

## Head South

Get your kicks on Route 125

By Barbara Radcliffe Rogers

Route 125 is better known as the **Calef Highway**, named for Sen. Austin Calef whose mother founded the iconic Barrington general store. But it actually starts farther north, in Union.

Begin at Exit 18, the northernmost on the Spaulding Turnpike (Rte. 16). Oldtimers will remember this road that heads south through Union as the old Rte. 16, the main route north before it was bypassed by the turnpike that claims its old number. This stretch north of Rochester is known as the White Mountain Highway.

Head south through attractive **Union**, with its well-restored depot and tidy white clapboard houses. Barely out of town are the sprawling barns and outbuildings of the **New Hampshire Farm Museum**, whose 104-foot-long great barn houses collections of early farm tools, and just beyond the Plummer homestead another fine series of attached barns, also part of the museum. These were only two of the farms that once crowned Plummer's Ridge, and across the road are two still in operation: The **13 Colonies Farm and McKenzie's Farm**, where in season you can pick your own raspberries, tomatoes, apples and pumpkins. Just beyond on the left is the old **Plummer's Ridge School House**.

As the road enters the village of Milton, the first of the Milton Ponds appears on the left, surrounded by cottages. At the end of the lake is **Riverside Antiques**, a group shop.

Shortly after passing the stately Spaulding Memorial High School, Rte. 125 turns left to bypass Rochester's business district, but a right turn into the parking lot is worthwhile to see the restored 1908 **Rochester Opera House** with its unique movable floor.

After Rte. 125 leaves the downtown area, if you feel the need of something substantial, look for the bright yellow **Wild Willy's Burgers** on the left, just before the **Rochester Country Club**, where they have public tee times available. Or look for **Sugar and Ice Creamery** on the right, a good stop for ice cream.

A couple of miles beyond, at the crossing of Route 9, **Calef's** has been serving the community

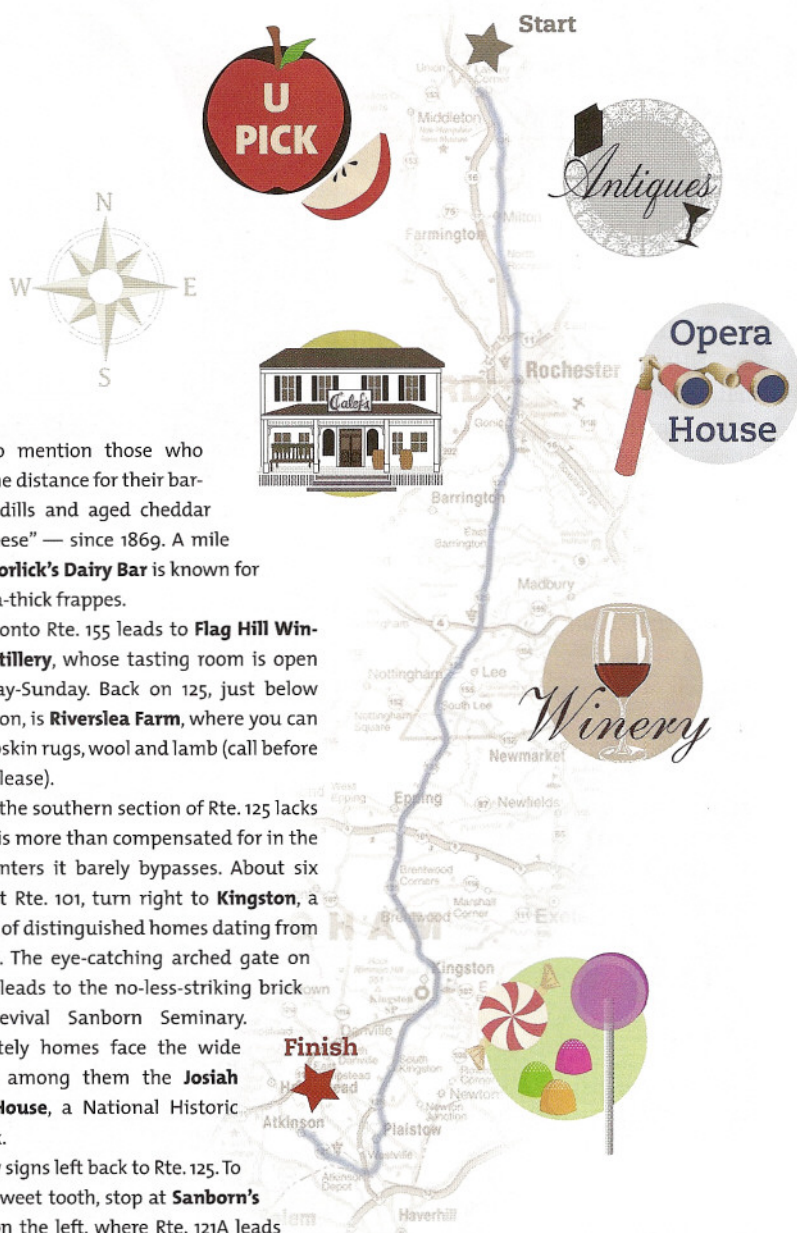
— not to mention those who travel some distance for their barrel-cured dills and aged cheddar “store cheese” — since 1869. A mile beyond, **Gorlick's Dairy Bar** is known for their extra-thick frappes.

A left onto Rte. 155 leads to **Flag Hill Winery & Distillery**, whose tasting room is open Wednesday-Sunday. Back on 125, just below the junction, is **Riverslea Farm**, where you can buy sheepskin rugs, wool and lamb (call before visiting, please).

What the southern section of Rte. 125 lacks in charm is more than compensated for in the village centers it barely bypasses. About six miles past Rte. 101, turn right to **Kingston**, a tidy town of distinguished homes dating from the 1700s. The eye-catching arched gate on the right leads to the no-less-striking brick Gothic Revival Sanborn Seminary. More stately homes face the wide common, among them the **Josiah Bartlett House**, a National Historic Landmark.

Follow signs left back to Rte. 125. To satisfy a sweet tooth, stop at **Sanborn's Candies** on the left, where Rte. 121A leads into Plaistow. In the jumble of shopping centers that follow, it's hard to tell when you leave New Hampshire, but when you see Heav'nly Donuts, you know you're at the border.

Don't worry: just beyond, Rte. 121 heads right back into New Hampshire, leading to Atkinson.



Plan Ahead: Length of trip: About 55 miles

**New Hampshire Farm Museum**  
(603) 652-7840, [www.farmmuseum.org](http://www.farmmuseum.org)

**McKenzie's Farm**  
(603) 652-9400, [www.mckenziefarm.com](http://www.mckenziefarm.com)

**Rochester Opera House**  
(603) 335-1992, [www.rochesteroperahouse.com](http://www.rochesteroperahouse.com)

**Calef's**  
(800) 462-2118, [www.calefs.com](http://www.calefs.com)

**Flag Hill Winery & Distillery:**  
(603) 659-2949, [www.flaghill.com](http://www.flaghill.com)

**Riverslea Farm**  
(603) 679-2629, [www.riversleafarm.com](http://www.riversleafarm.com)

**Atkinson Resort**  
(603) 362-8700, [www.atkinsonresort.com](http://www.atkinsonresort.com)