

# DEPARTURES

## Beautiful New England Towns Perfect for a Summer Retreat

Pack your bags and hit the beach at these picturesque New England towns.

By Pat Doherty on June 25, 2019

For most of us, the mention of New England in the summer leads to visions of [quaint towns](#), lighthouses, beachside clambakes, lobster rolls, and chowder. Sandy shores, lakeside cottages, and chilly evenings around a fire pit also fit the picture very nicely. There's a good reason our imagination creates those images. They describe New England summers perfectly.

We've gathered a few destinations from the New England states, huddled in America's northeast corner along the Atlantic and blessed with inland mountains. Most fulfill the dream of historic lighthouses, plentiful beaches, and assorted outdoor activities. All boast abundant and varied seafood, from clams to oysters, lobsters, and fish of all kinds, good reason to head to one of America's oldest states.

We hope these suggestions will inspire you to [plan a visit to the northeast](#) this summer. Rustic, luxurious hotels and inns await, and even if you spend more time in an Adirondack chair on the porch than swimming or paddling, you'll deserve an evening cocktail with sunset at the end of the day.

## Westerly, Rhode Island

Set on the state's southern shore, this beachfront community is bordered by the Pawcatuck River, which divides Rhode Island and Connecticut. Seven miles of sandy beaches include Misquamicut State Beach and several town and public beaches. Westerly's location on the ocean and river makes it ideal for water sports like rowing, swimming, surfing, sailing, fishing, and paddle boarding. Historic sites attract visitors, and a favorite destination is the Watch Hill Lighthouse, in place since 1745, and rebuilt several times. Their museum is open three days a week during summer. An old-fashioned amusement area, Atlantic Beach Park, features snacks, games, rides, and a 1915 carousel with its unique "flying horses." Napatree Point Beach, managed by the Audubon Society and the local fire district, is the place for birdwatching in summer. For a change of scenery from the beach, the Westerly Town Forest's 2.8-mile trail attracts hikers, runners, and walkers to its shaded dog-friendly trails. The Weekapaug Inn, a [Relais & Chateaux property](#), provides complimentary beach lounges, kayaks, paddle boards, sailboats, pedal boats, and boat tours aboard their electric Quonnie Queen.

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## Newport, Rhode Island

Ideal summer temperatures, balmy evenings, abundant seafood, sandy beaches, and stunning views have attracted visitors to Newport for well over a hundred years. Wealthy families with familiar names like Vanderbilt and Astor built summer homes there, many of which have been preserved and opened for tours. The Breakers, commissioned by Cornelius Vanderbilt II in 1893, has been designated as a National Historic Landmark. Many of the Gilded Age mansions can be seen from the 3.5-mile Cliff Walk, a popular attraction for its ocean views as well. The Scenic Ocean Drive or Ten Mile Drive is another way to see Newport. With more than 400 miles of coastline, visitors have their choice of beaches, some with ocean waves and others calmer waters. Tour Newport from the sea on an America's Cup yacht, sailboat, lobster boat, or motor launch for another view of its shores, or just stroll around the harbor to ogle the opulent yachts. The International Tennis Hall of Fame, the Audrain Automobile Museum, and Fort Adams State Park are on many visitors' itineraries. Stay in one of the twenty individually designed guestrooms in a historic mansion at the Chanler at Cliff Walk for comfort and atmosphere in an ideal location.



## Narragansett, Rhode Island

A more laid-back summer town, Narragansett is popular with surfers and beach lovers who head for Narragansett Town Beach, Salty Brine Beach, Roger Wheeler State Beach, or Scarborough State Beach, with its boardwalk, bathhouse, concessions, barbecue grills, and hiking trails. Fishing, both onshore and on charter boats, is available, and visitors can rent jet skis, kayaks, or canoes to paddle down the Narrow River. Point Judith Lighthouse, still a navigational aid, was first lit in 1857. Also testifying to the town's history are The Towers, the remains of the Narragansett Pier Casino, a lively resort during the 1880's that featured boating, billiards, tennis dancing, and dining. Today, only the renovated granite towers remain after fires and storms destroyed many of the buildings. Visitors can learn more about the area's history and culture in the South County Museum, with its demonstrations of farming, blacksmithing, carpentry, and textiles. Seafood shacks include the nearly century-old Aunt Carrie's, known for clam cakes, oysters, and chowder. The boutique Break Hotel, featuring ocean views and retro-surf style, is luxurious and fun. Take advantage of their complimentary beach chairs and bikes, and watch the sunset from their rooftop bar.

