleasant drive from Washington, D.C. Get away for a weekend (or longer) in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.

Retreating to a bed and breakfast in the country may in itself bring on a sense of calm inner peace, but The Inn at Vacluse Spring ([vaclusespring.com](http://vaclusespring.com)) takes it one step further. Located in Stephens City about a twenty-minute drive from Winchester and situated on a property bearing its namesake spring, the inn is also a place where you can attend morning mindfulness classes and occasional weekend-long mindfulness programs. Co-owner Tiffany Niide (who owns and operates the inn with her husband Derrick), is a former physician who's practiced mindfulness in her personal life for years; a few years ago she hung up her stethoscope, the two moved from Hawaii to Virginia and the former doctor now focuses on giving guests a relaxing stay and (if they choose) a little stress relief. Its Manor House was built in 1785 by a Revolutionary War captain, and painstakingly restored in 1997. Today the house has two dining rooms, two sitting rooms, a fireplace and a porch with rocking chairs that are just begging for you to kick back with at the end of the day with a companion, a cheese plate and a bottle of wine. If you

are feeling social, book one of the six rooms in that Manor House (the Jones Room has a queen-sized four-poster bed, two remote-controlled gas fireplaces and two-person Jacuzzi-tub shower, while the Strother Room has morning sunrise views.) Need a little more privacy? The rustic chic Cabin by the Pond is a converted tobacco barn with antique pine construction and exposed log walls and beams, the Mill House Studio is situated near the spring and the spacious Gallery overlooks the pool. Mornings here begin with coffee or tea and a three-course breakfast prepared by Derrick; gingerbread scones or lemon-raspberry coffin cake might be followed by seasonal fruit topped with garden mint and an egg roulade filled with corn and basil and topped with yellow tomato coulis, or a fluffy rolled omelet with crispy prosciutto.

Wineries dot this entire region, which will definitely put you in the mood to swirl, sniff and sip, so on the drive to the inn stop at Linden Vineyards ([lindenvineyards.com](http://lindenvineyards.com)) in Linden. Owner and winemaker Jim Law is a legend in the Virginia wine industry and his offerings are unbelievably well-made. Taste through his portfolio including mineral-driven, ageworthy, complex yet fresh Hardscrabble Chardonnay and his refined Rosé, a blend of several Bordeaux grapes. In Upperville, Slater



Run Vineyards ([slaterrun.com](http://slaterrun.com)) has a brand new facility with a handsome tasting room and lots of outdoor space. Winemaker Katell Griaud hails from Southwest France and is able to lend French restraint to showy New World grapes. The winery's entire lineup is memorable, especially two semi-sparklers made in the pét-nat style and a cabernet franc tinged with red plum and strawberry.

Continue piquing your palate at the intimate, low lit Crush Wine Bar ([thecrushwinebar.com](http://thecrushwinebar.com)) in Winchester, where you can sink into a plush sofa and peruse a wine list which runs 110 options deep and is presented on an iPad that categorizes them several different ways. (Trust us, it's incredibly addictive to browse.) General manager Tom Donegan has a list of ready-made flights of four one-ounce pours to whet your whistle like red blends and sparkling wines; if you are feeling more confident about what you want, order a DIY flight (yes, there are Virginia wines on the menu). All pours are meant to work

