

Perfect Day in Vermont

October is

one of the privileges of living in Vermont (some would say it makes up for March). So we asked seven writers from the Green Mountain State what they would do on a perfect day in the best season of the year.

YANKEE
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Mount Mansfield's summit was a good place to begin their own Long Trail.

Peak Experience

A mountaintop setting for a momentous question.

I WAS IN AFRICA'S KALAHARI DESERT when I dreamed up the perfect setting for my autumn outing in Vermont.

I was back only a week when in mid-October I whisked my girlfriend away from her job in Boston. We headed north and were soon winding through Vermont's technicolor Green Mountains. "Where are we going?"



We stumbled down the mountain giddily, a bottle of champagne having lightened our step. A few hours later we were sitting in the woody, intimate dining room of Le Cheval d'Or. This incongruous gourmet French restaurant resides in the small town of Jeffersonville, in the shadow of Vermont's highest mountains. Our elegant five-course meal in the restored Windridge Inn was complemented by a bottle of wine, aperitifs courtesy of the chef, and starstruck talk of the future.

We were married nine months later and now live within view of

Sue persisted.

Suddenly rock walls shot up around us. We had reached Smugglers Notch, the craggy,

gloomy, secret passageway through the highest part of the Greens. We parked the car and began a deliciously slow ascent of the Long Trail. My heart raced; Sue

Dinner at the Windridge Inn's Cheval d'Or in Jeffersonville.

lay the lush cloak of autumn, which was starting to succumb to winter's insistent prodding. I popped the question on bended knee on the summit.

wondered why we had come so far.

We reached the top of Mount Mansfield in a stiff breeze. Below us

Mount Mansfield's summit.
— DAVID GOODMAN

Essentials: *The Long Trail begins 1/2 mile past Spruce Peak parking lot on the left-hand side on Route 108. Smugglers Notch Resort, 800-451-8752 or 802-644-8851. Le Cheval d'Or, dinner only, 6-9, closed Wed., reservations recommended, 802-644-5556.*