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Delaware Is The New York City Escape You Didn't Know You Needed

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New York City is great for the hustle and bustle of real life, but when it's time to relax, it's so nice to get outta dodge. There are numerous destinations within a few hours from the city — Jersey, the Catskills, Connecticut — but don't count out a quick weekend retreat to Delaware. One of the oldest states in the country, this historic destination is both surprisingly regal and delightfully charming. Less than two hours on the Amtrak from Penn Station will bring you right into the heart of downtown Wilmington, home of the famous Du Pont family, the iconic Nemours Estate and gardens, and of course, the **Hotel Du Pont**(<http://www.hoteldupont.com>).

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STAY

The Hotel Du Pont, which opened in 1913, is home to all the grandeur and elegance that one expects from a European getaway, but thankfully, it's much more accessible. With imported chandeliers, hand-carved wood and mosaic flooring, the structure itself oozes sophistication, with twelve stories of rooms. From the illustrious Gold Ballroom to the decadent Green Room, each locale within the hotel rivals the next.

Over 200 generously-sized rooms are housed within the property, complete with luxury accommodations like flat screen TVs, wireless internet, robes, a mini bar, nightly turn down service and a lovely bathtub. Over the years, the Hotel Du Port has played host to a plethora of noted celebrities and royalty, including Amelia Earhart, Norman Rockwell, Reese Witherspoon, former President George Bush, and many more.

One of our favorite spots inside the hotel is the Green Room, the hotel's signature restaurant, where you can enjoy breakfast in the mornings, afternoon tea, or lunch or dinner. The stunning room is reminiscent of the Gilded Age, with golden chandeliers, a piano, and an oak-beamed ceiling. We recommend stopping by for afternoon tea on Wednesdays or Saturdays, where your choice of tea will be accompanied by scones, pastries and sandwiches that you will long remember.



EXPLORE

Wilmington is a perfect central location in Delaware, giving visitors easy access to all of the area’s wonderful attractions. Located right in the city, **Nemours Estate**(<http://nemoursestate.org>), is home to a vibrant mansion and gardens that were once owned and operated by Alfred duPont. The scenic estate houses the largest formal French gardens in North America, and visitors can take tours of the mansion and grounds. Nearby, another beautiful duPont mansion and gardens are worth a visit. The **Winterthur Museum Garden and Library**(<http://www.winterthur.org>) in Winterthur, Delaware, was owned by Henry duPont, and is now home to a museum of American decorative arts, as well as a 60-acre garden. The house itself is a sight to behold, with old storefronts and street lamps nestled between floors that make you feel as if you’re standing outdoors in 1900s London. Right now, they are even housing an exhibit entitled *Costuming The Crown*(<http://www.winterthur.org/exhibitions-events/exhibitions/thecrown/>), which showcases all of the outfits and costumes worn in the hit TV show “The Crown.”

A quick drive will bring you to **Longwood Gardens**(<https://longwoodgardens.org/>) in nearby Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Founded by Pierre du Pont, this property is home to a gorgeous display of horticulture, with a dazzling fountain show, greenhouses, an orchid house and even a must-try restaurant. 1906 Restaurant at Longwood Gardens has a surprisingly delicious menu and their innovative desserts should definitely be on your agenda.



DINE

While there are plenty of dining options within the Hotel Du Pont, it’s also worth exploring the restaurants within walking distance while you’re in town. **Bardea**(<https://www.bardeawilmington.com>) is an Italian gem in downtown Wilmington, and even has a James Beard nomination for best new restaurant under its belt. If you enjoy trying out the local beers, stop by **Stitch House Brewery**(<https://www.stitchhousebrewery.com>), which has many fun options with even funner names (think *Friends with Benefits* and *My Neck, Maibock*). **Merchant Bar** (<https://www.merchantbarwilmington.com/>)is another lively option serving up Mexican gastropub fare.

So while Delaware may not be a state that’s at the top of your bucket list, we can attest that it’s just the right spot to go to get out of the bustling city.

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