

DEPARTURES

How to See the Best of Newport, Rhode Island in Just One Day



Come for the mansions, stay for the waterfront seafood restaurants.

By Maya Kachroo-Levine on January 28, 2021

News from...



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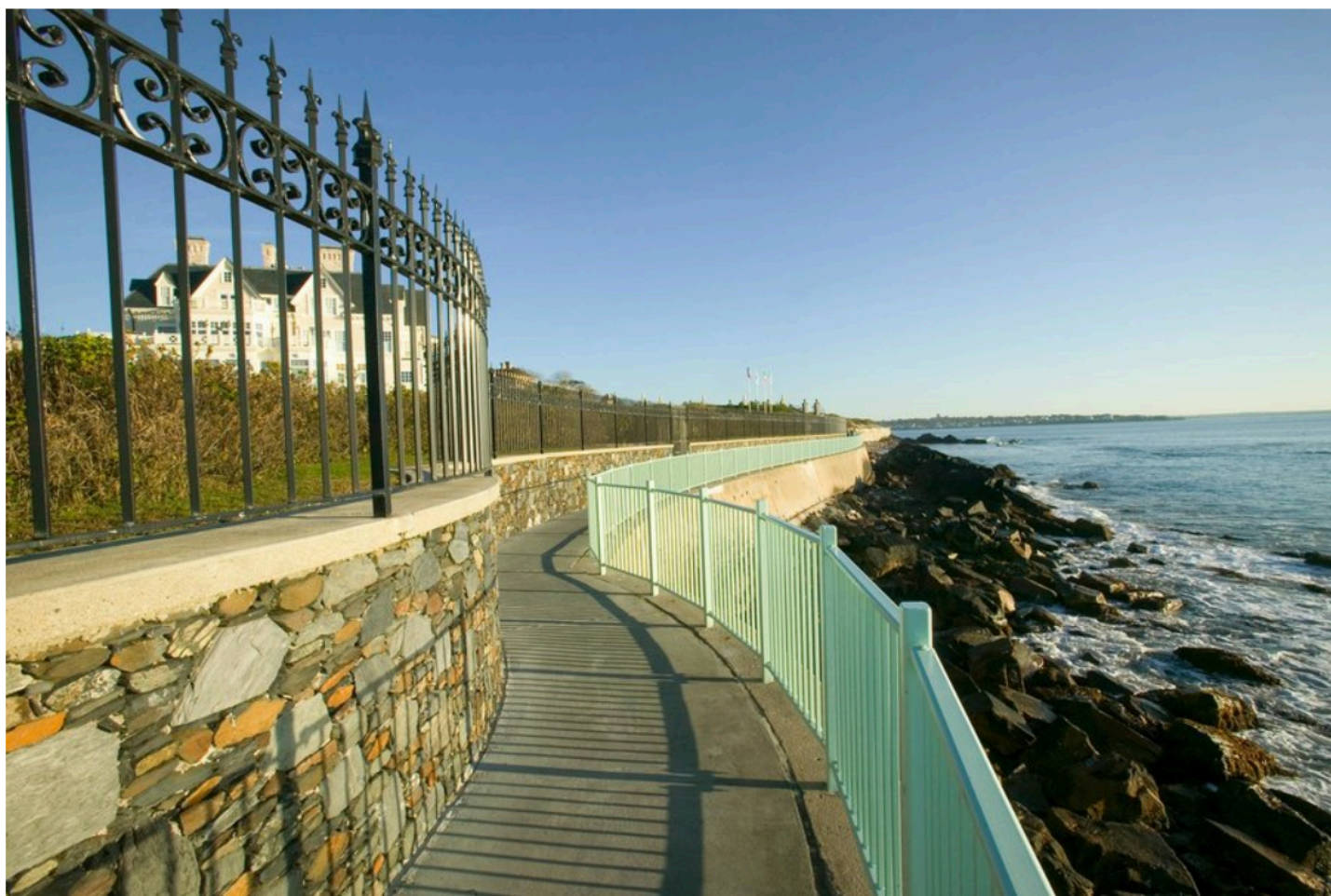
94,226 unique
monthly visitors

Newport is a good idea in any season. The [coastal New England city](#) is synonymous with architectural opulence, stunning beaches, and [fresh lobster rolls](#). Known of course for the mansions lining the jagged coast, Newport is a [storied Rhode Island town](#) that has long been a vacation spot of New York City-based celebrities and elite families like the Vanderbilts. As such, the luxury vacation infrastructure—particularly the fine dining and hotel offerings—has been part of Newport's draw for decades. Just a [three-hour drive from New York City](#) and a 90-minute drive from Boston, Newport is a crowd-pleasing weekend trip, or even a romantic 24-hour road trip stop. With our guide, here's how you can spend one perfect day in Newport, Rhode Island.

8:30 a.m.: Newport, Rhode Island is still quiet before 9 a.m., so rise early to see the town basking in stillness and sunlight. Start your day off with breakfast at [Belle's Cafe](#), tucked into Newport Shipyard. The seasonal cafe (open spring, summer, and fall but closed in the winter) serves all-day breakfast and lunch right on Safe Harbor. Belle's is used to serving locals (but inviting to all), touted as "Newport's best kept secret."

10 a.m.: When exploring a new city, we're proponents of the coffee walk, which—you guessed it—involves grabbing a latte at the city's best independent coffee shop and taking a leisurely stroll through town. In Newport, that means stopping in to [Kaffeology](#) for a cup of freshly brewed coffee and then walking along scenic Newport Harbor before cutting a block inland to Thames Street, the city's main drag.

10:30 a.m.: As you finish your cup of coffee, some of the best boutiques and galleries on Thames Street will be opening their doors to welcome visitors. Thames Street is really the heart of Newport's downtown—it's where you'll find not only the best shopping, but some of the city's best restaurants, too. For the gallery-and-boutique tour of Thames Street, make sure you visit [Arnold Art Store & Gallery](#) and [Coastal Contemporary Gallery](#). As for clothes shopping, [Anchored in Pink](#), a [Lilly Pulitzer Signature Store](#) is a must-visit for lovers of bright, Pulitzer prints.



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11:30 a.m. With caffeine (and possibly a new Lilly Pulitzer dress) in tow, it's time for a visit to the famed [Cliff Walk](#) and [Newport mansions](#). The Cliff Walk is actually a National Recreational Trail that runs for three-and-a-half miles along the coast, with many entry and exit points. There are some particularly rugged stretches of the Cliff Walk, so if you intend to walk the entire trail, hiking shoes are a must. That being said, if you want to do just a small portion of the Cliff Walk to see some of Newport's most exquisite mansions, take the easy section of trail from 40 Steps to Ruggles Avenue and you'll see part of the Salve Regina University campus and The Breakers mansion, a grandiose display of New England style built by the Vanderbilts.



1 p.m.: There is no wrong answer when it comes to choosing a seafood spot for lunch on Thames Street or Newport Harbor. But [The Lobster Bar](#) is a perfect place to start your seafood tour of Newport. Situated at the end of Bowen's Wharf, overlooking Newport Harbor, you'll feast on freshly shucked oysters, clam chowder, and lobsters rolls—also known as the holy trinity of New England cuisine. If you've got a big appetite, try The Lobster Bar Burger, a surf-and-turf burger with lobster meat mounted atop a sirloin burger.

3 p.m.: A 15-minute walk from Newport Harbor and Thames Street is the [International Tennis Hall of Fame](#), which is worth a visit, particularly if you have an aspiring Wimbledon player in your midst. One of the most remarkable features of the International Tennis Hall of Fame is that you can actually play tennis here. The club offers annual memberships, but non-members can come enjoy [private lessons at the Hall of Fame](#), too.



6 p.m.: Fancy a pre-dinner drink? Let us assure you that Newport has a must-visit spot for every libation palette. Beer drinkers can head to [Newport Craft Brewing & Distilling Co.](#)—they're known for making a great hazy IPA and have an forthcoming session IPA and blueberry ale. While hanging in their tasting room or outdoor pavilion, you might also want to sample their gin, vodka, single-barrel rum, or amaro, among other spirits. Wine drinkers, on the other hand, might prefer visiting [Newport Vineyards](#), where they can sip local wines among the vines. (Though the vineyard also houses Taproot Brewing Co., so craft brews are available here, too.) Make a reservation for an indoor or al fresco tableside tasting at Newport Vineyards.



8 p.m.: [Scarpetta](#) is already known in New York for their classic yet high-end Italian cuisine. But set Scarpetta on the Newport waterfront and the restaurant takes on a new life. Scarpetta, set on Gurney's private marina, offers indoor dining with waterfront views, or outdoor seating right along the water. You'll find elevated Italian classics on the menu alongside locally caught seafood—pro-tip: make a reservation at sunset for a romantic, memorable meal.

Where to Stay

Castle Hill Inn



On a private Newport beach, [Castle Hill Inn](#), an [American Express Fine Hotel & Resorts](#) property, does five-star accommodations on a small scale, with just 33 rooms and suites on the grounds. Choose between their suites in the Agassiz Mansion or their standalone beach cottages. And don't miss one of the standout features of Castle Hill Inn: chartering a private boat. Sailing culture is a crucial part of Newport life, so getting out on the water for a sunset cruise is essential.

Gurney's Newport Resort & Marina

[Gurney's Montauk Resort](#) faithfuls will, of course, want to post up along the water at [Gurney's Newport Resort & Marina](#) which features indoor and outdoor pools, the Seawater Spa, a private marina, and 257 rooms and suites. For over-the-top accommodations, book the two-story [Liberty Suite](#) in the Lighthouse Wing, which has a wet bar, two bedrooms, and two balconies.