

5 beach town alternatives to try instead of popular destinations

During peak summer travel season, popular beach towns are flooded with tourists.

This demand then causes hotels to raise prices, for restaurants to have scarce reservations — and for local attractions like boardwalks, waterparks, hotel pools and venues to be overcrowded.

Instead of facing the crowds and steep prices, you may want to swap your go-to beach town for a stand-in (while there's still time this summer!) that offers sun, sand, surf, charm and a cool culinary scene.

Above all, the most important variables of a coastal vacation are the beach and sunshine.

Here are five quieter seaside towns to consider.

Narragansett, Rhode Island

Just about 30 minutes from charming but tourist-filled Newport is Narragansett, a great alternative if you want better hotel prices, less-crowded restaurants and a new place to discover.

This small seaside town offers friendly hospitality and impressive surfing conditions — and the streets are dotted with Victorian-inspired architecture.

After a day of sun, water recreation and sand, browse the town's historical downtown area with boutique and gift shopping.

There are also plenty of hiking trails and water activity options such as boating, fishing, kayaking and sailing.

For accommodations, try The Shore House. It's an historic inn situated directly on the beach in Narragansett, which debuted last season following a complete renovation of its 31 rooms. You can also take a bicycle around town to enjoy more sights.