

48 HOURS IN

BODACIOUS BOSTON

The anti-preppy guide to the bluest of blue-blood meccas.
By SHIRINE SAAD

Boston is no longer all puritanism and Ivy League, though the legendary seafood platters still abound. On your next trip to this East Coast metropolis, check out avant-garde art, sip made-to-measure cocktails in underground bars and shop cool in concept stores.

DAY 1

10 a.m. How many prisons do you know that have Frette sheets? Check in and accept the welcome champagne coupe at The Liberty Hotel, the city's liveliest hot spot. Formerly the Charles Street Jail, the hotel has revamped its interior with a chic, urban touch. With four restos and bars, including star

chef Lydia Shire's Scampo restaurant, and a stunning view of the Charles River, your weekend is sure to be romantic *and* cool. (215 Charles St., 617-224-4000, libertyhotel.com)

11 a.m. Isabella Stewart Gardner built her palazzo-style museum to house her collection of opulent Chinese antiques, Italian Renaissance-master paintings and John Singer Sargent portraits. Be sure to take a break from the galleries to admire the museum's lavish garden. (280 The Fenway, 617-566-1401, gardnermuseum.org)

2 p.m. Finally, time for a decadent seafood lunch! Stroll the hip South End and stop by Barbara Lynch's B&G Oysters, where you can choose from 12 types of the molluscs from the raw bar. Chase your selection with a delicious lobster roll, a favourite of local foodies. (550 Tremont St., 617-423-0550, bandgoysters.com)

4 p.m. Maybe you won't get to see every one of the 450,000 works at the Museum of Fine Arts, but make sure you spend some time in the comprehensive contemporary-art section, browsing works by Mona Hatoum, Chuck Close, Bridget Riley and Takashi Murakami. (465 Huntington Ave., 617-267-9300, mfa.org)

8 p.m. You rarely hear sounds as perfect as those at Symphony Hall—its design was fine-tuned by a Harvard physics professor. Enjoy a superlative classical concert among the ravishing neo-classical architecture. (301 Massachusetts Ave., 617-266-7575, bso.org)

9 p.m. Commission a bespoke cocktail at Drink, a new Barbara Lynch lounge »



ABOVE: RINGO STARR BY RICHARD AVEDON, 1967, AT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS. BELOW: THE MISS WORLD COMPETITION BY MARLENE DUMAS, 1983, AT THE INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART



PHOTOGRAPHY: CORN STREET, BOSTON; BY ERNST WILBA/PHOTOLIBRARY; RINGO STARR COURTESY THE RICHARD AVEDON FOUNDATION; PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON



INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

in the über-cool Fort Point area. The “mixers” ask you to choose a liquor, then whip up a unique concoction from scratch. Down yours while nibbling on foie gras lollies, quail brochettes and quince confit. (348 Congress St., 617-695-1806, drinkfortpoint.com)

DAY 2

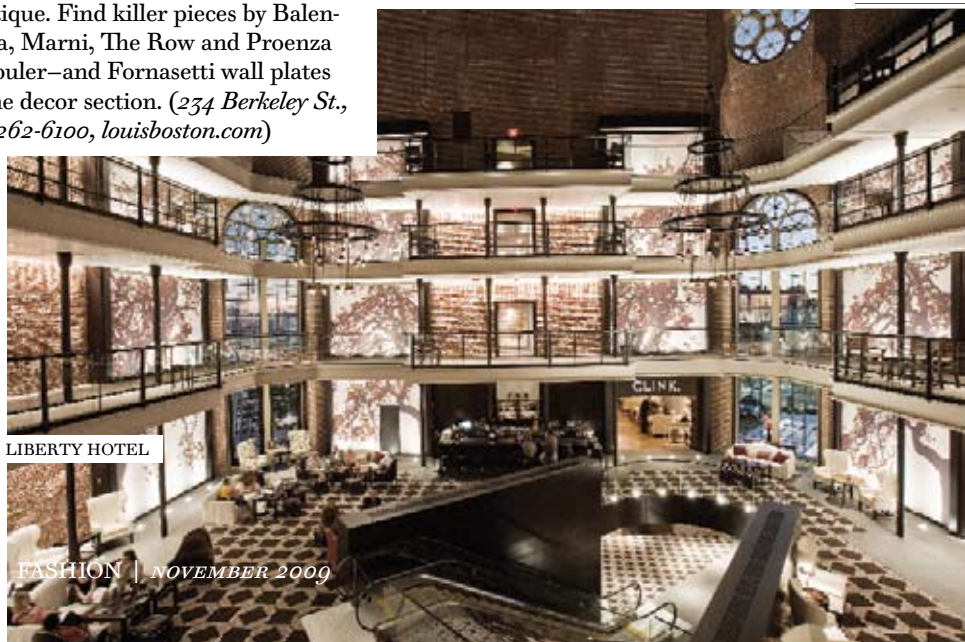
12:30 p.m. Champagne. Eggs Benedict. More oysters. Live jazz. What better way to start the day? At Beehive, a former boiler room turned casual resto that has held on to its industrial feel, it’s all about live music, art and food. (541 Tremont St., 617-423-0069, beehiveboston.com)

2 p.m. Of course, we love the Chanel and Burberry boutiques on swanky Newbury Street, but we really get a kick out of the edgy fashion section at Louis Boston, a four-storey lifestyle boutique. Find killer pieces by Balenciaga, Marni, The Row and Proenza Schouler—and Fornasetti wall plates in the decor section. (234 Berkeley St., 617-262-6100, louisboston.com)

4 p.m. The Institute of Contemporary Art’s new building showcases a collection of works by Louise Bourgeois, Julian Opie and Nan Goldin. Perched on the waterfront, the glass structure might give you vertigo, but its endless view of the water is mind-blowing. (100 Northern Ave., 617-478-3100, icaboston.org)

8 p.m. Head back to the Liberty for a modern Italian meal at Scampo. The truffled grilled cheese, lobster or lamb pizza and mozzarella-and-king-crab salad are all musts.

11 p.m. Jazz aficionados know that Wally’s, a hole in the wall near the Symphony Hall, hosts the best cats in the state—including professors and young talent from the prestigious Berklee College of Music. Order a glass of bourbon and drift away. (427 Massachusetts Ave., 617-424-1408, wallyscafe.com) □



LIBERTY HOTEL