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From Newport to Providence, Rhode Island Has Something for Everyone

April 7 — Written by Amanda Mactas

It might be small, but it is mighty. Rhode Island, the smallest state in the USA, knows how to have fun. From Newport to Providence, there are numerous destinations to visit within this tiny state, and whether you're looking for leisure or culture, there's plenty of both to be had.

For leisure, head to Newport

This seaside city, replete with gilded era mansions, gorgeous scenery, and an abundance of shopping, is the ideal destination for a leisurely getaway. Set up shop at the **Newport Harbor Island Resort**, whose location has a unique history. Located on Goat Island, just minutes from downtown Newport, the resort is home to the historical Newport Harbor Lighthouse (which was built in 1892), and more chillingly, is built over an infamous burial ground from the 1700s. You can read all about the [fascinating history of Goat Island thanks to Newport Waterfront](#), or learn the local lore in person on your next visit. The resort itself is a great place to unwind from the bustle of everyday life. Its sprawling view of Narragansett Bay provides a calming backdrop to your getaway, and walking paths around the property help you to take it all in from every angle. The resort boasts over 250 rooms and suites, an outdoor and indoor pool, spa, fitness center, and dining on property. We recommend cozying up near the outdoor fire pits, where you can bask in the bayside views and order up a cocktail or two.

Explore



Even though the quaint, seaside town is a mecca for relaxation, there is still plenty of fun to be had should you choose to sprinkle in some adventure and sightseeing. While you might think that the best way to get a glimpse of the area is via the water, there are other options for landlubbing visitors. **Rail Explorers**, a unique rail bike experience where participants pedal their 2- or 4-seater bikes along old railroad tracks, offers an array of tours throughout the day -- from Sunday morning brunch tours with mimosas, to romantic lantern lit rides at nighttime. If, however, you've come to Newport to get out on the water, **Newport Classic Cruises** has schooners, sloops, and modern motor yacht rum runners to sail you away along the bay. Cruises range from sunset sails, to morning mimosas, to afternoon cocktail or sightseeing tours. History buffs are in the right place here in Newport, where they are renowned for an abundance of Gilded Age mansions, including Rosecliff, The Elms, Marble House, and The Breakers, all of which are available for tours. Explore lavish marble columned rooms, platinum walls, and over-the-top opulence at these unbelievable "summer cottages" once occupied by America's wealthiest families. Want to learn more about some Newport's seedier history? We recommend turning to the city's Ghost Tours, where you'll mosey around some of the town's historical sites and learn about some of the spooky happenings that have occurred throughout its history. If that's not the kind of history you're into, fret not! The interactive Sailing Museum looks into a whole different genre of the city's past. Learn all about sailing legends, try your hand at racing the waters, and even learn about the construction of boats.

Dine



If you ask me, one of the best parts of going to a new destination is sampling the cuisine and restaurants in the area. This seaside city has no shortage of delicious fare primed for visitors and locals alike. Hit the prestigious [Castle Hill Inn](#) for Sunday brunch, where you can take in the gorgeous views on the lawn and soak in the Rhode Island splendor. A morning spent here will have you dreaming of coming back for a longer stay. Lunch at [Stonacre Garden](#), whose ambiance is as enchanting as its dishes. Come hungry because you'll want to dive into every dish on the menu, from the shareable shrimp chips and crab dip and tuna poke tacos to the more ample miso glazed salmon and lobster rolls. For dinner, cozy up at [Giusto](#), a "freestyle" Italian restaurant that offers inimitable takes on classic fare, such as their Scotch meatball appetizer and Caesar of the season. Don't skip dessert either -- a unique spin on cookies n' cream is not to be missed. Immerse yourself in the local flavors at [Newport Vineyards](#), where you can not only try a variety of locally-produced wines they make right on site, but also get a taste of their local brews, as well as dine at their on-premises restaurant. Executive Chef Andy Teixeira really knows what he's doing, and will wow you with his culinary prowess and thoughtful pairings.

For culture, head to Providence

Providence, Rhode Island is known as the creative capital, and that's not just because it's home to Brown University. There's an abundance of fun to be had in this bustling city, from their exciting culinary offerings to outdoor immersive art and even farms and famous movie locations. The New England city offers all of the activities and culture of a thriving metropolis, with all of the added charm of a provincial town.

Explore



East Providence is part of the larger Blackstone Valley - Rhode Island's National Historical Park - which spans a whopping 240 square miles. Carved by the Blackstone River, which runs all the way from Worcester, Massachusetts to Pawtucket, Rhode Island, this area is home to the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution, remnants of which are sprinkled throughout the area. Begin your exploration of the area with a cruise down the eponymous river on the [Samuel Slater canal boat](#), whose captain will point out various wildlife, give you a history of the river, and allow you to relax on the calm, glassy waters. Nearby, Chase Farm serves as a local green space for locals and out-of-towners to utilize. The rolling hills are primed to take advantage of for walkers and hikers alike, and the Butterfly Gardens are one of the area's main draws. It also serves as a familiar backdrop to eagle-eyed movie fans. Chase Farm was also the filming location for Hocus Pocus 2! Stick with the great outdoors theme and poke your head in to Phantom Farms. Here, you can enjoy freshly baked goods and hot coffee, and depending on the season, try your hand at apple and pumpkin picking. The must-do attraction while you're in Providence is to make sure you're in town for one of their **Water Fire** nights. The award-winning outdoor sculpture event has been taking place since 2001, along three of the city's rivers. Over 100 crackling bonfires light up at night, coming up from the middle of the rivers, where boats and gondolas drift by with passengers ready to get a close up look. Music from around the world pulses in the

and, while revelers can stroll along the pathways on either side of the rivers. Entertainment, refreshments, and vendors add to the festivity.

Dine

A great way to try as much of the local cuisine as possible is booking a food tour with **Rhode Island Red Food Tours**. Their gregarious guides take you on a walking and eating tour throughout downtown Providence, where you try mini bites of some of the city's best food and drinks. Some of the places we tried out on our tour included the beautiful (and tasty) vegetarian food hall Plant City, Geoff's Superlative Sandwiches, Taiwanese tea bar Charuma, Yoleni's (which had the best Greek yogurt ever), Ellie's bakery, and the The Malted Barley for their artisan pretzels and craft beer flights. But every tour is different, so you can go back multiple times and continue discovering new spots. For something more elegant, head to Bellini for fine Italian dining. You're sure to leave full and happy, especially if you pair your meal with their namesake Bellinis. If you have time, head up to their rooftop to take in stunning views of the city and a nightcap.

