

6 Captain Lindsey House Inn, Rockland, Maine

The quintessential mid-size New England inn, gracious in amenities, severe in architecture. Its success is due in equal part to romance and no-nonsense Yankee practicality. Once the home of a 19th-century sea captain (this is where the romance comes in – I often wonder if there were any New England homes *not* built by dashing sea captains), the Lindsey's rooms feature handsome, unfussy, traditional furnishings, and each has internet access. Communal rooms have fresh flowers, plenty of decent reading material, chessboards and a guests' computer.

The continental breakfast is better than average (one of the owners is a cookbook author), and drinks in the afternoon – alcoholic or not – are a nice touch. What sets the Lindsey apart is its sea-faring hosts: Ken and Ellen Barnes are both retired captains themselves (they restored and sailed the historic, 22-passenger schooner Stephen Taber, which still plies the seas).

□ *Captain Lindsey House Inn, 5 Lindsey Street, Rockland, Maine 04841 (001 800 523 2145, www.lindseyhouse.com). Close to Maine's Penobscot Bay (Midcoast region) and the Farnsworth Museum (www.farnsworthmuseum.org), one of the country's best small museums of American art. Nine double rooms; rates from £46.*