

A NEW YORKER'S EAST COAST VACATION GUIDE



A MESSY NESSY MINI GUIDE

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Long Island

The sprawling greenery and rich – as in, Great Gatsby rich – history of Long Island feels worlds apart from the hustle of the city, despite the fact that it's a stone's throw from it all. In addition to that old time glamour, Long Island is also home to homey alternatives to the Hamptons. Cozy up to the beachfront B&Bs, mom & pop shops and wineries of the North Shore towns, which know how to put their feet up in truly relaxed summer style...

North Fork instead of the Hamptons

There's a reason they call North Fork "the Un-Hamptons." North Fork comprises a 20 mile stretch of Long Island and is a charming, unpretentious enclave of both beachy and Victorian architecture, great seafood, and delightful mom & pop shops.

Where to Stay:



Silver Sands Motel: If you're looking for an American motel just like you saw it in Twin Peaks, take a weekend trip out to Long Island and book yourself a room at the Silver Sands Motel, situated right on the beach at Pipes Cove. These 1960s-era seashore lodgings haven't changed a lick, and with good reason. The folks at Silver Sands have figured out they're better off not changing their real-life Twin Peaks rooms or that fabulous old neon sign above the check-in office. The motel is regularly booked for fashion shoots and filming and for Wes Anderson fans, it's a weekend back in time at summer camp.

The Townsend Manor Inn: “The name Townsend is one of the oldest family names in America,” write the owners of this white pillared Greenport mansion, “and dates back to Salem, Massachusetts in 1638.” The family owned B&B in Green has been hosting Long Islanders and mainlanders alike for almost a century, and the manor even has its very own marina.

The Distilling Co.’s Guest House: Play, sip, and stay at the guest house of the Greenport Matchbook Distilling Co., whose rooms may include clawfoot bathtubs, balconies that overlook the garden, barn and neighboring Kontokosta Winery. “Here you can find the traditional vineyard and beach resort reimagined into a guest house,” say the hosts, “where creativity, relaxation and indulgence can all be found in equal measure.”

A Cottage by the Sea & Vineyards: This 1900s cottage by the bay for two even comes complete with kayaks. The Southold outpost is “nestled on a private road where you can listen to nature at sunset, see shooting stars at night, or just sit and enjoy the view.”

The Candlelight Inn: This big yellow Victorian manor in Shelter Island comes with a dreamy porch for lazy summer nights, and it’s B&B room is perfect for a couple or solo traveller.

The Garden Wing of this 1830s Home: This Captain's house dates to 1830, making it one of the oldest houses in Greenport, and the owners have converted its garden structure into a b&b complete with its own gazebo for 4 guests. “The garden wing is abundant with historic details, most notably the impressed tin ceilings and walls,” write the hosts, “Everything has been carefully restored giving the house its wonderful old charm combined with modern amenities.”

Things to Do:

Live the Small town life in Greenport

Let your hub be the village of Greenport, which was a huge oyster port in the 20th century and continues to boast charming seafood eateries, Mom & Pop shops (don't miss the Marine Supplies store and the furniture store inside the town's old theatre). This historic village has all the charm of the Hamptons without any of the pretension. You'll find great coffee shops and a few trendy little boutique hotels right in the centre of town if you need your caffeine fix first thing.



Pretend You're in Provence

In July, the lavender fields at [Lavender by the Bay](#) are in full bloom – and ripe for your viewing (and sniffing) pleasure. At this family owned and operated lavender farm, you're invited to walk through the fields, meet the lavender bees and browse organic products from the farm shop.

Wineries & Lighthouses



Scope out the North Fork “wine trail” via wineries like [Sparkling Pointe](#), [Raphael](#), and [Osprey Dominion](#). Venture out to **Orient Point**, a 15 minute drive to the tip of the shore and the furthest point east on the North Fork of Long Island, which offers gorgeous views and wildlife at the **Beach State Park**. Check out **Shelter Island** as well, the final stop on the Greenport ferry and another calm and secluded town with a beautiful preserve, known as “**Mashomack**” – quiet beaches and a town centre that is pretty much just bite sized hardware store, bar, and little cafe known as “[Marie Eiffel](#).”

It’s hard to beat the locale of Greenport’s [Kontokosta Winery](#), whose owners set up shop in what feels like an old, converted barn on a bluff overlooking 62 acres of land, turned swish tasting room. It is once again open by appointment only, so head over and pack a picnic to sip some of their delights overlooking the ocean.

Visit the Gold Coast Mansions en Route

Long Island is home to a legion of stately mansions that in the early 20th century, would provide the inspiration and backdrop for *The Great Gatsby*. The so-called ‘Gold Coast’ became the playground for Manhattan’s wealthy elite, who built themselves English-styled grand houses, with plush, landscaped gardens, and the most luxurious interiors money could buy. On your way out to North Fork, make a plan to stop in on a few of these historic estates – some have survived, whilst dozens have been sadly demolished and forgotten....



Knollwood Estate

- **King Zog's New York Mansion:** The Knollwood Estate was once owned by none other than Zog the First, King of the Albanians, ousted from his own country in 1939. Explore the ruins [here](#).
- **[Old Westbury Gardens](#):** Built in 1906, this Charles II-style mansion is covered with 200 acres of stunning gardens, lakes, and ponds. For over half-a-century it has been operating as a museum dedicated to documenting the traditions of the grand American estate. The Westbury family's art and antiques also continue to adorn the home, and they served as a backdrop for some of the scenes from the 1970 classic, *Love Story*.
- **[Vanderbilt Mansion](#):** Known as the Eagle's Nest estate of William K. Vanderbilt II, the mansion's interiors are not yet available for view, but you can buy tickets to visit sprawling 43 acre waterfront grounds, and amble through its colonnades, hilltop pool, and terraces overlooking the ocean. Pack a picnic, and lunch like your Jay Gatsby.
- **[Sands Point Preserve](#):** Once erected and owned by the prominent Guggenheim Family, this estate is rumoured to have inspired the iconic "East Egg" home of Jay Gatsby in F. Scott Fitzgerald's classic, *The Great Gatsby*. The gardens have reopened for the summer, with over 200 acres to explore surrounding the stately castle-like building, also known as "Hempstead House," that was completed in 1912.

Upstate & Hudson Valley

If there's one thing New Yorkers love as much as their city, it's leaving it for a little breather "upstate," whether that means setting up a homestead in the rustic Hudson Valley or escaping to explore some eco-friendly farms, B&Bs, and small pre-Revolutionary towns.

What to Do:



Village Life in Cold Spring

Just 50 miles from the city is the charming village of Cold Spring. Regular trains leave Grand Central Terminal and take approximately 70-80 minutes. Make sure to find a seat on the left-hand side of the carriage leaving New York, as the track hugs the Hudson River, often just a few feet away from the window. Cold Spring's Main Street is a delightful example of "small town America," known for its well preserved 19th-century buildings, antique shops and incredible views of the Hudson River. Make sure to poke your head behind the picture perfect storefront of **Once Upon a Time**, where loveable old timers Bob and Barbara sell their antique miniatures, vintage toys, costume jewelry and other oddities. (12 Main St, Cold Spring, NY 10516; +1 845-265-4339; open Mon-Fri 10am-4pm, Sat & Sun 10am-5pm). Stop for lunch at the colorful French saloon [Le Bouchon](#), with its red chequered tablecloths and commendable faux French cuisine that

makes you think of the old pioneer towns that tried to bring some French flair out to the Wild West. Sitting out on the porch if the weather permits with a bowl of French onion soup and a glass of port is a nice way to watch this small town go about its day. There's a [charming little inn](#) right in the centre of town.



Urbex Exploration on the Hudson

Hiding in the woods outside Cold Spring is one of the most captivating, and easily accessible, ruins in New York. The once magnificent **Cornish Estate** was built in 1917 for Edward Joel Cornish, President of the National Lead Company, and his wife Selina. The couple died tragically within a fortnight of each other in 1938, leaving the mansion empty, and a fire in the 1950s saw the grand home abandoned for good. Ever since, it's been slowly reclaimed by nature. But you can still get a clear picture of how beautiful this home once was. If you're travelling by car and using GPS, search for "Northgate, Cornish Estate" and park by the side of the road just opposite the trail entrance.

(Here are your parking space coordinates: N 41.4390505, W 73.973283)

Five miles up river, [Bannerman's Castle](#) might look like a medieval European storybook setting, but these American ruins have seen their fair share of disaster. The only real occupants of the castle were the weapons of war and temperamental explosives housed in this elaborate military surplus warehouse built in 1901. Just 50 miles north from New York City, it is located on the Hudson River's Pollepel Island. Arrive by your own kayak, opt for a self-guided tour, and check out the events available online.



[Julie Sees the World](#)

Stroll the Pre-Revolutionary Streets of Kingston, NY's First Capital

The storybook streets of Kingston, New York, are only an hour-and-a-half from Manhattan and offer a time capsule trip to 1777, when it was New York's first capital. Today, it's a vibrant little art town that doubles as an open air museum; ride the antique trolley, and visit the only intersection in America at which all homes are pre-Revolutionary, known as "The Four Corners"; peruse the downtown area and patronise mom & pop shops, cafes and eateries like Tubby's, Lis, Village Coffee, and Rough Draft; Clove & Creek (for home goods and souvenirs), Hops Petunia, and Kingston Standard. Start out at the historic [Rondout waterfront](#), and visit the city's [website](#).



[Wilderstein Historic Site](#)

Farm Life in Rhinebeck

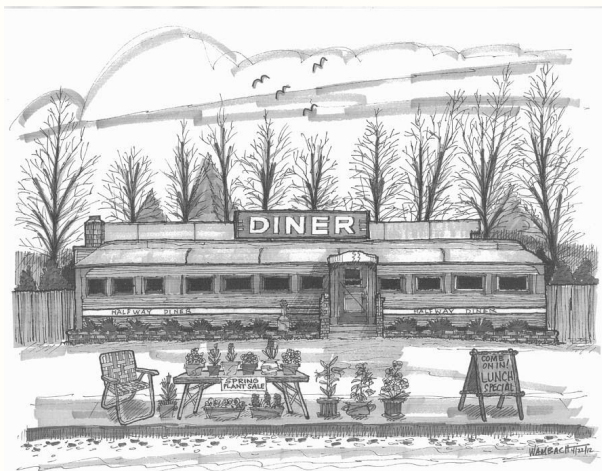
Yet another pre-Revolutionary gem of the Hudson Valley, Rhinebeck is a cultural pulse point north of New York City by some two hours. Soak life at the feet of the Catskill mountains, at farm-to-table restaurants, and amongst beautiful pre-War architecture. Check out the [Rhinebeck Farmers' Market](#) every Sunday, shop for some socially distanced veggies (more at [rhinebeckfarmersmarket.com](#)) and visit the grounds of the [Wilderstein Mansion](#), whose museum is not open but architecture is a magnificent, East-Coast-Adams-Family estate (more at [wilderstein.org](#)). Urbex explorers will want to check out the abandoned 19th century **Wyndcliffe Mansion**, once the extravagant 24-room abode of New York City socialite Elizabeth Schermerhorn Jones. Today, its gothic mansion ruins feel ripe for some spooky storytelling and journaling – in fact, it even has its own catchphrase. The turn of phrase, “keeping up with the Joneses” was invented here,

as Elizabeth’s neighbors couldn’t escape the looming physical presence of the home, nor the gossip surrounding it. Spend a few days on a working Rhinebeck farm and “take advantage of miles of hiking trails, say ‘hi’ to our friendly horses, our donkey “Tigger” and chickens, and take in breathtaking sunsets and clear starry nights,” writes the owner, Maggie. [Book here.](#)

The town’s [Old Aerodrome](#) is now a living, open-air antique aviation museum in Rhinebeck preserving aircrafts from the Pioneer Era to Golden Age of Aviation, and it’s opening again starting July 14th, 2020.

The Red Hook Poets Walk that Inspired Rip Van Winkle

Just 15 minutes north of Rhinebeck is Red Hook, a sleepy little town with a dreamy “Poets Walk” park. “Believe it or not, you’re walking through a designed landscape — a series of ‘outdoor rooms’ separated by stands of trees and stone walls — created for the owners of two neighboring estates around 1850,” say its guardians, “It got its name because writers like Washington Irving loved rambling here; legend has it he came up with the idea for ‘Rip Van Winkle’ while gazing toward the Catskill Mountains, the site of his protagonist’s long sleep.” It is free and open all year, though times may vary. Learn more [here](#).



The [Historic Village Diner](#) of Red Hook serves classic American fare in a beautifully preserved, early 20th century railroad dining car. “The diner is additionally significant as a representative example of a ‘Silk City Diner,’” say the owners, “a highly popular prefabricated dining car line manufactured by the Paterson Vehicle Company of Paterson, New Jersey” and an important piece of retro East Coast history.

Where to Stay:



Cedar Lakes Estate: A magical, women owned & operated estate in Port Jervis, New York, “Cedar Lakes” is an escape into a slower way of living. With over 500 acres to explore in the heart of Hudson Valley, you can show up alone or with the whole family and let the hosts plan the rest with entire itineraries, as full or sparse as you like, pre-planned with everything from outdoor wellness activities to farm-to-table meals.

The Bauhaus Escape, Kingston: Built in the 1890s, this B&B for up to four people has been dubbed the Bauhaus Guesthaus of the historic town of Kingston, New York, for its colorful approach to design and restoration.

The Wedge: the perfect mid century modern retreat for you to put up your feet with a high ball. Located in Andes, New York, it’s a little over 2.5 hours from Manhattan – and ideal for a quick weekend retreat. The home is “perched on 34 secluded acres deep in the woods above the Pepacton Reservoir, between the village of Andes and Belleayre Mountain,” and equipped with all the modern amenities you could need – not to mention a fondue set, old tapes, and retro magazines. Eat your heart out, Don Draper.

Stargazing in a Yurt at Gatherwild Ranch: For a little glamping, cozy up to a yurt at Gatherwild Ranch – an environmentally friendly settlement across 15 acres. “There are several barns on the property, a wood workshop, and a large garden with a greenhouse,” write the hosts, whose yurt hosts up to four guests and is pet friendly.

Firelight Camps: immerse yourself in equal parts luxury and nature in Ithaca, New York, where the hiking trails are plenty and all meals are locally sourced. “Our furnished tents are outfitted with hardwood floors, a plush king or double queen beds,” write the hosts, “a private tented porch with rocking chairs, battery-powered lanterns, and a writer’s desk and chair.”

A Retreat at Liberty Farms: Put up your feet at Liberty Farms, and you’ll inevitably be inspired to pick some gardening tools as well. This organic farm in Hudson Valley offers luxury amenities in its “summit tent” as well as seed-to-table tours, fly fishing, and craft beverage tours.

The 100-yr-old Chicken Cottage: This little yellow cottage in New Paltz, New York, is actually a 100-yr-old converted chicken hatchery. You may not be able to tell from the outside, but the two-story coop can sleep a small family! It’s also equipped for all your laundry, wi-fi and heating needs. The best part? It’s crazy affordable, and “you don’t even need a car to get [there],” write the hosts, “it’s just 12 minutes by taxi from the New Paltz Bus Station, or bring your bike up and cycle everywhere.”

Chill Like FDR at America’s Oldest Inn: A stay at the Beekman Arms & Delmater Inn is one for the history books. Established in 1776, it is now the continuously operating inn in the United States, and apparently President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a big fan and frequent guest. It’s still just as antique and charming, and these days it even curates a little antique market.

Get Spiritual in a Town of Psychics

There is certainly no place quite like the enchanting hamlet of Lily Dale, NY, population: 275, where over 50 registered spiritual mediums are in residence year-round, offering private readings, forest temple services, seances, workshops and access to the spirit world for all who care to venture to the other side. You can learn more about its curious history in our archive [article](#), exploring the ups and downs of its role as a Spiritualist epicentre in the United States. There are two hotels and several bed & breakfasts in the quaint and verdant village, where everything is walkable and open to all, from the skeptical to the curious to the devoted pilgrims that rely on Lily Dale's psychics to communicate with lost loved ones.



© [Celeste Elliot](#)

Catskills

We like to think of the Catskills as an eternal summer camp. Every year, it has unfolded its getaways, resorts, and natural beauty for folks to escape the city. This is where you come to bask in the mountains that inspired the Hudson River School, and to follow in the footsteps of writers, musicians and artists of yore...

Where to Stay:



The “Getaway” Cabin: A minimalist’s dream plopped in the woods of Catskills West, the cabins of “Getaway” give you the perfect blend of cozy and chic. Hole up alone or with a partner amongst the trees and your fellow pod people neighbors across 20 acres of land. With your own campfire materials, picnic tables, AC, kitchen, and toilet, you can decide to be as social or hermit as you like. We also love their recent “100 nights” initiative, in which they’re giving away 100 nights of free cabin rentals to 100 Black people who feel they could really use a night of self-care. [Nominations are open](#) until September 24th.

Urban Cowboy: “The spirit of The Cowboy has always been about freedom,” say the founders of Urban Cowboy, which also has an outpost in Nashville and gives New Yorkers a little bit of that country hospitality, “Have a few drinks, play some music, take a bath and fall in love.” With easy access to trails, streams and a few cedar soaking tubs (depending on your room), “The Lodge” they’ve set up in the Catskills is made up of five stand-alone houses for you to sip some whisky under the moonlight, and finally finish your great novel.



Glen Falls House: A boutique mountain hotel in the heart of the Catskills, Glenn Falls both carries on, and innovates the tradition of seasonal Catskills resorts. Established in 1881, Glen Falls was initially a farmstead. By the 1940s, it was converted into an activities & amenities heavy hotel, popular for its pools, tennis courts, and shuffleboards. Now, its newest owners, Jon and Greg, have made it open all year round. Guests can choose to stay in the Main House, Hilltop Motels, or Cottages.

The Woodstock Artist’s Retreat: Tucked amongst the junipers and century old cedar trees, you’ll find the estate of beloved social realist painter Reginald Marsh. Today, the former artist studio has been renovated into a minimalist architectural escape for up to five guests, complete with a private waterfall.

New York's Long Lost Holiday Resort

Explore the grounds of “Grossinger’s”, one of America’s grandest bygone resorts overlooking the hills of Liberty. Initially founded in 1917, Grossinger’s was at first the simple hotel dream of an Austrian immigrant couple, who passed on the torch to their daughter Jennie – an elegantly dressed, socially savvy woman who transformed Grossinger’s into one of most luxurious holiday destinations imaginable by the 1950s. With three swimming pools, tennis courts, grand ballrooms, night clubs and hotel rooms, Grossinger’s welcomed over 150,000 pleasure seekers every year to a resort twice the size of Monaco – it was so exclusive, Elizabeth Taylor even got married here. Sadly, by the 1980s, Grossinger’s was virtually bankrupt; cheaper airfares made summer holidays to Florida and other more exotic locations further afield possible, and the “Borscht Belt” became all but forgotten. Losing nearly \$1.8 million in 1985, the grand old resort finally closed its doors for good a year later. Wander its hallowed grounds today, and learn more about its history in our [archive article](#).



Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania is not only steeped in colonial history, but ye olde traditions and treasures. Explore the whimsical mansion of an Arts & Crafts dreamer, and a veritable village of antiques; hop from pub to pub, or nest up with your lover at a lovingly retro and kitsch “Lovers” where you can bathe in heart shaped jacuzzi. No wonder the state slogan is “Pursue Your Happiness.”

A Little Antiques Town



Essentially an open-air museum of intricate Victorian architecture, located at the gateway to the Pocono Mountains with a population of just over 4,000, Jim Thorpe is a picturesque time capsule; a hodgepodge of carefully preserved Greek Revival, Romanesque, Federalist, Queen Anne and Federalist buildings that [we've been drooling over for a long time](#). The community has built a stable economy based on the outside interest surrounding Jim Thorpe's nostalgic ambience— which is right where we fit in. Think antique shops, little museums, historic trains and architectural treasure hunting all in a day's work.

Where to Stay:

Gilded Age Time Travel in the heart of Jim Thorpe: If you're on a budget, check out the historic [Hotel Switzerland](#) for the novelty but just steps from downtown, the [Harry Packer Mansion](#) was the real life inspiration for Walt Disney World's "Haunted Mansions!" attraction. "Fifteen-foot ceilings, marble fireplaces and gilded mirrors reflect the elegance of the Victorian Age."



[A Cabin in the Trees:](#) Nearby to Jim Thorpe, this tiny cabin in the woods will sleep up to three guests and is a short walk from all the main attractions of the town. It shares a backyard (and nothing else) with the main house, and you're free to use the BBQ, fireplace, and picnicking space into the wee hours of the night. Seriously. The host, Jeffrey, writes "You can listen to music, talk and have fun outside as late as you like."



[The “Honeymoon Capital of the World”:](#)

Where to begin with Cove Haven Resorts? This small Pennsylvania institution of kitsch is a collection of three massive resorts that piqued in the 1970s and has the decor to prove it: Pocano Palace, Paradise Stream, and Cove Haven. It’s the latter of these trio that tugs our heartstrings most, thanks to its wonderfully cheesy amenities. A heart shaped tub, pool, and a suite with a massive champagne glass tub? All across 400 acres of greenery, complete with water skiing and canoes? What’s not to love? Catch a full breakdown of them in our [archive article](#), and this fantastic video [episode](#) of “A Pretty Cool Hotel Tour.”

Where to Eat:

Stone Row Pub & Eatery

Vegan pub food? We never thought we’d see the day in a small town in America, but the power couple owners of Jim Thorpe’s [Stone Row Pub & Eatery](#) wanted to make sure everyone who came knocking could find something to eat, whether they’re meat eaters, vegetarians or vegans. “Almost everything is made from scratch,” writes Margaret, who started the eatery with her husband, Jim, in an 1880s stone building. “As a couple, we started coming to the area in the 1990s, but Charlie’s roots in Jim Thorpe/Mauch Chunk extend further back,” she goes on, “His history includes three generations of German and Irish immigrants, family businesses that were (allegedly) foiled by a nefarious accountant, black lung from Coaldale’s No 9 mine, and Grandma’s 50 year confusion over the name change. My history is based mostly in England and (allegedly) includes royalty, great wealth and poverty, WWII rationing, gambling, mechanical skill and a ginormous food intolerance. Combine the two and you will find great attributes for creating and building a restaurant: tenacity, willpower, tolerance for risk, and an intimate understanding of the need for a setting that provides food for everyone.” Now that’s the kind of place where you want to pull up a bar stool.

The American Castle of a Renaissance Hoarder



Fonthill Castle © [Karl Graf](#)

Forget the great and gaudy Hearst Castle – why don't they talk about Doylestown, Pennsylvania's Henry Chapman Mercer's [Fonthill Castle](#)? Some might call Mercer America's first hoarder, but for any aspiring collector or lover of eclectic arts, Pennsylvania's most underrated treasure is an astonishing visual treat at every turn, telling the story of a renaissance man who mastered the art of clutter. He wasn't technically an architect, but an archeologist, collector of artifacts, and talented tile-maker. A passionate eccentric born into family wealth, Mercer strove to preserve and revive lost crafts and founded numerous historical societies through the building of this house, and became a leader in the Arts & Crafts Movement, an outspoken opponent of the plume trade, and an avid dog lover. In a nutshell, our kinda guy. See more of his home in our [archive article](#). Consider staying overnight nearby at [this mid-1700's farmhouse](#).

Connecticut

Sprawling forests, miles of coastline, charming New England villages... Connecticut may be one of the smallest states in America, but it has plenty to offer when it comes to a summer getaway. Feast on lobster rolls, explore undiscovered museums and ghost towns stacked with oddities, or simply enjoy the great outdoors on your visit to this unspoiled, and frankly, underrated state...

What to Do:



Indulge in a Good ‘ole Lobster Lunch

Of course, a trip to New England would not be complete without a pitstop at the humble lobster shack, [Lobster Landing](#). And Connecticut style lobster rolls are truly a cut above the rest. Succulent chunks of fresh lobster... drizzled with hot butter... packed into a perfectly fluffy and lightly toasted bread roll. Best served after (or before!) a swim in the Long Island Sound.

Island-hopping on the Long Island Sound

Nearly 60% of Connecticut is blanketed by lush green woodlands, rivers, and lakes, so wherever you end up, you are sure to be spoiled for choice when it comes to outdoor entertainment. Locals know that one of the best ways to experience this abundance of nature is from the water – that’s why you will always find them kayaking, boating, fishing, paddle-boarding, or swimming.



Thimbles Islands, Douglas Elliman

[Rent a kayak](#) in Branford and spend the day cruising through the Thimble Islands. There are over 365 islands dotted along this patch of coastline, though many like to play hide and seek, vanishing with the high tide and peaking out in the late afternoon as the water levels subside. Only 21 of the 365+ archipelagos are inhabited, with residences ranging from humble beach shacks to sprawling summer palaces.

Go Hunting for Captain Kidd’s Lost Treasure on Charles Island

Downstream, across the way from the Silver Sands State Park, legend has it that the notorious pirate buried his booty on Charles Island right before he fell for a trap leading to his capture and eventual execution. It’s been rumoured that this tranquil nature reserve has been cursed not once, not twice, but three times... But don’t let that scare you away from the beauty and serenity on offer. You can reach

the island by the mainland on foot at low tide when a sandbar reveals itself, but because the currents can change quickly, we recommend renting a kayak or paddle board from [Scoot and Paddle](#) in Milford.

Urban Exploration

[Holy Land USA](#) was a Christian tourist attraction filled with religious exhibits in Waterbury, Connecticut between 1958 and 1984. At its height, the park attracted up to 40,000 visitors each year. Today, the Holy Land is in an ‘advanced state of disrepair’. RoadsideAmerica.com recommends exploring the abandoned attraction “with caution (and with an up-to-date tetanus shot)”.

[Johnsonville](#) was a once thriving mill town and recreation spot set along the Moodus river – which fell into disrepair after years of neglect and was struggling to attract a serious buyer at auction. Damned, cursed, haunted? Who knows, but in 2017 it was bought by a questionable cult based in the Philippines...

Take a Ride Down Memory Lane

[The New England Carousel Museum](#) is a community led non-for-profit organization preserving the craftsmanship and artistry of antique carousels. Step into a time machine transporting you back to the gilded age of American amusement parks, when the glamorous carousel was the star attraction.

Where to Stay:



Huck Finn's Houseboat: If Mark Twain ever made his way up the Pootatuck River, we like to think he would've loved Sticks and Stones Farm. Nestled in Newton, Connecticut, the retreat is just 1.5 hours from the city and a little commune unto itself. The hub is a stone barn, and the surrounding cabins – as well as this charming houseboat – are for rent. There are fire pits, fresh veggies, and loads of hikes to help you feel at one with nature. The houseboat sleeps 2

guests. Kitchen, bathroom and wi-fi are available in the stone barn. 2 night minimum at \$119/night. Note: the farm is an alcohol free property, and kindly asks guests to respect their community practices.

A 1930s Lakeside Cabin & Sauna: If you packed this baby to capacity, the nightly fare would be just \$12.50 a night per person. Located 3 hours north east of Manhattan in Voluntown, this 1930s cabin (aptly nicknamed “the Vinola”) comes complete with stunning lakeside views, and a traditional wood-fired Finnish sauna. It’s rustic, but you won’t be roughing it: there’s all the heating, wi-fi, and toiletry needs you could ask for.

A 3 Story Victorian House in the Trees: All yours for \$145 a night, once you’ve spent the morning soaking in that claw-foot tub, there’s a country hamlet at walking distance with a restaurant, café, antique shop and post office, as well as several historic towns nearby in Connecticut.

New Jersey

It might not occur to overseas visitors to discover New Jersey, but they'd be missing out on a true time-travelling adventure.

Reliving the Glory Days of Asbury Park

There's something hauntingly beautiful about a once-decadent holiday destination slowly falling into decay. The rise and fall of Asbury Park is a cautionary tale of Jazz Age excess, but not one without hope. At the turn of the century, Asbury Park was well on its way to becoming the it-destination for wealthy socialites and holidaymakers. Parties extravagant enough to rival those of Gatsby's North Fork were a nightly occurrence throughout the roaring 20s, and opulent casinos, resorts, and amusement parks were erected to keep up with the demand. In the 60s, the wealthy set had moved on, but hippies and bikers, rockers and bohemians saved Asbury Park from dying outright. After the race riots in 1970 and developed a reputation as a crime-ridden and corrupt city. By the 1980s, Asbury Park's status as a popular resort began to decline. Crumbling casino teetered on stilts over the sand and motel ruins lined the coast like discarded crab casings. At the turn of the new millennium, things started to look up. The LBGT notably began to embrace a very dead Asbury Park Beach and suddenly became a draw for urban pioneers from Manhattan; its relaxed vibe and gritty frontier-town image providing a refreshing contrast to the over-fabulous Hamptons. Thanks to the undying passion of the local community, and with a little help from the Garden State's very own Danny Devito and Asbury native Bruce Springsteen, Beachside beaux-arts ruins and white sandy beaches provide the backdrop for farmers markets and trendy bars – a melting pot of old and new.

What to do:

- Cookman Avenue is the locus for an emerging art-and-antiques strip, with treasure troves like the [Antique Emporium of Asbury Park](#) a must-do. [Salvage Angel By The Sea](#) is also a 20,000 sq ft warehouse, a magical second hand wonderland of items well worth a visit.
- Strangely alluring and incredibly beautiful at night, the Boardwalk is punctuated by the formally abandoned 1929 Casino. A great people-watching stroll, there are lots of food choices, miniature golf and a very well-maintained beach for lazing the day away.

- Revisit your childhood arcade days at the [Silverball Pinball Museum](#).
- Take a ghost tour through Asbury Park's haunted history with the local [Paranormal Museum](#).

Where to Stay:

Just a short walk or bike ride away from the bustling boardwalk of Asbury Park is the peaceful little community of Ocean Grove, reminiscent of a lost 1940s world and known for its squeaky clean private beaches and pastel painted Victorian houses.

Borrow your very own Victorian beach house through AirBnB and sit back listening to the sounds of crashing waves or take a short stroll to Ocean Grove's quaint shopping street.. [This baby blue cottage](#) includes 3 beach bikes perfect for cruising through the neighborhood. Or live out your barbie dream house fantasies in this bubblegum pink [Creamcake House](#). Just a two minute walk from the beach, it comes with beach chairs, umbrellas and a wagon. If you prefer to take your vacation with a rooftop bar and an outdoor movie theater, [The Asbury Hotel](#) has something for everyone, including a buzzing schedule of social-distance friendly outdoor activities.

Vacation Like it's 1957 in The Wildwoods

The New Jersey coastline is dotted with architectural time capsules and kitschy mid-century motels, wonderfully captured through the lens of American photographer Tyler Haughey in his series [Ebb Tide](#). The resorts built during the post-war period, which are some of the finest examples of midcentury European design, are all located on a small five-long barrier island in New Jersey known collectively as The Wildwoods. In fact, they make up the largest concentration of postwar resort architecture in the United States. The tiny beach town of Wildwood, New Jersey, topped TripAdvisor's list of destinations on the rise for 2015. Fancy that. Indulge in a kitschy weekend back in time at motels like the [Starlux Hotel](#) complete with plastic palm trees (and a lava lamp in every room), or get a totally retro experience at the historical [Caribbean Hotel](#) where doowop music still plays in the halls.

