

block island travel guide

Block Island Travel Guide

Nestled off the coast of Rhode Island, Block Island is a gem of the Atlantic Ocean, rich in natural beauty, history, and charm. This idyllic destination is perfect for travelers seeking a tranquil escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. With its stunning beaches, picturesque landscapes, and a laid-back atmosphere, Block Island offers a unique experience for visitors of all ages. In this comprehensive travel guide, we will explore the island's attractions, accommodations, dining options, and tips to make the most of your visit.

Getting to Block Island

Traveling to Block Island is an adventure in itself. The island is accessible by ferry or plane, providing several options for reaching this coastal paradise.

By Ferry

The most popular way to reach Block Island is by ferry. There are two primary ferry services:

1. Block Island Ferry: This ferry operates from Point Judith, Rhode Island, and offers regular trips during the summer months. The journey takes about 30-45 minutes.
2. New London Ferry: For those coming from Connecticut, the ferry from New London to Block Island is another option. This route takes approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Both ferries allow passengers to bring bicycles and pets, making it a convenient choice for those wanting to explore the island at their own pace.

By Air

For a quicker journey, consider flying to Block Island. The Block Island Airport (BID) offers seasonal flights from Westerly, Rhode Island, and other nearby locations. Additionally, private charter services are available for those who prefer a more personalized travel experience.

Where to Stay

Block Island offers a variety of accommodation options to suit all budgets and preferences. Whether you're looking for a quaint bed and breakfast or a luxurious resort, you're sure to find the perfect place to rest your head after a day of exploration.

Hotels and Resorts

1. The Atlantic Inn: This historic hotel offers stunning ocean views and a charming atmosphere. With an on-site restaurant and easy access to the beach, it's a popular choice.
2. Block Island Beach House: Located near the beach, this modern hotel features comfortable accommodations and a laid-back vibe.
3. The Spring House Hotel: A family-owned establishment with beautiful gardens and a terrace overlooking the ocean, perfect for a romantic getaway.

Bed and Breakfasts

1. The Inn at Block Island: Known for its warm hospitality, this B&B offers cozy rooms and a delicious breakfast.
2. The 1661 Inn: This charming inn features a variety of room types, many with ocean views and private decks.

Cottages and Rentals

For those seeking a more home-like experience, consider renting a cottage or vacation home. Websites like Airbnb and Vrbo offer a wide selection of properties, from beachfront homes to secluded retreats.

Attractions and Activities

Block Island is renowned for its natural beauty and outdoor activities. Here are some must-see attractions and activities to consider during your visit.

Beaches

Block Island is home to several stunning beaches, each offering its own unique charm:

1. Mohegan Bluffs: Known for its dramatic cliffs and breathtaking views, this beach is perfect for sunbathing and photography.
2. Southeast Lighthouse Beach: Located near the historic Southeast Lighthouse, this beach offers calm waters and scenic beauty.
3. Ballard's Beach: A lively spot with beach bars and restaurants, making it popular for socializing and enjoying the sun.

Outdoor Activities

1. Biking: Rent a bike and explore the island's scenic roads and trails. There are several bike rental shops available, making it easy to navigate the terrain.
2. Hiking: With numerous trails, Block Island offers hiking opportunities for all skill levels. The Block Island Conservancy provides maps and information on the best trails to explore.
3. Kayaking and Paddleboarding: Rent a kayak or paddleboard to explore the island's coastal waters. Guided tours are also available for those looking for a more structured experience.

Cultural Sites

1. Block Island Historical Society Museum: Learn about the island's rich history, including its Native American heritage and maritime past.
2. Southeast Lighthouse: This iconic lighthouse, built in 1875, is a must-visit. Climb to the top for panoramic views of the ocean and island.
3. North Lighthouse: Located on the northern end of the island, this lighthouse is less crowded and offers a peaceful environment for exploration.

Dining and Nightlife

Block Island boasts an array of dining options, from casual eateries to fine dining establishments. Here are some highlights:

Casual Dining

1. Ballard's: A popular beach bar and restaurant offering seafood, burgers, and cocktails right on the beach.
2. The Oar: Known for its laid-back atmosphere, this restaurant serves a variety of dishes, including fresh seafood and classic American fare.

Fine Dining

1. The 1661 Inn Restaurant: This elegant restaurant features a seasonal menu with locally sourced ingredients, offering stunning views of the ocean.
2. The Atlantic Inn: The on-site restaurant provides a refined dining experience with a focus on fresh seafood and local produce.

Nightlife

While Block Island is not known for a bustling nightlife scene, there are a few bars and lounges where you can unwind after a day of exploration:

1. The Tap & Die: A casual bar offering a variety of craft beers and cocktails, often featuring live

music.

2. The Beachhead: A laid-back bar with a relaxed atmosphere, perfect for enjoying drinks with friends.

Tips for Visiting Block Island

1. Plan Your Visit: The best time to visit is during the summer months (June to September) when the weather is warm, and most attractions are open. However, consider visiting in the shoulder seasons (spring and fall) for fewer crowds and cooler temperatures.

2. Pack Accordingly: Bring comfortable clothing for outdoor activities, as well as swimwear for the beach. Don't forget sunscreen, a hat, and good walking shoes.

3. Reservations: During peak season, accommodations and dining reservations can fill up quickly. It's advisable to book in advance to secure your preferred options.

4. Explore on Foot or Bike: The island is small and easily navigable, so take advantage of walking or biking to experience its beauty up close.

Conclusion

Block Island is a captivating destination that offers a blend of natural beauty, rich history, and a relaxed atmosphere. Whether you're lounging on the beach, exploring scenic trails, or indulging in delicious seafood, there's something for everyone on this enchanting island. With its charming accommodations and welcoming locals, Block Island is sure to leave a lasting impression on all who visit. So pack your bags, grab your sunscreen, and get ready for an unforgettable adventure on Block Island!

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the top attractions to visit on Block Island?

Top attractions on Block Island include the Mohegan Bluffs, the Southeast Lighthouse, and the Block Island National Wildlife Refuge, offering stunning views and opportunities for hiking and wildlife observation.

What is the best time of year to visit Block Island?

The best time to visit Block Island is during the summer months from June to September, when the weather is warm and the island's activities, including festivals and outdoor events, are in full swing.

How do I get to Block Island?

You can reach Block Island by ferry from Point Judith, Rhode Island, or by taking a small plane from nearby airports. The ferry ride offers beautiful views of the ocean and typically takes about 30-45 minutes.

What outdoor activities are available on Block Island?

Outdoor activities on Block Island include hiking, biking, fishing, kayaking, and beachcombing. The island has numerous trails and beaches that cater to various interests and skill levels.

Are there any accommodations on Block Island?

Yes, Block Island offers a range of accommodations, including hotels, bed and breakfasts, and vacation rentals. It's advisable to book in advance, especially during the peak summer season.

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