

BRIDES

7 New England Coastal Towns to Visit This Summer

Beautiful beaches, clam shacks, lighthouses, and charming inns await.

By Lindsay Cohn Published on May 12, 2018



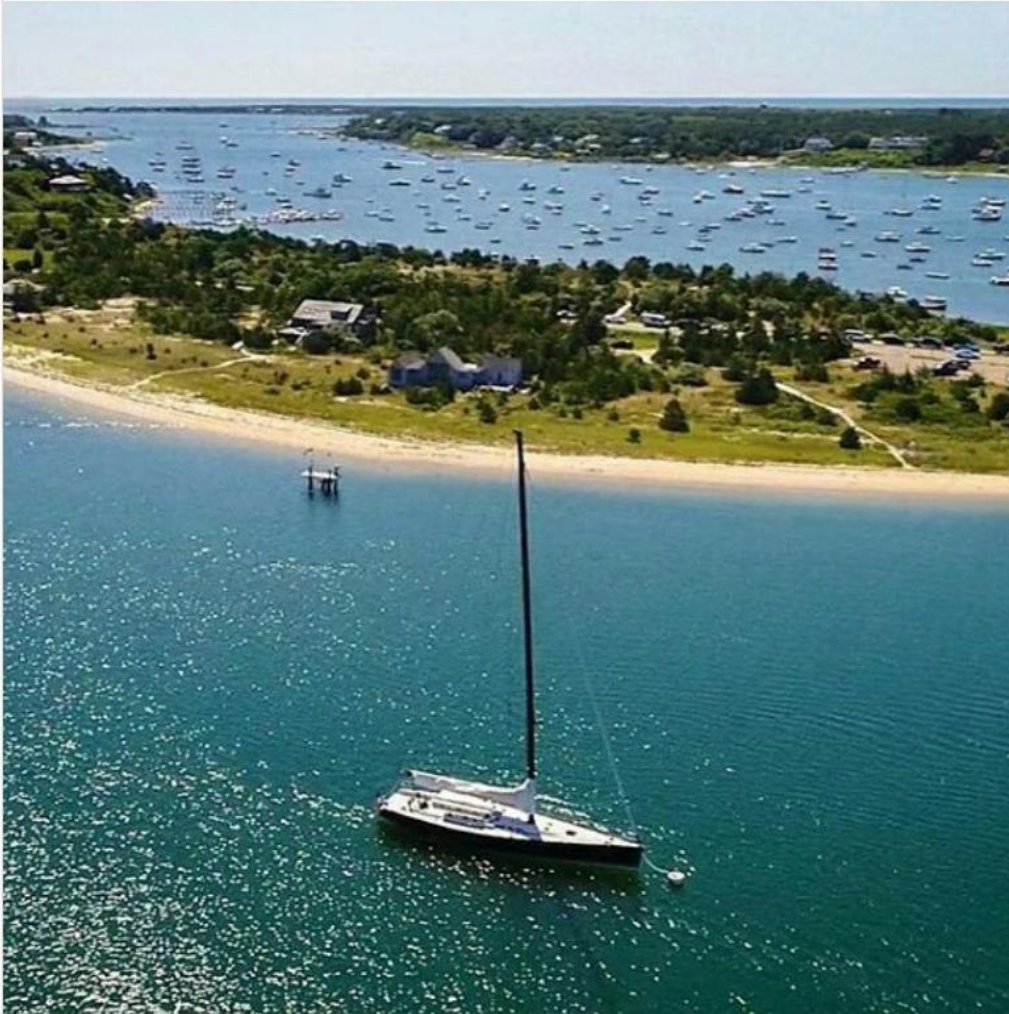
While exotic destinations are always enticing, there's something to be said for the ease of a summer getaway in the [United States](#). Luckily, staying close to home (relatively speaking) doesn't have to mean sacrificing, well, anything. Our great nation has a plethora of picturesque coastal locales. When it comes to charm, history, and seaside fun, you can't beat [New England](#).

Ready to plan your trip? From Mystic to Newport, these classic beach towns make a glorious day trip or [weekend getaway](#).



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8 MONTHS AGO



Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard

Martha's Vineyard is the quintessential New England summer colony. The population swells from 15,000 to 200,000 during high season. And everyone from the Obamas to the Clintons have vacationed in this beloved resort community. The brightly colored "gingerbread cottages" are a major draw, as is the East Chop Lighthouse and Joseph Sylvia State Beach, a two-mile stretch of pristine sand and shallow waters (it was a main shooting location for *Jaws*). Oak Bluffs also boasts the oldest operating platform carousel in America.



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1 WEEK AGO



Newport, Rhode Island

Newport conjures images of Gilded Age mansions, yacht-filled harbors, and golf courses. While this seaside gem holds onto the old-school sophistication that has lured well-heeled travelers for decades, it's not without its modern merits. Case in point: **Gurney's Newport Resort & Marina**. Set on Goat Island, just minutes from downtown, the hotspot—which opened last summer—flaunts 257 guest rooms, an outdoor saltwater pool, lounge with fire pits, full-service spa, 22-slip dock, and unobstructed views of Narragansett Bay.



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mysticseaportmuseum A bright spot on a gray day. Mystic Seaport photo by Andy Price. #red #gray #drizzle #rain #takeanap #lighthouse

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2 WEEKS AGO



Mystic, Connecticut

Immortalized in the 1988 film *Mystic Pizza*, this coastal Connecticut treasure has a lot more to offer than wood-fired pies. Sure, you can still score a slice from the legendary joint, but that's far from the only spot to grab a great bite. Main street is lined with eateries, cafés, and chic boutiques. Be sure to check out Mystic Seaport, the largest maritime museum in the world. The nearby aquarium gives visitors a glimpse at New England's only beluga whales, plus penguins and seals.



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Cape Cod Bay

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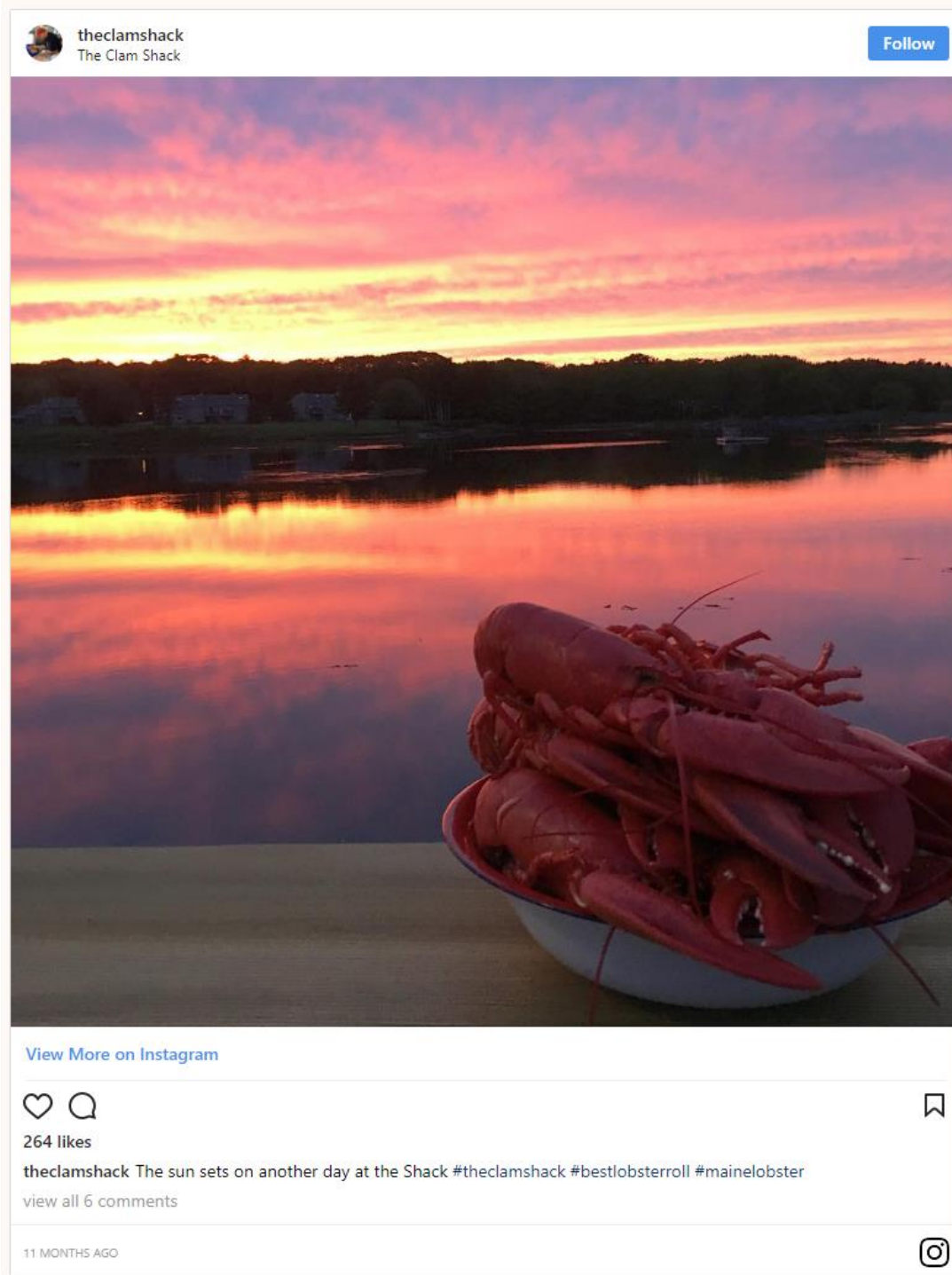
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1 MONTH AGO



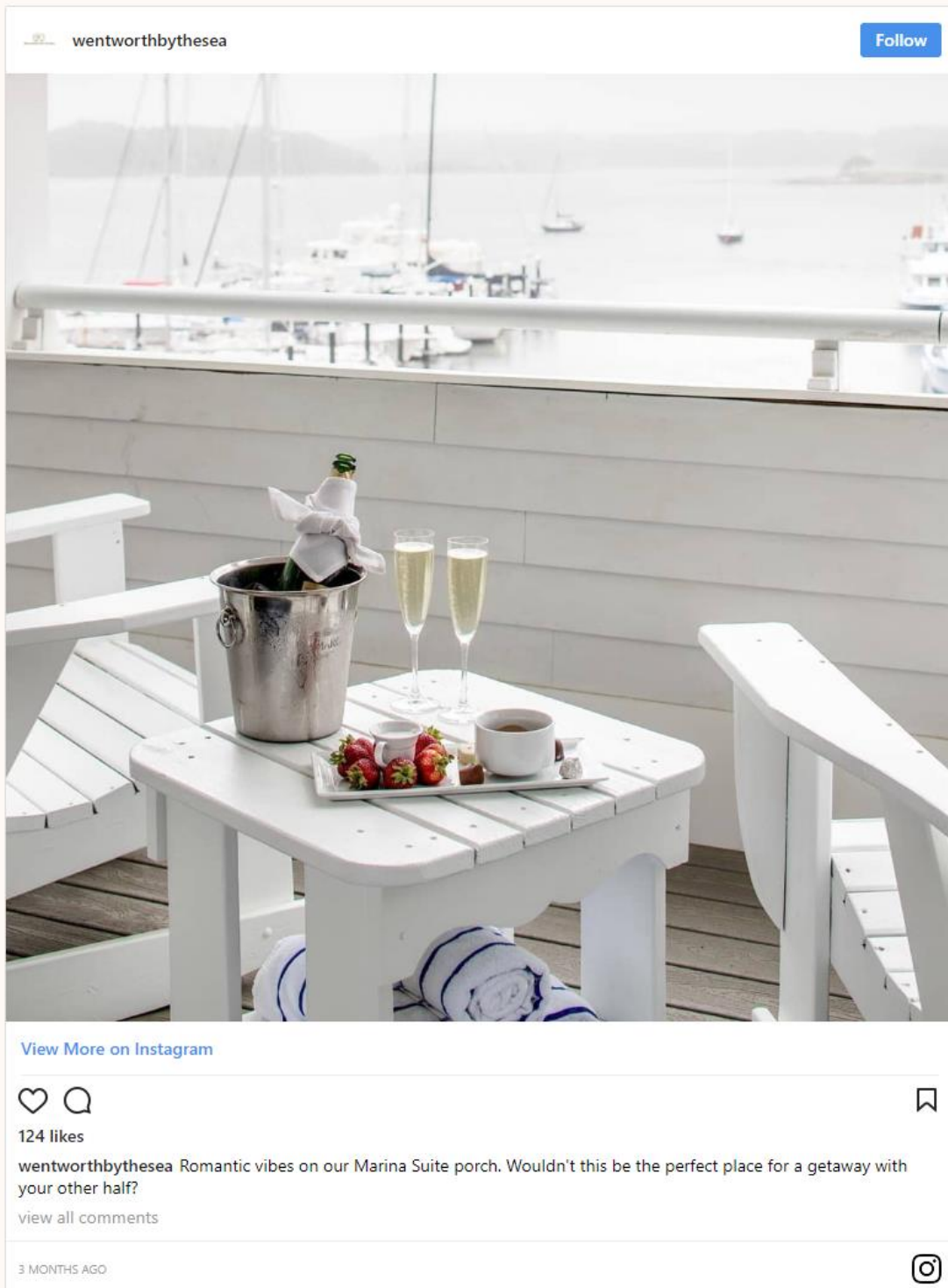
Brewster, Massachusetts

Cape Cod is among the most iconic locales in New England. Looking for a low-key alternative to Chatham and Hyannis? Brewster wins points for its picturesque setting and relaxed vibe. It's also home to **Ocean Edge Resort & Golf Club**, situated on a bluff overlooking the sparkling blue waters of Cape Cod Bay. Summer brings bonfires, clambakes, oyster walks, and scenic bike rides. Prefer more pampering pursuits? Head to the spa for a stress-melting massage or luxurious hydrafacial.



Kennebunkport, Maine

Kennebunkport, a quiet enclave in southern Maine, beckons with a mix of sandy shores, antique shops, art galleries, fishing ports, al fresco eateries, and quaint B&Bs such as [Captain Jefferds Inn](#). The Seashore Trolley Museum displays a massive collection of streetcars and other mass transit vehicles. And, of course, you can't talk about Maine without mentioning lobster rolls. [The Clam Shack](#) is a local institution, beloved for its traditional-with-a-twist approach to this New England staple.



New Castle, New Hampshire

Originally settled in 1623, New Castle is the smallest and easternmost town in the Granite State, and the only one composed entirely of isles. There's no shortage of things to see and do in this idyllic destination. It delights visitors with beautiful scenery and historic sites. Take advantage of the lovely weather at Great Island Common, a 32-acre recreation area with picnic facilities. Another must is **Wentworth by the Sea**, a grand oceanfront hotel dating back to 1874.



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Nantucket, Massachusetts

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7 MONTHS AGO



Nantucket

While its days as a top whaling port may be in the past, Nantucket retains its maritime heritage and classic character. The postcard-worthy town touts cobblestoned streets, steepled churches, and upscale shopping. Adding to the allure of this tiny island are unspoiled beaches, rolling dunes, and historic harbors. Plus, proximity to Cape Cod (it's a 30-minute ferry), makes it an ideal day trip. Not ready to go back to the mainland? Catch a few winks at [Jared Coffin House](#) or [The Nantucket Hotel](#).