

DAILY NEWS

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BY LINDA CLARKE
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Cape Cod has a beautiful beach, of course. But vacationing on the peninsula in southeastern Massachusetts also means exploring its old New England towns in search of good food and fun.

Turning off Route 6, and winding down narrow lanes, the town of Falmouth nestles on the southwestern tip of Cape Cod. Here, there's lots of great shopping, and places to grab a bite. Locals gather for breakfast or lunch at Pickle Jar Kitchen (170 Main St.; picklejar.kitchen.com), and eat blueberry muffin French toast and substantial sandwiches.

Another popular spot here is Bear in Boots (285 Main St.; bearinboots.com), a new gastropub with a piano built above the bar that serves up summertime favorites like lobster rolls and mussels and fries, and has fun weekly events like trivia on Thursdays and live music every Friday and Saturday.

Continued on next page

MORE TO EXPLORE

Cape Cod is all about finding fun spots and spot-on food

PHOTOS BY MARI HANSON FOR DAILY NEWS



Left, the village of Falmouth, Mass., on the southwestern tip of Cape Cod. Above, a bike is parked at the beach in Falmouth.

TRAVEL
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Continued from previous page

Take a guided tour of Falmouth Museums on the Green, and learn about the history of the town, of the Cape, and what life was like there in the 1700s. It includes a walk through the Federalist home and surgery of Dr. Francis Wicks, which is wonderfully preserved and packed with original artifacts. It's a shame that the nearby Palmer House Inn doesn't do tours. Guests at this superior B&B are surrounded by Victoriana and other antique knickknacks.

In North Falmouth, Sea Crest Beach Hotel's restaurant, Red's, named for onetime Celtics coach, Red Auerbach, is filled with his personal memorabilia, and overlooks Old Silver Beach. This summer, every Tuesday night, the hotel will hold an "Old Silver Beach Shore Dinner" (tickets required), offering a set menu of either a clam bake with Maine lobster, steamer clams, mussels, native sweet corn on the cob with poached baby potatoes; or, a barbecue alternative with meats, fresh-baked corn bread, and Cape clam chowder. To finish? S'mores, of course.

The Mid-Cape's center is Hyannis and a summer stroll along the harbor is filled with tempting treats. But one of the Cape's best eateries is tucked away near Hyannis airport. Called Pain D'Avignon (15 Hinckley Rd., paindavignon.com), the bakery and bistro offers lunches of fresh salads and sandwiches, diners-like bouillabaisse and roasted organic chicken, and an all-French wine list, which includes organic and biodynamic wines, too. Pain D'Avignon has a pretty



Truro Vineyards, L., hosts tastings of its wines. Above, Pain D'Avignon in Hyannis is the go-to source for rustic loaves.

patio and the interior has a classic bistro look of black wainscoting and white linen tablecloths. Don't even bother trying to resist the patisserie: try crumbly, light lemon biscotti and real cream-filled cakes.

In Hyannis, the Cape Codder Resort & Spa offers day passes to its indoor wave pool, which has giant water slides and a 24-person whirlpool. Resort guests, of course, have free access. The Codder also houses the exceptional Beach Plum Spa, which boasts only 100% certified organic or all-natural body products. Now's the time to have

that couples massage. Or go solo with the aptly named top-to-toe Cape Cod Bliss package.

Chatham sits on the Outer Cape's elbow, a smart, genteel kind of town, with the Chatham Bars Inn, and its restaurant, Stars, a fabled high society centerpiece.

Further north, the town of Wellfleet boasts one of the Cape's best beaches at Cahoon Hollow. A couple of decades ago, this former site of a U.S. Life Saving Station became the Beachcomber restaurant (1120 Cahoon Hollow Rd., thebeachcomber.com), which also has five

music — this summer's schedule includes surf guitar king Dick Dale, and funk rock band Fishbone.

Heading north, stop off at Truro Vineyards, which is set in an old farm, and holds summer wine tastings of its funky idiosyncratic Cape wines on the peaceful patio. Last year, the eight-year-old winery unveiled its distillery, South Hollow Spirits. The story has all the good-ies, and lots of fun wine-related gifts to choose from. Truro restaurant Blackfish (17 Truro Center Road; 508-349-3399), another Cape hotspot, sets up a summer food truck, the wittily titled Crush Pad,

serving up daily specials, along with naturally raised meat burgers and salads, on the farmhouse's lawn, which is perfect for a picnic.

The Cape's most northern town, Provincetown, which is a favorite among artists and the LGBT community, is Cape Cod's undisputed nightlife center. In summer, its theater scene lights up with big names escaping Broadway's heat. Tony Award winner Matthew Broderick and his wife, Emmy and Golden Globe Award winner Sarah Jessica Parker, perform together at Provincetown Town Hall. The Provincetown Theater's 2015 Broadway Concert Series brings top performers to its tiny, intimate theater. This season, there's Lena Hall with "Sin and Salvation," and Adam Pascal singing hits from "Rent," "Memphis," "Chicago," and "West Side Story."

Provincetown's main drag, Commercial St., is a hub of tiny old shops — Whaler's Wharf houses tons of trinkets — and eateries. Stop into Lewis Brothers Ice Cream shop (310 Commercial St., lewisbrothersicecream.com), where all flavors are made on-site. The family company is green-certified and its solar panel trucks set up at some Cape beaches, too.

Sage Inn & Lounge is also tucked off Commercial, adjacent to one of the town's famed landmarks: a mural depicting various famous women peering from windows. They're believed to be Amelia Earhart, Sylvia Plath, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

It's fun to guess who's who as you sit



Surgery at Dr. Francis Wicks House in Falmouth is an example of what life was like for a physician in a Federalist-era home.

on Sage's terrace, enjoying cocktails infused with herbs plucked from the vertical herb garden on the patio. This summer, there are Saturday night chef's dinners in the lounge, and the Calamari Sisters' drag comedy musical show, "Clambake."

Mac's Seafood (85 Shank Painter Rd., macsseasfood.com) is a sleek

Continued on next page



The Nobska Point Lighthouse Tower is located at the division between Buzzards Bay and Vineyard Sound in Woods Hole.



Continued from previous page
 restaurant offering everything from flounder in a beurre blanc sauce to Happy Hour buck oysters. For old Cape charm, the original Mac's in Wellfleet harbor serves up seaside favorites like sweet whole bellied clams to enjoy right on the pier, which also happens to be one of the Cape's best spots for sunset watching.

Visitors can buy day passes to the indoor wave pool, which has giant water slides and a 24-person whirlpool, at the Cape Codder Resort & Spa in Hyannis.

IF YOU GO

STAY:

Cape Codder Resort & Spa Family-friendly resort with indoor wave pool, heated outdoor pool, restaurant and wine bar. From: \$119. (1225 Iyannough Road, Hyannis; capecodderresort.com)

Chatham Bars Inn An ocean side resort with spa, entertainment, restaurant and bar. From: \$189. (297 Shore Rd., Chatham; chathambarsinn.com)

Palmer House Inn Rate includes a cooked breakfast, served in charming dining room. From \$179. (81 Palmer Ave., Falmouth; palmerhouseinn.com)



Sage Inn & Lounge Renovated inn has bright, airy rooms, and a Tesla charging station. From: \$100. (336 Commercial St., Provincetown; sageinnptown.com)

Sea Crest Beach Inn This beachside hotel offers daily yoga, water Zumba classes, entertainment and the Children's Kangaroo Club. From: \$89. (350 Quaker Rd., Falmouth; seacrestbeach-hotel.com)

PLAY:

Provincetown Theater 238 Bradford St., Provincetown; provincetowntheater.org.

Truro Vineyards 11 Shore Road, Truro; trurovineyardsofcapecod.com.