Island Time
Nautical Fun on Nantucket

What’s New in Buffalo
Discover the 1000 Islands
9 New York Traffic Rules to Know
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 second-floor room, with a white and beige color scheme with pops of orange, featured technology like a Siemens home automation system, a Nest thermostat 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 bone and ivory.

“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 headphones while driving, but the traffic experts at AAA suggest not wearing phone while driving, but the traffic experts at AAA suggest not wearing your phone at all. Headphones pumping music directly into your ears can hinder your 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.

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 important – 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, traffic safety specialist for AAA Northeast.

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On the cover: Brant Point Lighthouse on Nantucket.

Photo credit: © Adam Policky

MEDIA BAKERY
Discovering Nantucket’s Whaling History

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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 clambake 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.

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

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.

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The Nantucket Whaling Museum

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