

# FAMILY TRAVELLER

## Newport, Rhode Island: How to Spend 3 Days in America's Boating Capital

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Living in New York City provides a fantastic launching pad to many nearby destinations in the Northeast. You can quickly get to the [North Fork](#), [the Hamptons](#), the [Jersey Shore](#) and the [Hudson Valley](#). But a little farther afield is the quintessential American boating town: Newport, Rhode Island. We packed up our Buick Regal TourX, which is outfitted with ample storage space for our long weekend getaway and 4G LTE Wi-Fi that synched seamlessly with our phones for navigation and music.



Three and a half hours later, we pulled into the historic [Grace Vanderbilt](#) hotel where we were greeted with friendly and accommodating faces. The staff at Grace Vanderbilt goes out of their way to create a fun and welcoming environment for families, complete with customized welcome treats and activities for kids (think a kid-size tent and snacks, bath time toys, beach bags full of fun and cookie decorating supplies for a rainy day).



## DAY 1

- › Get acclimated to the City-by-the-Sea with a picturesque trolley tour. The **Viking Trolley Tour** departs and returns to the Newport Visitor Center at 23 America's Cup Avenue. Take in 90 minutes of some of the most spectacular scenery along Ocean Drive and the mesmerizing opulence of the Newport mansions along tree-lined Bellevue Avenue.
- › No trip to Newport is complete without a **boating** experience. Discover why Newport is considered the "Sailing Capital of the World" aboard a boat. The Madeleine is a 72-foot, three-masted schooner, and the Rum Runner II is a Prohibition Era motor yacht. A cruise on the Narragansett Bay will feature landmark sights, like Goat Island, Fort Adams and Hammersmith Farm — the site of the Kennedy wedding reception in 1953. Advance reservations are recommended, and families can board the vessels at Bannister's Wharf.
- › Visit **The Breakers**, Newport's grandest summer "cottage" and a symbol of the Vanderbilt family's social and financial preeminence in the Gilded Age. The tours feature the lives of the people who lived and worked there — whether a family member, a servant or a guest. The audio tour allows visitors to set their own pace.
- › Our Buick loaner was especially great for navigating the twists and turns of **Ocean Drive**, a historic district along the southern coast of Aquidneck Island, as we wound through 10 miles of extravagant mansions and gorgeous waterfront scenery.
- › After The Breakers and Ocean Drive, explore the stunning **Cliff Walk**, a 3.5-mile footpath along the Atlantic Ocean that also offers a sneak peek of manicured mansions grounds.





## DAY 2

- › Head to the recently renovated **International Tennis Hall of Fame** and discover the history of tennis and its superstars through a collection of memorabilia, art, video and more. The self-guided tour is housed within stunning Victorian architecture and surrounded by grass courts — available for public play. Advance reservations are recommended to play tennis.
- › A stone's throw from the tennis museum is the **Audrain Auto Museum**, one of the most highly regarded automotive museums in New England. It curates exhibits of 12-15 vehicles on display at one time. These fully restored vehicles range from the beginning of the 20th century to modern day.
- › Stroll along Bellevue Avenue, Newport's Old Quarter. You'll find the historic **Redwood Library and Athenaeum**, the oldest lending library in America and the oldest library building in continuous use in the country (founded in 1747). The [RLA Youth Program](#) includes story time for all ages and open play for toddlers.
- › Enjoy a self-guided audio tour of **Rosecliff**, modeled after the garden retreat of French kings at Versailles and the backdrop for popular films including *The Great Gatsby*, *True Lies*, *Amistad* and *27 Dresses*. The iconic fountain mesmerizes visitors and the ballroom remains the same as it did when it was commissioned in 1899.
- › Catch the stunning sunset over Newport's bay from the **Roof Deck Bar at Grace Vanderbilt hotel**. You'll see dozens and dozens of boats bobbing in the water by the lively wharf, along with a peaceful setting to watch the sun put on its nightly show.



## DAY 3

- › Start the morning with a caffeine burst at the Coffee Grinder at **Bannister's Wharf**. Be sure to step out to the Adirondack chairs behind it where the boats coming and going will provide lasting entertainment for the kids.
- › Stroll along **Thames Street** and **America's Cup** for shopping and sight-seeing. You'll find plenty of specialty shops, souvenir stores and more. Indulge in a lobster roll at one of the many restaurants along the water.
- › Pop into **Ryan Family Amusements** for some old-fashioned fun. The local chain boasts a variety of arcade and skill games in addition to traditional candlepin and tenpin bowling. Bumper bowling is available for younger players. Keep the smiles going and get a sweet treat from **Kilwin's** next door. Kilwin's is an old-fashioned confectionery chain selling chocolates, ice cream and handmade sweets.
- › Visit **Fort Adams State Park**, where the fort lives on as an engineering and architectural masterpiece. From 1824 to 1950, Fort Adams housed generations of soldiers. Today it is the largest, most sophisticated, most complex fortress in North America. Take a stroll on the BayWalk, a 2-mile walking path around the perimeter of the Park that boasts stunning views of the Narragansett Bay and Newport Harbor.



*By Bridgette Langdon*

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