

Escape



GILDED-AGE

GLAMPING

*Revel in the days of yore at the ultra-luxurious
“Great Camp” retreat, The Point*

BY PAUL RUBIO

Flash back to the late-nineteenth century, to the height of the Gilded Age, when prominent families like the Vanderbilts, the Astors, the Carnegies, and the Rockefellers were shaping a young United States of America through business, society, and politics. Beyond the hubbub of New York City and the rapid industrialization of the Northeast, the expansive, towering forests and emerald lakes of the Adirondack Mountains promised natural splendor, pure air, and serenity—the ideal locale for escaping city grime in favor of rural simplicity.

Wealthy industrialists eagerly developed estates—affectionately referred to as “camps”—along the Adirondacks’ lakeshores, erecting craftsman-style log mansions, cabins, and boathouses sculpted from native materials and often etched in iconic twig work. Inside,



TAKE IN MANY
WONDROUS VIEWS OF
UPPER SARANAC LAKE
AT THE POINT.

Escape



GUESTS CAN FIND SOLACE AT THE POINT'S BOATHOUSE, CHAT WITH FRIENDS ON THE DOCK, AND ENJOY LIBATIONS IN THE GREAT HALL.



they filled these rustic retreats with the riches from the (then) modern world like plush mattresses, ornate chandeliers, fine china, artwork, taxidermy, lavish refrigerators, and copious staff.

As this blue-blood real estate trend ignited, the "Great Camp" era commenced, presenting the first harbingers of American "glamping." During this time, William Avery Rockefeller built one of the Adirondacks' foremost camps along the craggy shoreline of Upper Saranac Lake as a personal summer retreat for his influential family and inner circle. Now, more than a hundred years later, this retreat has been transformed into The Point, an intimate, five-star resort that mingles history, nature, and luxury.

Little has changed at The Point since William Avery Rockefeller's day, and that's a good thing. The compound's four log buildings maintain their original rustic grandeur and house just 11 guest rooms. Interiors are replete with period furnishings (think: antique writing desks, chaise lounges, and roaring stone fireplaces) and peppered with veritable Rockefeller relics (though the mammoth designer bathtubs are definitely a more recent addition).

Guests are treated to the ultimate in pampering and service as The Point recreates the hospitality experience and utter romance of a time gone by. No request is too great, no whim too fanciful. All that's required of the guest is

to relinquish ties to city life (say goodbye to cell service and WiFi) and embrace the notion of indulgent escapism—the all-inclusive, adults-only policy will help.

An endless pour of superb Champagne or fine wine waits at every turn—on arrival, in-room, at the wooden bars strewn across the property, and even at nooks such as Camp David, a tiny cabin for respites while exploring The Point's extensive network of nature trails. Meals are designed as hours-long leisurely events for enjoying excellent food, stimulating conversation, and the magnificent surrounds. Expect extravagant lakeside barbecue lunches—two-dozen gourmet selections isn't uncommon—and elaborate, formal, multicourse dinners in the tradition of the Rockefellers.

Arrive with a bit of haute couture in tow. Guests are expected to dress to the nines nightly, especially on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, when black tie is requested. Before dinner, anticipate a sunset cruise on the resort's vintage wooden boat or cocktails in the Great Hall, schmoozing with fellow guests and photographing these timeless moments.

By day, The Point's forested lakeside grounds are a wonderland for active pursuits, from waterskiing and hiking in summer to snowshoeing and ice-skating in winter. But like the jet set of the late-nineteenth century, today's Point guests are less likely



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A LAKESIDE SUMMER SUNSET; A FULLY STOCKED LEAN-TO BAR; THE BOATHOUSE; PISTACHIO CAKE; HEIRLOOM CARROTS WITH MAPLE-SMOKED SALMON; AN INTIMATE MEAL ALONG UPPER SARANAC LAKE.



to complete a rugged five-hour hiking trail than a 20-minute one ending in Champagne and a picnic lunch. In this vein, The Point's boathouse carries an equal number of mahogany electric inboards and canoes so guests can explore Upper Saranac Lake as they choose. Likewise, staff is happy to organize afternoons of croquet, badminton, tennis, or horseback riding. You can always opt for simplicity and create memories from the comfort of a hammock under the forest canopy.

In a time when luxury travel has become all too polished, contemporary, and predictable, The Point looks to the past to create one of today's most experiential resorts. You can be sure William Avery Rockefeller would approve. (800-255-3530, thepointsaranac.com) ◀◀

