



Ben Nugent

ESCAPE to THE CAPE

Starting this summer, there will be direct flights from Tel Aviv to Boston – a perfect pretext to visit Cape Cod, the perpetually trendy holiday paradise on the Massachusetts coast **Bill DeSousa**

Cape Cod and the two neighboring islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket are well-known for being favorite summer vacation spots not only for local New Englanders, but also for Americans from around the U.S. and tourists from all over the world.

The area has always attracted the cultural elite and other privileged and famous Americans. The Obamas vacation on Martha's Vineyard every summer; the Clintons have been frequent visitors for years; and the famous Kennedy compound at Hyannis Port, Cape Cod functioned as a 'summer White House' during JFK's presi-

dency. Today, the John F. Kennedy Hyannis Museum, which preserves the Kennedy legacy and the family's deep connection to Cape Cod, is popular with tourists.

One hour from Boston

Cape Cod is situated at the extreme southeast corner of Massachusetts, about a one-hour's drive from Boston. The Cape is approximately 110 km. long and is shaped like a fishhook. It is completely surrounded by water: Cape Cod Bay on the north, Buzzards Bay on the west, Vineyard and Nantucket Sounds on the south and the Atlantic Ocean on the east

Because Cape Cod stands guard offshore from the New England



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Photos courtesy of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce



land mass, swaddled in both cold and warm waters, its weather is unique to the region. In the winter, it is warmed by the ocean and in the summer it is cooled by those same waters. Even during the most sultry summer day, Cape Cod enjoys a cooling ocean breeze, with average temperatures in July averaging a comfortable 21°C.

There are 15 different towns on Cape Cod, each with its own distinct character. Around 216,000 year-round residents live on the island, including 45,000 in Barnstable, the largest town. However, Cape Cod attracts 4-6 million visitors annually, mainly during the summer months.

Cape Cod was originally a

peninsula, but after the Cape Cod Canal was built in the beginning of the 20th century, it became a man-made island. The Cape is divided into three sections – the Upper, Mid- and Lower Cape.

Golf, biking, whales and more

Cape Cod is home to 115 named beaches, from the sparkling waters of Cape Cod and Buzzards Bays and the calm and refreshing Vineyard and Nantucket Sound beaches to the beautiful – and sometimes wild – Cape Cod National Seashore. The coastline is so long that even in the height of the summer season one can almost always find a piece of beach to be

alone. There are also 365 ponds, which are great for swimming and other water sports.

Visitors looking for active vacations will find plenty to do. Popular activities include sailing, boating, wind and wave surfing, canoeing, kayaking, bicycling, hiking, jogging and water skiing. Moreover, there are interesting and informative nature excursions from several locations, including not-to-be-missed whale watching expeditions.

Cape Cod is also a golfer's paradise and is sometimes referred to as "The Golf Coast." It is ranked in Golf Digest's 'top ten' U.S. golf destinations, and is home to 27 public and 14 private golf courses.

Cycling is also becoming increasingly popular on the Cape. There are currently 170 km. of protected bike paths and more roadways are being allocated for this sport every year. The entire area is bicycle-friendly and nowhere will cyclists find anything but warm welcomes. From Falmouth's Shining Sea Bikeway to Cape Cod Rail Trail and dozens of other bike trails and paths, the terrain and cycling experiences the Cape visitor will experience are as diverse as the Cape itself.

Hiking along more than 100 Cape beaches or within its forests, moors and conservation areas is another great way to explore the area. And no trip to the Cape is complete



WHERE THE MAYFLOWER LANDED

Physical evidence suggests that the earliest inhabitants arrived in Cape Cod about 10,000 years ago, settling in the warmer months mainly along the Cape's major estuaries in today's Barnstable, Pleasant Bay and Brewster. Settlers moved to inland ponds during the winter. Originally, the Cape was populated by Native Americans and, during the 16th century, the people of the Wampanoag Federation lived – in peace – along the Cape's coast.

Cape Cod's enduring appellation was coined by English explorer Bartholomew Gosnold after he took 'great stock' of cod from the peninsula's surrounding waters. On November 9, 1620, the 'Mayflower,' the iconic ship that transported the first pilgrims to the New World, sailed into Provincetown Harbor in Cape Cod Bay after a 65-day storm-tossed trans-Atlantic voyage. The Pilgrims decided to settle on Cape Cod. Before going ashore, the Mayflower Compact, which committed all male passengers to commit to cooperate in the new government to be formed, was executed. On December 15, 1620, the 'Mayflower' left Cape Cod and sailed for Plymouth, where its colony was established. As the colony grew, different groups decided to move to Cape Cod, where they farmed and fished. A fierce independence, more than any other attribute, typified the Cape Cod personality. They grew increasingly bellicose towards British rule and the acrimony culminated in the great war of independence with Great Britain.



without taking a dune tour in the Province Lands from Art's Dune Tours in Provincetown.

The more adventurous shouldn't miss an excursion to Monomoy Island, available year-round. Monomoy is a barrier island and wildlife refuge off the coast of Chatham, Massachusetts, where thousands of seals have made their home. Seal and other tours depart several Cape ports, and ranger-led walks and outings can be taken from within Cape Cod National Seashore.

Whale watching is also a popular activity. Stellwagen Bank is just off Cape Cod and is one of the best spots to observe pods of whales. Whale watching excursions, which run from May to October, depart from Barnstable and Provincetown Harbors.

Clam shacks and antique shops

There are more than 19,000

guest rooms on Cape Cod, including rental properties and timeshare properties. The assortment of lodging possibilities is diverse, from small bed & breakfasts and country inns to full-service resorts throughout the Cape's 15 towns.

When it comes to dining, Cape Cod offers more than 700 restaurants, catering to nearly every palate – from Cape Cod's famous fresh seafood to literally dozens of ethnic cuisines. Waterfront and hearthside dining venues are ubiquitous, and clam shacks are especially popular. Included within the selection of Cape restaurants are dozens of critically acclaimed and award-winning eateries. In fact, Cape Cod has its own Zagat Survey guide.

With 2,254 places to shop, visitors are bound to find shopping Cape Cod a delight. Shopping venues run the gamut from outlet malls and strip malls to lone storefronts and roadside stands. There is no

state sales tax on clothing.

From the Cape Cod Mall and quaint Main Street in Hyannis to the boutiques and galleries of Provincetown, the sheer diversity of shopping options could easily overwhelm. Specialty shoppers are certain to find a treasure or two in the 147 galleries and antique shops. Along Route 6A, many vintage homes are now delightful antiques shops and boutiques, with nooks and crannies bursting with one-of-a-kind merchandise.

Whether you are planning a New England road trip or looking for that perfect summer resort, visit Cape Cod for a fun break that is very civilized and, at the same time, totally relaxing.

For additional information, contact the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce:
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