

Captivated by the Cape

By Kara Murphy



Gaze upon Nantucket Sound's sparkling blue waters, and you may find yourself envisioning 35th U.S. President John F. Kennedy and his wife Jacqueline sailing here, either alone or with their family, more than 50 years ago. Hyannis Port (a small residential village in Barnstable, Massachusetts, on Cape Cod) is, after all, home of the sprawling waterfront Kennedy Compound, where JFK spent many summers during his youth as well as throughout his presidency. (His brother, Senator Ted Kennedy, lived here for the last 27 years of his life and was often spotted sailing aboard his boat, *The Maya*.)

The JFK Hyannis Museum, in nearby Hyannis, celebrates the area's presidential connection with photos depicting JFK's time on Cape Cod, while a memorial, about a mile to the south, also inspires reflection. As for getting a glimpse of the Kennedy Compound, you'll need to do it from a boat — one option is Hy-Line Cruises' one-hour Hyannis Harbor cruise, which departs from the inner harbor and travels close to the compound.

You can also achieve a (more distant) compound view from Hy-Line's service to Oak Bluffs, one of six towns on 100-square-mile Martha's Vineyard and definitely worth a visit, even if you only have a day to spare. In the island's northeast, the "down-island" town of Oak Bluffs is home to the circa-1876 Flying Horses Carousel, the oldest platform carousel in the U.S. Fancy yourself too mature for a carousel? Think again — given its ambiance and "grab the ring" game, it's more fun than you might expect.

For further island exploration, join a 2.5-hour island bus tour, which pauses at the spectacular Aquinnah Cliffs in the southwest, or hire a bike and pedal six miles south along a flat and easy bikeway to Edgartown. Choose the latter, and you'll have a chance to burn off your lobster ice cream (available at Ben and Bill's Chocolate Emporium in Oak Bluffs); enjoy views of Sengekontacket Pond and Joseph Sylvia State Beach, one of many Vineyard locations featured in the 1975 film *Jaws*; and quench your thirst at Bad Martha Farmer's Brewery in Edgartown,



where one offering is a cucumber and jalapeño lager called, ahem, Shark Bite.

Other possible day trips from Hyannis include Cape Cod National Seashore, which has self-guided walking trails and lighthouses, and Newport, Rhode Island (about 76 miles to the southwest), where you can tour several Gilded Age mansions. The most famous of these is The Breakers, an opulent, 70-room Italian Renaissance-style palazzo built by the Vanderbilt family in the 1890s. After your tour, walk east down Ruggles Ave and join the Cliff Walk, a 3.5-mile path that offers spectacular water and mansion views. [Ⓜ]



IF YOU GO

Bad Martha Farmer's Brewery
+1 508 939 4415
badmarthabeer.com

Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce
+1 508 362 3225
capecodchamber.org

Cape Cod National Seashore
+1 508 255 3421
nps.gov/caco

Discover Newport
+1 800 326 6030
discovernewport.org

Hy-Line Cruises
+1 800 492 8082
hylinecruises.com

John F. Kennedy Hyannis Museum
+1 508 790 3077
jfkhyannismuseum.org

Martha's Vineyard Chamber of Commerce
+1 508 693 0085
mvy.com

Newport Mansions
+1 401 847 1000
newportmansions.org

Clockwise from top: the coastal haven of Castle Hill Inn with panoramic views of the Atlantic and numerous sailboats floating nearby; The Breakers; Highland Light, in Cape Cod National Seashore; The JFK Hyannis Museum; Circuit Avenue in Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard

