

# Finding the real deal in the Hamptons

# Newsday

## May 24, 2009

### WHY GO

Aside from the Montauk Point Lighthouse, visitors can board a fishing boat or go horseback riding on the beach at Theodore Roosevelt County Park. Also a surfing and surf-casting capital.

### SPLURGES

**The Montauk Yacht Club Resort & Marina**  
32 Star Island Rd., 631-668-3100  
montaukyachtclub.com

#### COST \$\$\$

Originally built as a private summer home, the 80-year-old property reopened in April after a multimillion-dollar redesign. Rooms now have 37-inch flat-screen TVs, iHome iPod clock radios, and goose-down pillows and duvet comforters on the beds. Guests enjoy scenic views of Lake Montauk. 107 rooms and 23 private villas.

### The Surf Lodge

183 Edgemere St., 631-668-3284  
thesurlodge.com

#### COST \$\$

On Fort Pond, laid-back luxe life in rooms with wireless Internet access, private sun-deck and water views, iPod docks, Frette cotton sheets. Live music and "surf cinema" keep the place hopping. The deck is party central, and the beach is a half mile away by flip-flop.

### DEALS

**Uihlein's Motel**  
444 W. Lake Dr., 631-668-3799  
uihleinsmarina.com

#### COST \$

No frills, but eight units only steps away from the old fishing town's restaurants and bars. Renovated last year, each room has a different color scheme (green, blue and mauve). Amenities include kitchen and flat-screen TVs. They even allow small pets.



A cozy kitchenette in vintage style awaits guests at Uihlein's Motel in Montauk.

**Sail Inn of Montauk**  
548 W. Lake Dr., 631-668-2800  
sailinnofmontauk.com

#### COST \$

A favorite with ocean-bound fishermen, Sail Inn's upstairs rooms offer a view of the dunes and the Montauk sunset. Rates are rock bottom, as low as \$65 weekdays in June, \$85 in July and \$95 in August. Ten units, plus bar, restaurant and Wi-Fi.

# splurges & steals

**T**he call of the Hamptons can be hard to resist during the summer season, which officially begins this weekend. The sizzle returns to trendy restaurants, high-energy nightspots and world-class beaches. Historic sites reopen, and museums and theaters roll out star-studded summer shows. No wonder visitors from "up Island" — what Hamptonsites call folks from western Suffolk and Nassau County — feel tempted to turn a day trip into an overnight stay.

If you decide to stay the night, you'll find accommodations ranging from deluxe to simple but clean — many of them spruced up with at least a fresh coat of paint and upgraded amenities since last season. A number of marquee properties, such as the Maidstone in East Hampton and the Montauk Yacht Club, have undergone a full-scale Hamptons makeover.

### WHAT'S AVAILABLE

Although Hamptons hotel rooms are famously expensive and booked way in advance of summer during fat years, the current lean economy means you may be in a better position to bargain away restrictions or slip into a room on short notice.

Jim Zaborski, president of East Hampton-based Dune Management Co., which manages eight resort properties, said that recessionary times mean tourists may find vacancies this season, even up to the last minute. Zaborski explained, "obviously, the choicest locations will probably be booked, but there are plenty of beautiful alternative spots that may be available."

### GETTING A DEAL

Bargain hunters should look beyond the beach and its premium oceanview rooms. Laraine Creegan, executive director of the



Montauk Chamber of Commerce, said lodgings nestled around Montauk Harbor, with its old-time fishing-village ambience, can be a relative bargain. Hampton Bays and Southampton Village also offer less costly, yet presentable, accommodations.

Many lodgings require minimum stays on weekends, especially during holidays. However, if there's soft demand for rooms, minimum stays, which require guests to buy two or more lodging nights, may also fall victim to the recession. "There is a lot more flexibility than there was in the past" regarding minimum stays, Zaborski said.

Says Creegan, "When it gets closer to the weekend, they knock the minimum stays off."

Looking for a room with a view? Or just a place to hang your beach bonnet? Here are select Hamptons lodgings where the rates range from splurge-worthy to real deals.



Outside The Living Room restaurant at East Hampton's The Maidstone Hotel, which new owners reopened recently.