

The Concierge

TIPS FOR TOURING HERE AND ABROAD

An island and culture proud of their display

By Ellen Albanese
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

We know, you go to Nantucket for beaches and bike trails. But the island has a serious side, too, reflected in a range of museums celebrating its history, culture, and notable residents.

WHALING MUSEUM

Whaling put Nantucket on the map, and this museum celebrates whalers, their ships, and their proud prey. A major new exhibition, “The Stove by a Whale: 20 Men, 3 Boats, 96 Days,” explores the sinking of the whaleship Essex by a whale in 1820 with interactive displays, historic artifacts, and props from the upcoming Warner Bros. film “In the Heart of the

craft has been passed down through the generations. 49 Union St., 508-228-1177, nantucketlightshipbasketmuseum.org, \$5 adults.

SHIPWRECK & LIFESAVING MUSEUM

The Shipwreck & Lifesaving Museum memorializes islanders who risked their lives to save mariners aboard the more than 700 ships that foundered on Nantucket’s treacherous shoals in the 19th century. This year a special exhibit, Heroes of the Sea, celebrates the 225th anniversary of the US Coast Guard, with photographs, historical documents, and artifacts. 158 Polpis Road, 508-228-1885, www.nantucketshipwreck.org, \$10 adults, \$7 seniors and students, \$5 ages 6-17, under 6 free.

MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

The Nantucket campus of the Museum of African American History is headquartered in the beautifully restored 1824 African Meeting House. Watch a 20-minute film, “Rock of Changes,” then take a walking tour of New Guinea, the island’s historically African-American district. Summer 2015 programs include jazz concerts, lectures, and a peek at the restoration of the 1774 Seneca Boston-Florence Higginbotham House next door. 29 York St., 508-228-9833, www.afroammuseum.org/nantucket_campus.htm, \$5 adults, \$3 seniors and ages 13-17, under 13 free.

MARIA MITCHELL ASSOCIATION LOOKS UP TO NATIVE DAUGHTER

Honoring Nantucket native Maria Mitchell, an astronomer who discovered a comet in 1847, the Maria Mitchell Association operates two observatories, a natural science museum, and an aquarium. It also preserves the scientist’s birthplace, which contains many of her personal items such as her Doland telescope. Star Gazing Nights are held three nights a week at the Loines Observatory. Multiple sites, 508-228-9198, www.mariamitchell.org; admission prices vary. Opens June 8.



VASSAR COLLEGE

Maria Mitchell (left) with student Mary Whitney at the Vassar College observatory around 1877.

Sea.” 13 Broad St., 508-228-1894, www.nha.org, \$20 adults, \$18 seniors and students, \$5 ages 6-17, under 6 free (includes access to other Nantucket Historical Association sites).

NANTUCKET LIGHTSHIP BASKET MUSEUM

Baskets crafted by whalers and sailors on offshore lightships launched another signature Nantucket industry. This museum preserves the island’s rich history of basket making and showcases a wide range of Nantucket lightship baskets, both historical and contemporary. This season’s special exhibit, GenNext, explores relationships between basket makers and how the



BRIAN SAGER

Summer-into-fall is the “season” for farm-to-table dinners at Bartlett’s Farm.

FARM-FRESH NANTUCKET

So it’s been for generations with Bartlett’s and its bounty

NANTUCKET — Seven generations into the farming business, the folks at Bartlett’s Farm have figured it all out: how to grow produce that tastes like summer, how to overstuff sandwiches that won’t fall apart on a bicycle ride, how to celebrate food and friendship in farm-to-table dinners under the stars. With 100 acres under cultivation, the island’s oldest family-owned farm also has a market, deli, and bakery and is just off the bike path to Cisco and Surfside beaches.

The farm is best known for its fresh tomatoes and corn, said marketing director Hilary Newell, and for the homemade salsas and gazpacho they turn into. The market sells artisanal cheeses and olive oils, nuts and seeds in bulk, and a good selection of gluten-free and dairy-free products. The kitchen turns out a mind-boggling assortment of sandwiches, soups, salads, and entrees, rivaled only by the pastries, cheesecakes, brownies, and other sweets that beckon from the bakery case. The clam chowder we enjoyed at a picnic table on the grounds was one of the best ver-

sions we’ve had: smooth, creamy, with a rich clam taste. As for the black-bottom bread pudding with gannache sauce — need we say more?

Farm-to-table dinners, served family style in the outdoor garden center in the summer and early fall, feature menus designed by executive chef Neil Patrick Hudson, formerly of Queequeg’s and Town on the island. The first of the year, on June 30, will star Bartlett Farm’s sugar snap peas, beans, and strawberries in various dishes, alongside pan-seared halibut. Hudson also produces a series of “meals in a minute,” partially cooked dishes that can be finished up quickly back at the beach house.

Bartlett’s also offers field and greenhouse tours and pick-your-own strawberries in season — all part of its effort to help customers gain a better understanding of where their food comes from, said Newell.

BARTLETT’S FARM 33 Bartlett Farm Road, Nantucket. 508-228-9403, www.bartlettsfarm.com

ELLEN ALBANESE

HERE

GO CAMEL TREKKING IN BOSTON

Climb onto a camel and go for a ride at Boston’s Franklin Park Zoo as part of the new Camel Trek exhibit that opened this month. Rides on dromedaries (the camels with one hump) take place daily through the summer, giving you a chance to get up close to and learn about these fascinating animals. Known as “ships of the desert,” camels have transported people and goods around northern Africa and southern Asia for thousands of years. Go for a ride Mon-Fri 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sat-Sun till 5. Tickets: \$8 per ride, \$10 for a photo. 617-541-5466, www.franklinparkzoo.org

A BENEFIT FOR BIKING NANTUCKET

Explore Nantucket on two wheels and raise money for a good cause during Bike Nantucket, a charity bike ride on June 13 that benefits access nantucket, a local nonprofit that provides health and wellness information and referrals.



Enjoy a 10-mile family-friendly ride from Mid Island to Sconset Village and back. Or choose from a 16-mile, 32-mile, or 50-mile scenic ride that takes you by Sconset Chapel, Sankaty Lighthouse, and the Wind-swept Cranberry Bog. Refuel with protein and granola bars, fruit, and water at support stations along the route. The event also features a children’s fun ride, a bike decorating contest, a barbecue, and a mini wellness expo. Registration: \$25 age 18 and older, under 18 \$15, includes T-shirt and barbecue; suggested fund-raising donation of \$200. 508-228-3955, www.bikenantucket.org

THERE

GET A BIRD’S-EYE VIEW ALL OVER MAUI

Soar above Maui, second-largest of the Hawaiian Islands, on a helicopter and enjoy stunning views of the island’s rain forest, volcanoes, waterfalls, and coastline. Las Vegas-based Maverick Helicopters has opened a new operation on Maui, and now offers several different tours with live narrated talks: Choose from the Maui



Dream, a full island excursion; Molokai Voyage, a multi-island expedition over Maui and neighboring Molokai; and Maui Spirit, an adventure highlighting Haleakala National Park and the Hana Rainforest. The state-of-the-art EC130 helicopters (pictured above) feature personal voice-activated headsets, individual seating for up to seven people, and wrap-around windows for unobstructed views. Prices: \$329-\$399 per person. 800-978-0266, www.flymaverick.com

TOUR TO SAMPLE

CALIFORNIA’S TOP HOPS

Check into San Diego’s West Inn & Suites and then take off in a private luxury car for a tasting tour of the finest beers (pictured at right) along historic State Route 78. The Hops Highway Retreat package features a four-hour guided tour that takes you to microbreweries along the “Hops Highway,” a 60-mile stretch of road between Oceanside and Julian that has a cluster of top microbreweries. Visit Stone Brewing, Lost Abbey, Mother Earth, and Ballast Point, where you can sample beer and learn the history and

highlights of each brewery location. The package includes a late checkout and a free collapsible cooler filled with hotel goodies. Rates for the package, available on Saturdays and Sundays, start at \$499 for two guests, including gratuity, and can be customized for up to eight people. 760-448-4500, www.westinmindsuites.com

EVERYWHERE

NO AVERAGE SELFIE STICK

Monopods and poles for shooting selfies abound, but Pure-Gear’s new selfie stick boasts a new shtick: It has Bluetooth capability so you can quickly snap photos once you’ve composed your shot. Just pair the Selfie Stick with your phone and you can shoot away by pushing the shutter-release button on the handle. The foldable stick has a



built-in rechargeable battery, fits any mobile device ranging from 2.1 inches and 3.3 inches wide, has a 270-degree tilting phone clip for taking panoramic shots and packs small for travel. It extends from 7.8 inches to 2.8 feet when it’s time to start shooting. \$29.99. 877-570-4327, www.pure-gear.com

GIVE A BIG HAND TO THE KICKMAT

Stomping in puddles, running through sticky sand, and exploring muddy trails are part of being a kid, but keep those active feet from mucking up your car seats with Prince Lionheart’s Backseat kickMAT. The simple, easy-to-clean mat straps to the back of the front seat, and protects seats from sand, mud, rain, snow, and anything else transported inside on little soles. The kickMAT is made of polyester, neoprene, and nylon, weighs just 2.64 pounds, and packs down small for travel. It also comes with two carabiners so kids can attach a toy or water bottle, and it’s available in black or tan. \$17. 805-922-2250, www.princelionheart.com

KARI BODNARCHUK