



Maine lobster, blueberries and ice cream: A prized catch

Looking for that magical late summer and early fall escape? Little more than an hour's drive from Boston's Logan Airport, the craggy coast of Maine has drawn artists, sailors and seafood lovers to its shores for decades. And the jewel along this rock-strewn coastline is the town of [Ogunquit](#). Once inhabited by Native Americans, its Abenaki Indian name means "beautiful place by the sea." Money Magazine agreed, naming the Ogunquit region as one of the top vacation spots in the country.

Before heading north, check out one of my favorite places to stay on the Maine coast: the historic [Cliff House Resort](#) where you'll find the dramatic setting, all-inclusive packages—and succulent lobster—that make for the quintessential Maine getaway. Set high atop Bald Head Cliff, the location offers guests a great perch from which to enjoy sunrise while sipping morning coffee on their own private balcony with its views of the sea, aquatic bird life and the passing sail and lobster boats. Your same balcony with its Adirondack chairs makes a perfect platform for an evening glass of wine while the sun sinks into the horizon, painting a rainbow palette on the wide ocean views. Choose from several all-inclusive packages or book a last-minute stay as your schedule permits. See listings for a few of the package offerings listed at the bottom of this article.

Top Local Activities:

Hands down favorite for most Ogunquit visitors is the magnificent Marginal Way, a wild rose-edged footpath that meanders along the cliffs above the coastline from Ogunquit Beach to Perkins Cove. Small beaches nestle between the rock outcroppings below the path, offering the opportunity to clamber down to the shore before continuing your stroll. Golf, sailing, sea kayaking, biking and whale watching round out the activity list. Photo ops abound. Last but not least, consider the coast your personal home-made ice cream chest. Every town sports at least one family run scoop shop and the rivalry for unique flavors makes braving for a taste almost mandatory.

The Ogunquit Playhouse: From May into October, the playhouse stages a series of award-winning productions. One of the premier summer stock theaters on the East coast, with its drama school for children augmenting its theater program, the playhouse draws patrons and students from around the country. Check the matinee and evening performance schedule at www.ogunquitplayhouse.org.

Ogunquit Beach: Laze away a sunny afternoon on this three-mile stretch of white sand beach, framed by grassy dunes. Or comb the length of the beach in search of a memorable souvenir, that special shell or small wave-washed piece of driftwood. Only an hour or so from Boston, Ogunquit's tranquil seaside seems a world apart from the city's bustle.



Perkins Cove: Dine dockside in one of the nautically themed fishing shack restaurants that line Perkins Cove's pedestrian walkway, where a breezy blend of local artists' studios and congenial cafes straddles the strand between sea and cove. Many of the boats in the sheltered cove are genuine working lobster and fishing vessels.

Cliff House Packages: These are some of the current specials at the Cliff House Resort & Spa; for availability, check the [website](#).

Like to try your hand at catching a lobster? **A Lobster Cruise Package** highlights a narrated cruise on the "Finest Kind" lobster boat,-an Ogunquit favorite since 1956. The cruise leaves from nearby Perkins Cove and hugs the coast while the captain hauls traps and offers an up-close look at his catch. The Maine accent is part of the fun.

The Spa Sampler Package with its three or four-night stay includes an ocean-front room, full breakfast each morning, lobster dinner and a spa credit of \$200-\$300 per person. The resort's spa treatments feature "state of the art" rejuvenating services including "Beyond Botox" facials, romantic couple's massages and slimming, exfoliating body treatments. The Spa area features a 75-foot indoor lap pool and outdoor vanishing edge pool, indoor and outdoor whirlpool and individual steam and sauna rooms.

Walking the Labyrinth: After a spa treatment, be sure and step outside for an unexpected treat. To walk a labyrinth to the sounds of the sea is to be doubly blessed. The Cliff House labyrinth's pattern is similar to that of the Cathedral at Chartres with the added benefit of sea breezes and ocean air.

The Cliff House Resort & Spa is one of the only resorts in the area where guests can bring their dogs along with them on vacation. A special section of the resort has been set aside to accommodate guests who would like to have their family pet stay at the resort.

Open seasonally mid-April through mid-November, the classic Cliff House Resort and Spa has been owned and operated for 140 years by five generations of women in the Weare family. Dining in the resort's cliff top restaurant offers stunning ocean views and multiple opportunities to imbibe the region's bounty of fresh baked, stuffed lobster, blueberries and farm fresh home-made ice cream.

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American Airlines and other major airlines fly non-stop from San Francisco Airport to Boston's Logan Airport or to nearby Portland, Maine.

