

Charting A Course In Newport

by Terry Conway

At the turn of the 20th century Newport, Rhode Island reigned as the playground for the rich and famous. These days you don't have to be rolling in dough to share in its wealth.

With coastlines on the west, south and east, Newport is a maritime city. Its harbors teem with commercial fishing boats, power and sail pleasure craft. It is known as the sailing capitol of the United States.

Once the hub of Colonial commerce, the harbor is now packed with tall ships, cruise liners, mega yachts and fleets of rusty lobster boats. Visitors can take to the water for a sunset sail on the sea foam green waters of Narragansett Bay or watch world-class sailors harness the wind in one of the many annual regattas, races and sailing festivals.

Home to America's Cup from 1930 through 1983, Newport is a sailor's dreamland, where you'll also find the Museum of Yachting and the International Yacht Restoration School.

Each September (13-16) the Newport International Boat show attracts thousands of serious yacht buyers. As one of the five largest in-water boat shows in the country, the Newport show features more than 600 new powerboats and sailboats from domestic and international exhibitors.

Hundreds of booths offer marine electronics, services and accessories, plus educational seminars, Discover Sailing, and a TrawlerPort section for first-time boat and product debuts. Spread over 14 acres along America's Cup Avenue, the show area stretches from the Newport Yachting Center to Newport Harbor Hotel & Marina, including the well-known Bowen's Wharf. The town has one of the highest concentrations of colonial homes in the nation. Many of these homes were restored in the late 20th century through grants made by Newport resident Doris Duke, as well as other local efforts such as Operation Clapboard. As a result, Newport's colonial heritage is well-preserved. In addition, the city is known for its Gilded Age mansions, which have also received extensive restoration from both private owners and non-profits such as the Preservation Society of Newport County.



Local favorite "Tucker's Bistro"

Presidents Kennedy and Eisenhower both made Newport the site of the "Summer White House" during their years in office. Eisenhower stayed at Fort Adams, while Kennedy used Hammersmith Farm. In the 20th century, immigrants from Portugal and the Caribbean began settling in Newport, adding to the rich diversity of the city. Drive down the Avenue past the stately seaside Beaux-Arts mansions that line the

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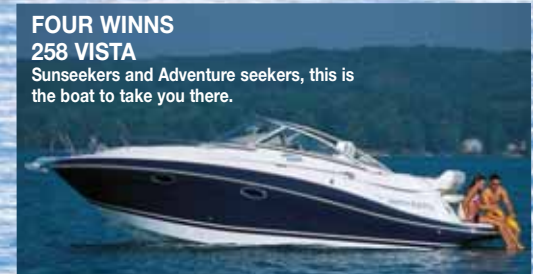
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