

TRAVEL

Skillcations trend: Learn to cook, golf or sculpt on vacation

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You can take a variety of courses like ceramics at Snow Farm in Williamsburg, Massachusetts. Credit: Candace Morgan Hope

By Sheryl Nance-Nash

[Special to Newsday](#)

Updated March 5, 2026 1:37 pm

A vacation isn't only about sand and surf. The [2026 Hilton Trends Report](#) found that 72% of travelers want to take time off to explore a personal passion, skill or a hobby. Increasingly, people are seeking a skillcation — time away that's also a learning opportunity, be it cooking, a language, art, archery or any number of things. What's better than focusing on your passion and coming home with the know-how to continue the practice?

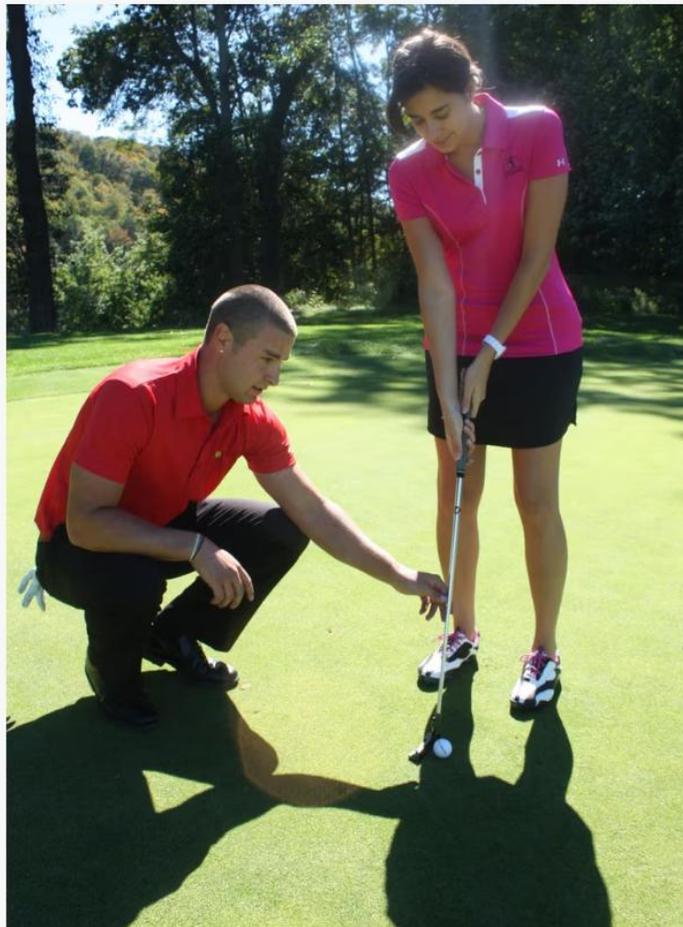
Here are a few of the best skillcations in the Northeast.

Practice your swing at Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort

100 Shawnee Inn Dr., Shawnee on Delaware, Pennsylvania

DRIVING DISTANCE FROM LI: About 2 hours away

[Road Scholar](#), a nonprofit travel program, is all about learning, offering many educational programs. If your interest is golf, Road Scholar's program at the historic Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort might be ideal for you. Set in the mountains, with a river and much greenery, the PGA professionals at Shawnee's Tillinghast Golf Academy will share their expertise on everything from the basics and techniques, as well as the game's history, etiquette and rules.



Practice your golf swing at Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort. Credit: Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort

Get instruction and practice each morning, play nine holes during the afternoon and take advantage of a bonus master class, private 30-minute lessons and more.

- **COST** The six-day retreat starts at \$2,449, and includes experiences, accommodations and 13 meals. Beyond the green, relax in the resort's spa, visit the ShawneeCraft Brewery or see a performance at the Shawnee Playhouse.
- **MORE INFO** 570-424-4000, shawneeinn.com, roadscholar.org

Learn to cook at Ocean House

1 Bluff Ave., Westerly, Rhode Island

DRIVING DISTANCE FROM LI: About 3 hours away



Ocean House's Center for Wine & Culinary Arts' culinary team and sommelier-led programs include hands-on cooking classes and wine tastings in the resort's wine cellar. Credit: Chip Riegel/Chip Riegel/Ocean House

This AAA Five Diamond seaside resort set on a bluff is intimate and a must-visit for foodies looking to refine or start developing their culinary expertise. The resort's Center for Wine & Culinary Arts' culinary team and sommelier lead programs include hands-on cooking classes and wine tastings in the resort's wine cellar. Classes range from a variety of topics, like sauce basics, fresh pasta and New England shellfish, one-pan wonders to Uncorking the Americas, Bubbles All Around the World and more. When you're ready to get out of the kitchen there's plenty else in town. Ride the Flying Horse Carousel, the oldest operating carousel in the U.S., visit the Watch Hill Lighthouse, shop and dine on Bay Street and walk the Napatree Point Conservation for birdwatching and a chance to see seals.

- **COST** Rates vary per season. Currently nightly rates are \$650.
- **MORE INFO** 401-584-7000, oceanhouseri.com

Try ceramics at Snow Farm

5 Clary Rd., Williamsburg, Massachusetts

DRIVING DISTANCE FROM LI: About 3 hours and 30 minutes away

Spend a week in the Berkshires for a full-throttle creative immersion. This residential craft school offers workshops in nine studios, including glassblowing, flameworking, ceramics, fiber arts, metal smithing, jewelry, woodworking and mixed media. Cottages have full kitchens. You'll have exclusive use of a studio 24/7 and access to all the tools and equipment. Venture off site to the nearby Black Birch Vineyard, hike the forest at Petticoat Hill and explore geologic formations and trails at the Chesterfield Gorge.

- **COST** \$1,800 for cottage and classes.
- **MORE INFO** 413-268-3101, [snowfarm.org](https://www.snowfarm.org)

Make a masterpiece at Little Falls Pottery Retreat

273 Dillenbeck Rd., Little Falls, New York

DRIVING DISTANCE FROM LI: About 4 hours away

The serenity of Pangaea Farms is a perfect backdrop for an experience that includes clay throwing wheel in the studio building, daily instruction, house clay, raku kiln, where your pieces are glazed. Proudly take home the treasure you create. You can prepare meals in the facilities' fully equipped kitchen. You have unlimited access to the studio to make magic with clay. If you have time, visit Canal Harbor and Rotary Park. Canal Place in downtown is home to the Little Falls Antiques Center with its vendors.

- **COST** \$1,500 for this 4-night, 5-day retreat that includes a private cabin.
- **MORE INFO** 845-235-3304, [littlefallspotteryretreat.com](https://www.littlefallspotteryretreat.com)

Go fly-fishing at Woodstock Inn & Resort

14 The Green, Woodstock, Vermont



Take a lesson on fly fishing with an Orvis Endorsed guide at The Woodstock Inn & Resort in Woodstock, Vermont. Credit: Woodstock Inn & Resort

DRIVING DISTANCE FROM LI: About 4 hours and 30 minutes away

The AAA Four Diamond Resort's Passion Pursuits program gives guests the opportunity to learn and delve into their interests. Fly-fishing is one of the outdoor pursuits offered. From beginners to seasoned anglers, there are a number of lessons and excursions. Maybe you're a rookie, learn to fly cast at the Activity Center Lawn, where all equipment is explained and provided. Get instructions on fishing knots and more. You can also get schooled about fly-fishing while on the water with an Orvis Endorsed guide who teaches casting knots, flies and strategies. Learn how to set the hook, play and land the fish, and safely release it back to the wild. For those more advanced, a small stream fishing trip is available and requires hiking and casting around boulders with small rods and light tackle. You can also get a customized fly-fishing experience. Woodstock is home to the Billings Farm & Museum, the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, boutiques, bookstores, art galleries and more.

- **COST** Prices vary on classes and excursions. Room rates at the Woodstock Inn & Resort start at \$359 in the spring.
- **MORE INFO** 800-448-7900, woodstockinn.com

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