



## WHY YOU SHOULD PLAN A FAMILY VISIT TO THE MASS MOCA MUSEUM

NICOLE FELICIANO · AUG 22, 2020

Getting your culture fix is hard right now. Museums need to be smart about how they share art with the community. With a bit of planning, you can still connect in person with artists who are bringing beauty and ideas to the world. There are a few reasons why you should plan a family visit to the MASS MoCA Museum and they all revolve around making the most of space and time.

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## PLAN A SAFE FAMILY VISIT TO THE MASS MOCA MUSEUM

Northwestern Massachusetts has relatively low case loads of COVID. With careful planning, you can execute a trip to this world-class museum and get inspired by art while keeping a safe social distance.

MASS MoCA is split over three floors with 250,000 square feet of space and tons of natural light. The thoughtful sprawl is perfect for families who love to explore. It's fun to wander from room to room and the most if not all the art can be viewed in one visit. On our trip, we didn't see any crowds and had all the chance to soak in culture safely.

## HOW IT ALL STARTED

The space is the latest incarnation of a mill buildings that were the heart of the city in the for centuries as the city built a reputation for making things. In the 1980's, manufacturing slowed and North Adams struggled. According to the museum, the business and political leaders of North Adams wanted to creatively re-use the space to continue making things. But instead of fibers or fabrics, they decided on art. The museum opened in 1999 and has been a leader in the art world ever since.

## A FEW OF OUR FAVORITE THINGS

The unanimous pick for favorite art was the Blane De St. Croix exhibit called How to Move a Landscape. The Brooklyn artist is using art to educate about the environment. Our girls, 15 and 12, were impressed by his massive pieces and the way they told a story.

De St. Croix was commissioned to create works just for MASS MoCA and he filled the spaces with wondrous pieces. We especially liked the large iceberg "Hollow Ground" that filled up MoCA's triple-height gallery.

The environmental pieces evoked images of icebergs, frozen landscapes and got us all thinking about the human impact on our world. In our family, we appreciate symbolism. We like to imagine what the artist's are thinking. We discuss motivation and choices of materials. I love talking to teens and tweens about art because there are no right or wrong answers.

A lot of contemporary art is open to interpretation, and it's amazing to hear what resonates with my girls. I was delighted that my girls were drawn to Jenny Holzer's writings.

Other favorite things included the "Cosmic Latte" a light sculpture made up of hundreds of LED fixtures suspended from the ceiling. It was a like walking through a constellation and my girls, fans of fairy lights, were very appreciative. Artist, Spencer Finch, planned the lights to mimic the Milky Way.

Environmentalism, feminism, and the instagram cool factor, this museum has it all. Getting my girls into art has taken some patience. They still don't love much before 1950, but slowly, slowly they are opening their minds. Museums like this make culture a lot more fun.

## PLAN YOUR VISIT TO THE MASS MOCA MUSEUM

The galleries are open 6 days a week 10am to 6pm and closed Tuesdays. No umbrellas or large bags allowed. Reservations are required with COVID. Same-day availability happens, but plan ahead. We had to move our visit time and it wasn't a problem.

The museum has a café (bring you goodies outside to a picnic table after your order) and a nice museum shop. The courtyard beyond the museum has a number of food and drink options for before or after your visit.

While in North Adams, be sure to check out the Northern Berkshires Outdoor Art Tour which includes some 30 works of art stretching across 10 miles of country roads. [Find out more here.](#)

We stayed at The Porches Inn. The 47-room boutique hotel is directly across the street from Mass MoCA and kid-friendly. Check out this review for more trip planning tips.

Mass MoCA is located at 1040 MASS MoCA Way, North Adams, MA 01247 413.662.2111 x8120

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