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SundayTravel

WITH: NEW ENGLAND DESTINATIONS
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New England Travel VERMONT



More than 200 varieties
of vegetables fill the
Kelly Way Gardens at
Woodstock Inn &
Resort.

WOODSTOCK INN & RESORT PHOTOS

A growth mind-set

Former concierge planted a seed and an idea took root. The result is Red Barns at Kelly Way Gardens.

By Diane Bair and Pamela Wright

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

THREE YEARS AGO, Benjamin Pauly was leaving his job as the concierge at the Woodstock Inn & Resort in Vermont. He wanted to work as a landscape architect, or horticulturist, or maybe start a small farm. The Midwest-born young man, with an architectural degree, was ready to pursue a dream.

Right place, right time.

"We didn't want to lose him," says W. Courtney Lowe, director of sales and marketing at the inn. "He's a great kid, really smart and a hard worker."

So, the Woodstock Inn & Resort, owned by the Rockefeller Foundation, offered Pauly a half-acre of pasture land on the site of a former dairy and horse farm, and the title of master gardener. Why not? The Foundation had a lot of land, and a lot of buildings at its disposal, including two barns that were being under-utilized as storage bins. And Pauly, when asked what his dream job would be, and what it would take to keep him, had come up with a plan that sounded feasible — and exciting.

"It was an experiment," Pauly says of the garden. "But it's working."

Today, more than three acres of rolling landscape have been transformed into rich, organic gardens, supplying produce, fruits, flowers, herbs, and honey to the historic, 142-room Woodstock Inn & Resort. The gardens are filled with more than 200 varieties of vegetables, 50 varieties of herbs and edible flowers, 75 varieties of fruit, 200 varieties of flowers, a mushroom glen, and beehives. The old barns have been refurbished, too, largely by Pauly and Rhys Lewis, the resort's executive chef, along with staff volunteers.

"Rhys took one look at the big barn and he knew what he wanted to do," says Pauly.

Lewis had formerly led culinary demonstrations and hands-on classes at Colonial Williamsburg, and Pauly, who grew up on a farm in Minnesota, had a passion for gardening. The team was formed, and the plan was hatched (and executed).

The newly renovated Red Barns at Kelly Way Gardens, housing a large, rustic-chic dining room and a state-of-the-art demo kitchen, will open May 1 for the first time. This spring, Pauly and Lewis will offer

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At the Woodstock Inn & Resort, master gardener Benjamin Pauly (left) supervises Kelly Way Gardens. The newly renovated Red Barns at Kelly Way Gardens houses a large, rustic-chic dining room (above) and a state-of-the-art demo kitchen overseen by executive chef Rhys Lewis (right).





New gardens bear fruit for Woodstock resort

► **BARN**
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guided garden tours, afternoon teas, themed dinners, classes, and tastings.

The setting, about a mile from the resort, is gorgeous, overlooking the resort's picturesque golf course. Beds of herbs, produce and flowers are terraced into the hillside, flanked by stone walls and bordered by open fields and a lush valley. There are mountain peaks in the distance. A cobblestone walk leads to the main barn. Inside the massive farm structure are soaring wood rafters, sugar maple and white pine floors and walls, and seat-

ing for up to 44 guests at long, wood tables, made from reclaimed wood. There's a gleaming, new professional kitchen in the back of the barn, fronted by a long, maple countertop. Open shelves are filled with custom-made Vermont pottery and Simon Pierce glassware.

"We tried to use stuff that was around the resort," Pauly says of the barn renovation. "The backsplash is from a butternut tree that was harvested on the property long ago and was stored in the barn. The maple countertop is from a defunct local bowling alley."

The gardens are open to the public, Tuesday through Sunday. Guided tours will be offered throughout the summer and fall including The Kelly Way Gardens Five Senses Tour, a 45-minute guided walk through the culinary and cutting gardens (Thursdays, 3 p.m., starting June 7) and the Enjoy Slow Tea in the Garden (Tuesdays, 3 p.m., July-September), featuring organic herbal tea brewed with plants from the

The Kelly Way Gardens at the Woodstock Inn in Vermont spread across three acres.

garden and honey from the bees. A series of special garden tours and tastings will also be offered, like Amazing Asparagus (June 23), Lettuce Entertain You (June 30) and Marvelous Mushrooms (July 7).

If you're looking to improve your gardening skills, check out workshops, like Seasonal Cut Flowers (May 19), Planning and Planting for a Great Gardening Year (May 26), A Tasty Terroir: Soil and Nutrient Density (June 2), Planting for Beneficial Insects and Pollinators (June 9), Perennial Producers in the Culinary Garden (June 23), and more. And, Lewis will lead a series of

Art of Cooking Classes, teaching fundamental cooking techniques.

The Red Barn Dinner Series begins July 8, when Pauly and Lewis prepare a meal showcasing the bounty of Kelly Way Gardens and local producers. The dinners will be held on Sundays throughout July and August.

A summertime farm-to-table dinner set in the Vermont hills, overlooking a dream garden, sounds like a fine evening to us. For more information, visit www.woodstockinn.com.

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