

# Leaving New Hope Behind

**S**ituated between New York City and Philadelphia, **Bucks County, Pennsylvania**, is a country refuge with hip New Hope at its core. But beyond the crowded shops and pricey restaurants lies unspoiled countryside, a rich literary heritage, and, yes, plenty of sophistication. Base yourself at the Barley Sheaf Farm Estate and Spa, where old playbills, photographs, and suites with names like *The Man Who Came to Dinner* pay tribute to former owner, playwright George S. Kaufman. Outside are inviting rose gardens, meadows, and perfectly placed swings. When relaxation gives way to hunger, follow York Road for dinner at JustEat By BrownGold, an inviting bistro serving up rustic Italian and French fare, much of it grilled.

Nearby Doylestown is home to the county's key cultural attractions. The "Mercer Mile" is a complex of poured concrete built by industrialist Henry Chapman Mercer in the early 20th century. At its core is his home, Fonthill, and the Mercer Museum, stuffed with American artifacts like early metalworking and agricultural tools, a Conestoga wagon, and

even an antique fire engine suspended from the ceiling. The James A. Michener Art Museum showcases Bucks County impressionists. The Pearl S. Buck House in Perkasié, about 13 miles northwest, is a rare woman-focused National Historic Landmark. The author's books, correspondence, and Nobel and Pulitzer prizes are interspersed among the screens and wall hangings she acquired while traveling through Asia.

Bucks County's 607 square miles are rich, too, in scenic treasures. Two highlights: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve and Ringing Rocks. The first, just outside New Hope, is an ever-changing woodland of Pennsylvania native species. The latter, in the northernmost part of the county, features a huge field of stones that, when struck, emit a distinct bell-like ring.

—JOANN GRECO

**LOGISTICS:** For general information, [www.buckscounty.travel](http://www.buckscounty.travel). Barley Sheaf Farm Estate and Spa, [www.barleysheaf.com](http://www.barleysheaf.com); from \$250. JustEat By BrownGold, [www.justeatbybrowngold.com](http://www.justeatbybrowngold.com), is open for dinner only. Pearl S. Buck House, 215-249-0100. Mercer Museum, [www.mercermuseum.org](http://www.mercermuseum.org). James A. Michener Art Museum, [www.michenermuseum.org](http://www.michenermuseum.org).



In Bucks County, country-road pleasures still lean toward the unspoiled and uplifting.