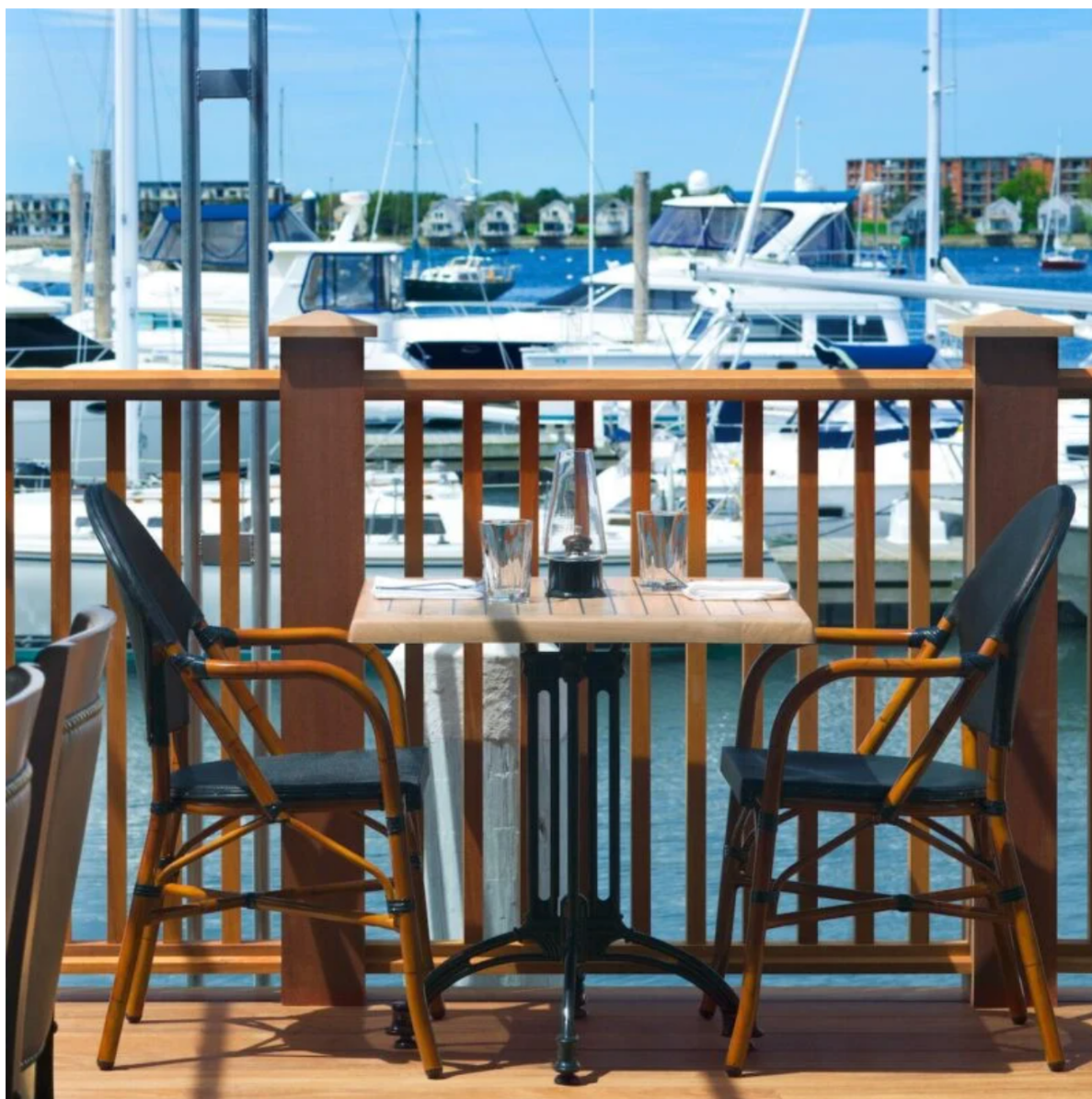


8 Amazing Restaurants To Try In Newport, Rhode Island



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Harbor view from the patio of The Mooring

PHOTO CREDIT: THE MOORING

Newport recaptured the imagination of audiences everywhere with many of the filming locations of *The Gilded Age*, the beloved television series set in the booming late 19th-century U.S. A summer playground for rich and famous New Yorkers in the 1880s, Newport remains a magnet for today's visitors. Visitors are entranced by the beautiful New England seaside town on Aquidneck Island, where the ever-evolving dining experiences and sailing scenes are every bit as attractive as the elaborate mansions lining the Bellevue Avenue Historic Area and along the famous cliff walk.

Newport's restaurants benefit greatly from the town's proximity to Rhode Island's many farms and fisheries. Whether you're walking along Newport Harbor or on the six blocks that constitute the Local Broadway District, you'll have lots of varied dining experiences. Additionally, Newport restaurants showcase the talents of newly-minted chefs from the culinary arts program at nearby Johnson & Wales University.

The most popular, and perhaps the best, restaurants in Newport are those with direct water views, or those within walking distance to the town's wharves and marina. Almost all offer a lobster roll and other New England standards, from a casual oyster bar to a more formal fine dining room.



Castle Hill Inn
PHOTO CREDIT: MERYL PEARLSTEIN

1. The Dining Room At Castle Hill Inn

When you think of fine dining and Newport, the restaurant that tops the list is [The Dining Room](#) at the gorgeous [Castle Hill Inn](#). Originally the private Agassiz Mansion built in 1875 and now a member of Relais & Chateaux, the inn sits on a 40-acre peninsula overlooking Narragansett Bay. The curved indoor dining room is a town landmark with oversized windows offering views of fishing boats, sailboats, and yachts navigating the East Passage. In warmer months, diners enjoy the inn's à la carte [Lawn Restaurant](#), where an expansive clambake feels as at home as the seagulls hovering overhead.

What To Order At The Dining Room At Castle Hill Inn

Chef Lou Rossi creates dishes that are both timeless and updated. Book well ahead for his six-course *prix fixe* menu, which features the flavors of coastal New England as well as influences from around the globe. Seasonally updated, the menu includes the likes of Rhode Island oysters, foie gras, lobster, and black truffles. An award-winning wine list with more than 800 selections is available.

Pro Tip: During regatta and race season, try to score a seat on the lawn. Newport's well-known races include America's Cup and the Newport to Bermuda Race.



Waterview seating at The Restaurant at Newport Harbor Island Resort
PHOTO CREDIT: NEWPORT HARBOR ISLAND RESORT

2. The Restaurant At Newport Harbor Island Resort

Across the causeway on Goat Island and a perfect stop before returning to the Rhode Island mainland, [Newport Harbor Island Resort](#) offers a new culinary destination for visitors with its seafood-centric [The Restaurant](#). Set at the end of the expansive lobby, the stylish restaurant and lounge are popular among guests and locals looking for a getaway from the crowds. Sunsets are particularly dramatic here, with unobstructed views of the bay.

What To Order At The Restaurant At Newport Harbor Island Resort

Meat-eaters are not left out, and steaks, roasted Statler chicken, and vegetarian appetizers will keep everyone happy. But you'd be remiss if you didn't try one of their lobster specialties. Try the lobster gnocchi, or the traditional or spicy lobster rolls for something a bit different. The restaurant takes particular pride in incorporating local proteins and vegetables into its seasonal menus.

Pro Tip: Newport Harbor Island loves to spice things up seasonally. In winter, you can book an igloo for a warming cocktail before or after dinner. Water-facing chaise lounges are the place to be in summer. Fall and spring are glorious, with outdoor seating around the fire pits.



Breakfast Nova Bagel at The Living Room
PHOTO CREDIT: MERYL PEARLSTEIN

3. The Living Room

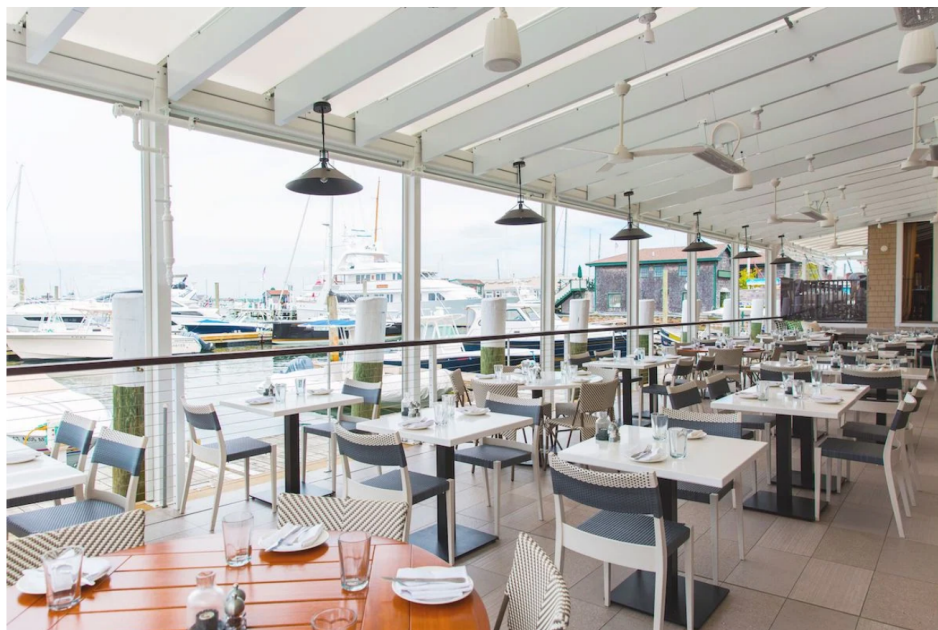
The Living Room presents a new, top-rated dining experience that might make you forget you've ever favored a three-course meal at a traditional dining table. "LR," as it's known among locals, is a small-plate destination in the Brenton Hotel — it's a circular room with a bar, sofas, and armchairs surrounded by panoramic windows. Seats are scattered, as in a living room, in friendly clusters around small tables or in front of a fireplace.

What To Order At The Living Room

Melding local and New England-sourced ingredients, Executive Chef Glaister Knight adds his own touch to what others might consider no-brainer lobster rolls or clam chowder. He serves a sake mignonette with local Blue Hill Cove oysters or Narragansett Bay littlenecks. Signature dishes include lamb chop lollipops, tofu fries with spicy honey, and a standout crab cake Scotch egg. The idea here is to create your own multi-dish *mélange*, an arrangement perfect for sharing and sampling.

Creativity at LR doesn't end on the dinner plate. Maurice's extensive multi-ingredient cocktails are sailing set favorites. Local beers and ciders also feature, along with nearly 20 wines by the glass. The Living Room also serves an enticing breakfast and brunch.

Pro Tip: While you wait for your meal or cocktail, look out the windows that face the bay. As the sun dips and lights come on, sailboat masts seem to glisten. If the weather allows, start your dining adventure with a cocktail on the rooftop.



The Mooring dining room
PHOTO CREDIT: THE MOORING

4. The Mooring Seafood Kitchen & Bar

A favorite among Newport foodies for more than 35 years, the waterfront [Mooring](#) is a seafood specialist among Newport restaurants. The restaurant offers both indoor seating as well as a sunset-facing patio set above the water. In warmer weather, The Mooring's outdoor drink rail is a coveted spot for viewing the sailboats and yachts docked around the restaurant.

What To Order At The Mooring Seafood Kitchen & Bar

Guests love the extensive raw bar that draws from the restaurant's long relationships with local fishermen, and hardly anyone skips the Mooring's clam chowder, a Hall of Fame winner at the New England Great Chowder Cook-off. A lovely variant of this traditional soup, the restaurant's native scallop chowder is also top-rated. For something unusual (and unforgettable), try Executive Chef Jennifer Backman's Bag of Doughnuts appetizer, a paper bag filled with lobster and shrimp fritters, accompanied by a side of chipotle maple aioli. The Mooring's chilled lobster roll is served on a brioche bun with a tarragon dressing. For non-seafood eaters, chicken, beef, and duck are offered.

Pro Tip: It's not advertised, but locals will tell you that if you dine at The Mooring on your birthday, you'll receive a free entrée. Let your server know if it's your birthday when you arrive.



Black Pearl's famous clam chowder
PHOTO CREDIT: MERYL PEARLSTEIN

5. The Black Pearl

A fixture on the waterfront, [The Black Pearl](#) was transformed starting in 1967 from a shanty to a fine dining restaurant with outdoor seating. Now, with its Waterside Patio covered and heated in colder months, the Pearl welcomes more guests than ever to enjoy its classic New England fare and raw bar. It's set on Bannister's Wharf near the famous Clarke Cooke House. The Black Pearl is considered one of Newport's best restaurants among both locals and visitors.

What To Order At The Black Pearl

The upscale Commodore's Room and casual Tavern are traditional New England, nautical and convivial. Order the clam chowder with its hint of dill or you may never be allowed back. A bowl of New England steamers guarantees that you'll get your hands dirty. The Black Pearl's version of a lobster roll comes warm on a croissant with a side of tangy purple slaw.

You'll need to order some kind of cocktail if you plan to fit in with the local vibe. Try the Frozen Mudslide — it's the drink of choice after a day sailing under the hot New England sun. If you're seated outside, ask for a table along the railing where the yachts and tour boats tie up, and then ask your server to take your photo for the perfect Instagram shot.

Pro Tip: You can order a six-pack of the famous chowder online from [The Black Pearl's shop](#).



Midtown Oyster Bar shrimp pasta dish
PHOTO CREDIT: MIDTOWN OYSTER BAR

6. Midtown Oyster Bar

There's clearly no shortage of places to slurp oysters in Newport, and Midtown Oyster Bar is rightfully named. Covering a full block right on Thames Street, the multi-floor, multi-room restaurant has the largest raw bar in town, with an extensive selection of wines and beer to accompany. This popular dining spot is the place for your seafood fix.

The crowd is as colorful as the boat flags hanging from the ceiling. Always lively, the first floor has an oyster bar setup with high-top tables. The so-called Burgee Bar on the second floor has three dining rooms plus water-view decks, usually filled with Newport sailors and visitors "in the know."

What To Order At Midtown Oyster Bar

I encourage you to come hungry. After a dozen oysters and littlenecks, you'll want to try Midtown's acclaimed char-grilled octopus and tuna tartare tacos. And don't forget the poached lobster roll or the creamy cod chowder — these dishes are Midtown Oyster Bar rites of passage. If you happen to be around for Sunday brunch, the lobster Benedict pairs beautifully with a boozy oyster shooter or any of the 20 or so wines by the glass.

Pro Tip: Midtown Oyster Bar is first come, first served. Relax, have a cocktail, and enjoy the people-watching while you wait for a seat.



Scales & Shells oysters
PHOTO CREDIT: SCALES & SHELLS

7. Scales & Shells

For 35 years, Scales & Shells has enticed seafood-searching visitors with down-home dining in a casual setting. Just outside of Newport's busy downtown, the Emilia-Romagna-influenced restaurant has an open kitchen and extensive bar that invite conversation and diner interaction. Changing daily, the menu is written on a chalkboard that includes the oysters of the day as well as dinner specials.

Presentation is important; a must-order is the beautiful lobster Fra Diavolo for two, a wondrous, red crustacean in a spicy marinara sauce with a mess of mussels, calamari, and littlenecks, all served in a giant pan.

What To Order At Scales & Shells

For the full Newport restaurant experience, start your evening in the 1/2 Shell, the restaurant's oyster room, where shuckers work their magic with piles of bivalves. Then move on to the main dining room, where the open kitchen is the main attraction. Hopefully, you'll have a bunch of friends with you because you'll also want to order Rhode Island's official state appetizer, fried calamari, or Sicilian mussels served family style. Save room for the perfect Italian finish to the feast: homemade tiramisu with a glass of housemade limoncello.



Giusto's outdoor dining

PHOTO CREDIT: GIUSTO

8. Giusto

Not every Newport restaurant is completely seafood-focused.

Looking for a menu that's a fun fusion of Italian and local seafood with vegetarian offerings as well? [Giusto](#), the new "freestyle Italian" restaurant at [Hammetts Hotel](#), is your go-to — a modern, airy space on Hammett's Wharf with both indoor and outdoor seating.

What To Order At Giusto

Chef Kevin O'Donnell is a native Rhode Islander with a penchant for originality. Don't expect to find red-sauce selections here. Instead, O'Donnell shows off his sense of place with lettuce wraps filled with crab, chowder-style littlenecks topped with a garlic doughboy, and a Rhode Island-influenced twist on Italian egg pasta: beet anolini with Aquidneck honey and orange. Veggie-forward Brussels sprouts, heirloom carrots, and Caesar of the Season are also offered. The bar features an unusual and heavily regional beer selection plus an extensive list of wines by the glass.

Pro Tip: If you can't decide what to order, the Tasting Menu is a well-priced, curated option for family-style sharing.

Other Options To Whet Your Appetite

For a taste of history, [The White Horse Tavern](#) has been serving thirsty visitors since 1673, making it the “[oldest operating restaurant in the U.S.](#)” Given its long pedigree and survival of tumultuous war days, the tavern has a reputation for being haunted by its former guests playing tricks on current imbibers.

If you're sick of seafood and are craving a bit of Mexico (instead of New England), [Perro Salado](#) presents a menu of traditional Mexican dishes from tacos to enchiladas. As a bonus, Perro Salado's mezcal and tequila list features 150 choices, in addition to three types of sotol.

If you find yourself near Washington Square, stop at [Bar 'Cino](#) for a casual Italian-inspired meal or drink. The restaurant is owned by its employees, who are all happy to serve you.