



Spend a day (or less, or more) on bucolic Long Island, p.36

Say cheers to a reinvigorated Atlantic City, p.38 and 39

Travel



THE BEST LOCAL ESCAPES



SURF'S UP!

5 lesser-known shore-lined sanctuaries near NYC

Catch a wave at Hampton Beach, an inviting retreat on the New Hampshire Seacoast about 255 miles from Manhattan.

By PERRI ORMONT BLUMBERG

SEE shells, not crowds. Every year from Memorial Day to Labor Day, countless New Yorkers flock to the Kiawahs and Kennebunkports of the Eastern seaboard. They diligently check these ladi-da locales off their list, curtsying to their inner prep schooler. But you, dear reader, know better. This summer, seek refuge upon a lido less traveled. For swimming, shorefront bike rides, boat excursions and more, read on for our five favorite picks for local-ish beach vacations. And do these small towns a favor — don't tell your friends.

► Westerly, Rhode Island

About 145 miles outside the city, slip into vacation mode with a dip in the water at Misquamicut Beach or Napatree Point Beach & Conservation Area, where you'll also want to bring your binoculars along for birdwatching. If you're traveling with kids, make a detour after Napatree to the Flying Horse Carousel, said to be the country's oldest platform carousel. For your accommodations, book the Ocean House (from \$755) in the posh Watch Hill neighborhood, just steps from the shoreline, or the Margin Street Inn (from \$300), two splendid homes on the Pawcatuck River. Wherever you stay, definitely feast at Olympia Tea Room, "famous not fancy" since 1916.



Quaint Watch Hill (above) — an upscale part of Westerly, RI — has historic charm, natural beauty and nautical activities.

▲ The Seacoast Region, New Hampshire

Often overlooked for New England's Marthas and Capes, the Granite State boasts 18 miles of shoreline ripe for sailing, whale-watching and birding galore, just shy of 4½ hours from NYC. Plop yourself down at Hampton Beach, a quintessential beach town with enough lobster shacks, clam stands and fried dough joints to make you second-guess that bikini. Stay overnight at the storied Wentworth by the Sea (from \$389) on the island of New Castle (one of the state's oldest settlements), or at least stop by to dine at its Salt Kitchen & Bar. Another solid bet is the Great Island Inn (from \$199), a circa-1920 clapboard house that's a two-minute stroll to the ocean's edge.

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► Bristol, Rhode Island

Four hours from the city lies Bristol, with bragging rights to the oldest Fourth of July parade in the country, inaugurated in 1785. Though considering the town was settled in 1680, that's practically the modern era. Channel the days of yore at Mount Hope Farm B&B (from \$190), perched on 127-soul-restorative acres. Come for the property's history (George Washington was a guest!) — stay for the area's stellar seafood (the newly reopened Bristol Oyster Bar and a dockside meal at Quito's are musts). By day, camp out at Walley Beach or visit Blithewold Mansion, Gardens & Arboretum. We daresay the latter, a 45-room English-style manor home brimming with antiques and art, is Little Rhody's best-kept secret.



Army (2); Shutterstock