

R H A P S O D Y

SEPTEMBER 2014

LATE-SUMMER
MAGIC ON
NANTUCKET

RACHEL ZOE
MEETS HER
FASHION IDOL

DISSECTING
BMW'S HYBRID
SUPERCAR

A REBELLION
IN THE NCAA

LENNY
KRAVITZ

RESCUES
ROCK 'N' ROLL

UNITED



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER



FIRST PERSON, FAR FLUNG

NANTUCKET

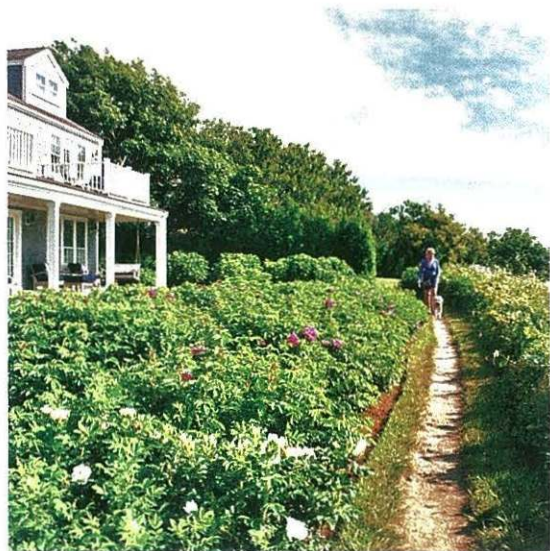
What makes summer memories so vivid? From flashlight tag and fire pits to gently crisping air and lonely dunes, we find the answer on New England's most magical island.

By MEG NOLAN VAN REESEMA

Photography by MARK HARTMAN

NEXT STOP: LISBON

The Wauwinet hotel's remote, water-fringed setting at Nantucket's northeastern tip; the nearest landmass across the Atlantic is Portugal



TRANQUIL TRAILS, HARBORS AND POOLS

Top: The sandy and fragrant Cliffwalk on Nantucket's south shore; bottom: Nantucket's Old North Wharf; opposite page: the White Elephant Village hotel has one of the few swimming pools in town

MY FAVORITE Nantucket bumper sticker—and there are many—reads, Fog Happens. And indeed it does. Rolling in nightly and blanketing the 105-square-mile island in a mist that can last throughout the following day, the fog is legendary, thwarting travel plans, requiring capable windshield wipers at night and, most of all, protecting Nantucket from being too easy to reach. This being New England, heartiness is heralded above all, and those who make the journey 30 miles into the Atlantic Ocean are rewarded with some of the most gorgeous preserved natural scenery in the world.

Named by its native inhabitants, the Wampanoag tribe, Nantucket means “faraway land.” For years it was home to a mixture of English settlers from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, who lived alongside the Native Americans, farming and fishing the local waters. All was rather bucolic until 1712, when whales and their precious oil became the focus and cause for founding various family fortunes, putting Nantucket firmly on the map as the whaling capital of the Atlantic and landing it in the pages of Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick*.

Even today, strolling Nantucket’s downtown, with its uneven brick sidewalks and cobblestone Main Street, it’s not too difficult to imagine the village’s 19th-century incarnation. These daydreams are far better realized early in the morning, when crowds are at their thinnest and the primary fishing pier, the Straight Wharf, is the only spot of frenzied commotion. With a hot coffee and the famed breakfast sandwich from the nearby delicatessen, Provisions, warmly in hand, I stroll the gleaming white-shell path of neighboring Old South Wharf, peeking into gallery and shop windows and relishing the pocket views of the harbor found between shingled cottages.

For me, Nantucket revolves around two things: family and the outdoors. Having visited the island every year for my family’s summer vacation since I was three years old, there’s little I haven’t done here. But the repetition of my various routines on the island has turned them into mini traditions. For instance, this past June I took my usual morning constitutional into town for coffee and the paper, which takes me by an inordinate number of meticulously planted house gardens and window boxes, awash with outsized hydrangea bushes, climbing roses and lavender. I’ve made this stroll a thousand times, but still I marvel at the beautiful plantings, capable of growing so well in such tight spaces, and vow to better green my own thumb—just the same as I did the summer before. Or consider my beloved evening walk at Sanford Farm, just off Madaket Road. “The Farm” is owned by the Nantucket Conservation Foundation (around 48 percent of the island has been preserved) and offers five miles of hilly walking trails that crest to offer views of Hummock Pond, the >





Late
Glove



MILK AND BERRIES

Left: Enjoy an old-school malted frappé at Nantucket Pharmacy; below: strawberry picking at Bartlett's Farm

Atlantic Ocean and the wind rustling through a pocket pine forest. Every summer, I am surprised at how this island's unique hills, dales and dunes speak to my soul, as if for the first time.

Perhaps the best way to listen to the landscape, however, is with a scenic trip on the White Elephant hotel's exclusive launch boat, the *Wauwinet Lady*, which daily shuttles 15 or so lucky passengers to and from the property's in-town location to its sister resort, the Wauwinet, for a meal at the justifiably lauded Topper's. The route takes you through the harbor, past old schooners and gleaming yachts; hugs the shoreline of scallop-rich Monomoy; passes by Polpis Road, with its own small harbor and fantastic Nantucket Shipwreck and Lifesaving Museum, and wildlife and nature preserve Coskata-Coatue; and finally arrives at the island's rugged, quiet northeastern end, Wauwinet. It's the best way there is (save for a private charter) to see Nantucket's inner waters and coastline—and don't forget the generously portioned lobster roll on homemade brioche at trip's end.

I now visit the island year-round, although early fall—when the sky is particularly sharp and the air is just beginning to crisp, with the ocean still warm enough for a dip—has become my preferred time to be here. Yet as my childhood memories (and fierce determination to provide the same >





SUMMER'S END

*Admiring a classic
Nantucket sunset,
which is heralded
for how the sun
appears to dip into
the ocean—a rarity
on the East Coast*

for my own children) will attest, there is something particularly magical about a Nantucket summer.

On any given night in August of 1988, I could be found playing flashlight tag, often hiding in my favorite spot between a white-painted wood shed and the gray-shingled frame of a typical Nantucket townhouse. I recall holding in my breath as the cries and giggles grew closer and the single beam of light roved between the neighboring houses. Cars were fewer than they are today, and so my friends, cousins, siblings and I played our favorite game between Fair and Darling streets, smack in the middle of town, with nary a concern for traffic or a scolding from the neighbors. It was a kid's playground.

Afterward, we would all troop down to Main Street for dollar ice-cream cones and frappés, or malt milkshakes, at the Island Pharmacy Soda Fountain (now Nantucket Pharmacy), where you still can get those same treats. My first lesson in budgeting came via my morning bike ride into town to fetch the daily newspapers for my father. I was allowed to keep the change from the purchase and—my!—what math skills

developed as I plotted potential expenditures at the Hub, the island's aptly named general store. The Hub also still stands, as does its tall, white-washed community message board, Nantucket's original Craigslist, where local ads range from babysitting services to rental properties.

Most of my best (and most heart-wrenching) memories are set during summers on the island, from boogie-boarding with my first best friend to my teenage years spent sneaking into the Dreamland Theater, or that first beer followed by that first heartbreak down on Steps Beach. Even into adulthood, Nantucket was where I sought solace after my first career pitfall or, most recently, where I decamped just three weeks after the birth of my son; I craved the island's nurturing elements with every last hormonal urge.

Why do seminal moments seem to happen more often in the summer? Maybe it's just that your memories of these times are stronger due to the heightened senses that come from spending almost all of your time outdoors—which, in Nantucket, is the whole point. If you miss that, you miss the magic. ☺

THE BEST OF NANTUCKET

SLEEP

76 MAIN

This hotel exemplifies the "New Nantucket," with a preppy interior design and techie amenities like guest iPads and flat-screen TVs. Accommodations are divided between the historic Main Street mansion and a low-slung building tucked behind a courtyard—equipped with a fire pit—which hosts a jovial BYOB cocktail hour.

THE WAUWINET

Tucked way out on Nantucket's northeastern end, the Wauwinet enjoys a privileged location like none other. For bird watchers, nature lovers and just plain lovers, its 32 rooms offer romantic cottage-style interiors, plush chaise lounges and some of the best sunset views on island.

WHITE ELEPHANT VILLAGE

This brand-new sister to the famous White Elephant inn offers excellent multi-bedroom residences and charming interconnecting rooms, ideal for families. It boasts one of the two

swimming pools in town, as well as free-to-use bicycles and shuttle rides to area restaurants and beaches.

EAT

GALLEY BEACH

Nantucket's answer to André Balazs' Sunset Beach, on New York's Shelter Island, Galley Beach offers "feet in the sand" seafood dining and cocktails with lounge wicker seating and fire pits, or an interior dining room whose sidewalls

are open to the beach and fabulous sunsets beyond.

MERSAULT

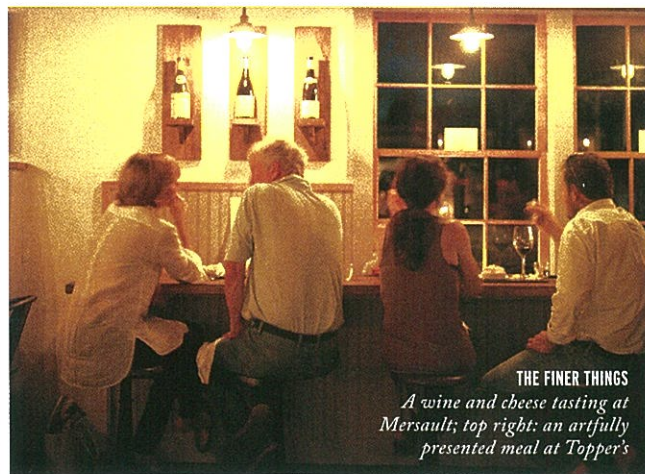
New this summer, this laid-back wine bar strives to conjure the tasting rooms of Burgundy, after which the bar is named and where its proprietor spent years honing his winemaking and tasting craft. Don't miss out on the curious selection of cheeses.

TOPPER'S

Heralded as the island's best gourmet restaurant, Topper's



(at the Wauwinet) offers an opulent five-course prix fixe tasting menu with wine pairings. Don't miss the resty oysters, served on the half shell, which are cultivated just 300 yards offshore.



THE FINER THINGS

A wine and cheese tasting at Mersault; top right: an artfully presented meal at Topper's

VENTUNO

This small-plate Italian restaurant has quickly become a favorite of locals and "summer natives" alike. The uncomplicated, fresh menu is complemented by friendly bar staff and a fabulous back patio.

✈ **BOARDING PASS** When traveling to Nantucket or any other "faraway land," MileagePlus members can optimize their travel using miles to book hotels, rent cars and buy certificates to local restaurants.