

AFAR

The Best Beaches in Rhode Island

[Bob Curley](#), 3.20.2019



Photo by John Woodmansee

There's only one way in and out of Rhode Island's East State Beach—a great option for those looking for a quieter place to get some sun.

The Ocean State's beaches are still a well-kept secret. The state might be small, but there's a sandy getaway spot for almost everyone here.

Rhode Island's beaches, like the Ocean State itself, tend to be a bit overlooked. Cape Cod gets more attention as *the* New England beach destination, and although the city of

Newport is world-famous for summer fun, Gilded Age mansions and yacht culture tend to overshadow the state's shimmering sands.

While Connecticut's beaches are placid affairs on the sheltered Long Island Sound, and Massachusetts's South Shore beaches tend to be more rocky and rugged, Rhode Island claims long swaths of shoreline facing the waves of the Atlantic, as well as calmer bay beaches. It may be a small state, but [Little Rhody](#) has a beach to suit the taste of almost anyone—even if most locals would thank you for not letting everyone in on it.



Courtesy of Discover Newport

Surfer's End is located on the northern part of Sachuest (Second) Beach.

Sachuest (Second) Beach, Middletown

South-facing Second Beach has views of the eminently Instagrammable Gothic chapel of St. George's School, as well as waves steady enough to attract surfers to the aptly named Surfer's End on the northern part of the beach. Local families and summer visitors love it here as an alternative to Newport's busier Easton's Beach, less than 10 minutes away. Along this one-mile crescent of sand you'll find a campground, surf school, and a concession stand selling typical beach fare like burgers and hot dogs (though you might do better at the food trucks that occasionally set up in the parking lot). Continue south and you'll walk onto the [Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge](#), a favorite of bird-watchers. On the opposite side of the point is the even less populated

Third Beach if you're looking for calmer waters for the kids; the [Norman Bird Sanctuary](#) with seven miles of hiking trails is less than five minutes away by car.



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Goosewing Beach, Little Compton

Goosewing Beach in the East Bay town of Little Compton sits between Quicksand Pond and the Atlantic, providing a home for seabirds like the least tern and piping plover. A mix of sandy and rocky sections, the beach backs onto high dunes and cliffs and is part of the Nature Conservancy's 75-acre [Goosewing Beach Preserve](#). Visit the Benjamin Family Environmental Center to learn about this unspoiled coastal habitat and join a guided nature walk or relax for a laid-back beach day on the New England shore.

See full story: <https://www.afar.com/magazine/the-best-beaches-in-rhode-island>