

YANKEE



Cape Porpoise, Maine | A Quiet Coastal Village

We were still a few weeks shy of the summer solstice, but our late-spring weather was bordering on balmy as Jim and I headed to Cape Porpoise, Maine — a small fishing village on the southern coast — earlier this month. Although I grew up in neighboring **Kennebunk**, we would be exploring the area as tourists, courtesy of the **Kennebunkport Resort Collection**, which had graciously offered to host us for the weekend.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Wend your way along Pier Road toward Bickford Island.

“Where exactly is Cape Porpoise?” you may be wondering. Wend your way along Route 9 East for approximately two miles beyond Kennebunkport’s bustling Dock Square, and you’ll land in this scenic little hamlet. This area is considered the quiet side of town, but pass through the gates of **Hidden Pond** — located in a 60-acre wood — and peaceful seclusion takes on a whole new meaning. So much thought has been put into infusing the guest experience with a sense of serenity that even the bungalow we were to call home for the next two nights had been aptly dubbed “Tranquility.”



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Aah, tranquility.

How to describe the Hidden Pond bungalow experience? The brainchild of visionary real-estate-development duo Tim Harrington and Deb Lennon, it's like a rustic summer camp wrapped in stress-melting layers of modern luxury. Private outdoor showers, two pools, complimentary beach cruiser bikes, and nightly bonfires — complete with s'mores — are but a few of the amenities that induce that home-away-from-home vacation feeling.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Enjoy an evening bonfire at Hidden Pond.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Relax poolside at Hidden Pond.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

One of the amenities at Hidden Pond is the complimentary beach cruisers.

We could have happily lolled the day away at Hidden Pond, lounging poolside or exploring the roads that twist through the resort, but before we knew it, Schuyler was at our door to shuttle us to lunch at the **Tides Beach Club**. Ranked **best seaside inn** by *Yankee Magazine* in 2012 and situated just a stone's skip from Goose Rocks Beach, TBC offers an array of fresh, local seafood that will delight any palate. With ocean breezes drifting through the open windows, Jim and I debated over what to order; we both craved the seared shrimp and Maine scallops, but ended up combining that entrée with the roasted lobster. A delectable start to our weekend of indulgence.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Goose Rocks Beach has some of the softest sand in Southern Maine.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Seared shrimp and Maine Scallops at The Tides Beach Club.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Roasted Maine lobster at The Tides Beach Club.

Once lunch was over, we were back in the shuttle being zipped down to the docks of Arundel Wharf to board the **schooner *Eleanor*** for a two-hour sail along Kennebunkport's craggy shoreline. Captain Rich and his crew pointed out local landmarks as *Eleanor* carried us toward the tip of Cape Porpoise for an oceanside view of Goat Island Light. Gliding past the mansions that dot Ocean Avenue, it's easy to envision this area as a rich man's playground, but the lobster buoys bobbing on the waves tell the story of the hardworking Mainers who make their living harvesting the sea.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Captain Rich shares a bit of local history as we glide along the waves aboard the Schooner *Eleanor*.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

The schooner *Eleanor*.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Boats bob on the waves in the Kennebunk River.

A big lunch and a two-hour tour of the coast could only be followed up by one thing: a nap on the daybed built for two on our bungalow's screened in porch. While others in our group took advantage of the many guest amenities offered at Hidden Pond, we dozed to a chorus of frogs calling to one another from across the pond.

With our stomachs rumbling once again, we prepared for dinner. Had it not been booked for a wedding reception, **Earth**, Hidden Pond's farm to table restaurant, would have topped our list for dining options. Next time we're in town, we'll be sure to make reservations.

You can't visit Maine without ordering a lobster dinner, and no trip to Cape Porpoise would be complete without stopping at **Nunan's Lobster Hut**. This family-run restaurant has earned myriad accolades for its no-frills, lobster-in-the-rough dinners. Before you go, brush up on your lobster-cracking technique by reading Terri Nunan's expert advice on **how to eat a lobster**.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Nunan's Lobster Hut has been a family-run business since the 1950s.

The Wayfarer Restaurant has long been a favorite breakfast joint with locals and visitors alike. The food is good, prices are reasonable, and this place may have the most personable wait staff in all of Kennebunkport. (Full disclosure: My niece Brie and her best friend, Bailey, are both working there this summer.) The Wayfarer is also open for lunch and dinner, but if you want to indulge in an evening cocktail, be sure to bring your own.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

The Wayfarer Restaurant is a favorite of locals and visitors alike.

With a few hours to spare, we decided to stroll from the center of Cape Porpoise along Pier Road to the town wharf. It's an enjoyable jaunt, filled with fishing boats nodding on their moorings or running aground on a mudflat, depending on the level of the tide; scores of hydrangea blossoms pushing against garden gates; and clapboard Capes bordered by impeccably maintained lawns.



Hydrangeas line the walkways along Pier Road.

Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch



Tides can change drastically.

Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

American pride along Pier Road.

The pier anchors Bickford Island, which connects to Cape Porpoise by a causeway. Those in the know head here to grab a bite to eat, dig for clams, or enjoy the scenic vista. There's a clear view of Goat Island Lighthouse, and plenty of benches on which to perch as you breathe in the scent of beach roses and gaze out at the sea.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Perch on a bench and enjoy a view of the Cape Porpoise Harbor.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

The Cape Porpoise Pier offers an optimal view of the harbor.



Goat Island Lighthouse

Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Of course, the ocean air is notorious for stimulating the appetite, so we headed to **The Ramp**, casual counterpart to Pier 77, to sate our hunger. Had we arrived earlier, we would have found seating inside, totally missing out on the al fresco dining experience. The patio, which overlooks the harbor, is outfitted with Adirondack chairs with arms wide enough to accommodate a bevy of plates, and that's where we chose to enjoy our lobster rolls.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

The Ramp Bar and Grill is the casual counterpart to Pier 77



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

The lobster rolls at the Ramp did not disappoint.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

The view from the patio at the Ramp Bar and Grill.

Our weekend in Cape Porpoise, Maine, wrapped up far too soon for our liking, but we left feeling relaxed and rejuvenated.



Photo/Art by Brenda Darroch

Brightly colored signs point the way to Cape Porpoise attractions.

6/28/14

<http://www.yankeemagazine.com/explore-new-england/cape-porpoise-maine>