



# Let's Head for the... **Northeast**

## Blueberry **THRILL**

*Festival at historic New Jersey site delivers a berry good time for all.*

*By John Foster, Trenton, New Jersey*

IF YOU LIKE blueberries as much as I do, consider visiting historic Whitesbog Village during its Blueberry Festival in June to learn about how the cultivated blueberry was born.

I happened on the turn-of-the-century village in the southeastern New Jersey pines while researching area cranberry bogs. When I learned of the upcoming Blueberry Festival, my wife and I quickly made plans to bring the grandkids.

Once a self-sufficient company town, Whitesbog Village housed both 40 year-round workers and production facilities in the J.J. White family's successful cranberry-growing operation. Most of its cedar-shake buildings—from rental houses to the general store and post office—have been restored and boast white trim and colorful tin roofs.

When White's daughter Elizabeth re-

alized that summer-ripening blueberries could complement the fall cranberry harvest, she persuaded him to fund research on cultivating the wild fruit. Eventually, Whitesbog devoted 90 acres to blueberry fields.

Today, the festival celebrates that heritage with berry picking, crafts, antique tractors and engines, historic and environmental tours and demonstrations and live bluegrass music. More importantly, to my way of thinking, it offers serious blueberry eating—everything from muffins to pies to cheesecake. To quench your thirst, try a refreshing Jersey Blue—iced tea laced with blueberry juice.

Getting here requires a little extra perseverance; Whitesbog's well off the main highways. But I've been back many times, since it's a journey worth seeing to fruition!



**PICK OF THE CROP.** Cranberries put Whitesbog Village on the map, but blueberries rule in June. You'll enjoy delicious treats (above) and a historic setting (below left).



### FAST FACTS



Whitesbog Village is located in the Brendan T. Byrne (formerly Lebanon) State Forest about 10 miles east of where U.S. Highway 206 meets County Route 530, and about 5 miles southeast of Browns Mills. At Route 530's mile marker 13, go north for about a mile on the one-lane Whitesbog Road.

The village is open daily from dawn to dusk, with guided tours available for a nominal charge. The Blueberry Festival is the last Saturday in June (that's June 25 in 2005); hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and cost is \$7 per carload. For more information, call the Whitesbog Preservation Trust office, 1-609/893-4646 or visit [www.countrydiscoveries.com/links](http://www.countrydiscoveries.com/links). ☀️ 🐷 🏠 🚗

**More to See...** About 28 miles northwest, The Grounds for Sculpture displays various works in a museum and on 35 imaginatively landscaped acres in Hamilton Township, just outside Trenton. For details, see page 27 of the March/April 2004 issue, call 1-609/586-0616 or visit [www.countrydiscoveries.com/links](http://www.countrydiscoveries.com/links).

