

# Grand European Tour

Connecticut's long history is made up of many influences, including most of the European cultures. Whether it's in art, architecture, food or fashion, the state still retains its connections with England, France, Italy, Ireland and many other European countries. So why not explore Europe right here in Connecticut? Here's a sample "grand tour."



- **Experiences Types:** Arts & Culture
- Seasons:** Summer
- Driving Tip:** Approximately 53 miles

## IRISH FAMINE MUSEUM

Let's start at the new [Irish Famine Museum](#) on Hamden's Quinnipiac University campus. The collection moves you to reflect on the potato blight that devastated Ireland from 1845 to 1852, resulting in the deaths of a million and the emigration of 2 million more, largely due to British government indifference. The story is told through sculpture and paintings, from 19th-century through contemporary works, and it's an eye-opener/consciousness raiser.

## YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART

From there it's a short drive to New Haven's [Yale Center for British Art](#), which showcases masterworks by Gainsborough, Reynolds, Constable, Turner et al, also works by the Flemish artist Rubens (collected by benefactor Paul Mellon), the Italian Canaletto and our own Whistler (both painted in England). Feast your eyes.

## WOOSTER STREET

By now you're no doubt feeling hunger pangs, and fortunately, you're not far from famed Wooster Street, New Haven's Little Italy. You can't go wrong here, whether it's pizza at [Pepe's](#), [Sally's](#) or [Abate's](#), or white-tablecloth fare at [Consiglio's](#) or [Tre Scalini](#). Wherever you dine, the street invites walking around, so once you're done, walk around . . . then cool off with a lemon ice at [Libby's](#).

## DELAMAR SOUTHPORT

Time to pack it in, head south on I-95 toward Fairfield and a comfortable place to rest your head. You could choose the elegant [Delamar Southport](#), which, in case you didn't dine earlier, also is home to an excellent restaurant, Artisan. The hotel itself, while it feels secluded, is just off Exit 19. Or find a lodging [here](#).

## ISABELLE ET VINCENT

When in the morning breakfast calls, you'll find a jewel of a patisserie just down the street at [Isabelle et Vincent](#). Vincent, a master baker whose family owned a bakery in Strasbourg, emigrated here five years ago with Isabelle to pursue the "American dream," their own patisserie. The line is often out the door for their *milles feuilles*, perhaps not standard breakfast fare but sublime, as are their brioches and croissants.

## HOUSATONIC MUSEUM OF ART

Now fortified, keep the European fling vibe alive by heading to Bridgeport's [Housatonic Museum of Art](#), housed on the Housatonic Community College campus. There, you'll find works by master artists such as Rodin, Picasso, Matisse, Miro and Chagall. Keep an eye out for lectures, programs and changing exhibitions in the Burt Chernow Galleries - they're normally open to the community at large.