


Time for a Rhode Trip!

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Best of Rhode Island 2021 | Outdoors Edition

Yankee editors pick the top Rhode Island attractions, dining, and lodging that highlight having fun in the New England outdoors.

Yankee Editors • April 26, 2021 • Add Comment

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TRAVEL NOTE: Before setting out to visit any of our Best of New England winners, please contact them or check online for updates on hours and operations this summer.



Visitors to Carolyn's Sakonnet Vineyard in Little Compton sample vintages at the outdoor tasting bar.
Mark Fleming

Best Rhode Island Outdoor Attractions

DRIVE-IN THEATER

Rustic Tri-View, North Smithfield

The state's only first-run drive-in may be retro to the point of no-frills, but with three screens showing double features plus a snack bar that does out doughboys and clam cakes, it's a guaranteed good time. [facebook.com/RusticDriveIn](#)

FARM ANIMAL FUN

South County Museum, Narragansett

Animal lovers should beeline it to this museum's Living History Farm, especially when chicks are hatching in early July. Rhode Island Reds are the state's official bird, and these amber fluffballs are part of an effort to march the breed back to its heritage form. Playful goats and sheep compete with the flock for attention. [southcountymuseum.org](#)

OUTDOOR FLEA MARKET

General Stanton Inn Flea, Charlestown

Held on the grounds of a stately 1667 inn, this picker's paradise attracts several dozen vendors selling all manner of antiques, crafts, and collectibles. Rounding things out are farm stands, local nonprofit booths, and food trucks, including Del's Lemonade. Sundays from April to Columbus Day. [facebook.com/generalstantoninnfleamarket](#)

OUTDOOR MUSEUM

Coggeshall Farm Museum, Bristol

Newly allied with Old Sturbridge Village, this coast-side living history farm takes visitors further back in time than its sister site. It's the 1790s here, and structures, tools, and tasks demonstrated by costumed interpreters, such as broom making and wool spinning, offer a glimpse of life in New England on the cusp of industrialization. [coggeshallfarm.org](#)

PUBLIC GOLF COURSE

Newport National, Middletown

Since the Arthur Hills–designed Orchard Course opened in 2002, it has remained at or near the top of New England's most popular golfing destinations. Because of the ocean views and the constantly shifting winds off the bay, players compare the experience of playing here to the famous courses of Ireland and Scotland. [newportnational.com](#)

PYO FRUIT FARM

Sweet Berry Farm, Middletown

Grown using predominantly natural means of pest control, fruits hand-harvested at Sweet Berry Farm have the exceptional appearance and flavor that befits a place that's been a passion project and a land-preservation success story for more than 40 years. Strawberries ripen first, then summer raspberries, blueberries, peaches, blackberries, fall raspberries, apples, and pumpkins. [sweetberryfarmri.com](#)

Best Rhode Island Outdoor Dining

CITY PATIO DINING

Oberlin, Providence

Strung with party lights and sheltered from Union Street by screens and potted plants, the new Oberlin patio has an impromptu, celebratory feel. It's a testament to creativity, something amply represented in chef Ben Sukle's Italian-inspired menu of crudos and elevated takes on the freshest summer vegetables. [oberlinrestaurant.com](#)

CRAFT BREWERY

Tilted Barn Brewery, Exeter

Homegrown hops flavor the beers at the state's first-ever farm brewery, Tilted Barn, which recently expanded into a new post-and-beam barn that houses a 30-barrel brewhouse and a tasting room with a large outdoor lawn, seating area, and patio. Grab a delectable fruity double IPA and drink in the serene setting. [tiltedbarbrewery.com](#)

FARM STAND

Walker's Roadside Stand, Little Compton

At this sweet, seasonal roadside stand, the jewel-like vegetables are piled into wooden crates, big bouquets of vibrant dahlias are crowded into buckets, and it's very hard to leave empty-handed. Even if you're just passing through with no plans to cook, it's still worth a stop to sample the brownies from the on-site bakery, or to grab a few pints of berries to eat at the beach. [facebook.com/walkersstand](#)

ICE CREAM STAND

The Wright Scoop, North Smithfield

Not only is the venue cool (a 1966 Streamline trailer), but the scoops are phenomenal: The milk and cream are sourced from cows steps away, the ice cream base is homemade, and trimmings from goods made in the on-site bakery are often folded into the final concoctions. [thewrightscopri.com](#)

LOBSTER SHACK

Newport Lobster Shack, Newport

Rhode Island's seafood shacks tend to lean more "seafood-ecumenical" and less lobster-specific. But the Lobster Shack is committed to its namesake, with a menu ranging from rolls, bisque, and more inventive fare like "lobster bites," which are like clam cakes, only, you know.... [newportlobstershack.com](#)

WINERY

Carolyn's Sakonnet Vineyard, Little Compton

Winemaker Elaine Phipps and vineyard manager Lorraine Frank's combined decades of experience are evident when you taste these white, red, rosé, and dessert wines. Sample flights at the cedar-shingled tasting room, or grab a table outside on the lawn and enjoy a bottle in the sun. [sakonnetwine.com](#)

Best Rhode Island Lodging: The Outdoors Edition

FARM STAY

Lavender Waves Farm, South Kingstown

Share your getaway with alpacas, white peacocks, and babydoll sheep when you book the lone suite at this fragrant private farm. The space, which sleeps four, is styled with reclaimed-wood wallboard, beams, and furnishings; amethyst geode sinks; and picture windows that frame views of 4,000 lavender plants, arrayed in a sunburst around a gazebo. [lavenderwavesfarm.com](#)

HOTEL ON THE BEACH

Weekapaug Inn, Westerly

Brisk waves or still water? Vacation dilemma solved when you choose the refined yet casual Weekapaug Inn on Quonochontaug Pond, where 35 watercraft stand ready for guests' use. Follow the scent of the sea over the bridge and down a path to the property's private Atlantic beach, and cherish the lightness of knowing chairs, umbrellas, towels, drinks, and food await you. [weekapauginn.com](#)

HOTEL PORCH

Ocean House, Watch Hill

On the Verandah, with a drink and a plate of glistening local oysters, croquet action below, milky-blue ocean in view, you've found the New England hallmarks of perfection. From the little things—like lobster rolls *your way*, hot or cold—to the monumental elements of historic character, visual splendor, and world-class service, the sweet life is here for even lunch-only visitors. [oceanhouseri.com](#)

LAKESIDE CAMPGROUND

Bowdish Lake Camping Area, West Glocester

On the western edge of the state, not far from the Connecticut border, Bowdish Lake feels more like summer camp than a campground. The large lake and a small pond allow for swimming, boating, and fishing, but also expect darts, wagon rides, artistic offerings at the Red Craft House, ice cream socials, and a genuine feeling of being part of a welcoming community. [bowdishlake.com](#)

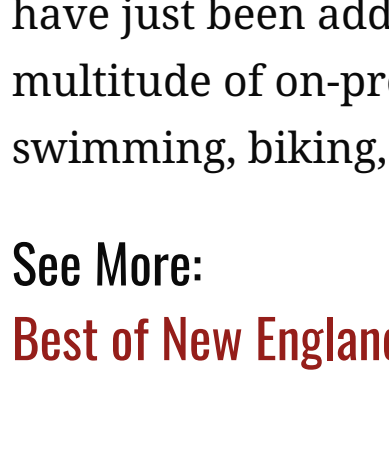
WILDERNESS LODGE

The Preserve Sporting Club, Richmond

The Ocean State is half forested, and a luxury sporting lodge—the sort you'd expect to find out west—hides in the midst of 3,500 of those wooded acres. Full-kitchen suites have just been added to the array of lodgings for overnighters, enticed here by a multitude of on-property activities: fishing, golfing, shooting sports, tennis, swimming, hiking, ziplining, spa-going. [preservesportingclub.com](#)

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Time for a Rhode Trip!

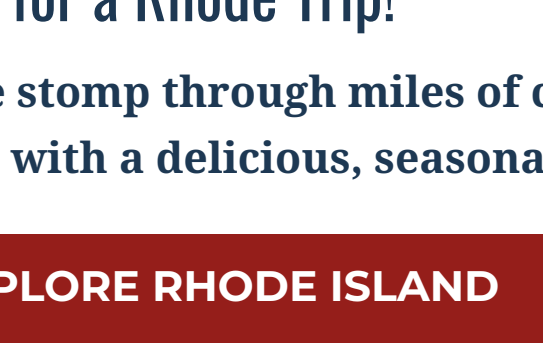
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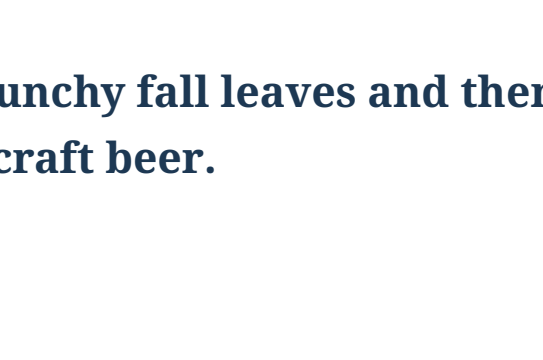
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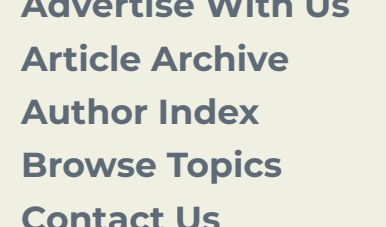
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