

LONG ISLAND: NEW YORK CITY'S BEACHFRONT BACKYARD



Just outside of the most visited metropolis in the world you'll find 120-miles of sparkling ocean beaches, historic sites including "America's First Spy Ring", quaint downtown villages, exclusive shopping, world renowned Long Island Wine Country – rated one of the "Top 10 Wine Regions in the World" by Wine Enthusiast - and of course, the famed Hamptons. Enjoy some of the best farm-to-table fare available in the United States, courtesy of our incredible farmlands and bountiful surrounding waters.



UNIQUE REGIONS: The fish-shaped island is divided into six distinct regions, each boasting their own unique assets and attractions. The **North Shore**, bordering the Long Island Sound, features the Gold Coast Mansions, high end shopping and some of the top rated and celebrity chef owned restaurants on the island. The **South Shore**, bordering the Atlantic Ocean, boasts big wave beaches, trendy downtowns and villages and incredible entertainment venues and complexes. **Fire Island**, the premiere LGBT destination in the northeastern United States, offers miles and miles of preserved land and is a true beach community accessible only by walk-on ferry, no cars permitted. The **North Fork** represents the heart of wine country and farming with historic waterfront villages full of restaurants serving up local fare and shops selling locally made wares. **Shelter Island** is one of several smaller islands found in between the North and South Forks and is the only inhabited one allowing for a true escape from busy life with quiet streets, hideaway B&Bs and uncrowded beaches. Perhaps the best known, the **South Fork** is famous for The Hamptons and Montauk, the island's glitziest towns and beaches where celebrity spotting, fine dining and exclusive lodging are part of the landscape.

GETTING HERE: Hop aboard a Long Island train, schedule a flight into one of several major airports or take advantage of the roadways, ferries and buses, as well as Long Island limos, car rentals and taxis – it's easy to get around Long Island.

By Land

Seven bridges and two tunnels within the City of New York connect to the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens in the western end of Long Island. From there it's a short drive east to Nassau and Suffolk counties. Three major express routes run east and west through Long Island:

- » The Long Island Expressway (LIE-Interstate Route 495), Manhattan to Riverhead
 - » Northern State Parkway, Queens to Hauppauge
 - » Southern State Parkway, Brooklyn and Queens (called the Belt Parkway in those two boroughs) to Oakdale.
- Other east-west routes:
- » Northern Boulevard (Route 25A)
 - » Jericho Turnpike (Route 25)
 - » Sunrise Highway (Route 27)
 - » Merrick Road/Montauk Highway (Route 27A)

Railroad

The Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) serves the Nassau-Suffolk County region, at 124 stations in communities throughout Long Island. For schedules and rates call 718-217-5477 or visit mta.info/lirr.

Buses

Buses serve most of the Island's communities and stop at many railroad stations, shopping malls, airports, colleges and even beaches.

Nassau County NICE bus:
516-228-4000 or nicebus.com

Suffolk County Transit:
631-852-5200 or sct-bus.org
Motorcoach companies offer scheduled service and tours from New York City to various communities, such as Hampton Jitney, Hampton Luxury Liner and 7 Bus offering service to Long Island's East End.

By Air

Three major airports serve Long Island. Long Island Islip MacArthur Airport in Ronkonkoma offers scheduled flights through a number of different carriers and includes a Southwest Airlines terminal in the Veterans Memorial Concourse. JFK International and LaGuardia airports are located in Queens just across the Nassau County border.

Long Island Islip MacArthur Airport:
1-888-LI-AIRPORTS or macarthurairport.com.

JFK International Airport: 718-244-4444 or panynj.gov/airports/jfk.html Information on rail transport from JFK to Long Island: 877-JFKAirTrain

La Guardia Airport: 718-533-3400 or panynj.gov/airports/laguardia.html

Four additional airports on Long Island offer full-service, fixed-based operators, and also serve executive and privately owned planes. They are Republic Airport in East Farmingdale, Francis S. Gabreski Airport in Westhampton Beach, Brookhaven Calabro Airport in Shirley and East Hampton Airport. Air Hamptons offers charter plane service to the Hamptons. (631-580-5051)

By Sea

Long Island is served by two year-round ferry lines that cross Long Island Sound and connect Bridgeport, Conn., to Port Jefferson, LI, and New London, Conn. to Orient Point, LI. If you want to visit Fire Island where no cars are allowed, the most convenient way is to take one of six passenger ferry routes.

Furthermore, you can travel from the North Fork to the South Fork of Long Island through

FACTS AT A GLANCE:

History with a View – Long Island is home to some of the oldest lighthouses in the United States including the Montauk Lighthouse, authorized by President George Washington in 1792. Public access varies by lighthouse with many accessible only through boat tour while others, like the Montauk Lighthouse and Fire Island Lighthouse allow visitors to climb to the top for a spectacular view. Still others like Greenport's "Bug Light" and Mamaroneck's Execution Rocks Lighthouse allow for special request dinners and even overnight stays.

Catch a Day at Sea - Surfers flock to our shores each year to conquer east coast waves at Long Beach or Montauk and sailors, yachtsmen and fishermen alike enjoy some of the deepest water ports the Northeastern seaboard has to offer boasting waters teeming with life. Across Long Island you can find top rated fishing charters, fishing tournaments and tons of water sport rentals including boats, jet skis, paddle boards, kayaks and more. Dig your toes into the shallows to come up with clams the size of your fist, hop on board an inshore charter for fluke, bass or flounder or head offshore in search of shark, tuna or marlin.

Savor Local Flavor – Unsurprisingly, Long Island cuisine focuses heavily on seafood harvested from the surrounding waters. Depending on the season, fluke, striped bass, sea bass, flounder, bluefish and blackfish can be found on restaurant menus and in fishmonger's ice trays. Shellfish like clams, mussels, oysters and both bay and sea scallops are also abundant, the most well-known of which are the Blue Point oyster and the Peconic Bay scallop. The soil and climate provide the perfect conditions for a wide range of fruits and vegetables grown on the island's various farms, many of which are produced to strict organic standards and are available at the innumerable farmer's markets and farm stands. Many farmers also raise chickens, pigs, cows and ducks allowing for succulent meats, fresh eggs and cheeses. Numerous restaurants feature menus entirely created from local ingredients and most farms are open to the public to purchase goods.

The "Gold Coast" – On Long Island's north shore, just outside of New York City, you'll find the Gold Coast mansions. Built during America's "Roaring 20's" (the 1920s) during a time of opulence, almost 200 of the once over 500 mansions and estates survive today. A mansion, by definition, must be over 7,000 sq ft with 30+ rooms, 7+ bedrooms, separate staff quarters and large entertaining rooms. The inspiration behind F. Scott Fitzgerald's

The Great Gatsby, the Gold Coast mansions do not disappoint in their breathtaking splendor; while some are still private homes many are open to the public for visitation, overnight stays, events and tours.

America's First Spy Ring – Long Island has a rich Revolutionary War history but none so important as the creation of then General George Washington's "Culper Spy Ring", a secret group of Long Island men and women who ferried information on British activity to the Continental Army. AMC's dramatic series *Turn* is based on actual events which took place across the island and many of the sites associated with the spy ring, like the Brewster House, the Thompson House and Raynham Hall are open to the public.

Wine Country – New York is the third largest wine growing region in the United States and with over sixty wineries, Long Island has quickly become the epicenter of the state's premium vinifera wine grapes. Listed as one of the "Top 10 Wine Regions in the World" by Wine Enthusiast magazine, Long Island's East End benefits from a long growing season, maritime climate, moderate temperatures and ideal soil conditions. The region produces over 500,000 cases of wine annually and the most popular varietals include Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling as well as many award-winning blends.

Imbibe and Unwind – Wine isn't the only way to experience Long Island's local beverage offerings. Beer connoisseurs will enjoy over three dozen award winning craft breweries and beer bars and gastropubs featuring brews made with local ingredients and farm grown hops. Brewery tours and tastings are available all year long and several companies like Brew Crew Cycles offer group bicycle tours with multiple brewery stops. Long Island is also home to cideries and distilleries making moonshine, vodka and whiskey. LiV distillery, the first craft distillery to open on Long Island since the 1800's, serves up potato vodka, whiskey, gin and sorbetta all made with local ingredients.

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ABOUT DISCOVER LONG ISLAND:

Discover Long Island was established under the name Long Island Convention and Visitors Bureau & Sports Commission in 1979 as the official tourism promotion agency for the destination's travel and tourism industry. The organization contributes to the economic development and quality of life on Long Island by promoting the region as a world-class destination for tourism, meetings and conventions, trade shows, sporting events and related activities. For more information, please call 631-951-3900 or visit www.discoverlongisland.com.

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