

Travel

ESCAPE TO PREP ISLAND

Spend a summer weekend in classic Nantucket

By DANA SCHUSTER

TRAVELERS are eschewing Europe for some quality time in the USA — thanks in part to a state department warning against

travel there that expires on Aug. 31 — and some domestic destinations are thriving.

Take Nantucket. The 48-square-mile Massachusetts island, 30 miles south of Cape Cod, epitomizes Americana. Lined with pitched-roofed, cedar-shingled homes, the preppy New England locale is a sea of its namesake red shorts and boasts a picturesque town so charming and quaint that it doesn't even have traffic lights.

And while Kourtney Kardashian and on-and-off-again beau and baby daddy Scott Disick were spotted in Nantucket last week — they even delivered their Rolls-Royce to ACK, the airport code that's

become the island's nickname and a bumper sticker hallmark — it will take more than reality stars to taint the laid-back vibe of an island where even billionaires drive 10-year-old Jeeps.

WHAT TO DO

Gather up your friends, head to **Island Boat Rentals** and nab a 20-foot Boston Whaler for the day; it's their most popular vessel (islandboatrental.myshopify.com). Massachusetts doesn't require a boating license, so amateur enthusiasts can actually get behind the wheel.

(Watch out for the sandbars!) Rentals start at \$525 for a half-day and can fit up to nine people. Stock up on snacks at **Provisions**, a cafe adjacent to the

FISHY BUSINESS: Black-Eyed Susan's tuna tartare (below).

Courtesy of Black Eyed Susan's (2)



dock famed for its Turkey Terrific sandwich, a riff on the traditional day-after-Thanks-giving concoction (provisionsnantucket.com).

Landlubbers can rent bikes and head to **Steps Beach** for the day, a spot with calm waters accessible via a dramatic, Instagram-worthy walk down a cliff. An added bonus? It's right next to **Galley Beach Bar**, an über-chic beachside restaurant where you

ON YOUR 'TUCKET LIST: Massachusetts' scenic island.

Getty Images

can sip Whispering Angel (a rosé affectionately known on the island as "Nantucket crack") with your feet in the sand (galleybeach.net).

Don't leave Nantucket without dinner at **Black-Eyed Susan's** (black-eyed-susans.com). It's a greasy spoon-style diner by day and the most creative restaurant on the island by night. The minuscule eatery offers three seatings each evening — at 6, 7:30 and 9:15 — and only takes same-day reservation requests starting at 6 p.m. Priority is given to those who line

up in person as early as 5 p.m. The menu runs the culinary gamut, from deceptively simple dishes like linguine with local clams to duck in a sweet and salty curry. The restaurant is BYOB and has a \$3 per person corkage fee. (Pro tip: A local said he brings an extra bottle for the staff to guarantee future reservations.)

For dessert, get some homemade ice cream at **The**

MULTI-TUSKING: Chaise laze or lawn graze at the White Elephant hotel.



Juice Bar (facebook.com/juicebarnantucket). The line at this smoothie joint regularly wraps around the corner,

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The iconic Ritz Paris after its \$450M face-lift.

Credit: Ritz Paris (3)

By the Numbers

The Ritz Paris

By ALEXANDER LOBRANO

FOLLOWING a two-year renovation that reportedly cost a whopping \$450 million, the Ritz Paris (ritzparis.com) has reopened and is dazzling the world's highest flyers all over again.

Located on the posh Place Vendôme, the 142-room hotel has been the epitome of Gallic luxury since it was opened by César Ritz in 1898. Now it's been discreetly, but sumptuously, revamped and rewired to offer a quintessential 21st-century luxury experience.

Since reopening, the Ritz is packed — and the following numbers help explain why.

\$1,100

The average rate for the 375-sq.-ft. Superior Rooms, which overlook the rue Cambon or the Terrasse Vendôme.

2

Number of suites named for famous American writers. Both Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald were regular hotel guests.





BLADE RUNNER:
Fly semi-private to ACK.

Courtesy of Blade

WHERE TO STAY

The **White Elephant**, situated right on the harbor and a quick five-minute stroll from town, is the island's best hotel (from \$695 in summer, \$225 in fall; whiteelephanthotel.com). Guests can play cornhole or recline in chaises on the immaculate lawn, sipping the hotel's signature lobster Bloody Mary (\$29) — which is more appetizer than drink thanks to its quarter pound of meat.

Rooms are spacious and have an old-school Nantucket feel. And there's also the newer **White Elephant Village** (from \$695 in summer, \$195 in fall; whiteelephantvillage.com), replete with bathrooms bigger than most Manhattan studios. Both White Elephants offer a sunset boat ride to dinner at **Topper's** — free to all if you have a reservation. Complete with cocktails — this is Nantucket, after all — the hour-long jaunt feels like a million-dollar cruise.

Other top beds include NYC shoe designer **Vanessa Noel's** eponymous hotel (from \$545 in summer, \$300 in fall; vanessanoelhotel.com), which is set in a restored former home from the 1840s. And later this year, the White Elephant family may get some

new competition when **Greydon House**, a 20-room boutique hotel designed by Roman and Williams, opens nearby. The hotel, currently under construction, will artfully combine two buildings: a Greek revival mansion from the 1850s and a newer addition (from \$600, greydonhouse.com).

HOW TO GET THERE

Fancy-shmancy Nantucketgoers no longer have to mingle with the hoi polloi in general aviation, even though Delta, American, JetBlue, United and Cape Air all offer direct flights from New York. **Blade**, the NYC-based company that launched flights to ACK last year, has kicked it up a notch with a brand-new lounge at the Nantucket airport, outfitted in reclaimed wood with a handmade copper bar (flyblade.com).

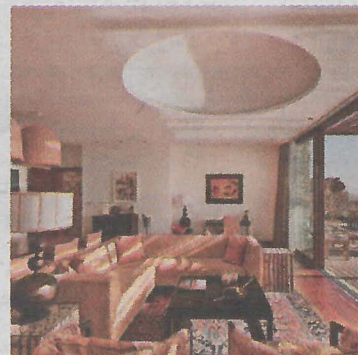
At the lounge, passengers can take some last swigs of vacation with beer from local favorite **Cisco Brewery**. Then it's an hour-long, semi-private flight to Westchester County Airport, followed by a 15-minute hop by helicopter from there to Midtown Manhattan for a quick Uber ride home. The cost: a cool \$695 one-way.

HOTEL FACE-OFF: ISRAEL

Adventure vs. History

BERESHEET HOTEL, MITZPE RAMON

A guest room at Beresheet (near right), where wild ibex roam free; an open-air salon at Efendi, a restored palace with panoramic Mediterranean views.



Courtesy of Beresheet Hotel (2)

THE LURE

Located 2,400 feet above sea level in the heart of the Negev desert, the mod-design hotel is perched atop the jagged cliffs of the cavernous Ramon Crater.

THE LAYOUT

The 111 rooms are nestled in small stone buildings that seem to rise out of the desertscape. The upgrade to a crater view room with balcony or private pool is worth the extra cash.

DON'T MISS

The nine-room spa, which offers both Middle and Far Eastern treatments including a hot stone or Ayurvedic four-hands massage.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER?

Daily breakfast and dinner buffets are packed with Israeli and Middle Eastern salads, baked breads, meat, fish and vegetarian options. Many ingredients are locally sourced.

THE LETDOWN

The hotel is kosher, so some weekend meals are pre-prepared. The quality is still excellent, but forget that Saturday morning cappuccino.

THE LOWDOWN

Once you've relaxed at the luxurious infinity pool, head out for a guided Jeep tour and rappelling adventure in the crater, best booked after 5 p.m. to avoid the heat.

BOTTOM LINE

A posh nature retreat midway between Tel Aviv and the Red Sea resort town of Eilat.

DETAILS

From \$350; isrotel.com

The crater-front pool at the Beresheet resort in Israel's stark Negev desert (near right); an elegant, antiques-filled guest room at Efendi.



EFENDI HOTEL, ACRE



Courtesy of the Efendi Hotel (2)

A hidden gem in the historic Arab-Israeli village of Acre. The property features a 400-year-old Turkish hammam and 2,000-plus wines set in a 12th-century stone cellar.

The renovated historic Ottoman-era palace houses 12 antiques-filled rooms with 16-foot ceilings and 19th-century frescoes painstakingly restored by Venetian artists.

A glass of cava on the rooftop at sunset overlooking the sea and village — an authentic slice of history just an hour from Tel Aviv.

The Efendi serves traditional Israeli breakfast including dips, spreads, salads and homemade pastries. Don't miss dinner at owner Uri Buri's nearby namesake restaurant.

The 4 a.m. morning call to prayer from nearby mosques may wake you up. Be sure to use the in-room earplugs and eye masks.

Acre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and emerging tourist destination within easy access of the adventure-filled Western Galilee.



History and luxury so indulgent, it lured former Israeli president Shimon Peres (above).

From \$320; efendi-hotel.com

—Randi Charno



21,500

The square footage of the magnificent Grand Jardin by architect Thierry W. Despont, who oversaw the renovation of the hotel, in collaboration with landscape architect Jean Mus. They were inspired by the Palais Royal.

355

The price, in dollars, of the Signature menu created by the hotel's new chef Nicholas Sale at the L'Espadon restaurant. Try the langoustines prepared three ways.

1988



The year that the Ritz-Escoffier School of French Gastronomy opened. It's named in honor of August Escoffier (above), the hotel's first chef.

50,000+

Number of different wines available from the hotel's wine cellars, which are curated by Estelle Touzet, age 35 (right).



The ultra-luxe Fitzgerald Suite.



The historic hotel's chic new Grand Jardin.

