

# South Maine’s Kennebunks set to Launch!

ROCHELLE LASH

The Kennebunks in Southern Maine will kick off summer’s high season with a new event, the first Launch! A Maritime Festival, which will run for three days, June 17-19.

Cultural and culinary events will pop throughout Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Arundel, which will celebrate their rich sea-centric history, with activities focused around shipbuilding, lobstering and commercial fishing, industries that date to the 1600s and still are vital today.

The Maritime Festival will encompass sociable happenings for young and old, including buoy decorating, a kids’ playhouse and a Rock the Boat shipboard party for grown-ups (some fees apply).

The spectator highlight — and this one is free — will be an evening River Lights boat parade.

Visitors also can soak up local lore during walking tours narrated by costumed figures from the Kennebunkport Historical Society.

The fest weekend will go foodie with a Clam Jam at the Seafood Center of Maine in Arundel, a chef competition, a chowder cook-off, food trucks, a lobster bake at the Pilot House in Kennebunk and beer tastings at the Kennebunkport Brewing Company.

In keeping with the festival’s theme, restaurants around the Kennebunks will focus on seafood.

LODGING PACKAGES

Several hotels will offer nautically themed getaways to mark Launch!, including the 102-year-old Colony Hotel, which has dining, a pub and a majestic ocean-front setting.

Three historic Kennebunkport inns with exceptional features, antique decor and gourmet breakfasts are participating in Launch, including the Captain Lord Mansion, the 1802 House and Maine Stay Inn and Cottages.

The elegant Maine Stay is a luxurious property on a residential street with a range of rooms. Once a sea captain’s house, it has fireplaces, heated floors in some bathrooms, fine linens and whirlpool or soaking tubs. Maine Stay’s Launch! deal is 10 per cent off regular rates that start at about \$199 US in mid-June, although the rate might be lower prior to that. Kennebunkport’s classic vacation spot, the Nonantum Resort, has fine dining, a pub, poolside lunches, concierge service, and its own marina on the Kennebunk River, outside the door.

For Launch!, The Nonantum will offer a Seaside Romance Package, starting at \$301 US per night, which includes a sail on the Pineapple Ketch with a sampler of local cheeses on board. In addition, Captain Bob of Rugosa Lobster Tours will lead a lobster learning session, with a lobster roll lunch, at \$25 per person.

The recently renovated Port Inn on Route 1 in Kennebunk is a treasure



A shipboard party will be a highlight of the first Launch! A Maritime Festival, June 17-19, in The Kennebunks in Southern Maine. ROBERT DENNIS / KENNEBUNK-KENNEBUNKPORT-ARUNDEL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

sure of well-priced convenience and family appeal.

It’s near services and restaurants and it’s a stop for the colourful Shoreline Explorer Trolley from June 27 to Labour Day. Kids love the heated pool outdoors and the high-speed Wi-Fi in.

For Launch!, rates start at \$169 US with buffet breakfast and newspaper.

IF YOU GO

It’s about a 5.5-hour drive from Montreal to the Kennebunks in Maine (Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, Arundel). Tourism & Launch! Maritime Festival: 207-967-0857, gokennebunks.com or launchfestme.com. Launch! lodging affiliates:

Colony Hotel: 800-552-2363, colonymaine.com; Captain Lord Mansion: 207-967-3141, captainlord.com; 1802 House: 800-932-5632, 1802house.com; Maine Stay Inn & Cottages: 207-466-0791, mainestayinn.com; The Nonantum Resort: 888-205-1555, nonantumresort.com; Port Inn: Kennebunk: 207-985-6100, portinnkennebunk.com



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## Anguilla is for all budgets with plenty to do and see

Expect low-key, fantastic activities on an island that also caters to foodies



JIM BYERS  
Anguilla

Justin Bieber was spotted here over Christmas and there are some very chi-chi resorts, but Anguilla (ivisitanguilla.com) also offers low-key, fantastic activities that are easy on the wallet. Here’s a mix of things to do that can fit a variety of budgets.

**For the beach:** Anguilla has more glorious and crazy long stretches of sand than any place I’ve seen. The sand is mostly pure, glistening white and the beaches go on forever at Meads Bay, Rendezvous Bay and Shoal Bay. If you’re not staying the night on the island, you can take a short 20- or 30-minute ferry ride from St. Maarten and hire a driver to take you for the day.

**For foodies:** Be sure to check out any of the great roadside spots selling barbecue chicken, ribs or fish. I stopped at a low-key spot near South Hill and had a glorious rotisserie-style chicken leg with hot sauce for \$3.50. Also worth checking out is Smokey’s at the Cove for good ribs, Ocean Echo for a sensational squash and sweet potato soup with curry, nutmeg and coconut milk, or Scilly Cay for their barbecue lunch with spiny lobster, chicken and legendary rum punch. The sumptuous CuisinArt resort on the south side of the island has a great sushi-making class (it’s harder than it looks) and an Italian cooking class.

**For music lovers:** I’d only been on the island for an hour when I stumbled onto the Elodias Beach Bar on long, sweeping Shoal Bay East. A band called Took and Friends was playing a mix of everything from reggae and calypso to 1970s classics, including Knock Three Times by Tony Orlando and Dawn. The bar served a nice dish of ribs and

sides for about \$15. You can also find live music at Bankie Banx’s Dune Preserve, a ramshackle, charming spot on the beach at Rendezvous Bay.

**For history lovers:** Colville Petty is a tall, rail-thin gentleman who’s amassed a hugely impressive collection of material about Anguilla. It’s all on display at The Heritage Collection, a small museum that displays hundreds of shells (gleaming rooster-tail conch, Sally Lightfoot crabs and more), shell chisels from Arawak Indians and displays on the island’s turbulent political life. “I love history and I have a passion for it,” Petty says. There’s also a great quote displayed from a former politician who was fighting against Anguilla independence and advising his enemies that he would “put pepper in their soup.”

**For the art critic or shopper:** Savannah Gallery is a fantastic spot in The Valley run by Canadian Frank Costin where you’ll find colourful, reasonably priced Caribbean art, including funky metal works from Haiti. The Devonish Gallery sells everything from local art to colourful, oval bracelets and scarves the colour of Anguilla’s ocean waters. Across the road is the Driftwood Gallery, with driftwood carved into the shape of everything from humans to pigs.

**Budget or luxury stay:** On a budget? Shoal Bay Villas (sbvillas.ai) features nice units with fully equipped kitchens and a small pool on one of the island’s best beaches, Shoal Bay East. On the luxury side, CuisinArt (cuisinartresort.com) is located on the beach and has gorgeous landscaping, great food and a variety of units and villas.

**Deal of the week:** The seven Disney Springs Resort Area Hotels in Florida are offering Spring into the Magic Rates for stays through June 30, 2016, with rooms starting at just US\$69 per night. For more information and reservations, visit disneyspringshotels.com.

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