Destination Article

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Cape Cod: The Perfect Escape

I push gently off the bank of the water and slowly drift away from the shore. Dipping one end of the paddle into the water, I am aware of the sun beating down on my back and realize I am alone on the lake. I pick up speed, the kayak gently swaying back and forth as I cut across the still water. Immediately my mind goes blank. I let the calmness of the morning overtake me.

These quiet moments exist in the small little beach towns of Cape Cod, even as the pace of the island quickens in the summer months. Visitors from all over the world escape the mundane of everyday life to surround themselves with the natural beauty of the cape.

Whether you enjoy being active and outdoors or prefer shopping on the small main streets and tasting the delicious food, pleasures abound.

Cape Cod’s beaches make the area famous. With the National Sea Shore covering most of the area, plenty of soft sand and blue water can be found. The beaches offer a great place to spend your day swimming in the water, which is rather cold most of the year but refreshing nonetheless, or simply laying on a towel with the sun shinning down on your face.

During the peak of the summer season, July 4th to Labor Day, the public beaches bustle with activity as children and adults splash in the water and build castles in the sand. An outer beach pass offers a quieter beach experience, if you have the proper SUV, allowing you to drive right out onto the beach. Priced slightly higher than the public beach, a weekly pass is $60 dollars or a season pass is $125 dollars. The outer beach gives you your own little piece of paradise without people screaming next to you and eliminates every beachgoers biggest headache: dragging coolers and chairs onto the beach. On the outer beaches, you step out of the car and hit the sand.

All the beaches offer something different and a beautiful view. However, Nauset Beach in Orleans is my favorite beach spot. The clean beaches, clear water and well maintained facilitates, make for a hassle free, fun experience. Liam’s, specializing in fried everything stands only a step away from the water and keeps people wanting more with their delicious onion rings and famous fried clams.

In addition to the beaches, there are plenty of state parks and trails for hiking or walking and the views are beautiful no matter which one you choose. Just steps into your walk on a trail in a state park and you are transported to a quiet oasis surrounded by trees and animals.

For those who enjoy biking, the 22-mile rail trail that stretches along the cape is perfect. The paved path runs through towns with secluded stretches of marsh and wetlands on either side for miles. Whether you have your own bike or you are a slightly more inexperienced biker, the dozens of bike shops, conveniently located near the entrances of the trail are available for bike rentals or equipment questions.

On the rail trail, runners can also find a quieter, less busy place to run than on the streets without having to worry about hills. As a runner myself, I can say that sometimes the hilly terrain of Cape Cod makes going to the trail an easier and more enjoyable option for getting a long run in.

For a more adventurous escape, Cape Cod includes a huge surfing community that convenes during the early hours of the morning. Surfers zip themselves in full-body wet suites to brave the chilly waters in hopes of catching a wave. I have sat many mornings on the still damp sand watching, with my cup of tea and sweatshirt on, the brave souls out there crashing through the waves, cheering and laughing.

At night, the cape comes alive, with tons of restaurants and bars to satisfy any taste bud. For a more family friendly night experience, miniature golf places dot the area and Wellfleet’s great drive-in movie theater offers fun the whole family can enjoy. For those who cannot get enough shopping, most stores stay open late. Chatham offers the quintessential small town shopping experience and bustles with activity especially after dinner.

And lets not forget the best part of every night: dessert. Homemade ice cream shops stand on almost every corner and small pastry and candy shops will keep you wanting more.

Regardless of your passion or age, with so much to do and so many beautiful places on Cape Cod, it keeps people coming back year after year.