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Bucolic and sparsely populated, Litchfield County, in Connecticut's northwestern corner, is less trodden than the Catskills, Hudson Valley or "out East," on Long Island, with nary a big box store or traffic jam in sight. While unspoiled nature, agriculture and slower pastimes like hiking, camping and antiques are draws, its small villages and artistic enclaves are increasingly home to chic shops, modern galleries and, as of this past year, new hotels. You may see a famous face out and about — the fashion designer Diane von Furstenberg, actor Meryl Streep and writer Malcolm Gladwell are among those with retreats in the rolling hills — but locals are conditioned to provide anonymity. This itinerary focuses on some of the more central towns like Litchfield, New Preston and Kent, but, whether dining on fresh trout or immersing yourself in art, there are miles and miles to explore.

Kent, about 17 miles west, has been associated with art since 1923, when nine painters and illustrators established the [Kent Art Association](#). The nonprofit remains a community anchor, regularly exhibiting local talent and hosting gatherings. From there, cross to the other side of Route 341 for more modern offerings. [Kent Barns](#), a complex of about a dozen buildings and restored barns, is home to [Craven Contemporary](#), which focuses on photography; [Kenise Barnes Fine Art](#), representing emerging and mid-career artists; and [Peggy Mercury](#), a hybrid Pop Art gallery and beauty boutique. About a quarter mile farther up the road, you'll hit [Morrison Gallery](#), whose 24-foot-tall ceilings are ideal for sculpture, such as Alice Aycock's spiraling aluminum piece, "Cyclone," and oversize abstract canvases by the Connecticut artists [Jonathan Perlowsky](#) and [Cleve Gray](#).