

RESIDENT

SPENDING THE FALL WEEKEND IN WEEKAPAUG

By Monika Ploc

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What do millennials want for a weekend escape? Wellness adventures sought by young globe seekers, who like to plan on the fly. Sure, we love a deal on airfare, enjoy free breakfast and Wi-Fi perks, but when it comes to getting away, we crave customized experiences, worthy of #Insta moments. More than any other generation, millennials like myself, care about unique, personalized travel experiences.



To my surprise, a little gem in the hippie town of Westerly took notice. Situated on the southern end of the Rhode Island coastline, the Weekapaug Inn is a boutique 31-room seafront hotel, conveniently accessible via Amtrak from New York City's Penn Station. Call it the anti-Hamptons, but the commute *sans* traffic won me over. Not to mention, the hotel's house car chauffeuring me from Westerly's train station into New England's leaf-peeping galore. Total travel time from Manhattan? Approximately 3.5 hours, door-to-door.



With sweeping views of Quonochontaug Pond, the Atlantic Ocean and Weekapaug village through windows on three sides, my stay in the Osprey Suite, no joke, was so serene. Named after the fish eagle that almost exclusively feeds on fish in the pond, staying in the room felt like a scene out of Thoreau's Walden.



It's Saturday morning. My espresso is hot, and I immerse myself in curated coffee-table reads. From astronomer Edwin Hubble's star gazing discoveries, to a bit of Rizzoli and the occasional book on bass fishing, I balance it all, as my I-Phone goes off on social that the harbor seals were just spotted sun bathing in Quonnie.



In comes Mark Bullinger, the Inn's go-to naturalist, who scoots us across the pond in a 20-foot fishing boat to see the duo live, bobbing up and down with their lab-like faces. From turkey vultures to sea crabs and the occasional eel, I received quite the lesson in ichthyology from the former Executive Director of the Rhode Island Salt Pond Coalition. Talk about a lesson in the fishes and life sciences. Side note, be sure to ask Mark about the story behind the shingle house "Swept Away," – townie secret.



With binoculars in hand, and my AIX 'summer water' game strong, the weekend continued over 4-mile bike rides along the Weekapaug Inlet, meteor-shower star-gazing nights, oyster shucking, and so much more. The Weekapaug Inn reminded me that the occasional unplug from tech, in order to connect with nature, is a good thing.



All 31 guest rooms (27 rooms and four Signature Suites) are uniquely designed to bring out the history of Weekapaug Inn and the colonial appeal of New England. If walls could talk, seriously! Just ask Innkeeper Simon Piers Dewar to dive into the history behind the Buffum family's portraits in the open lobby.



From monogrammed pillows to Cape Cod inspired interior décor, the room themes are carefully crafted with history and tradition in mind. This is a Relais & Châteaux property after all, so luxury isn't completely left out: Frette bedding, Bose sound systems, a fireplace nook, bathrooms with heated marble floors and rainhead showers, are just a few of the amenities you'll enjoy in the guest rooms.



But my absolute favorite perk? Bring Fido with you! The perfectly manicured lawn offers light crudité and Adirondack chair-side service overlooking Quonochontaug Pond. Snack on S'mores with your pup over ruby red sunsets, just so #picoftheday.



Rates for the Weekapaug Inn start at \$435 per night for October and \$390 per night (weekdays) and \$435 (weekends) in November.