

The Connecticut Bride

theconnecticutbride.com

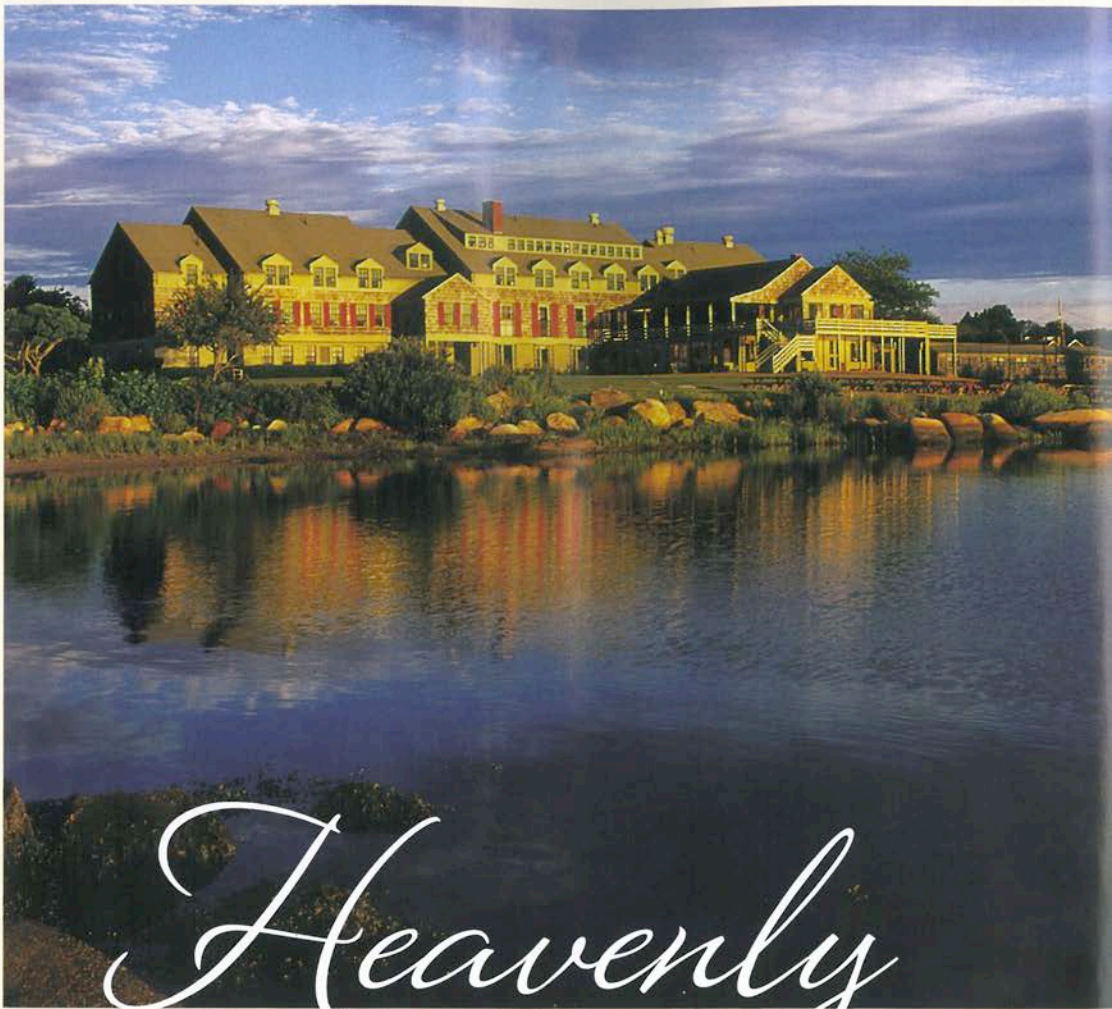
Oh la la!

Gorgeous gowns,
fantastic flowers &
cakes, receptions
to remember—
and much more

we've got the
inspiration
for your dream day!

SPRING/SUMMER 2013 \$4.95
DISPLAY UNTIL JUNE 30 2013





honeymoons

You don't necessarily have to travel far for the perfect honeymoon escape. In fact, in spring and summer, our own Northeast—city and shore—can seem like just the right places to go.



For many decades, Rhode Island's Weekapaug Inn has been a getaway of choice for knowledgeable honeymooners and vacationers. Now, after undergoing a stunning renovation, it's never been a more attractive (and romantic) destination.



For your first trip as husband and wife, why not explore some of the riches of your own back yard, right here in the Northeast? If you like the idea of honeymooning in a big-city hotel suite, there's New York or Philadelphia to consider, with their cultural riches of every kind. If you're more attracted to water, we'd recommend the charms of coastal Rhode Island or an island getaway to Nantucket.

Rhode Island Shore

You have your heart set on a honeymoon spot with old-fashioned charm, not too big and not too small, preferably on the water—and, oh yes, with wonderful food. Nothing seems quite right until you come across this description of “a select and first-class house, built in 1899, on the southern Rhode Island shore . . . situated directly upon that incomparable strip of beach, stretching from Point Judith to Watch Hill, which is fanned in summer by almost continuous southwestern breezes from the ocean . . . rooms are provided for chauffeurs . . . the inn is managed by its owner, who is always interested in providing a wholesome and dainty table. Seafood [is] fresh from the water . . . and the Weekapaug Inn Poultry Farm issues an abundance of absolutely fresh poultry and eggs.”

True, the description seems dated—you don't have a chauffeur (who does?), aren't quite sure what “a wholesome and dainty table” would consist of and suspect the poultry farm is no more. But still, you're intrigued, so you read on and discover . . . that the description is taken from a 1901 brochure for a quintessential New England seaside inn. And fortunately for you, the Weekapaug, located on one of Rhode Island's great barrier beaches, rebuilt after the hurricane of 1938 in a protected cove nearby and maintained by the heirs of original owners Frederick and Phebe Buffum until 2007, has been restored and then some by new owners Lang Wheeler and Chuck Royce.

Opened just last fall, the new Weekapaug, its original 77 smallish rooms pared down to 27 more spacious ones and four luxury suites, has left untouched the environment that inspired the Buffums and kept generations of guests returning year after year—a natural surround of salt pond, salt marsh and barrier beach whose peace and quiet is broken only by the sounds of the myriad birds that likewise flock here. You learn about them, as well as the glacier that carved out this spot and the flora and fauna that give it life, from resident naturalist Mark Bullinger. As much a part of the landscape as the creatures he delights in pointing out, he's happy to guide you on nature walks (binoculars are provided), kayak excursions or sails, or set you off to explore on your own, on foot or by bike (bikes are also provided). Once you've done all this, and swum and sunned by the pool and on the beach, you're free to take the complimentary shuttle over to the inn's sister property, the grand Ocean House in Watch Hill, whose beach, indoor pool, spa and more are yours to enjoy.

Or you can do what guests did back in 1901: stay put. “In those days,” says Wheeler, “people never left the grounds. They swam, sailed, took all their meals and explored the natural beauty around them.” The restoration has made staying put all the more appealing. Rooms are simply but tastefully furnished with original and contemporary pieces (think Stickle maple and warm wicker). The décor blends soothing earth tones and colorful accents, bed linens are luxurious Frette and windows open (yes, open) to sweeping views of the salt pond, Quonochontaug, aka Quonnie, that is the inn's back yard (watching the sun rise over the pond together is a

memory you'll cherish).

Dining, too, is all about the views thanks to the positioning of tables in the formal restaurant and brasserie-style Sea Room and on the grand wraparound porch. While the fare may not be "dainty" nowadays, it's far more interesting thanks to chef Jennifer Backman, who works with area suppliers to carry on the "absolutely fresh" tradition in updated shoreline classics; consider her local Matunuck oysters on the half shell, pan-roasted native fish and butter-poached Stonington lobster with seasonal vegetables, and an over-the-top "Chocolate Excursion" dessert—chocolate-coconut egg roll, dark chocolate pate and Mexican hot chocolate—just meant to be shared by two.

All this, rooms with a view and a barrier beach to call your own. Definitely worth a new brochure—and a honeymoon visit.

—Dale B. Salm

For more info, call (401) 322-0301 or visit weekapauginn.com.