

ELITE

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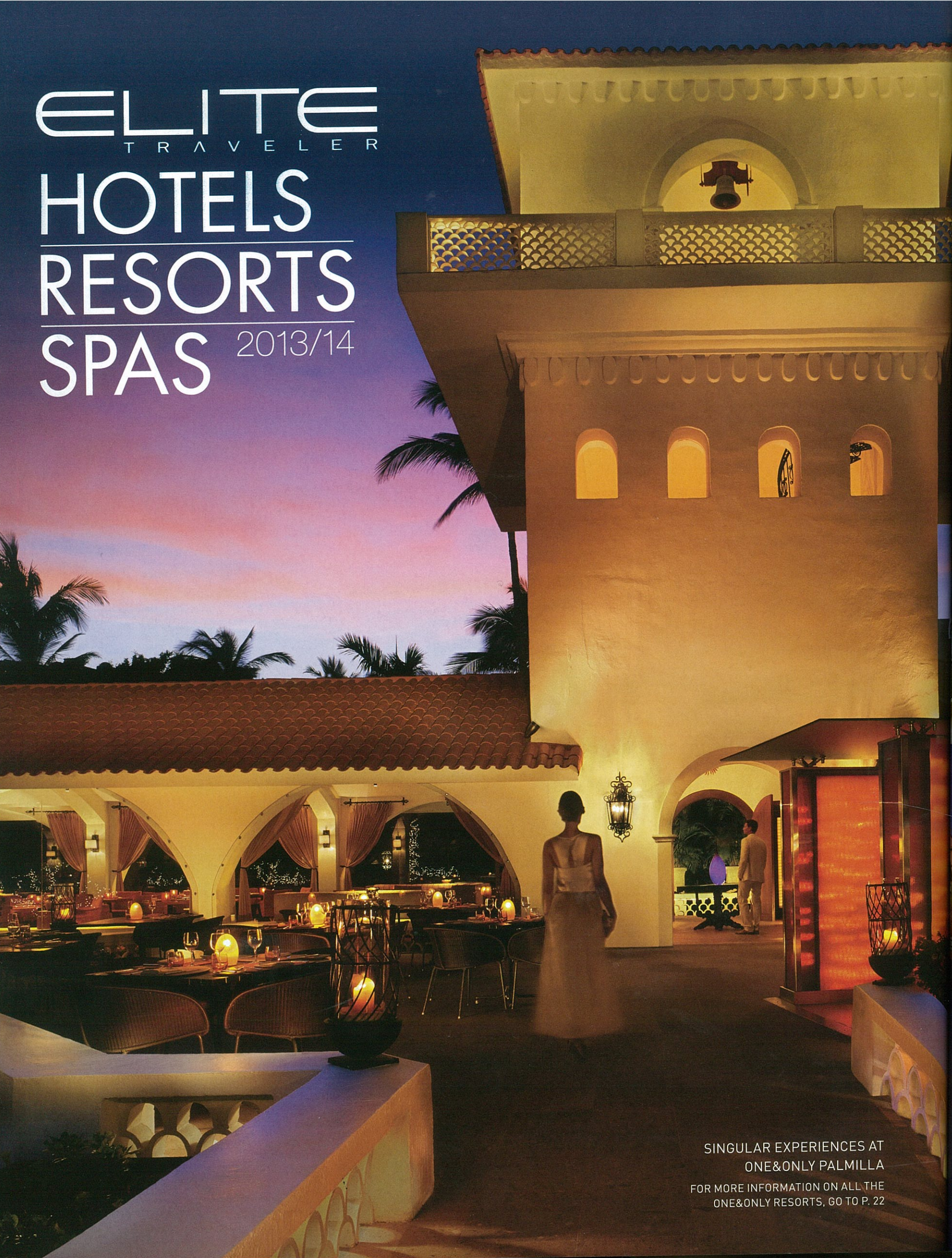
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BRANT POINT LIGHTHOUSE / NANTUCKET

NANTUCKET AND MARTHA'S VINEYARD

Lying off the coast of Cape Cod, the islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard are an essential stop on any New England itinerary. Roam the islands on foot or by bicycle, taking in the beaches, stately homes, and acres of conservation land.

BY MIRIAM CAIN

NANTUCKET BOAT BASIN, MASSACHUSETTS, U.S.

Once the world's richest whaling outpost, Nantucket is now an exclusive hideaway for billionaire tycoons, politicians, and publicity-shy A-listers looking for a little isolation. The crescent shaped island has been drawing the crowds to its quaint towns and villages since becoming a holiday haven for the Broadway set in the late 19th century. Nantucket Boat Basin lies just a stone's throw from old Nantucket Town and is the perfect gateway to discover the island's acres of conservation land, miles of sandy beaches, and 17th- and 18th-century clapboard mansions that dot the landscape.

SPORT & LEISURE

The best way to discover Nantucket is by bicycle. You can easily cycle from one end of the island to the other on bike paths leading past cranberry bogs, salt marshes, and woodlands of scrub pine. From Nantucket Town cycle to the **Coskata-Coatue Wildlife Refuge**, where you can access Brant Point. The point itself is where the cold Atlantic currents hit the Nantucket Sound creating cool eddies that have attracted the largest gray seal breeding colony in the U.S.

The rarefied Old Town is where it all happens, though. Boutiques and inns line the streets that lead down to the yacht-filled Nantucket Boat Basin where you will find antique shops and galleries in antique wharf shacks. There are no modern facades or neon signs on the island – the only branded store is Ralph Lauren and the label sums up the island's aesthetic perfectly. Nantucket also has its own unofficial dress code of faded red shorts and caps, known as Nantucket Red. Step into the legendary **Murray's Toggery Shop** for a pair of original reds and you might be mistaken for a local. Alternatively, join the summer set (the island's population more than quadruples in the summer months) and

don a sweater with whale insignia over your shoulder.

There are also three golf courses on the island. The **Sankaty Head Golf Club** is the public course, the **Nantucket/Sconset Golf Club** is the oldest, but it's **Miacomet Golf Club** that remains the most welcoming to non-islanders and part-time golfers.

CULTURE

The Whaling Museum has a large collection of memorabilia from the island's heyday as a bustling international port. During its boom period in the 1820s, the island had 83 whale ships. Charting the rise of the island's riches, the museum has all manner of artifacts, from captains' diaries and shipping logs to the skeleton of a finback whale.

The island has had its booms and busts but its lucrative past is evident all around the island. A number of the whalers' grand houses on Main Street are as they were in the 19th century, with some remaining open to the public. There are also more than 50 art galleries to visit on the island, most of which

TOP MARINAS | NANTUCKET AND MARTHA'S VINEYARD



are located in Nantucket Town or down on the Old South Wharf on the harbor.

To experience the true retro glamour of the island, take a trip out to Siasconset at the eastern edge of the island where you will find a series of tiny rose-covered cottages. The quintessential New England village, set high on the seaside cliffs, remains as it was when the Broadway set hung out here. Visit in the spring for the **Daffodil Festival**, or October for **Nantucket Historical Association's Annual Harvest Fair**.

DINING

Located on the outskirts of Nantucket Town, the **White Elephant Hotel** is an island institution. Here you will find **Brant Point Grill** and the **Harborside Terrace**. Arrive in style and take your yacht's tender across the harbor from Nantucket Boat Basin and step ashore to the waterfront lawn. Dishes are prepared by chef Tom Pearson, who sources seafood ingredients from local waters in order to craft specialty dishes like tagliatelle with organic poached egg and Jonah crab. The Lobster Bloody Mary is the most popular item on the menu, which also includes fantastic turf fare including prime steaks (Contact: Restaurant Manager Miguel Sandoval, (508) 325-1320; msandoval@niresorts.com; www.whiteelephanthotel.com).

At the other end of the island, **Topper's** restaurant, located in **The Wauwinet Inn**, is another premier waterfront dining spot offering indoor and terrace dining. Island classics include charcoal grilled octopus, dry-aged Peking duck, and butter poached lobster (Contact: Restaurant Manager Jennifer Hudson, (508) 228-8768; jhudson@hiresorts.com; www.wauwinet.com).

Straight Wharf is a perennial favorite close to, well, the wharf. Hurricane lamps light the sea-facing tables on the deck. Simple, fresh ingredients make up a menu full of clambakes, butter lobster with chorizo, and local harpooned swordfish (Contact: Co-Owner Scott Fraley, (508) 228-4499; info@straightwharfrestaurant.com; www.straightwharfrestaurant.com).

Dine on scallops and sea bass at the **Sconset Café**, a chic, minimalist space that is a hive of activity during the summer months. Try the crispy crab cakes and remember to bring your own bottle from the wine shop right next door (Contact: Owners Rolf & Cindy Nelson, (508) 257-4008; info@sconsetcafe.com; www.sconsetcafe.com).

AFTER DARK

The Boarding House is a popular hangout for the summer set from New York, while **The Summer House** is a classic, if somewhat faded, collection of quaint cottages situated around a central restaurant (Contact: Customer Service, (508) 257-4577; reservations@thesummerhouse.com; www.thesummerhouse.com).

GENERAL INFORMATION

The **Nantucket Boat Basin** has berthing for superyachts up to 316 feet. Open year-round, it is located just one block from downtown Nantucket. Facilities include bars, restaurants, boutiques, and a supermarket (Contact: Director of Marina Operations George Bassett, (800) 626-2628; nantucketboatbasin@niresorts.com; www.nantucketboatbasin.com).

