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Jill Adams is the operator of her sixth-generation family farm in Southern Vermont. Because of her passion for the land, the history and the lifestyle, she has created "the ultimate agricultural experience"

for her visitors, says the *Boston Sunday Globe*. She has won many awards for her unique and clever tours. The Adams Farm has been featured on many major television programs and in magazine and newspaper articles. Jill, along with her young daughters, Olivia and Charlette, manage the 100-acre diversified farm enterprise purchased by her family in 1865. Find out more at adamsfamilyfarm.com.

It's by leaving the area that I realized what a remarkable place I come from. I am the sixth generation to grow up on my family's dairy farm in Wilmington. I'm fortunate enough to make my living doing what I love to do the most—operating my family's farm and opening it as an attraction to the public. These two elements together offer a full and diverse life, full of hard work, creativity and accomplishments.

People are so removed from the farm nowadays, and I wanted to help reconnect that in whatever way I could. And I think my farm has made a difference in the lives of so many. I experience happy animals and happy people every day through what I do. Who could get sick of that?

I once thought because I grew up in such a rural area and graduated from public school with 17 other students, that I was missing something. I went to art school in Boston, and lived in several towns in Southern Vermont as well as Berkeley and Lake Tahoe, California. But after having experienced other parts of the country—and having people admire all the basic skills and talents that one has just by being the product of the farm and growing up with teachers that know and understand you so well and can foster your individuality—I realized I am from an absolutely incredible place that offers so many rare and unique opportunities and experiences. Once I realized this, it made me want to return to Vermont and share my childhood traditions with others.

This is as close to heaven on earth as one can get. The mountains and the cold weather are in my blood. I am most content when wearing layers of wool. I'll choose a trip to Alaska, Iceland or Northern Europe any day over the Caribbean. The extreme diversity of the four seasons here in Vermont is what keeps me challenged. There is always something to do, with never enough time to do it all. There is always something to look forward to with anticipation as each season approaches, but they never last long enough.

Because I grew up on a dairy farm, and the cows needed to be milked twice a day, every day, 365 days a year, we were not able to go on vacation very often. So my parents taught me to make the most of my spare time and how to have quality time. They taught me there is so much to do, see and enjoy all within an hour from here.

With each season I have so much to look forward to, but regardless of the season, there are certain things I enjoy year-round, such as being able to ride the ATVs virtually anywhere on the property at any time or on the many trails here in Southern Vermont, whether alone or with friends and family. Packing up some food and beer or wine and putting out a spread, anywhere I feel like it, maybe by my pond to go fishing and enjoy the spectacular views, or under a big old maple tree or stone wall or mossy area under the evergreens somewhere. Same goes for saddling up the Morgan horses. I've been known to venture off with the ATV during the day, set up a tent and build an area for a campfire on the top of a mountain. Go back home and wait for it to get dark; I'll then take the horses out for a one- or two-hour ride under the full moon to go camping. I love cooking breakfast in the morning and watching the horses graze.

My all-time favorite place to go when I need to contemplate life is



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Adams Family Farm, Wilmington

Hamilton Falls. It's such a visual experience, it makes me feel like I've entered another country. Even if I'm only able to visit for an hour, it's like a vacation to get away from the stresses of life. Though it is so lush and green in the spring and summer, I always look forward to the winter and early spring, when the mist from the falls sprays up on the trees and they are completely covered in ice and glisten in the sun or moonlight.

Of course, hiking up to the top of Haystack Mountain in the fall, and snowshoeing just about anywhere in February and March to watch what the wildlife has been up to is always a great day. To me, this is just part of the beauty of living in Vermont. I have the ability and opportunity to do this whenever I want. Well...as long as time allows me too.

Heck, even driving up Route 100 North to get to a meeting is one of the perks to living in Southern Vermont.

I can't imagine a better place to raise my children. They get to experience traditional farm life values, and a multitude of life skills, including the magic of growing up with their grandparents here on the farm, as well as being surrounded by an ever-revolving door of cousins, aunts and uncles. The schools are small, which I feel is a gift to be able to work with teachers and administrators so closely. I am involved with my children's education. It's wonderful to live in a community where your voice and thoughts are welcome and can make a difference. It's hard to believe one can still live in a state where you can actually know and talk to your governor, senators and congressmen. Sometimes they even call me. It's a state where your voice counts...grass roots—it's where it all comes from.