

Connecticut, Rhode Island and Maine

www.allwaystraveller.com

A swing through the splendour of New England

The New England region of the Northeast corner of the United States is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, Canada and New York.

It consists of the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

New England's long rolling hills, mountains, and jagged coastline is dotted with lakes, hills, swamps, and sandy beaches.

Further inland are the Appalachian Mountains, extending through Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.

Fall in New England brings bright and colourful foliage, which comes earlier than in other regions and attracts many thousands of 'leaf peepers'

In this *AllWays traveller*, Susan Frost takes a swing through Connecticut, Rhode Island and Maine.

Ashley Gibbins

The International Travel Writers Alliance
www.itwalliance.com

Words and images by Susan Frost



Lake Waramaug, Connecticut

www.discovernewengland.org



New Preston, Connecticut



Invitation to a family reunion in New Preston in western Connecticut with relatives I have never met over the Fourth of July weekend?

Sounded like fun to me. Since I was making the trip anyway, I prepared a more extensive swing through the New England states of Rhode Island and Maine after the reunion ended.

My cousin's husband suggested I fly from Portland, Oregon to White Plains, New York which is an hour drive south of New Preston and he assured me that it would be easier to pick me up at the White Plains airport versus the main airport at Hartford, Connecticut.

The White Horse Pub

That evening a small group of cousins and I enjoyed dinner at the White Horse Country Pub and Restaurant in nearby Marbledale, CT.



Photo by Janet Serra

English owner John Harris's menu has traditional British dishes with shepherd's pie, trifle, bangers & mash, and my favorite--fish and chips.

The facts

Where is New England

New England is a region located in the Northeast corner of the USA.

The region is made up of six diverse US states including Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

New England's geography offers immense diversity.

The region is bounded on the north by Canada, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the south by Long Island Sound, and on the west by the state of New York.

There are rivers and lakes, towering forests, miles of white sand beaches, mountain ranges with hiking and skiing trails, quaint fishing villages with picturesque lighthouses, and coastal resorts with elegant yachts bobbing in the harbor.

New England is famous for white-steeped churches on emerald greens, sophisticated Boston and, in the fall, forests aflame with reds and golds.

Getting to New England

New England's principal gateway is Boston, Massachusetts, the region's largest city.

Several major airlines operate direct scheduled flights into Boston's Logan International Airport situated just a stone's throw away from the city centre.

The airport is also located at the heart of New England's interstate highway network linking Boston to every corner of the region.

Climate

With four distinct seasons, New England truly is a year-round destination, and it's the distinct change of seasons that native New Englanders often like best about living in this part of the USA.

Lake Waramaug, Connecticut



Sunset on Lake Waramaug

The next day, over 80 descendants of Captain James Sands, one of the 16 founders and purchasers of Block Island, Rhode Island, gathered at the Windemere, a lovely hilltop home and bed & breakfast owned by my cousin Sandra Flood and her husband Gary.

www.litchfieldproperty.com

It was a terrific day. We had so many things to share about our mutual family history.

The day just flew by. In the evening, when the majority of cousins had left, we sat outside and watched the lightning bugs and unwind after a perfect day of conversation and food.

New Preston, founded by colonists in 1741, is a very picturesque small town and it is the site of beautiful Lake Waramaug, Connecticut's second largest lake.

Surrounded by trees and small beaches, the lake reminded me of something I might see in the Swiss Alps.

On the Fourth of July, Gary and Sandra invited me to join them at their members only, Washington Club on Lake Waramaug.

We spent a lazy afternoon swimming, sunning and watching people sail in their small Sunfish sailboats and paddle their kayaks.

In the evening families gathered with their children and stretched out on lounge chairs to watch the spectacular fireworks light up the eight-mile long lake.

I stayed at the 7C Herb Garden B&B just down the hill from the Windemere. Surrounded by large maple trees, it was peaceful and quiet.

The room at \$100 per night was comfortable and Jamaican owner, Alicia Collins, served a tasty homemade breakfast each morning.

Her husband Hansel, who is blind, carves spoons and forks out of wood and entertains the guests with stories of Jamaica.

www.7CHerbGarden.com

Fall

This is the season for which this region is best known. In its glorious autumnal months, thousands of camera-laden travellers – termed 'leaf peepers' -- flock to see the spectacular fall foliage and enjoy long leisurely drives to scenic vistas.

Winter

The snowy winter months are ideal for skiers and snowboarders alike.

Spring

Temperatures are ideally suited to outdoor pursuits – this is a great time to visit New England's lakes and mountains, or enjoy many adventures – from ziplining to mountainbiking.

Summer

Long and hot -- perfect for those wishing to enjoy one of the region's many spectacular beaches and lakes, and drives along magnificent coastlines.

Where to stay

New England also boasts a wide range of hotels, budget motels and hostels right through to luxurious five-star properties.

Quaint country inns and boutique B&B's are the most popular type of accommodation for the vast majority of visitors wishing to experience the warm hospitality and high levels of service for which the region is renowned.

The New England breakfast

The hearty New England breakfast combined with comfy four poster beds, in-room fireplaces and private whirlpool baths add to their appeal.

Private rental properties; condominiums; spa retreats; golf, tennis and ski resorts, fully equipped and primitive campgrounds and RV parks are also available.

Block Island, Rhode Island



Block Island Coastline

After the excitement of meeting so many relatives and enjoying the Fourth of July, it was time to begin the journey to Block Island which is a small island (7 miles long and 3 miles wide) and 13 miles from the Port of Galilee (a village in Narragansett), Rhode Island.

From New Preston by car it is a three-hour drive to Galilee to catch the high speed ferry to Block Island, which is only 30 minutes to the island but you cannot take your car.

There is only one other ferry that will allow you to take your car. Reservations have to be made several weeks in advance.

www.blockislandferry.com

Once you arrive on Block Island, there are taxis that will meet you at the dock to drive you to your hotel for approximately \$10.

My lodging destination for the next two nights was the Sea Breeze, a cute little B&B with an excellent view of the harbor.

It isn't fancy and the least expensive room with a shared bath is \$130. Three rooms on the same floor share the same bathroom.

Continental breakfast is included and it is within walking distance to the downtown area.

www.blockisland.com/seabreeze

If you prefer to dine at a restaurant nearby, take a short walk up the hill to the historic and lovely Spring House Hotel and restaurant, which is an excellent place to enjoy the beautiful harbor view while dining on their outdoor veranda.

Crab cakes some of the best

Their crab cakes were some of the best I have tasted. Complimented with a glass of chardonnay, it was a perfect end to a hot summer day.

To learn more about the history of Block Island, consider setting up a private tour (\$65) with Pam Gasner, executive director of Block Island Historical Society.

She is very knowledgeable about the history of the island and the original 16 settlers.

www.springhousehotel.com

Getting around New England

By Car

Driving in New England is a pleasurable experience and is by far the best way to explore the region. New England is relatively small, so distances between points of interest are often fairly short; the region is also very easy to navigate and, outside of Boston, is usually congestion free.

Drivers should note that driving is on the right hand side of the road, the speed limit is 25 MPH in most cities and 65 MPH on highways.

Car rental companies

www.dollar.co.uk
www.avis.co.uk
www.budget.co.uk
www.hertz.co.uk

Besides cars, recreational vehicles (RV's) are also a fun way to explore the six states.

New England is well equipped for RV's with numerous designated parks throughout the region.

www.awwt.co.uk
www.trailfinders.com

By bus

For those who don't drive or would prefer not to, regular bus services connect most major cities and some of the smaller towns.

www.greyhound.com

By train

For those who just want to sit back and enjoy the beautiful scenery, there are several train routes operated by Amtrak that link many major New England towns and cities.

www.amtrak.com

New Englanders love their food and take full advantage of the rich regional produce.

There's nothing quite like apple cider during the fall, pancakes with real maple syrup, a clambake on the beach or a barbecue on the back porch.

Think of blueberries, cranberries and lobster.

Block Island history

It was an extremely hot day (95 degrees) and we rode in an old Jeep without air conditioning but she was a great source of information and we were able to visit the island cemetery and Settler's Rock.

Fascinating to learn that the original settlers (including my great (x9) grandfather, Captain James Sands) swam to shore when they reached the island. Settler's Rock commemorates the spot where they landed and includes all 16 names prominently displayed on the plaque.

The next day, we stopped for a tour of the historic Southeast Lighthouse, which sits near the rocky Mohegan Bluffs.

In 1873, the building was 300 feet from the edge of the cliff. By 1993, it was only 55 feet from the cliff. Funds were raised through Block Island Southeast Light Foundation and the structure was moved to its current location. Work is in process to turn the lighthouse into a Bed & Breakfast by 2011.

www.blockislandtimes.com

Sebago Lake, Maine

It is often said that you save the best for last. My visit to Migis (my-giss) Lodge on Sebago Lake in Maine proved this point. It was a perfect ending to a hectic swing through two New England states. Migis Lodge was truly a place to breathe, relax and rejuvenate my spirits.

A magical, wooded resort located only 40 minutes from the Portland, Maine airport; it is the essence of upscale rustic.

The main lodge has six deluxe guestrooms all with private bath, wood burning fireplace and deck with a beautiful view of the lake. Discreetly placed within the pine trees on these spacious 100-acres are 35 wood and stone cottages that range from a studio to six bedrooms.

Each night at the main lodge (except on Friday), they have a cocktail hour on the porch which overlooks Sebago Lake. Comfortable chairs. Great conversations. Try the refreshing Raspberry Crush to cool down during a hot summer day.

In keeping with classic, rustic elegance, men are required to wear jackets to dinner. Bring your appetite and enjoy an elegantly prepared five-course dinner by their executive chef, John Strain.

My choice was New England poached salmon paired with an exquisite and flavorful, 2006 Zinfandel from Rockpile Road.

Schedule your visit at Migis Lodge to include a Friday night so you don't miss the Lobster Bake which is held lakeside.

The menu includes Maine's famous, gigantic red lobsters, steamed corn, clam chowder, numerous salads and strawberry shortcake. After a sumptuous meal, waddle down to the lake and enjoy the beautiful bonfire and listen to staff strum their guitars.

At Migis Lodge almost every wish is your command.

Fabulous food, wonderful views, excellent service. My recommendation to stay at this resort cannot do it justice.

You have to experience the serenity and beauty yourself to completely understand this incredible resort! Reserve early since the Lodge may be sold out during the summer months.

www.migis.com

Food and wine

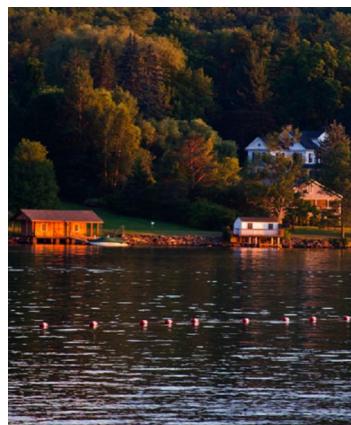
Then there are clams, the vital ingredient to New England's very own clam chowder.

Fresh organic fruit and produce grown on family farms is used to make pumpkin, peach and apple pies, spinach soufflés or corn and crabmeat bisque.

A wide choice of artisan cheeses and breads are available and there are also a number of microbreweries and vineyards to be explored throughout the region.



More information



New England

www.discovernewengland.org

Connecticut

www.visitconnecticut.com

Western Connecticut

www.visitwesternct.com

Rhode Island

www.visitrhodeisland.com

Block Island

www.blockislandinfo.com

Maine

www.visitmaine.com



© Susan Frost Photography



The International Travel Writers Alliance



AllWays

www.allwaystraveller.com

AllWays is the consumer travel service from the International Travel Writers Alliance.

The International Travel Writers Alliance

www.itwalliance.com

The International Travel Writers Alliance represents travel writers, editors, broadcasters and photographers worldwide

The International Travel Writers Alliance
Hampton House, 77 The Ridgeway, North Chingford, E4 6QW, London, UK.

Tel : 0776 419 8286

Email : Ashley@itwalliance.com

Susan Frost



Susan Frost's articles and photos have been published in many national publications including *The New York Times*, *World Traveler*, AAA and *Sunset* magazines.

She is the author and photographer of *Portland, Oregon – A Photographic Portrait* and the author of *Blueprint for Marketing*.

www.frostphotography.com