

Taking It Easy In Boothbay Harbor

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Flying over Rhode Island New Hampshire Camping A Full Moon Over New Jersey

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Taking It Easy In Boothbay Harbor, Maine

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Harbor

By Debbie Stone

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T'm on a treasure hunt for trolls at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay, Maine. Yes, trolls – five mammoth-sized creatures who want to impart lessons they've learned about trees to all who find them. And they're located deep in the forest, reached by a series of trails within this enchanting paradise.

The trolls actually are ginormous, recycled-wood figures crafted by Thomas Dambo. The Danish man is considered the world's leading recycled-materials famous for artist. his troll sculptures. His pieces are immense and eye-popping and each invites seekers into the woodlands, while

communicating a story of conservation.

Teachings are aimed at encouraging people to save seeds and plant more trees, reduce and reuse, and become better stewards of the environment by getting to know the nature existing in their own communities. The hope is that

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by sharing one's discoveries, it will help others expand their awareness and sense of wonder.

There's Roskva, who stands for the trunks, and is the heaviest and strongest of the trolls, and also the one with the best memory. Lilja, the youngest of the trolls, holds the

scent of the flowers. She adores the colors and the aromas of the plants and is enamored when bees and butterflies flit among branches. Then the there's Soren, who sticks up for the branches. He's a curious one and his head is always turning and twisting in a quest to search for higher places. When the wind blows, he rejoices with a special dance.

Gro smiles with the leaves. A wanderer, she disappears every fall, but then returns to the forest in the spring. Upon arrival, she creates a feast for the forest, making sure her friends are well-fed. Last but not least is Birk. He holds the roots and is known as the wisest and most mysterious of the trolls. He hides in the shadows, listening to the whispers of the soil, and knows everything that happens in the wild.

When you're not searching for trolls, explore the beautiful gardens, many which feature native





plants of Maine. The place is expansive, with hundreds of acres of mature forest, wetlands and a mile of tidal shoreline.

The Dahlia Garden, for example, showcases five dozen varieties of these colorful flowers. It's a stunner in bloom, as is the Rhododendron Garden, with its

floral feast, magnificent waterfall and sculptures.

The Great Lawn is a lovely open space, inspired by 19th century landscape parks. One of its most distinctive features is Whale Rock, a large rock formation that rises out of the grass. And don't miss the Arbor Garden and its lovely arbor that's draped in climbing roses, wisteria, ornamental grapes and honeysuckle.

The Native Butterfly House and Gardens is a must. Dazzling butterflies abound amid the nectar plants, along with caterpillars munching off of their own special smorgasbord.

Other popular areas include the Bibby and Harold Alfond Children's Garden and the Fairy House Village. Whimsical sculptures representing story characters by Maine authors dot the children's garden, along with a treehouse, coloring playhouse and





story barn. The Fairy House Village is also a magical spot for kids, who are welcome to construct ephemeral fairy dwellings using any of the available natural materials in the forest.

After you've toured this unique place, drive to nearby Boothbay Harbor. This quaint town is of perhaps one the most picturesque in Maine. You'll be captivated by its quiet coves and rocky shores, island lighthouses, boating culture, eclectic boutiques and antique shops, and dockside restaurants, serving up some of the freshest local catches. It's a place

that oozes quintessential coastal Maine allure.

A fun way to see the town is to follow the outdoor sculpture trail. There are 31 pieces installed around local businesses and within natural areas. Grab a free map and set off on a cultural adventure. As you stroll the streets, not only will you get to enjoy some interesting local art, but you'll also get to absorb the ambiance of Boothbay Harbor one step at a time.

There are actually over 200 artists in the region, which likely means the temptation to peek inside some of the town's numerous galleries and studios during your walk will be strong. Looking doesn't cost anything and the artists are always keen to talk about their work.

Of course, you'll most likely be enticed to shop and eat. Handmade treasures abound for some great souvenirs. And with over fifty restaurants and cafes (in-season), going hungry in Boothbay Harbor is never an issue. For lobster roll fanatics (guilty!), head to Shannon's Unshelled. This unassuming seafood shack really delivers!

Boothbay Harbor has been referred to as the "Boating Capital of New England" due to the number of seacrafts in town. So, if you visit the area in summer, you'll definitely want to take one of the many boat excursions that depart right from the bustling harbor. Such trips offer an opportunity to see the surrounding islands and espy puffins, seals and even whales. Or opt to rent a kayak and paddle around the area on your own steam.

There's also plenty of hiking to be found, from easy trails to challenging treks. If you're short on time, but still want to take a







historic but town, Topside Inn with its laidback, coastal Maine vibe, is a standout. It was love at first sight the for but me. panoramic harbor from views the property's stunning back lawn sealed the deal.

> The inn is a serene retreat, yet it's just steps from the waterfront and main street. This is a

peaceful walk in the woods, I suggest Porter Preserve. You'll meander through an old growth forest that has a stretch

of shorefront on the Sheepscot and Back Rivers. Coastal views are plentiful and there's access to a small beach overlooking an island.

Charming accommodations abound in this delightful





place you want to move into and never leave. And yes, I'm planning on putting my name on one of those Adirondack chairs!

You'll have your pick of accommodations in the main house or the guesthouses with their private porches. Or up the ante and book the suite with its spacious living room, vaulted ceilings, fireplace, kitchen and master bath with soaking tub.

Topside and its owners have been recognized by several entities in the industry. Mark and Buzz were named innkeepers of the year in 2020 by Hospitality Maine and the property was named the number one inn in the state by Downie's for 2021. The accolades are entirely well-deserved.

Every detail is accounted for, from the comfy beds and lux spa products to the sun-filled lounge areas and quiet nooks, 24-hour guest kitchen with assortment of beverages and snacks, intimate bar for those late afternoon libations, homemade cookies of the day and the delectable breakfasts.

I could wax rhapsodic about the breakfasts, which are prepared and cooked-to-order by the innkeepers, and are a showcase for local, seasonal ingredients. Onsite gardens provide a bounty of produce and other offerings come from the nearby farmer's market.

You'll dine on such delights as banana bread French toast; lemon ricotta pancakes with blueberry compote; sour cream waffles with cherry-bourbon sauce; organic grits with Maine lobster and a sunny-side egg; pear, potato and lentil hash with house-smoked salmon; and other signature dishes. Accompany your entrée with fresh fruit, in-house baked goods, homemade granola, yogurt and more. You'll have no problem fueling up for a full day of adventure!



For More Information

• Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens: www.mainegardens.org

Debbie Stone is an established travel writer and columnist, who crosses the globe in search of • Topside Inn: www.topsideinn.com

uniquedestinationsandexperiencestosharewithreadersandlisteners. \frown

Rockingham Park's Horseplay

History and fun in Southern New Hampshire

t may be too late to bet on the fabled horse Seabiscuit, but it's not too late to visit the one mile long race track where he ran and bet on standardbred horses.

Rockingham Park dates from 1906 and has had a history that includes famous horses, motor racing, and even barnstorming biplanes. It was even a military base in WWI.

In the 1920's, Rockingham Park hosted motorized racing, like the 1925 race that ran cars on a dirt oval at 76.8 mph. With the success of the events, motor races were started on a 2-mile board track, where Curly Fredericks set the record for the fastest speed that a motorcycle would attain on an oval board track (120.3 miles per hour on an Altoona). In 1928, the track held the final motorcycle national championships to be competed on a board track.

Rockingham Park has a recent history of harness racing and still features standardbred horse racing on a grass track, along with

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Official Program

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simulcast thoroughbred, harness, and greyhound races. The most popular of these simulcast events

BIG

EVENTS

WORLD'S

FAMOUS

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DePaolo

Lockhardt

Hartz

Woodbury

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include major racing events like the Belmont Stakes.

The gaming doesn't stop with betting on races. The Sports Club at Rockingham Park features Combat Zone live mixed martial arts fighting events.

And for those who have honed their skills with online poker sites and are anxious to play face-to-face with others, Rockingham

Park features table gaming seven days a week with poker, blackjack, roulette, and craps in Rockingham Park's poker room. These games,

For More Information

 Rockingham Park -<u>www.rockinghampark.com</u> - like the regularly scheduled bingo games, benefit local charitable organizations.

> Special like events. classic car shows. craft fairs. home shows, and motorcycle shows make good use of Rockingham Park's space and accessibility. At recent a Family Fun Day, visitors enjoyed free rides. pony complimentary entertainment and amusements. celebrity

appearances, clowns, face painters, magicians, puppeteers, temporary tattoo artists, and caricature artists.

(603) 898-2311



Piloting a Private Plane Flying Over Rhode Island

By Paul Pence

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Adventure is sometimes, very literally, in the air!



ne of mankind's greatest dreams came true for me. I flew. I climbed into a small plane, settled into the pilot's seat, taxied to the runway, took off, and in no time was sailing 2000 feet above the Rhode Island coastline at over 100 miles an hour. Of course, it wasn't that simple, I didn't actually do the take- off and landing, and the licensed pilot was right there every moment, but I did steer the plane left and right, up and down, and around a couple tight corners.

My little adventure, called an "Airman's Flight", was designed to introduce potential student pilots to the joy of flying. Not as intense as a formal flight lesson, I still received a detailed walk-through on the pre-flight inspection and the use of the yoke, rudder, throttle, and trim controls. Sorry about the jargon there, I could have said "all



the knobs and wheels that control where the plane goes."

The teaching started on ground. "An airplane is not the best place to learn the basic concepts," said Horizon's office manager, Chris Porter. "There's a lot going on and a lot of noise."

Student pilots get 40 hours of

classroom time, with extensive flying experience, but for the airman's flight, I got a half-hour of easy-tounderstand instructions on what a small plane owner goes through every time he wants to fly off to Block Island or Niagara Falls.

There's no substitute for actually flying, though. Being told on the ground that a plane has a delay between turning the yoke and when it actually begins to tilt is not the same as experiencing it in the air

Being told that the bumps and wobbles are absolutely normal and nothing to worry about is not the same thing as

seeing the calm pilot not even reaching for the controls when the plane jumps to the side. We started at Horizon Aviation's offices at the north end of TF Green Airport, in the building that lifelong Rhode Islanders may associate with Hillsgrove.





Under the watchful eye of my trainer Steve Wesolowski, I steered the plane along the ground using foot pedals to control the rudder and the brakes. Just that experience drove home the point that an airplane does not drive like a car.

We took off from the same runways the big airliners use, taking to the air in just a few hundred feet. Flying south, we were past Goddard Park and almost to Quonset Point before we settled in at 2500 feet and Steve said it was my time to fly.

Flying at 130 mph at 2500 feet feels like you're barely moving





Tilting the nose down by pushing the voke forward a little doesn't change the altitude much, since the plane speeds up and creates more lift. A 30-degree turn may seem tame when you're sitting at home describing it to your family, but in the air, it feels like the whole plane is standing on the tip of the wing. I was so focused on the dials and the horizon line, I didn't even notice that we had traveled from Quonset to Point Judith.

Once we turned west to travel out toward Misquamicut Beach, I started paying attention to the



ground.

It was a beautiful day for flying, and a beautiful day for looking at the world from a couple thousand feet up. The views were incredible.

We circled back, across the bottom of Jamestown Island, up the eastern side of Newport, over the Mount Hope bridge, and finally back to TF Green.

Before I flew, I had never looked out the front window of a plane in flight. Now I'm not sure I'll ever be content to look out the tiny side windows of airliners ever again.



For More Information

My airman's flight was arranged through the Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association and courtesy of the wonderful folks in Rhode Island's Horizon Aviation. To book your own airman's flight or to set up a full series of flight lessons to get your certification, visit the AOPA website at LetsGoFlying.com or Horizon Aviation at www.HorizonAviation.com.

Nantucket's Spring Celebration

The entire island is abloom!



Three Million Daffodils



From early April to mid-May over three million daffodils of every color, shape and size will bloom on Nantucket Island, a world-class resort just 30 miles off the coast of Massachusetts. This blossoming, and the advent of spring itself, is the focal point of the Nantucket Island Chamber of Commerce's Annual Daffodil Festival during the last weekend of April each year.

Originated by the late Jean MacAusland, a summer resident of Nantucket and former publisher of Gourmet magazine, the weekend has grown into a full-scale celebration of winter's thaw, joyous for both islanders and visitors alike.

Daffodils adorn the island's roadsides, gardens and shop windows with blossoms of yellow, orange, white and even pale pink.

The Daffodil Festival's grand event, held on Saturday is the



cuisine served on fine china to box lunches and burgers.

Other highlights include the Nantucket Garden Club's Annual Daffodil Show.

Annual Antique Car Parade, featuring over 100 daffodilbedecked antique cars (preregistration necessary for participation.)

After winding through town and across the island to the charming village of Siasconset, participants join residents and visitors for the Annual Daffodil Tailgate Picnic. Held on the lush lawns leading into the village, the picnic boasts fare ranging from elaborate gourmet

For More Information

Nantucket Island Chamber of Commerce - 508/228-1700 or visit www.nantucketchamber.org.

Nantucket is accessible by airplane or ferry - one-hour high-

Children's Daffodil Parade and Daffy Hat Pageant and the new Daffodil Dog Parade!

Daffodils are in bloom for about five weeks - early and late bloomers from early-April to mid-May. Springtime on Nantucket brings delightful weather and offers opportunities for seal cruises and outdoor activities such as bicycling, hiking, fishing, photography, bird watching and nature study.

speed ferry services are available. Visitors are encouraged to leave their cars behind, as all activities are accessible by walking, bicycle, or taxi

New Hampshire Camping Again and Again

By Kathleeen Doyle

If you've ever done any NH camping then you understand why people return time and again to this beautiful state.



f you "just want to camp" there are nearly 200 campgrounds and 1000's of New Hampshire camping sites to choose from, with or without hook-ups

You can have your pick of tent and RV sites in wooded areas or along rivers; in RV parks and resorts; family campgrounds; private grounds or magnificent state and national forests.

Of course, camping isn't just a matter of sleeping in a tent, it's also about the things you can do nearby.

Within short driving distances adventurous campers can find

rolling hills, mountains, abundant wildlife, hundreds of crystal-clear rivers, and too many lakes to count. The NH coastline, although short, is beautiful and includes Hampton Beach, ranked as the 3rd cleanest beach in the United States.

Don't forget New Hampshire's blazing fall foliage that makes October NH camping trips unforgettable.

Outdoors, Year Round

Everv season has loads of choices available for those who prefer outdoor fun on their NH camping vacation. Take a big boat cruise on one of the larger lakes or take out your own boat. Swim, water ski, fish, sail or sit on the beach.

How about a thrill ride down one of the mountain zip lines?

Snowmobilers and skiers love NH camping and there are several campgrounds open in the winter for those who like to brave the cold. Snowmobiling is very popular in New Hampshire along with skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing.

The opportunities to enjoy the outdoors are endless.

Sporting Events

If you like sports, you will have access to every professional sport depending upon the time of year. Close by in Massachusetts,



campers will find the Boston Red Sox, New England Patriots, Boston Bruins, Boston Celtics, and New England Revolution. New Hampshire's own baseball team in Manchester, the Fisher Cats, a Double-A affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays.



Attractions

New Hampshire boasts Canobie Lake Park, a traditional amusement park for all ages which is located near the NH/MA border. Other fun attractions like Story Land and Santa's Village in the White Mountains are geared toward small children.

In the hot weather, you can cool off at Water Country in Portsmouth or Whale's Tale in Lincoln. A visit to Clark's Trading Post to see the performing bears or a ride on the Hobo Railroad is sure to delight kids from ages 1 to 100. These are only a few of the many fun things to do and see while on your NH camping trip.

Auto Racing in NH

Auto racing is plentiful in New Hampshire and there is some limited parking available for RV's. From spring to fall, drag racing heats up the quarter mile track with newly IHRA-sanctioned races with scheduled funny car and jet car events. Hudson Speedway and Lee Speedway, both run stock car races on the oval track every Sunday. Loudon, in the heart of the Lakes is home Region, to New



Hampshire Motor Speedway where race car fans can enjoy an occasional NASCAR event.

Shopping and Day Trips

Don't forget day trips to go shopping at the outlets. Or take a drive to experience the breathtaking views along the Kancamagus. Fall festivals such as the Deerfield Fair and dozens of local weekend festivals like the

Kathleen Doyle and her family are happy campers and spend most of their camping time in New ones held at Applecrest Farm in Hampton Falls attract thousands of autumn NH camping enthusiasts and tourists every year. Your NH camping experience can be anything you'd like it to be!

But most of all, if you love cooking outdoors and relaxing by the fire, or prefer a quiet dinner for two at a quaint NH restaurant, NH camping has it all.

Hampshire. There's no place they'd rather be Http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Kathleen_Doyle



Lodging for your New England Coastal Road Trip

Special packages and unique hotels in Portland, Portsmouth, and Boston

Hotels in Portland, ME, Portsmouth, NH, and Boston, MA are offering a New England Coastal Road Trip Package encouraging travelers to explore and discover three beautiful maritime towns filled with history, museums, shopping, pristine beaches and outdoor adventure!

No matter whether starting up north and working their way south, or vice versa, visitors will enjoy a scenic drive for approximately one hour between destinations.

Guests who stay at The Portland Harbor Hotel, a Portsmouth Collection Hotel, and/ or The Row Hotel at Assembly Row Boston, upon check-in, will receive a special gift box filled with artisan foods and other surprises unique to the destination, including a curated list of where to go and what to see to ensure a truly authentic local experience.



Portland Harbor Hotel Tucked in the heart of Portland's historic Old Port district one block from the waterfront, the Portland Harbor Hotel is known for its distinctive design and exemplary service. Newly renovated and Portland's only AAA Four Diamond Hotel. the property boasts a gracious lobby filled with original artwork by Maine artists and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking Portland's Fore Street.



ACHotelbyMarriottPortsmouthDowntown/Waterfront - An upscale lifestylehotel with original art throughout,

The AC Hotel, with its Europeaninspired breakfast, is the perfect choice for sophisticated travelers, especially couples, seeking a modern, urban vibe reflecting the destination's seaside heritage. The place to see and be seen, the hotel's popular restaurant, Rooftop at the Envio, boasts panoramic harbor views of the Piscataqua River and the iconic bridges that cross it.



Hampton Inn & **Suites Downtown** For the _ costconscious traveler, Hampton Inn & Suites, in the midst of Portwalk Place, offers a complimentary features breakfast and elegant accommodations, furnishings and amenities that take this world-class brand to a new level. The saltwater indoor pool is a favorite with families, and guests can enjoy the added convenience of booking a suite with refrigerator, microwave and wet bar.



Residence Inn Portsmouth Waterfront/Downtown -

Residence Inn is an all-suite, extended-stay hotel featuring spacious suites with King beds, sleeper sofas, sitting areas, and fully equipped kitchens. With its complimentary breakfast buffet, heated indoor pool and other amenities, families and travelers who like to

who like to surround themselves with the comforts of home will find this hotel to be similar to, but much better than, staying at an AirBnB!



The Row Hotel at Assembly Row - Where bold character and uncommon details meet, The Row is an original boutique hotel in Somerville, MA. Combining historic charm with a modern twist, this once Ford Motor Assembly Plant offers travelers an escape from the predictable in vibrant Assembly Row – a center of shopping, dining and entertainment

with close proximity to Boston proper. The Row is an Autograph Collection Hotel.

For More Information

- www.necoastalroadtrip.com
- www.colwenhotels.com





Connecticut, envisioned a fresh and inspiring space where local and regional artists and artisans could exhibit their work, sell one-of-a-kind handmade gifts and boutique items, and individuals of all ages could improve their quality of life by taking art classes. With the support of many passionate and dedicated individuals, she established Silver Circle in 2008. Since then, the Gallery has become a haven for the artistic community and an advocate for the benefits of creativity for everyone.

Carly sees herself as facilitator for the artists and community alike, creating not only a venue for

seasoned professionals, but also a launching pad for fledgling artists. Silver Circle offers a wide range of art classes and workshops in a variety of mediums for all ages, children through adults. In a friendly, non-threatening environment that encourages everyone to find their inner artist, children and adults alike discover the joys and therapeutic benefits of creativity while building skills.

The Gallery rotates exhibits, bringing color, shape, and form to the Putnam community.

One exhibit, Transcendence: Works by George Chaplin is a prime example of the exhibits that Carly schedules at the Silver Circle Gallery. This show displayed a variety of pastel works on paper and select oil on canvas paintings.

George finds a great deal of inspiration from nature, as well as music. Once called "nature's transcendent painter," Chaplin delicately utilizes color to lure the viewer in with intense gradations of three to four colors. One of the sources of his creativity comes from the ocean of which George "It's a mesmerizing states. experience. You look at the ocean, it's constantly moving, it's always same but it's constantly the

changing."

This idea is translated into his pieces where George is able to create movement as the colors blend into one another, creating the illusion that they are vibrating off of the canvas. George has the ability to select color combinations that never overpower each other and is able to simultaneously create a sense of both excitement and calmness in his compositions.

George Chaplin received his BFA in 1958 and his MFA in 1960, both from the Yale University of Art in New Haven, Connecticut where he studied under world renown Modern artist, Josef Albers who was a student at the Bauhaus in Germany. From 1965-1971 he was the Chairman of the Painting Department at the Silvermine College of Art in New Canaan, CT and from 1972- 1991 he was the Director of Studio Arts and a Professor of Fine Arts at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.

George's art has been purchased by the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C. and has pieces in countless private collections worldwide. He has also

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participated in hundreds of national and international exhibitions and lectures since the 1960s and is mentioned in publications such as The Art of Drawing, Color, and Who's Who in American Art.

In an article about George's work for the Hartford Courant, it was stated that "There is something visionary about these works. Chaplin's choices of colors are never ostentatious or bombastic, but finely tuned to achieve more lasting effects. If these later pieces can be said to have a stirring impact on the human spirit, perhaps a category of "Spiritual Abstraction" can be applied to Chaplin's art." In this way, George lets the colors take control and permits them to dictate the direction of the painting.



For More Information

Silver Circle Gallery is located at 75 Main Street in Downtown

Putnam. www.SilverCircleGallery.com



On The Lookout For A Full Moon Over NJ

Full moon climbs in 2022 at Cape May Lighthouse rare opportunities to climb to the Watch Gallery at

night



ape May MAC (Museums+Arts+Culture) offers rare opportunities for nighttime climbs up the 199 spiral steps to the Watch Gallery of the Cape May Lighthouse during select full moon dates each year.

A full moon climb is a special chance on clear nights to see the spectacular full moon in all its glory. Climbers can enjoy a nighttime view nearly 156 feet above the Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean. Interpretive panels tell stories of Lighthouse Keepers, the surrounding area, and how the lighthouse functioned historically,

and are located at landings along the way. The 1859 Cape May Lighthouse is a state historic site and the third beacon on this site. Still an active aid to navigation, it was restored and is maintained by Cape May MAC. Since it opened to the public in 1988, more than 2.5 million visitors have climbed to the top, but far fewer have climbed at nighttime.

Mark your calendar now for these special evening climbs in 2022: Saturday, April 16 (7 p.m.-9 p.m.), Monday, May 16 (7 p.m.-9 p.m.), Tuesday, June 14 (8 p.m.-10 p.m.), Wednesday, July 13 (8 p.m.-10 p.m.), Thursday, Aug. 11 (8 p.m.-10 p.m.) and Tuesday, Nov. 8 (7 p.m.-9 p.m.) Admission for these special evening climbs is \$20 adults, and \$10 for children ages 3-12. Tickets are available for purchase on site the evening of the event. Visit capemaymac.org for updates.

Since it opened to the public in 1988, more than 2.5 million people have climbed to the top of the Cape May Lighthouse during the day. Fewer have seen the grand vista of the evening sky and the full moon from atop this majestic beacon.

The lighthouse is in Cape May Point State Park, Lower Township (next to Cape May Point Borough Hall in Cape May Point), at 215 Lighthouse Ave., and normally closes at dusk. The Cape May Lighthouse is open regularly for visiting and climbing during daytime hours. Tickets for climbing during daytime hours are available for purchase online or on site.

Visit capemaymac.org for ticket prices and current schedule.

For information about historic accommodations, contact Cape May Historic Accommodations at capemaylodging.com. For information about restaurants, accommodations and shopping, call the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May at 609-884-5508.



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