

Atlas

September 2019

Explore the world with Etihad Airways

Food awakening
The chefs
mixing it up
in Mayfair

**Beauty and
the beast**
In search of
bison in Belarus

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Designs for life

*Why New York's creatives
have left the city to make
home in upstate Hudson*

**Seven-day
wonders**
Fashion week's
best buys

Sari not sorry
The designer
redefining
India's dress code

Editor's letter



Alex Barlow
Editor

One of my friends at college took herself off to New York one year, alone, just to see it – just because. “So how was it?” I asked, on her return. “Amazing, obviously.” “So, what did you do?” “Well, nothing, really,” she replied. “I was there. That was enough.”

Ever since, I’ve been aware that there are some cities in the world where you don’t need much of a to-do list to make a visit worthwhile, even amazing; just being there is enough. For me, the list includes Tokyo, London, Hong Kong and, depending on the weather, Paris. Oh, and Brussels (no, really).

Still, the ultimate city where just turning up is 80 per cent of the ride, has to be New York: the energy, the spectacle – just taking a walk along Fifth Avenue or sipping an espresso at

Grand Central Station is all it takes to make you really aware that you’re in one of the world’s great cities. No wonder, then, that many visitors don’t venture beyond NYC itself. But that’s a mistake: as our cover feature this month shows, growing communities of creatives upstate have revitalised old towns, meaning there’s never been a better time to explore outside the Big Apple. Our favourite stop? Hudson. Find out why on page 44.

Elsewhere, we’re in London for a reappraisal of one of the city’s swankiest dining-out districts. You might think that Mayfair is all prim and proper; you’d be mostly right. But a new wave of restaurants are opening up the city’s priciest postcode with more approachable eats (page 54).

Enjoy the flight.

This month's contributors



Jimi Famurewa

As the lead food critic of the *Evening Standard Magazine*, there are few London gourmards read more widely than this *Atlas* returnee. Who better, then, to tell us how Mayfair has been rebooted as one of the city’s coolest districts for dining out (p 54).



Phil Fisk

A London photographer who shoots regularly for *Observer Magazine*, Phil welcomed six of the West End’s hottest chefs to his East End studio for the same feature on the new Mayfair restaurant scene. And, yes, that *is* a real octopus in the photos – it did all its own stunts.



Tyler Wetherall

NYC-based author of *No Way Home: A Memoir of Life on the Run*, her account of growing up with a fugitive father, Tyler writes regularly for *The Guardian* and *CN Traveller*. For her *Atlas* debut she visits the creative community of Hudson, upstate New York (p 44).

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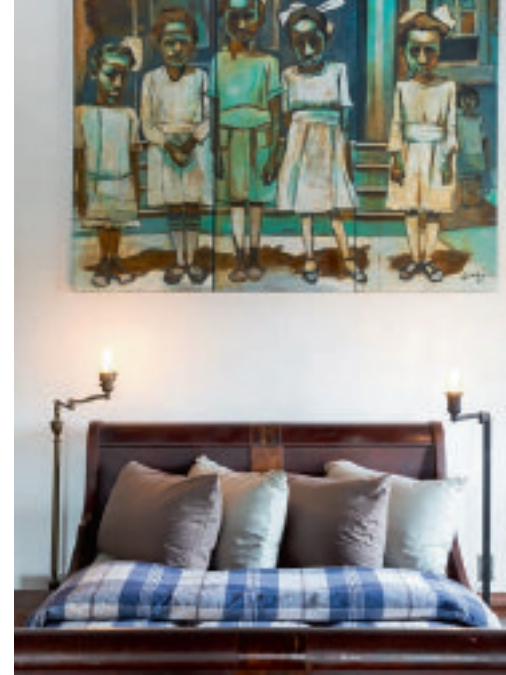
On the trail of wolves, bison and owls in Europe’s last primaevial forest – Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park in Belarus



ARTISTS IN

Known as “Brooklyn in the country”, why has the small, upstate town of Hudson





RESIDENCE

become such a lure for New York's creatives? By *Tyler Wetherall*





It's happy hour in The Spotty Dog Books & Ale. Shoppers amble through the aisles of poetry and politics, as locals emerge from their nearby studios to converge at the wood-paneled bar for a craft IPA. Everyone, it seems, knows everyone else; and, if they don't, they're soon brought into the fold. Myself included. I meet Sherry Jo Williams, a curator-designer, and over a few rounds of \$5 sake, she effusively introduces me to each friend that walks in the door. Soon, like so many others before me, I imagine myself moving here from Brooklyn. Hudson exerts this powerful pull on certain people; it's a place where artists come to visit and never leave.

Williams first visited in 2011. "When I got off the train in the dead of winter, I knew immediately in a visceral, inexplicable way," says Williams, her eyes bright and animated. "There's a vibe here. I

call it, 'the Vortex?'" She moved to Hudson a month later and went on to open culture+commerce project, a design gallery and store, now operating online, and is a founding member of the annual Design Hudson festival.

The spontaneity of her decision is commonplace here. Part of Hudson's appeal is its proximity to New York, but in this historic 18th-century whaling town, the architecture alone – Greek Revival, Beaux-Arts, Queen Anne – can enchant, as can the epic backdrop of the Catskills. With such bucolic vistas, it's hard to imagine the heaving metropolis of Gotham, as New York is known, is so close.

The eight blocks of Warren Street, Hudson's central artery, are packed with galleries, antique stores, restaurants and boutiques selling small batch face oils, locally cured salmon and hand-made jewellery. New Yorkers sardonically refer

Above, from left Appropriate visitors outside The Spotty Dog; Finch stocks vintage and contemporary homewares



to it as “Brooklyn in the country” – for its shared emphasis on artisanship, sustainability and style – but these same New Yorkers flock here each weekend. Hudson offers the perky charms of a small town, alongside the cosmopolitan pleasures of a city larger than its 7,000 inhabitants. It’s a semi-rural idyll, bursting at its handwoven seams with artists, makers and a grassroots creative economy that just keeps growing.

The train deposits visitors in the middle of the track in front of the original red-brick train depot from 1874, after a hypnotic ride alongside the lush green banks of the Hudson River. The conductor places a small step stool out to help people down. It feels like arriving at an outpost from a previous century, an impression affirmed by the weathered grandeur of the old houses with their colourful shutters and towering columns.

I check into the family-run Wm. Farmer & Son’s Boarding House & Barroom, which occupies three beautifully renovated 19th-century buildings near the station. The design is rustic yet plush: pale grey, plaid and hand-picked antique furnishings, peddling a deeply appealing pastoral fantasy. On the mantelpiece

of the gas stove fireplace in my suite there’s a *Guide to Canning, Freezing, Curing & Smoking Meat, Fish & Game*, facilitating my daydream of one day buying a 200-year-old farm here and learning to make cheese.

I take a stroll up Warren Street, where people stop to greet one another. I fall into step with a fabulously dressed 22-year-old pop-performance artist called VeMilo (short for Venus de Milo, obviously). He’s wearing a kaftan, leopard-print slippers and a studded collar. He came to Hudson for the weekly open-mic night at Club Helsinki and stayed.

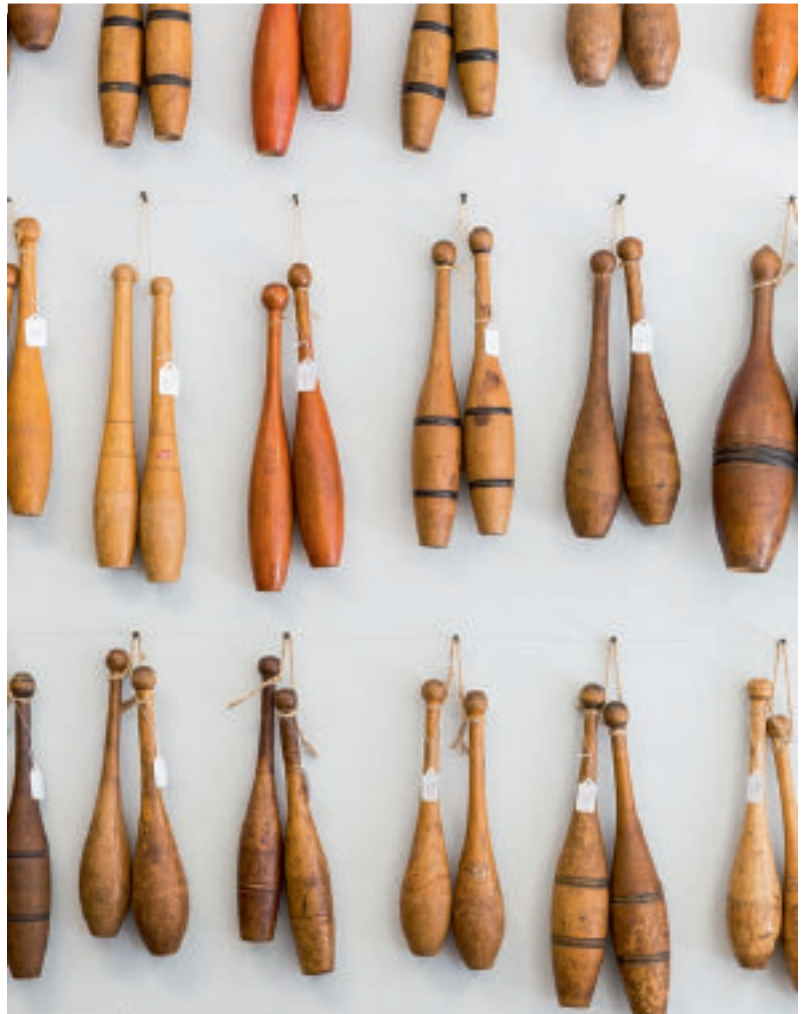
“Hudson kind of seduced me,” he says, as we stroll slowly in the muggy July heat. “It became my purpose finding people who were like me, but also finding folks who weren’t like me and cherished my creativity.”

Many of the shops double as studios. The ethically produced geometric textiles at Minna are designed in the back of the shop. The sewing >

Above, from left
Curator-designer
Sherry Jo Williams;
Hudson’s main
thoroughfare
Warren Street



From left Cocktail hour at Lil' Deb's Oasis; cold comforts at Grazin' diner; the room at Wm. Farmer and Sons; plus, the hotel's street entrance





From left The entrance at River Town Lodge; pins at Neven & Neven Moderne; inside arts venue Basilica Hudson; wheels to rent at River Town Bikes

machine at showroom LikeMindedObjects is put to use making recycled denim jackets and jeans by designer Enkyu. Artemesia stocks the Hudson “uniform” – pale linen jumpsuits, clogs and sun hats – and owner Wendy Akroyd can often be found tweaking designs in her workshop behind the counter.

“Hudson has been good to me,” she says, a refrain I’ll hear again and again. Over the weekend, galleries throw open their doors, and the gallerists are on hand to talk about the art – or where to find the best swimming hole in this heat.

I stop in Hudson River Exchange, a contemporary crafts pop-up selling work from a rotating collective of Hudson Valley makers. Co-founder Stella Yoon – who also moved here spontaneously after a weekend visit – began the venture as a weekend market, but it quickly grew, galvanising the local

maker community and creating commercial opportunities to sustain their practice. “We’re so used to consuming at the pace we do with things like Amazon. Here, you can have a relationship with the things you own and get to know the people who make them,” Yoon says, showing me around the breezy pop-up. She points out a whimsical dish shaped like a fried egg. “How does this not make you smile? And it’s not anonymous; you know you’re supporting this artist.”

It sounds idealistic, but so much of what happens in Hudson is. There is an inherent optimism in moving to a small town to pursue one’s dreams, and with so much of America divided, what’s happening here feels hopeful. Before I leave, I buy a T-shirt from Christin Ripley, hand-printed using a 16th-century Turkish method of marbling with seaweed.

Artist-led initiatives like Yoon’s abound, from Drop Forge & Tool, a few doors up, offering craft workshops and artist residencies, to the recently launched River House Project, which reclaimed a 1,765sqm schoolhouse to create state-of-the-art

Below, from left Stella Yoon of the Hudson River exchange; vintage goods at Hudson River Exchange; pasta-burrata and the bar at Fish & Game

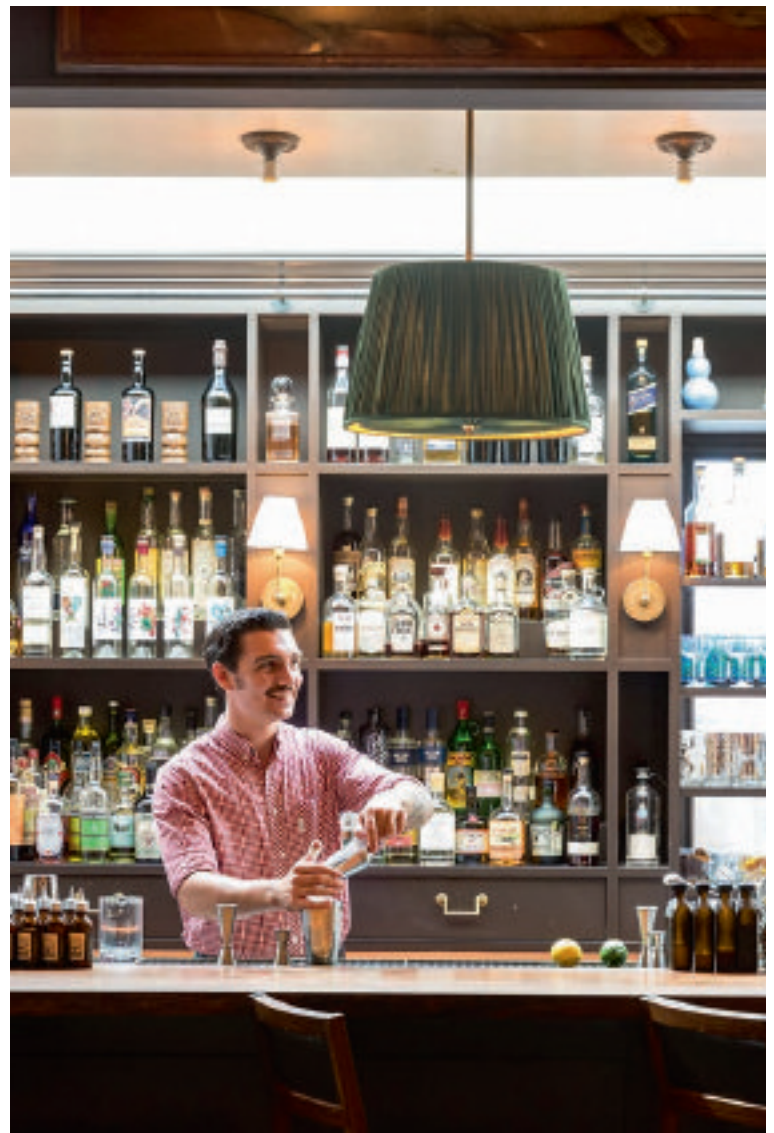


work studios. Hudson Valley has long beckoned artists. In the 19th century, the Hudson River School embodied the first distinctly American art movement. The nearby homes of Thomas Cole and Frederic Edwin Church are now museums. Warren Street became a hub for antique dealers in the 1980s and, ever since, Hudson has undergone a faltering ascent, weathering recessions and the boarded-up shopfronts they brought.

In 2011, several events accelerated this growth, including the arrival of Etsy's customer care centre in a 19th-century mill and artist Marina Abramović's plan to build a \$15-million art institute here. She later abandoned the idea, but it put Hudson on the map. The same year, Melissa Auf der Maur, once a bassist for Hole and Smashing Pumpkins, and her husband, artist-filmmaker Tony Stone, renovated a glue factory near the train station, transforming it into the thriving cultural venue Basilica Hudson.

The foodie scene grew in tandem. I have dinner one night at Fish & Game, cherishing my perfectly delicate black bass while a taxidermy goose looks down on me. The restaurant earned multiple national awards for its locavore tasting menu, setting the culinary bar high in Hudson. The biggest opening in recent months is undoubtedly The Maker. The 11-suite hotel and gym is due to launch this November, but the Parisian-style corner cafe and lounge are already doing steady business. The bar is a sumptuous Gatsby-esque >

"Hudson is a big mix of freaks doing their freaky thing"





affair in an 1850s carriage house where I enjoy a pale pink-gin cocktail and French fries decadently dipped in duck-egg aioli topped with Ossetra caviar.

Needless to say, gentrification has occurred and is marching through town apace. Warren Street does not represent the entirety of Hudson. Beyond the rehabbed buildings and the self-conscious boutiques, the city struggles with poverty. The 20 per cent of Hudson's residents living below the breadline benefit little from the tourists who file through adoringly.

However, the small business owners and artists I speak with are impassioned on the subject of their city, such as Shannon Greer and Charlotta Janssen, a multi-talented couple I meet at The Spotty Dog.

They bought a former hat factory across the street and turned it into what is now The Hudson Milliner, a guesthouse and art salon. The ambitiously restored property is decorated with Greer and Janssen's work, a pleasing contrast between his playful, bright animal photography and her narrative-driven political paintings. They also have a restaurant in Brooklyn, Chez Oskar. "Your vote counts here," says Janssen, as we talk about the level of civic engagement. "You ask, how can I be a better member of this community and protect what gives it character and makes it wealthier, and I don't mean in a financial way."

Above, from left; Cafe patisserie in The Maker Lounge; The Maker's pastel array of cocktails; Finch's owners, Andrew Arrick and Michael Hofemann; hand-painted porcelain at Finch

EAT

Talbot & Arding

A provisions shop with a curated bounty of farmstead cheese and fancy artisan goods, as well as a daily-changing deli menu.

Lil' Deb's Oasis

It would be easy to be distracted by the maximalist aesthetic if the tropical comfort food wasn't so outstanding. Order the *ceviche del día*.

Le Perche

A 17-tonne wood-burning brick oven imported from France is to thank for the perfectly crisp croissants and fluffy pastries in this boulangerie-meets-bistro.

Fish & Game

The ace, James Beard Award-winning locavore tasting menu and impressive wine list here put Hudson on the culinary map.

DRINK

The Half Moon

Casual and unpretentious, this neighbourhood dive bar has a line-up of incredible live music, from Nigerian avant-garde rock to Southern blues.

The Spotty Dog

This bookstore-bar hybrid in a historic former fire station is the happy hour hangout. They also host regular live events.



42.2529° N, 73.7910° W
HUDSON, NEW YORK



From 18-27 October, the US Embassy and the US Consulate in the UAE bring you **Discover America 2019**. The trade promotion campaign will highlight the strong partnership between the United States and the United Arab Emirates, providing a platform for US companies to showcase their products and services. The focus of #DA2019 will be mobility, an exciting lens to view US opportunities and prospects in the region. From travel and tourism through personal mobility and digital connectivity, to autonomous cars and logistics, there are opportunities for everyone to participate. Join us in October during your visit to the UAE to #DiscoverAmerica WithUS!



Despite rising rents, young people still gravitate here, with many choosing to bypass the expense of big cities altogether. “Previously you needed to be in an urban space to have a community and create a name for yourself, but now [with social media] you can be anywhere,” says Carla Perez-Gallardo, who, along with Hannah Black, both artists-turned-chefs, opened Lil’ Deb’s Oasis, where I dine on my final night. On an unassuming street in the less gentrified part of town, Lil’ Deb’s is a kitsch wonderland of bright colours and neon lights, as much art installation as restaurant. It also acts as an informal gathering place for the young, diverse and progressive crowd of Hudson – and anyone else who

comes for their “tropical comfort food” (which earned them a James Beard Award nomination). “It’s a big mix of freaks doing their freaky thing,” Perez-Gallardo adds. When the entire hospitality world seems “curated”, Lil’ Deb’s offers something delightfully DIY; I’d move to Hudson just for their grilled octopus and sweet plantain.

After dinner, I head to The Half Moon, a dive bar that was shuttered for 15 years until Hudson’s recent revival. Lady Moon and the Eclipse play, a local band who left to make their name in Brooklyn, and everyone tells me it’s going to be “a show”. They’re not wrong. As I sway amid the beaming throng to Lady Moon’s cosmic soul, I consider missing my train home tomorrow, and I realise this is what Sherry Jo Williams was talking about in The Spotty Dog. I’ve fallen head first into the Vortex. ■

✈️
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SHOP

The Maker Lounge

Sensual and sumptuous, every detail in this cocktail lounge has been carefully considered, no less the classic cocktails. The food menu is inventive and equally decadent.

Finch

From mid-century icons like Eames “Rocker” chairs to Art Deco barware via fine art, this tasteful edit of vintage and modern homewares comes courtesy of two ex-Brooklynite fashion world high-flyers.

SLEEP

Wm. Farmer & Son’s

The boutique guesthouse strikes a balance between chic and cosy, with fires, clawfoot tubs and endearing antique details. The restaurant, bar and coffee shop are favourites among locals.

The Hudson Milliner Guesthouse & Inn

Run by a creative couple whose work decorates the walls, each of the four guest suites in this 19th-century townhouse impress with original features and antique furnishings.

Rivertown Lodge

A movie theatre turned 27-room hotel with a vintage motel vibe. Rivertown’s Tavern is also popular as a weekend brunch and cocktail spot.