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Seven Reasons To Take A Connecticut Vacation

By Cliff Calderwood

As a New England vacation travel writer I've always considered Connecticut an overlooked state

when people choose destinations and attractions for a New England vacation. As you'll discover here a Connecticut vacation offers excitement... or peace and quiet, depending on your mood.

Let's take a quick look at seven reasons why you should consider a Connecticut vacation for your next New England trip.

THE MUSEUMS OF CONNECTICUT

With more than 14 diverse theme museums in Connecticut, there's bound to be something to suit your taste. Here's a quick rundown...

Bridgeport is home to The Barnum Museum and Discovery Museum, and at Danbury you'll find the Military Museum of Southern New England and the Danbury Railway Museum. Keeping with a train theme Thomaston hosts the Railroad Museum of New England and Naugatuck Railroad.

In Bristol you can find The New England Carousel Museum and period time pieces at the American Clock and Watch Museum. Just a little south in Waterbury is Time Expo, and a chance to celebrate the heritage of the Litchfield region at the Mattatuck Museum. At the Connecticut Antique Machinery Museum in Kent experience machinery that once drove commerce in the area.

Windsor Locks is not just home to Bradley International Airport but also to the New England Air Museum and south in East Haven experience another form of transportation at the Shore Line Trolley Museum.

And rounding out our must-see list is Mystic's Museum of America and the Sea, and the fabulous Mashantucket Pequot Museum in nearby Mashantucket.

THE CONNECTICUT WINE TRAIL

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Wineries in Connecticut? Yes, in fact there's 16 of them scattered throughout the state, and they make a perfect basis for a Connecticut Vacation. The climate in Connecticut is mild compared to the rest of New England and wines produced include: Chardonnay, Cabernet, Merlot, and Riesling. While Connecticut wines have only been produced since 1978, many farms where the grapes are grown are hundreds of years old. The wine tasting room will usually be open but call ahead for a tour time. You'll find these wineries not geared for large bus loads, but on the plus much more intimate than wineries in Northern California.

The wine trail is split into two major regions and it's suggested your tour is split up over three to four days. But because the trail takes you near so many other destinations and attractions in Connecticut let yourself be distracted and enjoy the jaunt through scenic and historic New England towns.

FOXWOODS AND MOHEGAN SUN

Combined Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun make the largest casino complex in the world. Foxwoods is owned and run by Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, and Mohegan Sun by Mohegan Tribe on lands they own in Uncasville. These are sophisticated high-style experiences with shopping complexes, hotels, high profile entertainment acts, and top-rated restaurants. They are both close to each other and located in the eastern region of Connecticut, and close to museums, scenic drives, and the Connecticut vacation attractions in Mystic.

HISTORIC HOMES OF CONNECTICUT

Perhaps the most famous home to see on your Connecticut vacation is Mark Twain's in Hartford, which is now a museum as well full of many artifacts he accumulated in the 17 years he lived there. Also in Hartford is the home of Harriet Beecher Stowe – of Uncle Tom's Cabin fame. Another famous woman's home is the academy run by Prudence Crandall in Canterbury – it's the site of the first academy for black women in New England. Your trip to Connecticut should include the town of Litchfield where you can view museum quality preserved colonial homes, and the Litchfield History Museum and Tapping Reeve House and Law School.

Connecticut includes many historic homes that played an important role in the Underground Railroad and the African-American journey from slavery to freedom.

ESSEX STEAM TRAIN AND THE CONNECTICUT RIVER

The historic 1892 Essex station is your kick-off point for a unique vintage Steam Train and Riverboat Cruise along the Connecticut River. This combined tour takes 2 and 1/2 hours. In the summer it's cooling, and in the fall stunning with the turning of the leaves. The Connecticut River Museum is also in Essex and vividly brings to life the river's history as told through paintings, artifacts, and interactive exhibits.

THE TOWN OF MYSTIC

Mystic Seaport and the Mystic Aquarium are magnets for visitors to Connecticut. The seaport is billed

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as The Museum of America and the Sea and depicts an authentic 19th century seafaring village, tall ships to tour, and a Preservation Yard where master shipbuilding skills are still practiced. The Mystic Aquarium includes a delightful array of indoor and outdoor exhibits, including Beluga whales, and a stunning model of the Titanic.

THE ANTIQUE RUNS

Connecticut is famous for its concentration of antique shops, and draws thousands of treasure hunters each year who take a Connecticut vacation just to stock up on bargains and specimens to collect and decorate their homes. The village of Woodbury is known as the "Antiques Capital of Connecticut" and has over 45 dealers, but the fact is you're never too far from that special purchase no matter where you are in the state. Just sometimes its nice to take the time to follow your nose along a scenic New England road and see where it takes you... you can bet if it's in Connecticut, it'll take you close to an antique shop.

For more details on these and other Connecticut vacation attractions and to pick up your free travel reports go to Cliff Calderwood's New England Vacations site at:

<http://www.new-england-vacations-guide.com/>

Take a Vacation---You Deserve It.

By Mike Yeager

A vacation is just what the doctor ordered for many people. While there is nothing wrong with working hard, it's always fun to get away. Given the low cost of airline tickets these days, many people can go almost anywhere they want. From skiing in the mountains to sunbathing next to a pool, a vacation is a great time to relax and have some fun. Whether you have a day or a month off, make the most of it by doing something that you enjoy.

While many people like to spend their vacation in a warmer climate, others like to explore the great outdoors and go on hikes. No matter what your ideal vacation is, it will allow you to leave your troubles behind and embark on fun filled adventure.

Plan Your Vacation.

If you plan to fly somewhere for your vacation, book your airline tickets early. Also, try to make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. Doing so will reduce most last minute stress. It also helps to pack as lightly as possible. If you don't know exactly what you want to do on vacation, it might help to check with a travel agency.

Keep in mind that you don't have to travel far for your vacation. Many people take a vacation in their own town. Check out some of the tourist attractions in your own city that you might have forgotten about. If you pick the right vacation for you, you will be able to fully enjoy and look forward to a great time ahead.

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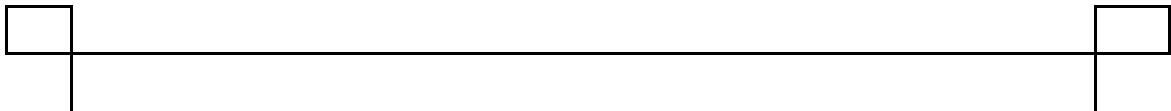
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