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Time

Three Easy Getaways For Summer

Francesca Donner and Meghan Casserly 05.01.09, 6:15 PM ET

Eat ...

Santa Monica, Calif.

There aren't too many places in California that can be enjoyed on foot, but Santa Monica is one of them. And it's unexpectedly perfect for food lovers.

Shutters on the Beach (www.shuttersonthebeach.com) is an exquisite hotel with thoughtful creature comforts, including snuggly beds, overstuffed sofas and ocean-view tubs.

If retro sexy is the name of your game, the Huntley's (www.thehuntleyhotel.com) oh-so-hip decor is perfectly California chic. The Penthouse serves up food and drinks overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

If you're up early, walk through one of Santa Monica's farmers markets (various locations, www.smgov.net) to start your day.

Once you've worked up an appetite, head to BreadBar (www.breadbar.net) for a salmon omelet or freshly baked scones. If it's later in the day, stop in for a salad or sandwich or pick up a loaf of oven-fresh artisanal bread to snack on.

Burn off some calories with a yoga class (you are in California after all). Stop by Bryan Kest's Power Yoga (www.poweryoga.com) where payment for classes is on a donation basis. (Suggested donation: $12.)

For dinner head to Michael's (www.michaelssantamonica.com), a local favorite that's been dishing up California cuisine since 1979. Newer to the scene is Rustic Canyon (www.rusticcanyonwinebar.com), which serves "farmers-market-inspired" dishes and wine from boutique wineries around the world.

In the evening catch a flick at the Aero (www.americancinematheque.com), a restored vintage movie theater built in 1939. Nightly shows of Hollywood classics cost only $5 to $7 per person.

Visit Angelato's Café (www.angelatocafe.com) anytime for gelato in grown-up flavors like mandarin ginger and some not-so-grown-up ones like blue bubble gum.

In Pictures: Eight More Getaway Ideas

Explore ...

The Berkshire Mountains, Mass.

From festivals to museums to historic homes to antiquing, the Berkshires have plenty of activities that will keep you busy from morning to night.

Play country house at the Blantyre, (www.blantyre.com) a 24-room hotel on a vast estate complete with cottages and carriage houses. Meals are served in the oak-paneled dining room. (Male diners are required to wear suit jackets and ties.)

The Wheatleigh's (www.wheatleigh.com) ornate Italianate facade belies the 19 bedrooms and suites that are refreshingly light and airy. The hotel's exquisite restaurant overlooks the Berkshires and by itself is worth a visit.

For those seeking New England restraint, the Old Inn on the Green (www.oldinn.com) in New Marlborough offers plenty of

charm without too much fuss.

Time to go exploring: The Mount, Edith Wharton's home (www.edithwharton.org), was built in 1902 and is surrounded by three acres of formal gardens.

In nearby Stockbridge the Norman Rockwell Museum (www.nrm.org) houses the largest collection of the artist's original work in the world.

For an all-day outing, grab a picnic from Nejaime's Wine Cellars (various locations; www.nejaimeswine.com) and spread out on the lawn at the Jacob's Pillow dance festival (www.jacobspillow.org) or unwind while listening to the Boston Symphony Orchestra's summer season at Tanglewood (www.bso.org).

Between cultural stops you'll need some refreshments. Stop by the SoCo Creamery (www.sococreamery.com) just off Lenox's Main Street for old-school cones, frappes and floats. Pearl's restaurant (www.pearlsrestaurant.com) is good for a lobster roll and a glass of wine.

Relax ... Savannah, Georgia

There's a lot about Savannah that's just plain good--good food, good weather, good people.

The city's one-of-a-kind architecture, dreamy gardens and laid-back culture make it the perfect place to escape life's frantic pace.

The Hamilton-Turner Inn (www.hamilton-turnerinn.com) is one of the city's chicest bed and breakfasts. Built in 1873, the house overlooks the equally elegant Lafayette Park.

Avia (www.aviahotels.com) is not your typical Savannah hotel. Housed in a modern block, the sleek rooms downplay Savannah's occasional tendency toward the frilly. Hit the hotel's wine bar for pre-dinner drinks.

Elizabeth on 37th (www.elizabethon37th.net) serves award-winning cuisine that uses local seafood, seasonal produce and house-grown herbs. Bonus: The restaurant is housed in a Victorian mansion.

Kick up your heels at Uncle Bubba's Oyster House (www.unclebubbas.com), part of Food Network star Paula Deen's empire. Shrimp and grits are a stalwart on this menu along with oysters--char-grilled, steamed, straight up--and pecan pie for dessert.

If you like to get your fingers messy, Desposito's is the place to go. Known chiefly for crab, it also serves up steamed, boiled and fried shrimp and oyster dishes.

Want to learn how to cook Southern-style? Head to the 700 Kitchen School on Forsyth Park (www.mansiononforsythpark.com) and try your hand at whipping up crab-stuffed eggs at the school's "low country" classes (about $90 per person).

If you're looking to get out of the city, head for the islands off Georgia's coast. Tybee Island is a 20-minute drive from Savannah and is chock-full of seafood shacks and long stretches of beach. If you decide to stay, check in at Mermaid Cottages (www.mermaidcottages.com).

Farther south, Little St. Simons Island is hard to get to but well worth the effort. Stay at the Lodge for unparalleled pampering amid unspoiled nature (www.littlestsimonsisland.com).

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