

VOGUE

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7 Great Island Vacations— No Passport Required

APRIL 4, 2016 1:56 PM

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Photographed by Toni Frissell, *Vogue*, February 1935

Absolutely no disrespect to the Caribbean and its dreamy white-sand beaches, but from time to time we all need a vacation that's a little closer to home.

Fortunately, the U.S. coasts are dotted with stunning island retreats perfect for a quick, off-the-mainland getaway. So from the warm, sunny Florida Keys to the naturally striking San Juan Islands in Washington State, here are a few inspiring spots to check into on your next holiday. No passport required.



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Nantucket

What keeps vacationers returning year after year to this charming island just 30 miles off the coast of Cape Cod in Massachusetts is undoubtedly its small-town appeal. Regulars have been buying its preppy “Nantucket reds” at **Murray’s Toggery Shop** on Main Street since 1945 and indulging in soft-shell crab sandwiches at the **Straight Wharf Fish Store** for almost as long. Planning a visit? Stay at the classic **Nantucket Hotel** (originally built in 1891, but fully renovated only a few years ago) or the chic (and also historic) harbor-front **White Elephant Hotel**, both just a quick bike ride or walk from the beach. Eat dinner at the seasonally driven, locally sourced **Proprietors Bar & Table** and then wander over to The Juice Bar for a scoop of homemade ice cream. Before you head back home, make sure to stop at one of the island’s many farm stands, like Pumpkin Pond Farm, for some fresh fruits and veggies to go.

Photo: Alamy



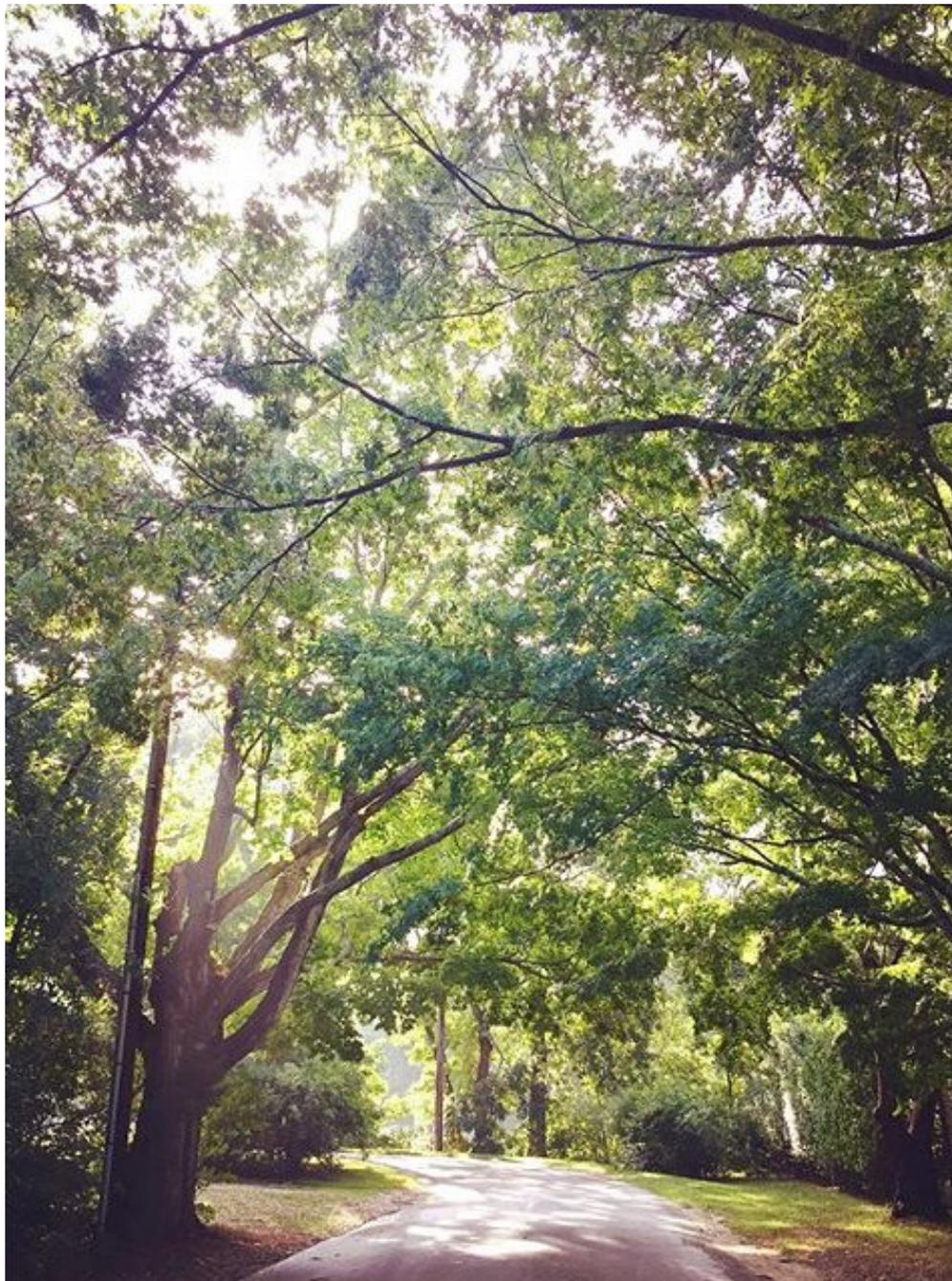
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Florida Keys

Though the Florida Keys have traditionally had a reputation for being a less-than-sophisticated vacation destination, their relative proximity to Miami, laid-back attitude, and aquamarine waters have drawn visitors over the years nonetheless. Now the islands are finally growing up and ushering in a new era of well-appointed boutique hotels and gourmet restaurants to please even the most discerning guests. On Islamorada, the quiet, whitewashed **Casa Morada** and newly renovated **Amara Cay Resort** offer refined, tropical vibes only an hour-and-a-half drive from the Miami airport.

Meanwhile, further south, the Waldorf-Astoria–owned **Casa Marina** and recently opened, design-centric **Gates Hotel** are luxe getaways. On the drive down, stop at **Keys Fisheries** for ultra-fresh seafood (it supplies to Whole Foods and Miami favorite Joe’s Stone Crab, among others). Once in Key West, try Café **Marquesa** for an intimate dinner, **Seven Fish** for seafood with the locals, or **Bad Boy Burrito** for . . . exactly that.

Photo: Courtesy of @gateskeywest



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Long Island

The Hamptons and its stylish summer inhabitants need no introduction. If you fancy a weekend “out East,” spend a few nights at the gracious **Topping Rose House** in Bridgehampton or the spa-centric **Gurney’s Montauk Resort & Seawater Spa** in Montauk. However, for those who prefer a slightly quieter side of New York’s island getaway, there’s also Shelter Island and the North Fork to explore. On Shelter Island, check in to the enchanting **Chequit** and take a swim in the mellow waters of the sound. When you start to crave some company, head to the André Balazs–owned **Sunset Beach** for a European-style beach club scene. Alternatively, you could make your getaway to North Fork, where in place of mega-mansions you’ll find rows of working farms (and farm stands) and local wineries to visit. Spend the night at the easygoing **Greenporter Hotel** and eat as many meals as possible at the heavenly **North Fork Table and Inn** and its adjoining backyard food truck (a lobster roll and fresh baked cookie are the way to go). Be sure to stop into Greenport boutique **Lido**, where owner Heidi Kelso offers well-curated goods from her world travels. For a sweets fix, head a bit further east to Orient Village, where you’ll find a seasonal outpost of beloved Brooklyn pie shop **Four and Twenty Blackbirds**.

Photo: Courtesy of @thechequit



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Mackinac Island

At the top of Lake Huron in Michigan, this tiny 3.8-square-mile island is 80 percent preserved state park and has prohibited the use of motor vehicles since 1898, making it a seriously endearing retreat. Activities here are unsurprisingly laid-back. Think: biking, swimming, and lounging on the beach, interrupted from time to time for a leisurely game of bocce or tennis. The town's main attraction? An abundance of fudge purveyors, hawking their sweet treats. Stay at the grand (and newly renovated) **Mission Point**, an 18-acre property that offers every activity imaginable (golf, croquet, arcade, flower-pressing classes, you name it), lending it a wonderful old-school summer-camp vibe.

Photo: Alamy



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San Juan Islands

Just off the coast of Washington, at the very northwestern tip of the United States, sit the striking San Juan Islands. Here, instead of water sports and sunny beaches, you'll find cozy cabins and plenty of campfires. In other words, plan on packing your boots and flannels because hiking, biking, kayaking, fishing, and whale watching will be on the agenda. From late May through mid-October, whale-watching tours regularly spot pods of migrating orcas alongside seals, sea lions, sea otters, bald eagles, and a host of other wildlife. The main town, where you'll want to make your home base, is Friday Harbor. There, check into the modern **Island Inn at 123 West** or **Friday Harbor House**, or head across the island to the **Snug Harbor Resort** cabins for something a bit more remote. Grab prepared foods and picnic provisions for lunch at **Market Chef** or **San Juan Island Cheese**, and for dinner try the inventive **Duck Soup Inn** or sophisticated **Bluff** at Friday Harbor House.

Photo: Alamy



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Martha's Vineyard

As New England's largest island, Martha's Vineyard has something for everyone. Drive for long enough and you'll find elegant Victorian mansions, bucolic farmland, and sleepy fishing villages all sharing the same 100 square miles of seaside land. For those who prefer to stay in an intimate, artful retreat, try the **Beach Plum Inn**. Another island favorite is the quirky-luxe **Hob Knob**. And then there's the lovely and well-positioned **Winnetu**, which offers access to popular South Beach and an array of on-site activities. By day, lounge on the wide, sandy beaches or wander the shops in quaint towns like Chilmark or Edgartown. And don't forget to eat (well and often). At lunchtime, venture to **Larsen's Fish Market** for insanely fresh lobster rolls and other seafood specialties or **7a Foods** for unique sandwiches. At night, dine at **State Road** or the **Red Cat Kitchen**.

Photo: Courtesy of @marthasvineyard



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Block Island

For outdoorsy types, this stunning Rhode Island summer spot will do the trick. With more than a third of the island's 9.7 square miles dedicated to a nature reserve, getaways to Block Island are all about hiking along dramatic bluffs and lounging on the often-deserted sandy beaches. Accommodations here are refreshingly pretty simple. Try the laid-back **Hotel Manisses** in town. For breakfast, the baked goods at **Aldo's Bakery** can't be beat, and for dinner, do like the locals and line up at **Eli's** for fresh New American fare. And if ever you tire of the island's casual, laissez-faire vibes, you can always make your escape to neighboring Newport, where glamorous hotels like **The Chanler at Cliff Walk** stand ready to greet you.

Photo: Courtesy of @thechanler