



6 Budget-Friendly New England Getaways To Experience This Spring

By Andrea E. McHugh

There's arguably no region in the U.S. more enthusiastic to welcome spring's arrival than New England. As the seasonal thaw takes hold, hotels and resorts that command top dollar in the summer season entice travelers by offering more bang for your buck with special offers, packages, deals, and added value.

Even better, as our parkas get tucked away to make room for lighter layers, destinations fête the return of warmer temperatures with fairs and festivals to trumpet spring's arrival, so you can enjoy the perks of pre-peak-season travel.

Some of these places I've visited on a press trip, others I've discovered in my many New England travels. All opinions are my own.

Newport

Rhode Island

When America's wealthiest families made Newport its blueblood summertime playground during the Gilded Age, it set the bar high for travelers for decades to come. Fortunately, more than a century later, the City by the Sea still delivers, with mansions turned museums that belonged to society's elite allowing us hoi polloi to get an up close look at their 19th-century decadence. As summer brings tens of thousands to this coastal enclave on the southernmost tip of Aquidneck Island, it also brings top dollar. Even the most basic accommodations can be hundreds a night. But springtime allows travelers to not only enjoy so much of what Newport is best known for — Cliff Walk, mansions, and world-class dining — they can experience more than one million blooming daffodils across the city and a bevy of springtime events.

In April, the [Newport Beer Festival](#) welcomes more than 50 craft brewers from near and far plus live music and good grub at Fort Adams perched on the shores of Narragansett Bay. May brings the [Newport Oyster & Chowder Festival](#), where you can slurp and savor briny bivalves to your

heart's content from growers across Rhode Island. Enjoy creamy clam chowder, stuffies, and other spoils of the sea (and plenty for landlubbers) and tons of drinks to toast the season. Even better, the circumnavigating [Ocean Race](#) sails into town mid-May, bringing with it nearly 10 days of excitement and fanfare.

Best of all, lodging rates are still a far cry from what you'll find in the summer and fall. Rooms at the newly christened [Newport Harbor Island Resort](#) on Goat Island can command hundreds in peak season. But take advantage of pre-summer offers like [Book Early & Save](#), which offers up to 20 percent off the best available room rate when booking a month or more in advance (two-night minimum required; reservations are non-refundable). Ready to upgrade? Through April, the resort is offering a [Suite Life](#) package, featuring 15 percent off their roomy suites plus a complimentary bottle of prosecco, daily breakfast for two, and a pair of seasonal cocktails upon arrival.