

Grilling Secrets
Tangy rubs, sauces,
and marinades

**10 Memorable
Golf Shots**
What you can learn from them

**Drive a Bentley
in the mountains**
**BIG, BOLD
BOURBONS**

HOT
SUMMER
GETAWAYS
HERE
AND ABROAD

PRIVATE Clubs

A C C E S S T H E L U X E L I F E

SUMMER 2013

The Pacific Northwest

Go now for new wineries and craft brewers,
upgraded golf, urban fun, outdoor adventures,
and a brilliant sunset or two (if you're lucky)



Rhode Island

Two lovingly restored inns

Casco Viejo

Panama City neighborhood
for you get-there-first folks

Toronto/Montreal

Upping their game and appeal

5 new Houston
restaurants
winning raves

Marrakech

Now even more enticing

Plus

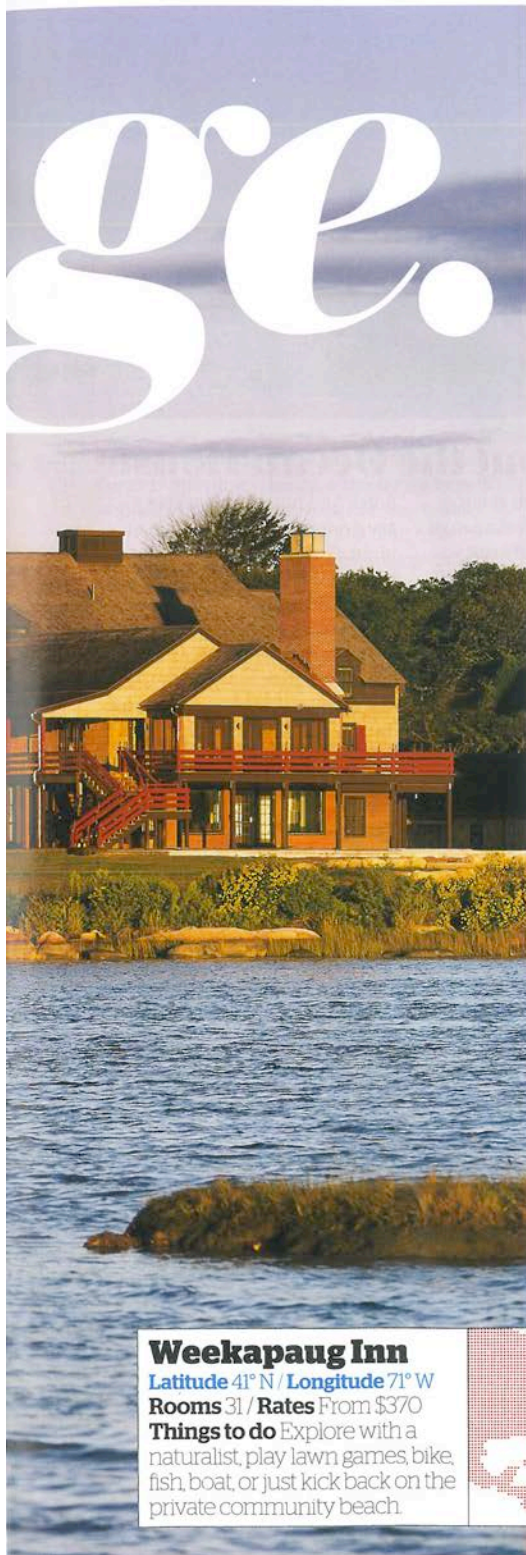
How to sail San Francisco Bay
before America's Cup teams do

Las Vegas' latest hot spots

Maru

Because You Can





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On the Waterfront

Beachy Keen

With a megadose of TLC, a seaside New England inn turns on the charm again

BY DON NICHOLS

INN SEASON:

At the renovated Weekapaug Inn (left), settle into a cozy pond-view room (bottom far left) and relax in the casual SeaRoom lounge (bottom left), an ideal spot for reading or playing board games.

WHAT CAN \$20 MILLION do for a historic coastal inn shuttered in 2007, a bit dated and worn? Check into the 31-room **Weekapaug Inn**, in

Weekapaug, R.I., on the Atlantic seaboard near the Connecticut border, and see for yourself. In 2009, two wealthy businessmen who own second homes along this tony coastline teamed up to lovingly restore the 114-year-old inn, painstakingly maintaining its original look while also making necessary updates. Since the duo reopened the Weekapaug last fall, their management team has been tweaking the operation and prepping for the reborn inn's first high season, the summer beach rush.

Proof this old favorite oozes charm again: Just three months after opening, it earned membership in the Relais & Châteaux collection of luxury hotels — a distinction properties typically aren't considered for until they're open at least a year. Its sister hotel also gives it plenty of credibility. Charles Royce, one of the inn's partners, led the \$140 million renovation of the 145-year-old Ocean House, another Relais & Châteaux member that reopened to good reviews just five miles down the coast in Watch Hill three years ago. After the grande dame was shut down in 2005, Royce bought it in 2004 and spent six years meticulously restoring it, as well. Most of the Weekapaug's management team, including general manager Antonia Korosec, came from the Ocean House.

Casual but chic best describes the transformed Weekapaug; Korosec calls its ambience "barefoot elegance." Without an ounce of pretense, the inn has everything you'd

Weekapaug Inn

Latitude 41° N / Longitude 71° W

Rooms 31 / Rates From \$370

Things to do Explore with a naturalist, play lawn games, bike, fish, boat, or just kick back on the private community beach.



Indulge./Travel/

expect in a Relais & Châteaux property, including a gourmet restaurant with an innovative chef dishing out interesting cuisine; a spacious great room perfect for lounging and reading a book or playing board games; and tastefully and cheerfully decorated guest rooms befitting a seaside locale.

And, oh yes, you have access to a private, 2-mile-long community beach just a short stroll away, as well as the inn's private bathhouse with food and beverage service, changing rooms, lockers, and showers.

The Weekapaug dates back to 1899, when Frederick and Phebe Buffum built the original inn on the beach, to play host to the affluent families who vacationed on this coastline for weeks at a time every summer. When the massive hurricane of 1938 destroyed it, the couple rebuilt it on land overlooking scenic Quonochontaug Pond and the ocean just beyond. The Buffum family continued to operate the property until its closure. Thank Royce's partner, Langdon Wheeler, for all the black-and-white archival photographs strewn throughout the inn that recount its storied history. Wheeler personally restored most of the photos, which you don't want to miss. You'll also enjoy perusing through the decades of guest-registration books that fill a bookcase in the lobby library.

High season from \$370, breakfast included. 888-813-7862; weekapauginn.com

3 must-do's at the inn ...

Get to know Mark Bullinger, the property's naturalist. The knowledgeable local leads guests on fun and informative activities such as barrier beach walks, clamming, and wildlife-viewing kayak excursions on the pond.

Sail the inn's restored 12-foot Beetle Cat on the pond, if you're an experienced sailor. Or opt for the Hobie Wave catamaran or a Sunfish. Not a sailor? Sign up for lessons or go out for a sail with one of the inn's experienced staffers.

Book one of the Fenway Suites if you want added privacy. They're located steps away from the main lodge on the top floor of a two-story building that also houses a fitness center and yoga studio. Besides privacy, you'll get a stellar view of the pond and ocean from large picture windows in your room and a spacious private terrace with a soaking tub.

PRIME VIEWS:

Take in the Ocean House's coastal beauty from the Seaside Terrace (right) or a deluxe guest room (far right).



More About the Ocean House

If you prefer your beach getaway a bit more regal, the Weekapaug's sister property will likely suit you more. Even though it has only 49 rooms and 23 private residences (the latter with kitchens and multiple bedrooms, and many available for rental), it delivers the type of elegance and service you expect from a much larger Four Seasons or Peninsula hotel. Not coincidentally, the resort's top executives bring extensive experience at such top-end luxury brands to this Rhode Island beauty — experience that shows in the details you'll notice (and like) throughout the property.

While the Weekapaug exudes casual chic, the Ocean House focuses more on chic, sans the casual. A "Welcome to the Ocean House" sign out front requests that no jeans, T-shirts, or bathing attire be worn in the

hotel, and notes that jackets are preferred for gentlemen at night. Given such a welcome, it's no surprise that the attractive rooms, restaurants (there's even a private club available to some guests), and public areas are more formal than at the Weekapaug. On some nights, a harpist entertains in the lobby followed by a pianist tickling the ivories on a grand piano.

Polished service complements the formal ambience. If you need anything in your room, simply dial up the butler assigned exclusively to your floor. The waitstaff takes note when you express a food preference in one of the several restaurants, and you probably won't have to ask for it again. Resort manager Edward Villafane recalls how one guest requested a particular brand of cereal for breakfast that

New Look for a Beantown Grande Dame, Too

Boston is only about 100 miles from the two Rhode Island inns, making it one of the easiest ways to access either property if you're flying into New England from other parts of the country. While in the Massachusetts capital, consider staying at another historic gem that completed a \$20 million-plus renovation of its own last summer to celebrate its 100th birthday: the **Fairmont Copley Plaza**.

The extensive project included the addition of a lobby lounge and rooftop health club, plus a redo of all 383 guest rooms and a reinvention of the property's iconic Oak Room restaurant, now called the Oak Long Bar + Kitchen. Since the debut of its new format last summer, the restaurant has become a huge hit, with both guests and locals filling its seats for dinner most every night. It's quite the happening scene worth catching. Bartenders whip up an expansive menu of handcrafted cocktails from behind an eye-catching 83-foot-long copper-topped bar, while chefs dish out farm-to-table-inspired American dishes, such as Lobster Pappardelle and Roasted Chicken. The restaurant also serves breakfast and lunch.

From \$299. 800-257-7544; fairmont.com/copleyplaza — D.N.



JEFF GOLDBERG (EXTERIOR)



the hotel didn't have. The guest got his cereal the next morning — because the server herself stopped at a grocery store on her way home from work the night before and bought it.

The formality doesn't translate into adults only; the Ocean House is family friendly. Residences in the rental pool provide ample room for those with kids; the restaurant outlets range from fine dining to simple beach fare served al fresco; and a summer children's program caters to ages 5-10. Not many kiddos complain about the private beach in the resort's backyard, either.

High season, from \$555. 888-552-2588; oceanhouseri.com

Make sure you ...

Pamper yourself in the resort's OH! Spa. The 12,000-square-foot facility serves up all the usual treatments — from body wraps and massages to facials and pedicures — you'd expect at a top spa, in an inviting setting. Be sure to spend time lounging in the peaceful relaxation room, where a curved bank of large picture windows provides entrancing panoramic ocean views. — D.N.

RICHARD MANDELKORN (FAIRMONT), JOHN H. HOWARD (CLINE)



Vegas Update

Hot New Tickets

Gaming and sunbathing rank among Sin City's prime lures, but these six fresh diversions surely warrant respites from the dice or pool

1 A Master Sommelier's Wine Classroom

On the third Wednesday of each month, at the **Bellagio's** Michael Mina restaurant, the resort's director of wine and master sommelier Jason Smith now leads this 90-minute class. During the taste-pleasing lesson, Smith and his team of experts pour eight wines for attendees to sample. 866-406-7117; bellagio.com



2 Hakkasan

Ultra high-end Chinese food, handcrafted cocktails, cool lounges, and a state-of-the-art dance club fill the five levels of this new hot spot at the **MGM Grand**. 702-891-3838; hakkasanlv.com

3 La Comida

Restaurateur Michael Morton draws inspiration from Mexico City's sophisticated cuisine for his latest venture downtown. Expect fresh ingredients, complex sauces, and a massive tequila selection. A gigantic, pink neon monkey keeps watch over the al fresco diners. 100 Sixth St.; 702-463-9900

4 Light

Cirque du Soleil performers moonlight alongside internationally acclaimed DJs at this new nightclub at the **Mandalay Bay**. 702-693-8300; thelightvegas.com

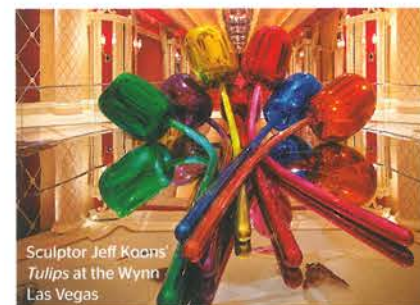
5 Michael Jackson ONE

Also at the **Mandalay Bay**, Cirque's newest production pays tribute to the chart-busting hits and memorable dance moves of a great entertainer. 877-632-7400; cirquedusoleil.com/mjone

6 Jeff Koons' Tulips

Famed art collector Steve Wynn shares his \$32.7 million acquisition at his **Wynn Las Vegas**. One critic describes the sculpture, rendered in stainless steel and transparent color coating, as "highbrow meets kitsch." See it near the entrance to the Wynn Theater. 888-320-7123; wynnlasvegas.com

— MICHAEL KAPLAN



Sculptor Jeff Koons' Tulips at the Wynn Las Vegas



Insider Tip

"Between Los Angeles and San Francisco, California's unspoiled Avila Beach is close to Central Coast wineries. For a comfortable patio steps away from the ocean, try Custom House restaurant."

— Patrick Cline, member, La Cima Club, Irving, Texas