18 THINGS TO DO IN RHODE ISLAND YOU CAN'T MISS

Rhode Island is one of New England's most picturesque and tourist-loved states. It's lined with seaside colonial towns, as well as entertaining and bustling cities — such as Newport and Providence. No matter where you go, there is an Italian presence offering amazing food.

Although Rhode Island is the smallest state in the United States by area — they've packed a whole lot of amazing things in! Ready to learn more? Here are 18 things to do in Rhode Island that we know you and your crew are going to love.

NEWPORT

The beautiful city of Newport is first on our list for good reason. Besides ogling at luxury yachts and strutting through The Breakers, there are just endless opportunities for fun in the sun here. If you are the sporty kind, it is worth noting that the International Tennis Hall of Fame resides here, where they host the annual ATP men's event.

It is a very romantic getaway, but also can be a great family summer vacation spot. It's not hard to wonder why bachelor and bachelorette parties reside here with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd beaches all being great locations for lazy beach days.

Details: Website

THE MANSIONS

One of the big draws to Newport, Rhode Island is checking out how the wealthy lived in the olden days. The major mansions are protected under The Preservation Society of Newport Mansions. This includes the incredible Vanderbilt summer cottage, known as The Breakers.

Anyone who visits here will note that the Vanderbilts idea of a summer cottage could host an army. In fact, it is more appropriately described as a Gilded Age mansion. Along with Marble House, these were mansions built between 1870 and the early 1900s, featuring lavish estate homes designed by the world's best architects. They also have exquisite art, which you can see on the tour.

Another beautiful journey you can take is the Rough Point guided tour through Doris Duke's home. Doris was an heiress and philanthropist in Newport, living in a beautiful estate that is now the Rough Point Museum. From the outside, the stone mansion offers beautiful panoramic views of the Atlantic Ocean. From the inside, you will find lavish decorative art.

If there is one mansion you can not miss, it's The Elms home. In 1996, it became a National Historic Landmark honoring the home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Julius Berwind. Between beautiful gardens and historic art, this tour is amazing.

Details: 424 Bellevue Ave, Newport, RI 02840 | Website

OCEAN DRIVE

Ocean Drive is one of the best things to do in Newport, Rhode Island. Roll down your windows and feel the ocean breeze for 10 historic miles.

The drive starts at Bellevue Avenue, where you can find a number of the mansions listed above. The drive winds around different beaches, farms, and parks, making it very scenic.

Details: Newport, RI 02840 | Website

INTERNATIONAL TENNIS HALL OF FAME

There are so many different reasons to visit the International Tennis Hall of Fame. Whether you want to hit some balls back and forth on the iconic grass courts or visit their museum about tennis history, there is something for everyone.

During the summer, catch the ATP Men's tour event where you can see greats like John Isner and Kevin Anderson play!

Details: 194 Bellevue Ave, Newport, RI 02840 | Website

FORT ADAMS STATE PARK

Fort Adams State Park is one of the stops along Ocean Drive. While many zip past this park, it's worth slowing down for.

Take the guided 75 minute tour and learn more about the history of the park and the restoration process. During the guided tour, you'll also be able to explore the underground tunnels! Self-guided tours are also available.

Fort Adams State Park offers an exceptional panoramic view of both Newport Harbor and the East Passage of Narragansett Bay. In the summer, this state park hosts both a Jazz Festival and a Folk Festival that brings thousands of music lovers to this beautiful area.

Some of the best sunset views in Newport can be seen from Fort Adams State Park Trail loops. This walking area is a 2.5 mile loop around the outside of the Fort Adams structure.

Details: 80 Fort Adams dr., Newport, RI 02840 | Website

BEAVERTAIL LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM

Though not technically in Newport, the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum in nearby Jamestown, RI is worth a visit.

The museum is home to a collection of information and artifacts about the history of the Beavertail Lighthouse — which is the third-oldest lighthouse in all of North America.

Learn about lighthouse history, and more about Narragansett Bay's maritime science, technology, and culture. After your museum trip, you can explore Beavertail State Park, which adjoins the lighthouse site.

Details: Beavertail Rd, Jamestown, RI 02835 | Website

CLIFF WALK

Cliff Walk in Newport is a National Recreation Trail in a National Historic District. This 3.5-mile walk takes you along the rugged New England shoreline, past mansions, beaches, and more.

On the Cliff Walk, you'll enjoy Newport's natural beauty, while also taking in the beautiful architecture of the homes and buildings along the way. Most of the walk is pretty easy, but part of the southern half of the walk is rougher — and you may have to maneuver over the rocky shoreline.

This popular trail is visited by more than 500,000 people each year. The beauty along the routes cannot be beat!

Details: Website

PROVIDENCE

Providence is the capital of Rhode Island and has a lot to offer. For instance, their historic Federal Hill is home to the best Italian bakeries and restaurants in the state, maybe even New England! There is also a lot of great art and fun activities for the entire family to enjoy, such as the Roger Williams Park Zoo.

Because of its bustling college scene with Brown, RISD, Johnson and Wales, Providence College, etc., there is a lot to be experienced educationally and through art. Let's get into it.

Details: Website

ROGER WILLIAMS PARK ZOO

With more than 150 animals to see, the Roger Williams Park Zoo has so much to offer. The park offers tons of green space and other interesting activities, such as the Museum of Natural History, recreation areas like tennis courts, among other enjoyable activities.

The zoo was founded in 1872, making it the third oldest zoo in the nation! The Museum of Natural History also includes a beautiful Planetarium, with several education programs for kids.

Details: 1000 Elmwood Ave, Providence, RI 02907 | Website

WATERFIRE PROVIDENCE

WaterFire in Providence takes place in the downtown area at Waterplace Park on Memorial and South Main Street Park. It's a beautiful display that occurs from May to November, with a special holiday fire lighting returning in December. Over 80 braziers are lit up just after the sun goes down to create a magical ambiance throughout the downtown area.

This is one of the most popular attractions, as 1 million visitors come to experience the WaterFire showings. It also has an incredibly important economic impact, creating $113 million in economic output for local businesses!

Details: 4 N Main St, Providence, RI 02903 | Website

JOHN BROWN HOUSE

The John Brown House Museum was the first mansion to be built in Providence. Today, it is a museum that not only shows the one of the most elegant and magnificent mansions, according to John Quincy Adams, but also depicts what life was like back then for women, the architects, and landscapers — and of course, John Brown.

It also takes a look into important topics, like slavery and independence. Art, culture, and history are abundant here in this home.

Details: 52 Power St, Providence, RI 02906 | Website

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HISTORIC FEDERAL HILL

The Italian corner in Rhode Island rests in Historic Federal Hill. It offers the iconic Atwells Avenue, with surrounding streets lined with pasta restaurants, Italian bakeries, and boutique shopping.

With each stop, such as at Camille's on the Hill, you'll not only indulge in Italian food, but also quickly learn the immigration stories from families that have come from Italy to take part in the American Dream.

The cobblestone streets with Italian flag colors used as driving dividers on the road will let you know that you are in the right spot. In fact, the street ends up being blocked off by cars, which allow patrons to roam freely in and out of shops!

Details: Website

RISD MUSEUM OF ART

RISD Museum of Art stands for the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art, and offers strong collections of modern and interesting art exhibits for all to enjoy. This multi-building art museum came about in 1877, showcasing work from ancient times all the way to the present day. This is incredible to see first-hand because it shows just how much things have changed.

With over 100,000 works of art to be explored, there is no shortage of things to see. Both permanent and rotating exhibits can be found here, and they even offer some exhibits online.

Details: 20 N Main St, Providence, RI 02903 | Website

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PROVIDENCE PERFORMING ART CENTER

This not-for-profit theater was formerly known as the Loew's State Theater, and even before that, the Palace Concert Theater. It's located in Johnson and Wales Providence Campus and offers tons of events and shows open to the public. From adult comedy to plays, their event calendar is busy offering different shows for an all-inclusive experience.

Make it a date night, as there are tons of restaurants and eateries in the neighborhood. If you are seeing a late-night show and coming from out of town, there is also a lot of accommodations nearby.

Details: 220 Weybosset St, Providence, RI 02903 | Website

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Not to be confused with Bristol, Connecticut, Bristol, Rhode Island is an amazing area to visit.

Traditional and historic, this water seaport was named after Bristol, England, and was built on traditional territories named the Pokanoket Wampanoag. With state parks, museums, and more — there is a lot to see here.

Details: **Website**

COLT STATE PARK

Colt State Park is one of the biggest and best green spaces in Rhode Island, offering 464 acres on Poppasquash Neck. Its beautiful panoramic views of Narragansett Bay could have you sitting for hours taking in the Bay's breeze. With four miles of paved bike paths and additional trail loops, there is a lot of activity going on here.

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Whether you are someone who wants to take advantage of the active areas, or you are a photographer looking to explore the history and the beautiful area, there is something for all here.

Details: Route 114, Bristol, RI 02809 | **Website**

HERRESHOFF MARINE MUSEUM

For those who love the history of boats and open waters, look no further than the Herreshoff Marine Museum.

Particularly those interested in the yachting history of Rhode Island, this museum has a serious section dedicated to America's Cup Hall of Fame. There is also an amazing exhibit and collection of boats, artifacts, and other museum sections uncovering more than 25 years of boating history.

Details: 1 Burnside St, Bristol, RI 02809 | **Website**

BLITHEWOLD

Blithewold Gardens and Museum may just be the best part of visiting Bristol. This beautiful 33-acre summer estate is America's best example of the Country Place Era. Blithewold Mansion is a whopping 45-room home encompassed in a plethora of gardens that are explored yearly by many visitors.

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It's an inspiring area for many, as the gardens resemble romance, mystery, joy, and serenity, with beautiful stonework that can be marveled at for hours.

Details: 101 Ferry Rd, Bristol, RI 02809 | **Website**

NARRAGANSETT

Questions?

Narragansett is one of the most beautiful oceanside towns you can visit in Rhode Island.

With beautiful beaches and areas to walk, run, and bike, it's become one of the most popular New England summer vacation spots. Not to mention, it has an upscale island feel, very similar to Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket.

Details: **Website**

NARRAGANSETT BAY BEACHES

Narragansett Bay Beach is one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Scarborough State Beach is the most popular of the Rhode Island State beaches. Other popular beach destinations include Salty Brine Beach and Roger Wheeler State Beach. Going to any of these beaches is easily one of the most popular things to do.

Please note that most of these beaches will have a $12 entry fee, depending on the season, for parking, so plan accordingly.

Details: **Website**

#Pokanoket

SAIL TO BLOCK ISLAND

Block Island is basically the Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket for Rhode Island! While you can certainly sail your way there, you can also take the famous Block Island Ferry. The Newport Hi-Speed Ferry can get you from Newport to Block Island in just 60 minutes.

The Mohegan Bluffs is one of the most beloved attractions because frankly, a beach that sits at the bottom of 200-foot bluffs is quite majestical to take in. Even if it is just a day trip, it is worth taking the ferry to come here.

You can also find the beautiful Southeast Lighthouse here, which sits atop of the bluffs, making for beautiful pictures.

COASTGUARD HOUSE

The Coastguard House is a beautiful place to grab a bite to eat. It's also the perfect place to learn about history.

Once it was a station built of solid granite, perched upon rocks overlooking Narragansett Bay. Now, it's been converted into a local's favorite restaurant with spectacular views. It features a lounge perfect for a pre-dinner cocktail, and a full dining room for family meals or date nights.

Details: 40 Ocean Rd, Narragansett, RI 02882 | **Website**

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