



www.HistoricInnsOfRockland.com

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**ROCKLAND INNS CREATE MARKETING CONSORTIUM TO ATTRACT VISITORS
FOR OVERNIGHT STAY AND PLAY**

Historic Inns of Rockland work in partnership with the community

Rockland, ME – Perhaps nowhere does the phrase “A rising tide floats all boats” ring so true as in the coastal town of Rockland, Maine. While the tides of tourism ebb and flow throughout Maine, a tenacious group of Rockland inns calling themselves the Historic Inns of Rockland, Maine, have set out to buck the tide and the recent headlines that Maine tourism is flat. Working together to market the Rockland vacation experience, members of Historic Inns of Rockland, Maine, have put many of their own individual marketing priorities aside for the betterment of cooperatively attracting attention to Rockland’s premier inns and vacation experiences. Made up of historic properties including Captain Lindsey House, Granite Inn, Berry Manor Inn, and LimeRock Inn, the Historic Inns of Rockland, Maine, are working closely with local businesses and the Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce to collectively attract vacationers to Rockland through public relations campaigns, creative marketing, a wedding consortium, a central reservation line, enticing events, a collective eco-initiative and a highly charged and informative website. For their efforts to promote tourism and their support of non-profit organizations from the region, the Historic Inns of Rockland received the 2007 Annual Community Service Award from the Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce.

The core of the Historic Inns of Rockland's cooperative marketing effort is in their website, www.HistoricInnsOfRockland.com. From here, guests can connect to each of the individual inns' websites, learn about Rockland's attractions and seasons, research the many packages and events offered by Historic Inns of Rockland, and gather information about the inns' wedding facilities. Travel media are offered profiles of each of the inns, press releases and a full photo library. The group also distributes a video library with B-roll for broadcast journalists. Visitors can access room-by-room availability for the four inns as well.

To build shoulder season visits, the Historic Inns of Rockland have created a number of events and special packages. Debuting in the worst blizzard of the winter January, 2005, the group launched the annual Pies on Parade Inn-to-Inn Tour to commemorate National Pie Day in January. Next year, the event will be held January 24, 2010 (minus the blizzard) and each event takes in a weekend package including pie tastings and demonstrations, along with overnight stays. Over the past five years, this event has raised more than \$20,000 for the Area Interfaith Outreach Food Pantry and Fuel Assistance Program.

To boost visits during June, Historic Inns of Rockland launched the Lobsters, Luxury and Lighthouses package, combining the three most appealing attributes of a stay in Rockland. Similarly, a package combining overnight stays with historic tours and discussions, geared entirely toward the baby boomer and 55+ traveler will be offered in September.

All four Historic Inns of Rockland are Maine-certified Hospitality Environmental Leaders. The list of eco-friendly practices for the group is long. From recycling and composting to use of bio-fuel, buying locally and a gift of a reusable shopping bag to each guest, Historic Inns of Rockland are working collectively to educate and reward guests for their eco-friendly practices. Packages offer \$50 in free gas for 50+ travelers staying midweek and traveling to Rockland by carpool.

The result of these efforts? Historic Inns of Rockland have hosted more than 80 travel media and their guests over the past few years. The media outreach through a coordinated PR campaign and the press room on the website has attracted a host of writers to visit. Journalists from the Boston Globe, Woman's Day Magazine, St. Louis Post Dispatch and North



Photo Caption: Travel writers wearing signature lobster hats pose with innkeepers at a recent media dinner hosted by Historic Inns of Rockland in partnership with community businesses.

American Inns & Resorts, Examiner.com, Working Woman Magazine and more have printed articles. A producer from the new High Definition Outdoor Channel filmed a segment, and the Food Network declared Rockland “America’s Pie Town” when filming a story about Pies on Parade, and the Berry Manor Pie Moms. Media from the popular Frommers.com, BudgetTravel.com, GoNomad.com, Lovetripper.com and TravelStoriesMagazine.com have sent stories far and wide via the Internet. In 2007, the ghost stories from the Historic Inns of Rockland appeared on the TODAY Show and the Wall Street Journal. Stories have already appeared in such magazines as Coastal Living, Saveur, Yankee, and Home & Away and in newspapers including Maine Sunday Times and Boston Globe, Coral Gables Gazette, Boston Herald, NY Daily News, USA TODAY and more.

The real story, however, is how businesses from throughout Rockland have come on board to help in the effort to market the Rockland experience. Restaurants including Amalfi on the Water, Café Miranda, Primo, Rustica, Lily’s Bistro and In Good Company have offered meals to travel media; food purveyors including Atlantic Bread Company, Rock City Roasters, The Pastry Garden, the Wine Seller, Toast of the Town and Rocky Bay Brewers helped in offering food for media dinners. Captain Jack’s Lobster Cruises took travel journalists out to teach lobster lore on Penobscot Bay; Monhegan Boat Lines took them on Puffin Cruises; and, the schooners A Morning in Maine and Bugeye Jenny Norman showed off the harbor and coastline from the sea. In his busiest hours before the opening of the Maine Lighthouse Museum, Bob Hastings, former Director of the Rockland-Thomaston Chamber of Commerce and the new Maine Lighthouse Museum, offered personalized tours to guests and media; All Aboard Trolley Company, The Farnsworth Art Museum and Wyeth Center, and the Owl’s Head Transportation Museum have come on board offering personalized tours as well.

Businesses throughout the community have contributed to this effort and the Historic Inns of Rockland have put their own identities aside to promote Rockland to achieve positive results. Already, many visitors have participated in packages offered by the Historic Inns of Rockland. and many dollars have been spent within the community by people enjoying the shopping, museums and local attractions.

Who says Maine tourism has to be flat? Rockland’s resurgence doesn’t stop with its downtown district. Through the efforts of a dedicated group of inns and partner businesses, tourism in one Maine town is flourishing. For more information on Historic Inns of Rockland, Maine, visit www.HistoricInnsOfRockland.com or call 1-877-ROC-INNS (877-462-4667).

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