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The Whaling Museum, once a whale oil processing and candle factory, is a necessary first stop for first-time visitors, the place where these Nantucketers … conquered the watery world like so many Alexanders.” The island’s most prominent citizens were sea captains, traders and owners of factories that processed whale blubber and spermaceti, a prized oil that comes from the head of the sperm whale. By the mid-19th century, however, whaling was in decline as cheaper petroleum replaced whale oil and the island’s harbor silted up. When gold was discovered in California, many Nantucket men left to seek their fortunes. The Civil War distracted others. Enter tourism in the latter half of the 19th century, when summer visitors became the catalyst for Nantucket’s recovery. As a result, the island became—and remains to this day—one of the most popular destinations in the world because of its beaches and historic charm.

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Nantucket has a mystique and charm all its own. Just ask anyone who lives there or has ever visited this small “elbow of sand” (as novelist Herman Melville once called it) some 30 miles off the coast of Massachusetts. The name Nantucket—which means “faraway land” in the island’s original Wampanoag language—suggested from the beginning a place apart and distinctive. The first English settlers, who arrived in the mid-17th century, formed a community of farmers, sheepherders and fishermen. By the early 18th century, however, deep-sea whaling had become the island’s economic mainstay and the island’s whalers ventured as far away as the South Pacific. Nantucket, in fact, became the whaling capital of the world, providing the whale oil that lit homes and cities around the world. As Melville wrote in Moby Dick, “Thus have these Nantucketers … conquered the watery world like so many Alexanders.”

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Nantucket Island Resorts
Nantucket Island Resorts has a portfolio of historic, luxurious accommodations and restaurants on the island. Consider the White Elephant hotel, situated on the waterfront and just a short walk from the center of town. Originally the dream of a prominent 1920s Nantucket socialite, the hotel has been updated and expanded over the decades. Although much has changed since its humble beginnings, the property remains a prominent piece of Nantucket history.

The hotel offers the perfect base from which to explore the town’s museums, shops, restaurants and nightclubs. Alternatively, you can relax in a chaise on the lawn while overlooking Nantucket Harbor, rejuvenate in the on-property spa and even arrange a cruise on a Hinckley yacht stocked with wine, champagne and snacks. A family-friendly place, the hotel also has a “children’s beach” where parents can drop off their young ones for supervised activities such as yoga, soccer, music and dance programs.

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Be sure not to miss The Wauwinet, the island’s only Relais & Châteaux property. Situated on the northeastern side of the island, about 9 miles from town, it’s easy to get to this seaside refuge by road on the inn’s private jitney or by water on the Lady Wauwinet ferry. This grande dame of an inn first welcomed guests in 1875. After falling into disrepair over the years, it reopened in 1988 after extensive renovations. The property particularly appeals to those seeking a tranquil, romantic getaway. Luxurious rooms feature custom furnishings and fine linens. An expansive lawn with chaise lounges overlooks the harbor.
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Inside, antiques embellish a cozy living room that doubles as a book-filled library. Art from the owner’s collection graces halfway walls. The Wauwinet’s Spa by the Sea offers a variety of treatments, from facials to massages, including a popular detoxifying body massage and algae wrap.

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Black-Eyed Susan’s: For large homemade omlettes, buttermilk pancakes and “scrambles” (the Portuguese scramble has linguica, tomatoes, spinach and garlic). Get there early since there’s always a line for breakfast.

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Cru: For a seafood raw bar and mains such as butter poached lobster and grilled Wester Ross salmon. Both the restaurant and two convivial bars overlook Nantucket’s waterfront.

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Craftsmasters of Nantucket: The shop offers quality home décor, accessories, belts and so much more. Turning Heads since 1883

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Scarlett’s Home Décor is your destination for home goods, furniture, gifts, and so much more.
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FOR MORE INFORMATION
GETTING THERE
Short flights and ferries take visitors from Hyannis, Massachusetts. Additionally, major airlines offer direct flights from New York City (various airports), Boston and Washington, D.C.

ACCOMMODATIONS
nantucketislandresorts.com
whiteelephanthotel.com
wauwinet.com
jaredcoffinhouse.com

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