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AUGUST 2016

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NEWS & NOTES

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AAA member services will be open on Monday, Sept. 5, but administrative offices, AAA locations and the travel call center will be closed. As always, 24-hour roadside assistance will be available.

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On the cover:
Brant Point Lighthouse on Nantucket.
Photo credit:
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Discovering Nantucket's Whaling History

BY JILL FERGUS

I'd long wanted to go to Nantucket but, when I recently read Nathaniel Philbrick's book "In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex," my desire kicked into overdrive. And so, this past May, I visited for a few days to learn more about Nantucket's rich whaling history – during the early and mid-19th century, this remote island off the coast of Massachusetts was the whaling capital of the world. Today, tourism is the main industry, so in addition to exploring its maritime roots, I looked forward to seeing its storybook gray-shingled cottages, charming cobblestone streets, boat-filled harbor, unspoiled beaches and lighthouses.

I checked into 21 Broad, a Victorian building that's been transformed into a stylish 27-room hotel after a top-to-bottom renovation (a new wing was added). Beyond the traditional façade – I loved the front porch overlooking Broad Street – interiors featured a contemporary white-on-white décor accentuated with cheery colors like lemon yellow. As soon as I entered, I felt myself shifting gears ... I was on island time now! As a vintage turntable spun Florence + The Machine, I began to plot my afternoon, but kept getting distracted by the outdoor patio with a glassed-in fire pit (the perfect spot for a pre-dinner glass of wine, I thought). My



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A nautical scene on the beautiful island of Nantucket.

second-floor room, with a white and beige color scheme with pops of orange, featured plenty of high-tech gadgets, and the friendly staff, who always greeted me by name, even gave me a loaner iPad.

21 Broad is steps from the Whaling Museum, housed in a former 1847 candle factory. You could easily spend several hours here (check out the rooftop observation deck with Nantucket Harbor views before you

start). Highlights include a 46-foot sperm whale skeleton (it washed ashore on Siasconset's Low Beach in 1998), whaling equipment such as harpoons and wooden barrels that held the precious whale oil (used as lamp fuel) and portraits of ship owners and captains. In the second floor galleries, you'll find examples of scrimshaw, the art of engraving images on

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9 New York Traffic Rules You May Not Know

BY ROBERTO X. CRUZ

Certain rules of the road stick in your mind, like "click it or ticket" and "don't drink and drive." But not every rule has a clever slogan that makes it easy to remember. Ahead of the heavily traveled Labor Day holiday, and the start of the 2016-17 school year, here are some lesser-known – but impor-

tant – New York traffic safety rules.

The 100-Foot Rule. In New York, drivers must use a turn signal for at least 100 feet before making a turn and/or switching lanes. An easy way to adhere to this rule is to hit the signal before you start braking for the turn, said Barbara Ward, a traffic safety specialist for AAA Northeast.

When to Stay Right. Speeding is dangerous, but so is driving too slowly on interstates and other limited-access highways. When possible, those driving slower than the flow of traffic should use the right lanes to help reduce congestion and prevent aggressive driving maneuvers by others.

No Headphones, Please. New York law allows you to wear *one* headphone while driving, but the traffic experts at AAA suggest not wearing any at all. Headphones pumping music directly into your ears can hinder your

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Book a Free Senior Driver Workshop Today

Driving is a function of ability, not age. However, driving ability is affected by natural changes to our bodies over time.

AAA is dedicated to keeping seniors driving for as long as safely possible. Our safety experts are available to address senior groups about the importance of making certain adjustments to compensate for reduced vision, hearing, flexibility and

reaction time. These talks usually last about an hour, but can be tailored to fit your needs and are offered at **no charge** to senior centers.

To book a workshop, please contact Barbara Ward at 516-873-2364.

To learn more about senior driver safety and the numerous resources available to the mature driver, please log on to AAA.com/Safety or SeniorDriving.AAA.com.



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Lark Hotels



Brant Point Grill

Left: The courtyard at 21 Broad. Right: A seafood tower at the Brant Point Grill. Below: A sperm whale skeleton at the Whaling Museum.

Discovering Nantucket's Whaling History

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ivory (typically whale teeth) and rattan-woven Nantucket lightship baskets, both of which were created by sailors looking to pass the time at sea.

I was keen to see the “Stove by a Whale: 20 Men, 3 Boats, 96 Days” exhibit, which tells the story of the ill-fated Nantucket whaleship Essex, and it didn't disappoint. In 1820, an enraged sperm whale attacked the vessel while it was deep in the then-uncharted waters of the Pacific Ocean; the shipwrecked crew of 20 then set out on small whaleboats — only eight survived. These events inspired Philbrick, who resides on Nantucket, to pen “In the Heart of the Sea” in 2000 (a Ron Howard-directed movie of the same name was released last year). It was this maritime tragedy that formed the

basis of “Moby-Dick,” the classic 1851 novel written by Herman Melville, who had spent time as a crewman aboard a New England whaler. The museum is now offering 90-minute Essex-themed walking tours, which visit historic sites including the former home of Capt. George Pollard (who survived).

That evening, I headed to Galley Beach, where I enjoyed a terrific meal of grilled octopus and truffle-butter poached lobster. This see-and-be-seen beachfront restaurant, especially during the nightly sunset, got its start as a humble clam shack and has since grown into a beloved island institution attracting everyone from celebrities to CEOs in their Nantucket Reds pants. You can dine inside or at a table set up directly on the sand.

I had another memorable meal of steamed mussels and lobster (do you see a theme here?) at Brant Point Grill at the White Elephant, one of the island's top resorts. The restaurant overlooks Steamboat Wharf, where Cape Cod ferries come and go (you can also fly direct from New York City, as I did) and features a classic surf and turf menu with everything from a halibut fillet to filet mignon, along with a wide-ranging wine list and craft beers from on-island Cisco Brewers.

Each morning, 21 Broad offered a light breakfast of yogurt, granola, fruit and other tasty treats along with juices and java from Nantucket Coffee Roasters. I love that the hotel was so centrally located — I could easily stop back to drop off bags after hitting the shops or just take a breather on the back patio. In the afternoon, the staff left out cookies, and pre-dinner, there was a BYO cocktail mixer, which is a great way to meet other guests and trade itinerary suggestions. Though I didn't get a chance to rent a bike, I highly recommend a van tour with Gail Nickerson Johnson, a sixth-generation islander, who'll take you out to Siasconset and Sankaty Head Light. Alas, it was time to head back to the “mainland,” but with its classic lighthouses, fresh lobster and old whaling lore, Nantucket is not so easily forgotten.



The Nantucket Whaling Museum



BOOK NOW!

The island of Nantucket is right off the coast of Cape Cod, so visit AAA.com/CapeCod for a list of fun things to do.