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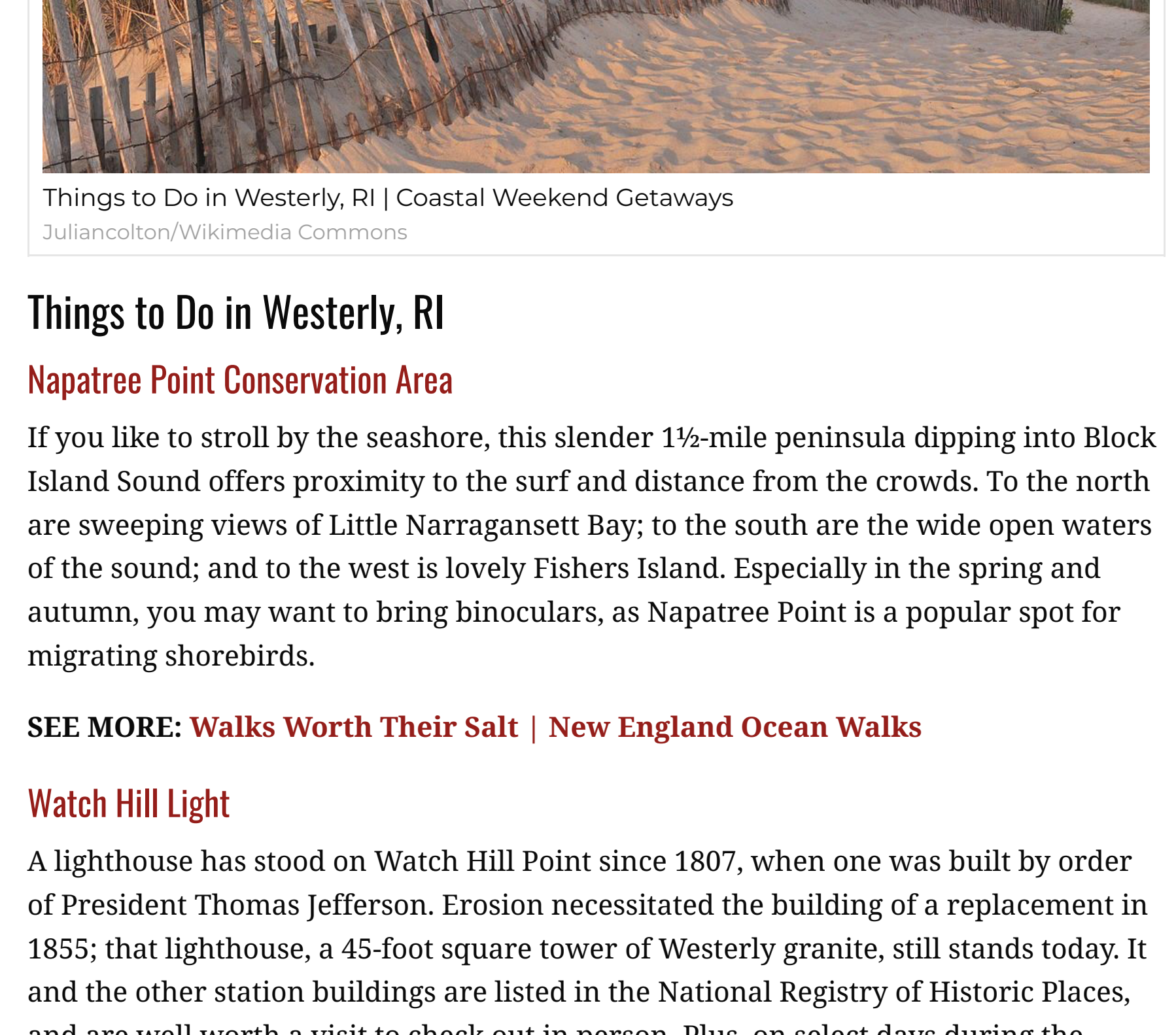
WESTERLY
Things to Do in Westerly, RI | Coastal Weekend Getaways
 The *Yankee Magazine* editors share some of their favorite places to eat, favorite places to stay, and favorite things to do in Westerly, RI.

Yankee Magazine · July 27, 2020 · Read Comments (6)

★★★★★
 5.00 avg. rating (86% score) - 1 vote

Though rather unglamorously named for its geographical position on Rhode Island's southwestern tip, Westerly is a classic New England town with a vibrant personality — especially in summer, when visitors flock to the beachfront communities of Misquamicut and Watch Hill. You can wander Westerly's historic downtown, with its shops and restaurants, art galleries, and 15-acre Victorian strolling park, and then take a 10-minute drive south to reach the picturesque shoreline and nature escape of Napatree Point. It all makes for a great weekend getaway, especially with this roundup of our favorite places to eat, favorite places to stay, and favorite things to do in Westerly, RI.

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 JulianScott/Wikimedia Commons

Things to Do in Westerly, RI
Napatree Point Conservation Area
 If you like to stroll by the seashore, this slender 1½-mile peninsula dipping into Block Island Sound offers proximity to the surf and distance from the crowds. To the north are sweeping views of Little Narragansett Bay; to the south are the wide open waters of the sound; and to the west is lovely Fishers Island. Especially in the spring and autumn, you may want to bring binoculars, as Napatree Point is a popular spot for migrating shorebirds.

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Watch Hill Light
 A lighthouse has stood on Watch Hill Point since 1807, when one was built by order of President Thomas Jefferson. Erosion necessitated the building of a replacement in 1855; that lighthouse, a 45-foot square tower of Westerly granite, still stands today. It and the other station buildings are listed in the National Registry of Historic Places, and are well worth a visit to check out in person. Plus, on select days during the summer you can stop into the Watch Hill Lighthouse Museum, which has a collection of lighthouse keepers' documents, photographs of area ships and storms, and the lighthouse's original Fresnel lens.

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Flying Horse Carousel
 Head to Watch Hill Beach to discover one of the oldest continuously operating carousels in the country and the last surviving "flying horses" model. Built in 1876 and brought to Watch Hill in 1883, it gets its name from the fact that its hand-carved wooden steeds are not attached to poles that go up and down, but instead are suspended from a center frame, causing them to fly out when the carousel turns. The ride is for kids only, but the spectacle is free for all to enjoy.

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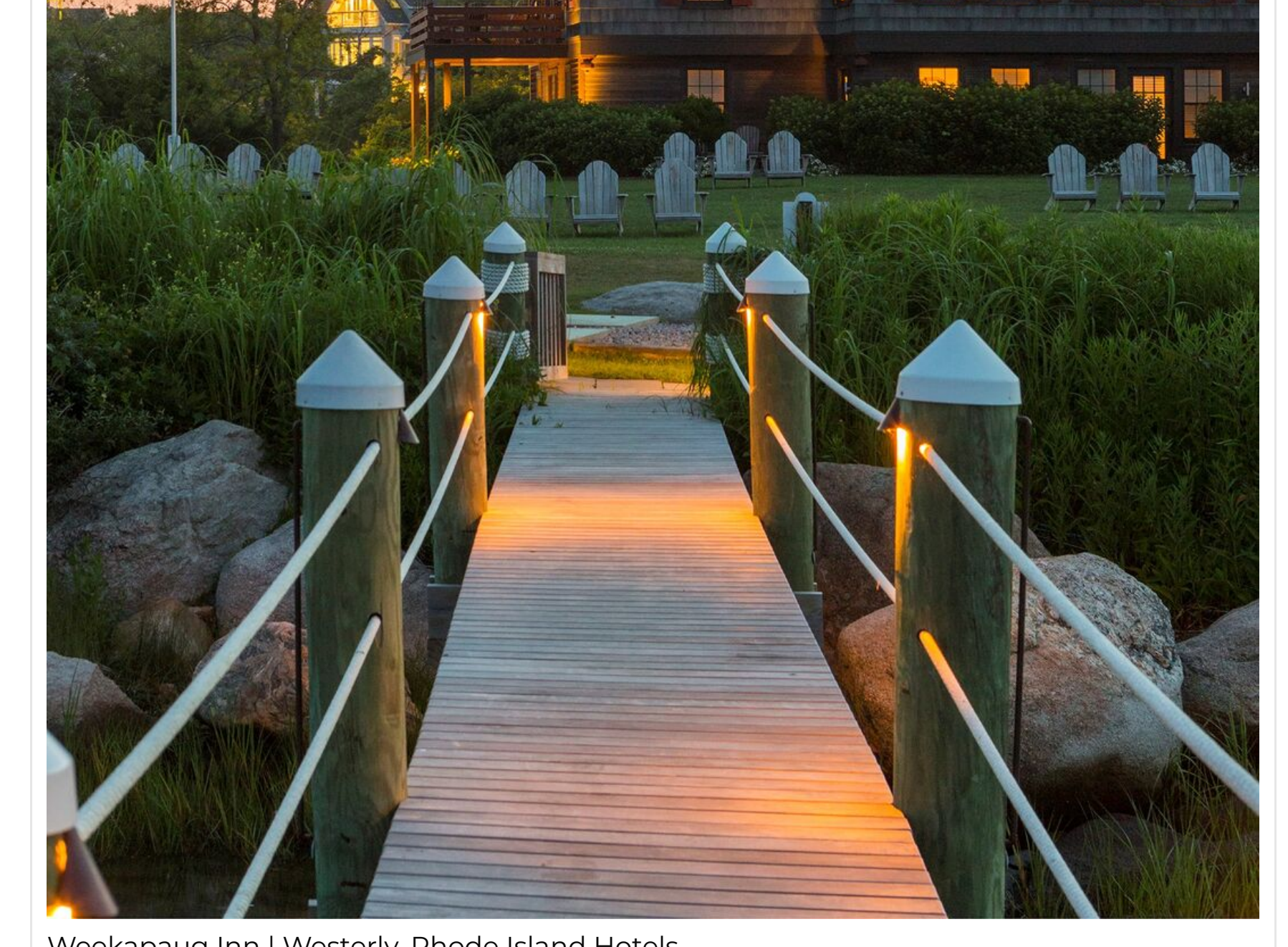
Heliblock
 Doors on or off? It's your call when you book a sightseeing or point-to-point flight out of Westerly or Block Island state airports aboard a Robinson R44 helicopter. The 15-minute Block Island Experience and 10-minute Watch Hill tour are popular with first-timers, but this is the rare thrill you can customize. The ultimate option? A romantic dinner trip to Winfield's with a sunset swoop around Block Island.

Westerly, RI | Restaurants
Two Little Fish
 On a sun-drenched day, you can't beat sitting on the deck of this seasonal shack with a plate of crunchy-fried, sweet whole bellies or strips and hand-cut onion rings, especially if you have nothing more to do than watch Wuskenau Beach dune grasses ripple. Beloved for its reasonable prices and community-mindedness, this family business's commitment to serving wild-caught, sustainable, close-to-home seafood is so strong, on rare occasions when wild weather keeps clam boats ashore, you may find this menu item MIA.

Ella's Fine Food & Drink
 After establishing herself on the Florida dining scene with a hit Punta Gorda restaurant called the Perfect Caper, Connecticut native Jeanie Roland wanted to get back to her New England roots. So along with her husband, James, this acclaimed chef-owner (seven James Beard Award nominations and counting) opened Ella's in downtown Westerly in 2012. Its menu has a French-Asian influence but spans everything from tuna tacos made with sesame-ginger-infused tuna tartare, to Moroccan spiced lamb, to steak frites. On a summer evening, you can further elevate your dining experience with one of the puckishly named cocktails (the Dirty Laundry, the Frothy Swine) and a seat on the terrace.

Pizzeria Longo
 After Jerry Longo's eponymous café in Providence's Little Italy, Federal Hill, closed in 2012, his fans were delighted to see him back in action in Westerly. In bringing the same "mama's kitchen" Italian cooking to Rhode Island, he first opened Trattoria Longo, then in 2016 debuted this take on the classic pizzeria. At the heart of the operation is a 6,500-pound wood-fired grill imported from Italy, which churns out traditional and specialty pies with a thin crust, light char, and quality ingredients. The apps are worth a look, too, with standout bruschetta on offer, as well as Longo's famed meatballs with a scoop of ricotta. The pizzeria serves beer and wine, and offers patio seating with a view of Westerly's Victorian strolling park.

St. Clair Annex
 This seasonally operated old-school sandwich and ice cream shop has been ingrained in the Watch Hill summer scene for decades — so much so that a stop here is often a ritual for return visitors. There's a basic but solid breakfast menu (French toast, pancakes, breakfast sandwiches) as well as delicious house-baked pastries; for lunch, choose from 10 different grinders, among other sandwich-y selections. But the star of the show may well be the ice cream, made daily on-site in small batches: black raspberry chocolate chip, banana walnut chip, banana Nutella swirl, peach cobbler... need we say more?



Weekapaug Inn | Westerly, Rhode Island Hotels
 Courtesy of Weekapaug Inn

Westerly, RI | Hotels & Inns
Ocean House
 For luxury by the sea, Ocean House is the name to know in Watch Hill. The original resort hotel on this site — built in 1868 — closed in 2003 and was demolished. But the property's owners would resurrect it in 2010 as a newly built \$146 million structure that channeled the same Victorian gentility while adding a big dose of modern comfort. Its 49 spacious guest rooms and 18 suites are outfitted with flat-screen high-definition TVs and iPod docking stations with sound bar; all have water views and many offer fireplaces. Amenities include a 650-foot private beach, a 12,000-square-foot spa, and a lap pool, and top-notch dining is available on-site in both casual and upscale settings, including the *Forbes* five-star restaurant Seasons.

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Weekapaug Inn
 A sister property to Ocean House, the Weekapaug offers the good life on a smaller scale, with just 27 guest rooms and four suites in a more relaxed setting. Situated on the shore of Quonochontaug Pond, with the Atlantic stretching out just beyond, the Weekapaug celebrates its natural surroundings with a number of naturalist-guided outings, including kayaking, bird-watching sessions, bicycle trips, and barrier beach walks. For those looking to simply kick back and relax, we recommend grabbing one of the inn's superlative lobster rolls, choosing an Adirondack chair on the lawn, and basking in the late-afternoon sun.

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Margin Street Inn
 Long-time artist and newly minted innkeeper Sarah Cooper's eye for aesthetics and gift for making guests feel at home has quickly turned this year-old 10-room riverside B&B into yet another diamond in Chuck Royce's Westerly hospitality portfolio. Like his larger projects—including Ocean House and Watch Hill Inn—the two mid-19th-century mansions that make up Margin Street Inn were still in preservation effort away from renewed elegance. Guests enjoy homemade breakfast spreads, lounging in the shade of the six-acre estate's enormous beech trees, and nibbling cheeses and locally cured Soupy in the sunroom.

The Hotel Maria
 Superstorm Sandy's wrecking of Maria's Seaside Café and its handful of overnight rooms was a catalyst for the Bellone family to stake their Misquamicut Beach hospitality roots even deeper. Late matriarch Maria would have adored the rebuilt restaurant and this cherry 31-unit boutique hotel, which opened in 2018 across the street from prime sand. You'll adore it too: Rooms are cottage-chic and spacious, breakfast is free, cute custom bikes are yours for the borrowing, and your beach bag and towels are waiting. Plus, you're steps from your pillow if you overindulge on homemade ravioli ... or margaritas.

Pleasant View Inn
 Situated so close to the ocean you can almost feel the salt spray, Pleasant View Inn in Misquamicut is a bright, comfortable, budget-friendly option that's especially good for traveling families. The 112 modern, newly remodeled guest rooms come in a variety of configurations, and recreation for kids (and adults) is just steps away in the form of a heated pool and, of course, a private beach.

What are your favorite things to do in Westerly, RI? Let us know in the comments!

This post was first published in 2017 and has been updated.

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Comments

Tammy February 6, 2020
 Hello,
 I will be coming in from Texas to New England the weekend of Feb 22, 2020. Westerly & Mystic area. Any ideas welcomed. It'll be several friends meeting me there.
 Respectfully
 Tammy Jean
 Reply

Turboannin@gmail.com July 14, 2019
 Have summered in Weekapaug for 75 years; my husband has spent all 79 years of his life in Weekapaug and racing sailboats in Weekapaug and Watch Hill; he still races in Watch Hill; his family owned the original Weekapaug Inn and the replacements. We also play tennis and golf. Great community, but expensive and you most own or rent there to use beautiful 3 mile beach or smaller beach on the western side with good waves and softer sand.
 Reply

CARL June 25, 2019
 Many people do not realize that Napatree was covered in beach cottages in September 1938. The '38 hurricane wiped out every one and the following day nothing was there but the sand.
 Reply

Reader June 19, 2019
 Watch Hill was one of my summer sailing destinations. Always a pleasant experience to walk the beach. Great place.
 Reply

CAROL May 5, 2017
 A weekend getaway at Watch Hill was spectacular.
 Reply

Reader April 18, 2017
 Favorite thing to do is stand exactly where that picture was taken and soak in the beauty!
 Reply

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