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DESTINATIONS

## Where to Go for a Less-Crowded New England Summer

*Trade the crowds of Nantucket and the Hamptons for these tucked-away gems along the East Coast.*

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Come summertime, there's [no place like the East Coast](#). The sun-filled months of June through August remind us why we voluntarily endure our beloved home's long and harsh winters: to bike past cape-style homes and hydrangeas down to the beach, where lighthouses and fishing boats dot the coastline; to indulge in salty oysters and buttered lobster rolls; to shop our way through quaint, historic downtowns.

For those chasing a New England summer (far from endless and always too short), a few seaside destinations will always come to mind: [Nantucket](#), [Martha's Vineyard](#), [the Hamptons](#), [Newport](#), [the Cape](#)—places where *to summer* is a verb. But as with many of the world's most sought-after places, seasonal tourists can push availability, and cost, out of reach for many travelers.

This summer will be no different. Hyannis, Massachusetts, (home to Cape Cod's main airport) was ranked the number one trending domestic destination in Hopper's [summer travel forecast](#), with Bar Harbor, Maine, (the gateway to [Acadia National Park](#)) not far behind at number three. According to data from Kayak, the average hotel room in Nantucket this summer will cost you \$769 a night, and in the Hamptons, \$621 a night. Even if you can swing it, that small town peace and quiet is often spoiled if a busload of people from the same place you're trying to escape arrive along with you.

None of this means you can't still plan the classically coastal getaway of your dreams. Lesser-known towns and islands—dare we say hidden gems—offer a chance for an authentic East Coast summer sans the crowds and sticker shock. The catch? You just need to know where to look. So, we tapped local experts and *Condé Nast Traveler* editors for their favorite under-the-radar northeast summer destinations, from New York up to Maine.



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## Block Island, Rhode Island

Just 13 miles off the coast of mainland Rhode Island, [Block Island](#) boasts similarly stunning scenery to the more-frequented Cape Islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard, but with less fuss. It may not be as anonymous as other entries on this list, but with just 1,000 year-round residents and 44% of the island protected as a dedicated nature preserve, it won't be hard to find peace and quiet on the 9.5-square-mile island.

The most common way to get around Block Island is by bicycle, and sustainability is a "huge initiative to the island," says Anika Kimble-Huntley, chief marketing officer at Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, who calls the area a "special place for bird watchers and enthusiasts, as it's a migratory stopover in the spring for fall birds."

Take the hour-long ferry from Point Judith, Narragansett or Newport (or, splurge a little for the high-speed 30 minute ferry). You can reserve a spot onboard for your car, but you won't need it.

[BOOK A STAY AT THE BLOCK ISLAND BEACH HOUSE](#)



## The Farm Coast, Massachusetts and Rhode Island

New England's "[Farm Coast](#)" is a region in Massachusetts and Rhode Island that encompasses the rural communities of Tiverton, Little Compton, Westport, and South Dartmouth, where rolling green fields meet the sparkling blue sea. The closest urban hub is New Bedford, once a major whaling port that is now one of the largest commercial fishing ports in the US (pro tip: it's home to some of the best Portuguese food in the state).

The Farm Coast "has been a real sleeper for a long time and it's stunningly beautiful," says Sherman of Duxbury's Island Creek Oysters, which also has a tinned fish cannery located in New Bedford. "It's one of the few places in New England where you still get these gorgeous saltwater farms that cascade down to Buzzards Bay."

Because agriculture is at the heart of the place, farm-to-table is taken seriously here. Sherman recommends [The Back Eddy](#) restaurant in Westport, Massachusetts, for seafood and [Little Moss](#) restaurant in Padanaram Village, South Dartmouth.

[BOOK A STAY AT THE STONE HOUSE INN](#)