

## travel

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# A Cape Cod escape

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By ALISON LOWENSTEIN Special to Newsday

**QUICK SUMMARY** Beauty, simple pleasures and seafood in Cape Cod



Photo credit: Cape Cod Times / Krista Schinagl | Marge and Dave Scarpata of [Pennsylvania](#) walk down the boardwalk at Grays Beach in Yarmouth, Massachusetts.

## galleries



Beautiful Cape Cod

Known for its beaches, pristine ponds and fresh seafood, Cape Cod is one of America's classic vacation destinations. From a stay at a bed-and-breakfast in the quaint town of Sandwich to the colorful nightlife in Provincetown, the diversity of Cape Cod is what has kept this scenic waterfront area a popular vacation spot for decades.

Of course, you can spend the entire week at the beach working on your tan. But there are other diversions - a retro drive-in movie theater, extensive bike trails, whale- watching. Cape Cod has its own baseball league - games are low-key and admission is free.

For Long Islanders, this stretch of New England coastline is close enough to make it an attractive destination to recharge this summer.

## WHY GO

What draws people (and me every summer) to Cape Cod is that it never became overdeveloped. Unlike other beach communities, there isn't a main boardwalk through each town with carnival-like games or roads filled with fast-food restaurants. Once you cross the Sagamore Bridge and drive along the 65-mile-long peninsula, you ride along Route 6 or Route 6A, which wind past the many old-school seafood shacks, resort towns and residential neighborhoods

## THE TOWNS

### SANDWICH

One of the first towns on the Cape. You can tour the classic salt box-style Hoxie House (\$2-\$3, 508-888-1173) or take a peaceful stroll through the village - the boardwalk at Town Neck Beach offers unbeatable views.

**STAY** The historic Dan'l Webster Inn and Spa offers a two-night "Cape Cod" package that includes two breakfasts and one dinner for two, plus admission to local attractions (from \$254 a night, 800-444-3566, [danlwebsterinn.com](#)).

### HYANNIS

When you think of Hyannis, you probably think of the Kennedys. This charming town is home to a carousel, boutiques and many motels. It's also a popular place to get the ferry to [Nantucket](#) and Martha's Vineyard.

There is much to do in Hyannis. Learn about the Kennedys at the John F. Kennedy Hyannis Museum Foundation (508-790-3077, [jfkhyannismuseum.org](#)) or see the sites aboard a land-and-sea Cape Cod Duckmobile (\$17, 508-790-2111, [capecodduckmobile.com](#)).

For something different, take a free self-guided tour of the Cape Cod Potato Chip Factory (888-881-2447, [capecodchips.com](#)). If you are more interested in cars than chips, you must visit the Toad Hall Classic Car Collection, where you can see more than 50 classic sports cars from Ferraris to Jaguars (\$8, 508-778-4934, [toadhallcars.com](#)). Start or end the day at Kalmus Park Beach, which has lifeguards and facilities.

**STAY** Rooms at dog-friendly Simmons Homestead Inn, a bed-and-breakfast, are done in animal themes and the owners are happy to lend guests bikes and fishing gear (from \$200, 800-637-1649, [simmonshomesteadinn.com](#)).

### CHATHAM/ORLEANS

This area of the Lower Cape has both bay and ocean beaches, an amazing bike trail and a lighthouse. With great eats and lovely waterside spots, it's a great place to relax. Top-rated beaches are in Orleans - the popular Nauset Beach is great for those who like ocean waves; calmer waters await at Skaket Beach (\$15 parking, 508-240-3775).

Chatham's Main Street has plenty of shops and galleries to stroll through. You can also climb 44 steps to the top of the Chatham Light (508-430-0628).

### STAY

The family-friendly Wequasset Resort and Golf Club has a highly rated kids' program - and hosts a popular summer jazz festival that's open to the public (from \$195, 508-432-5400, [wequasset.com](#)).

The Chatham Bars Inn is a luxury resort that overlooks the water. Guest services include boating, guided beach walks and a Chatham tour in a chauffeured vintage car (from \$295, 508-945-0096, [chathambarsinn.com](#)).

### OUTER CAPE

The Outer Cape is at the peninsula's end. Cyclists will love riding the Cape Cod Rail Trail, a paved 24-mile trail that runs from the Lower Cape town of Dennis to Wellfleet.

Take a break at Eastham's popular Arnold's Restaurant for fresh seafood and a game of mini-golf (508-255-2575, [arnoldsrestaurant.com](#)). Early risers get the first pick of doughnuts at the local favorite, Fleming's Donut Shack (508-255-6551).

Wellfleet is an arty town that's known for galleries and restaurants. Its private beaches and ponds are a big draw, too. Crowds flock to Marconi Beach (\$15 parking) - if you're staying in town, get a weeklong pass that covers most beaches and ponds (but not Marconi) for \$70 (508-349-9818, [wellfleetma.org](#)). See a movie from the comfort of your car at the Wellfleet Drive-In, which hosts a flea market on weekend days (508-349-7176, [wellfleetcinemas.com](#)).

If you really enjoy nightlife, vibrant (and gay-friendly) Provincetown has a main strip with eclectic shops, restaurants and performance venues that is constantly bustling.

By day, the Dolphin Fleet Whale Watch leads excursions out to sea (\$39, 800-826-9300, [whalewatch.com](#)). Or you can bounce around Provincetown's sand dunes in a truck with Art's Dune Tour (\$26, 800-894-1951, [artsdunetours.com](#)).

**STAY** If you want to stay near the bike path and the beach in Wellfleet, rent a cottage or a room at the EvenTide Resort Motel and Cottages (from \$75, 800-368-0007, [eventidemotel.com](#)).

## SIDE TRIPS

### Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket

**GETTING THERE** You can take a passenger ferry to either island from Hyannis on Hy-line Cruises. Round-trip summer fares cost \$43 (508-693-0112, [hylinecruises.com](#); there also are ferries from Wood's Hole, 508-548-5011, [islandferry.com](#)).

**WHY GO** These islands are filled with serene beaches and charming main streets. One of the best ways to traverse Martha's Vineyard is on a bike. Rent one at Vineyard Bike Rentals in Edgartown (800-627-2763, [marthasvineyardbike.com](#)).

[Nantucket](#) is also ideal for bikers (rent at the Nantucket Bike Shop, 800-770-3088, [nantucketbikeshop.com](#)). The island is marked by stellar beaches and dunes - if you have kids in tow, head to the aptly named Children's Beach, which has calm waters, a playground and a snack bar. For more sophisticated eats, chow down on oysters on the half shell at Rope Walk (508-228-8886, [theropewalk.com](#)).

## RENTING A HOUSE

Although there are inns and hotels around Cape Cod, many vacationers rent homes. For this summer, there is still a wide variety of homes available for rent - from small Capes to larger beach homes.

Rentals are typically scheduled by the week, from Saturday to Saturday. Longer periods are available.

### WHAT IT COSTS

Weekly prices range from around \$1,000 for a smaller two-bedroom cottage to \$2,000 and up for a four-bedroom home close to the beach.

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR

When picking out a house, make sure it has amenities that are important to you, such as an outdoor shower, proximity to the beach and shops, a deck or grill.

Since it tends to get cooler at night, many homes on the Cape don't have air conditioning - so be sure to ask if it's important to you.

### FINDING A RENTAL

Many Cape Cod real estate offices have rental listings, but many people book through these popular regional Web sites:

\* [capecodrentals.com](#)

\* [capecodvacation.com](#)

\* [weneedavacation.com](#)

## READER'S PICK

### Yarmouth Port and Dennis

For our family, this is one of the most beautiful areas of the Cape. There are beautiful old captains' houses and other historic homes in Yarmouth Port and Dennis on Route 6A.

Captain Frosty's has the best fish-and-chips platter anywhere - it can get busy, so be prepared to wait (508-385-8548, [captainfrosty.com](#)). Hallett's is an original ice cream shop (508-362-3362, [halletts.com](#)). In Dennis, Mayflower Beach has been our family's favorite beach for over a decade. --

**SUBMITTED BY** *Patricia Kessler, Syosset*

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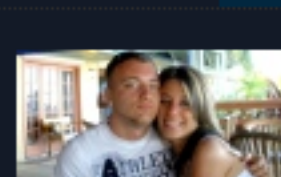
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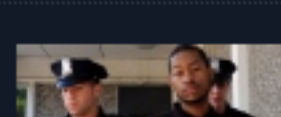
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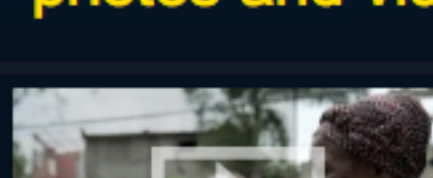
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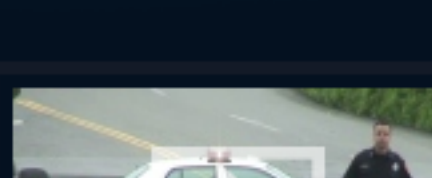
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