



Dogs and cats are welcome at the Woof Cottages with prior innkeeper approval.



Out to Sea

The enchanting island of Nantucket is a dog-lover's haven.

By **Andrea E. McHugh**

While best known for luring Boston bluebloods and the Washington elite in the warmer months, the enchanting island of Nantucket is a dog-lover's haven. Thirty miles off the Massachusetts mainland and seemingly a world away with unspoiled beaches and a downtown not much changed from its Colonial-era whaling days, this elegant isle welcomes visitors and their four-legged friends year-round.

The cobblestone streets of downtown, where neon signs, big box stores and restaurant chains are noticeably absent, are peppered with shops where visitors are more likely to be greeted by a lazy Lab or bubbly Bichon before the shopkeeper has a chance to bid hello. The boutiques along Centre Street were once known as "Petticoat Row," as during whaling times the wives of merchants would mind the shops while their husbands were out to sea. Don't be surprised if Fido is inundated with treats throughout this historic district.

One of the island's most legendary dogs was Marshall, a Newfoundland rescued in an 1877 shipwreck, who lived out his life on Nantucket aiding with other rescues. He and other famed "salty dogs"—including Sinbad whose service aboard a Coast Guard cutter during the Second World War was chronicled in books, magazines and film—are celebrated in the exhibit "Sea Dogs! Great Tails of the Sea" at the Nantucket Shipwreck & Lifesaving Museum through mid-October.

Michael LaScola, executive chef of American Seasons (a lauded, upscale eatery) and his wife Orla Murphy-LaScola, the restaurant's general manager and sommelier, delight in taking their two terriers, Max and Jasper, to their favorite beach, Pocomo, on the island's eastern shore. "They chase the crabs in the water, and as the beach is more sheltered, there are few waves. It's a very child-friendly beach so we can bring the whole family," said Orla. "There are lots of kids dropping food and losing balls—all of which our little terrors love."

Miles of trails that dissect the bucolic landscape are ideal for peaceful walks and uninterrupted views. Tupancy Links, a retired golf course, is a beautiful expanse where Fido is welcome to frolic amongst the rolling greenery and wildflowers. The Sanford Farm, Ram Pasture and The Woods, with hundreds of acres, scenic wetlands, helpful markers, and a trail that leads to the sea, make for a fun afternoon with Fido who will likely come across other pooches (in addition to many other walkers, and on occasion, horses). All of these lands are part of the Nantucket Conservation Foundation's properties.

If You Go

ARRIVING

Dogs are welcome both on the ferry lines and most air carriers (notify airlines ahead of time).

Cape Air

(866) Cape-Air; www.flycapeair.com

Nantucket Airlines

(800) 352-0714;
www.nantucketairlines.com

The Steamship Authority

(508) 477-8600;
www.steamshipauthority.com

Hy-Line Cruises

(508) 778-2600; www.hy-linecruises.com

Freedom Cruise Line

(508) 432-8999;
www.nantucketislandferry.com

STAY

The Brass Lantern Inn

(508) 228-4064;
www.brasslanternnantucket.com


The Cottages at the Boat Basin's Woof Cottages

(866)838-9253;
www.thecottagesnantucket.com

Safe Harbor Guest House

(508) 228-3222;
www.beesknees.net/safeharbor

Exploring just part of the 82 miles of sandy coastline here is easy as Fido is welcome to hop aboard the Nantucket Regional Transit Authority Shuttles for free (when leashed and well-behaved, of course). Though dogs are not allowed on lifeguarded beaches from 9 am to 5 pm during the crowded season, after or before those times they are welcome.

Some say this time of year, when the crowds have disappeared and the sun is beginning to turn the leaves to vibrant hues known only to New England, is the best time to enjoy Nantucket. But this island of legend and lore extends a warm welcome to cold noses any time of year. 

tipbit

Woof Cottages offer one- and two-bedroom accommodations for guests and their pets. Dogs and cats are welcomed with blissful beds, treats and toys, food and water bowls, litterbox, litter and more.

www.thecottagesnantucket.com