

FORTUNE

A weekend guide to Rhode Island



For being the smallest state in the union (by land mass), there sure is a lot to see and do in Rhode Island. Summer is certainly the most ideal time to visit, having been a premier weekend escape for New Yorkers, Bostonians, and New Englanders since the 19th century.

Even before the recent [HBO](#) series, there is plenty to indulge that Gilded Age itch or, if you're looking for more modern vibes, the Taylor Swift of the *Folklore* era with "[The Last Great American Dynasty](#)."

This is by no means an exhaustive travel guide to visiting everything in and around Rhode Island, but merely a few suggestions to fill up a regular weekend or even a long weekend comprised of a beach day and a few excursions.



What to see and do

The Breakers: Newport is home to some of the most impressive mansions in the United States, many built in styles emulated from the great chateaus and villas of France and Italy. None are more grand than the former summer getaway of the Vanderbilt family. Opt for a guided tour if you can as the onsite tour guides are fonts of knowledge. (The house also served as one of the primary sets for HBO's *The Gilded Age*.)

Maker's Mark Hobbit Houses: When you hear hobbit houses, you're probably scratching your head, thinking those are in New Zealand, where *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy was filmed. But these are the only official hobbit houses licensed by New Line Cinema in North America. And they're the perfect settings for a rustic private dinner, which can be setup with tasting menus paired with both new and rare bottles from the Maker's Mark portfolio.

Newport Harbor: Being that this is the original home to the famed America's Cup sailing race, you can't go to Newport without sailing yourself. While you don't have to (and probably shouldn't) attempt a ride on some of the more modern racing catamarans, you can take a ride on a previous winner from the 1960s with [America's Cup Charters](#), for a sail around the bay.

Newport Jaguar Tours: Taking a note from the previous denizens of Newport from the last century, travel around Newport in style. The tour operator has different Jaguars to choose from, including a convertible that can seat two. Being a coastal town popular with tourists in the summer, you might not realize that Newport is quite large. While you can walk a lot of places, you can see much more in the span of two to three hours, all while seated in a luxurious vehicle, while learning about Newport's famous (and infamous) former residents.

The Sailing Museum: Among the newer attractions in Newport, the educational non-profit organization is home to the National Sailing Hall of Fame and America's Cup Hall of Fame in the space once used as the press room for the America's Cup.

Bowen's Wharf: San Francisco has Fisherman's Wharf, and Newport has Bowen's Wharf. This is a must-visit and unavoidable hub for shops, galleries, cafés, ice cream parlors, and restaurants ideal for both lunch and nightlife.



Where to eat and drink

Sydney Providence: This all-day Australian café offers some of the best breakfast options in Providence, from healthy to indulgent. Even if you're not an avocado toast person, you should still order it here. Also try the “brekkie bowl,” with a surprise layer of lemon curd, and one of the specialty iced coffee drinks.

Bellini Providence: Located in The Beatrice hotel, Bellini does simple Italian dishes right, with a focus on fresh, local ingredients, expertly paired with a vast and well-curated wine list. And even if you're not going in for a full meal, definitely get a cocktail at the gorgeous bar and lounge area.

Théa at Dune Cottage: Opened just this year, Thēa, which translates to “view,” offers unobstructed views of the Atlantic Ocean. (And on a clear day you can even see as far as Montauk.)

Bar'Cino: This Italian bistro is a neighborhood favorite in the heart of Newport's historic Washington Square, which is often overlooked by tourists and more frequented by locals. Almost everything on the menu here is a winner—but do not stop by without ordering one of the restaurant's signature grilled pizzas.

Cara Restaurant: Tucked away in a small private room at [The Chanler at Cliff Walk](#), this five-star restaurant offers contemporary and creative blind tasting menus based on your dietary preferences, all inspired by local ingredients and European cuisine with special wine pairings. Tasting menu dinners can last two to three hours, and right now, the restaurant only does seatings at 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. And while the food is everything to write home about, you'll also be spoiled by the panoramic views of the beach and the ocean at sunset.

The Roof Deck at The Vanderbilt: Located at the very top of the historic downtown Newport mansion, it is the perfect al fresco spot to watch the sunset and take in sweeping views of the historic city and port. The hotel, now an Auberge property, also has one of the best cocktail bars in the area, including a special “gold leaf” martini.



Where to stay

The Beatrice Hotel: Opened just before the pandemic, The Beatrice is a great choice for any type of travel, from business to pleasure. Try to make a reservation for one of the corner suites out of the 47 rooms onsite, which offer bay windows and lovely views of the financial district. The Beatrice is also well located in the center of the city, near the river and Brown University as well as the arts district, full of options for daytime and nightlife.)

The Preserve Sporting Club & Residences: This is the ultimate luxury getaway in Rhode Island. You could get here by car...or by helicopter...or even by private jet if you're a member with the club. Accommodations range from plush hotel suites to multi-room townhomes to “**tiny homes**,” which might not seem so tiny if you're coming from New York or Boston, but are cozy and fun (especially for kids) nonetheless. (And soon the property plans to open its treehouses, starting this fall.) And while there are plenty of onsite services and amenities (such as a full hair and nail salon, a spa, an outdoor pool, and a fitness center), the real draw here is everything wondrous about the great outdoors. Among the many activities you can get into include tennis, archery, clay shooting, fishing, and of course, **golf** on the property's championship mountain course.

Hammetts Hotel: Run by the [same hotel group](#) as The Beatrice, among other properties in New England, Hammetts is one of the best located hotels in Newport, right in the middle of the waterfront area, just a few blocks from Bowen's Wharf. The hotel has all the amenities you'd need, including a 24-hour gym, coffee service in the lobby in the mornings, and onsite parking with valet service. (Valet service is plentiful in Newport.)

Ocean House: There might be nowhere more iconic in Rhode Island than the pale yellow Victorian mansion than Ocean House on Watch Hill, an affluent coastal area that has a long history as a summer getaway destination for New Englanders but also might become a pilgrimage site for younger travelers in that it was an inspirational site for one of Taylor Swift's albums. Ocean House fits the needs for any traveler, whether you need to work remotely, want to spend time with your family, host a birthday party, or just chill out at a private cabana. And if you're looking for some athletic options, there's a croquet lawn, subterranean squash courts, a full gym, and access to paddle and boogie boards on the ocean. (The hotel is also very pet-friendly, and more than happy to set up your best friend with treats, toys, a ceramic water bowl, and his or her own dining menu, either in your room or at one of the cabanas on the beach.)