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Escaping the Crowds



Yannis Koleskis for The New York Times

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MONTAUK, N.Y.

WHY NOW Montauk prides itself on being the poor man's side of [the Hamptons](#), where bars cater to deep-sea fishermen, not deep-pocketed hedge-funders. But sandy-haired surfers are showing up in greater numbers, hotels have upped their thread counts, and the Jitney set has started to make inroads. To experience the old Montauk, visit before Memorial Day, when the secluded coves and sweeping dunes are calm, and the cool breezes off the Atlantic make the place feel more like Maine than [Long Island](#).

WHAT TO DO If it's too chilly to surf at Ditch Plains Beach, no worries: May is fast becoming festival season in Montauk. May 13 to 16 will be the premiere of the Montauk Music Festival ([themontaukmusicfestival.com](#)), with performances ranging from rock and rap to blues and jazz, and May 29 and 30 is the third annual Montauk Fine Arts Festival ([montaukartshow.com](#)). For bicycle enthusiasts, there's the Montauk Century bike ride on May 16 ([5bbc.org](#)) along the South Shore of Long Island to Montauk, with starting points in either Manhattan (for a 145-mile ride) or on Long Island (for a 100- or 65-mile trip).

DON'T MISS Tennis enthusiasts can take advantage of the pre-Memorial Day \$150 package offered by the Manhattan-based Gotham Tennis Academy (gothamtennis.com), which has just partnered with the yacht club. The deal, starting May 1, includes a private lesson and a group clinic, each an hour long, and all the court time you can squeeze into a day.