

Adventure Town: Mystic, Connecticut

Plan a long weekend getaway with our Mystic adventure guide, featuring great outdoor escapes, where to stay, and where to eat.



A pair paddle out from the historic Mystic Seaport for views of lighthouses and islands.

Photograph by Henry Georgi, Aurora Photos

Pop. 4,001

GPS: 41°21'N, 71°57'W

Though most know it and flock to it only because of Julia Roberts's 1988 flick, *Mystic Pizza*, locals will tell you that's not even the best pizza joint in town. Bike rides through historic Mystic along the stately colonials of River Road, known locally as Captains' Row, and visits to nearby Stonington wineries and classic cider mills will really make you feel like a New England swell. And for those

rare times you want your adventure handed to you, keep nearby Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Marine Exploration (maritime celeb Robert Ballard's home base) in mind (www.mysticaquarium.org).

PLAY

Get out on the water and drink in the views of lighthouses, islands, and seaside mansions in Long Island Sound while you haul in blues and bass. Fishing charters are available on the Black Hawk II about 30 minutes away in Niantic (\$53 for six hours; www.blackhawksportfishing.com), or just hire a private yacht straight out of Mystic. Cyclists can hit the Vineyard Loop, a 25-mile (40-kilometer) wrap-around with some hairy climbs that stops at two of the best wineries around (www.mystic.org). No bike? No problem. For \$20 a day, you can rent some wheels from Mystic Cycle Centre (www.mysticcyclecentre.com).

EAT

Logging time in any port may cause a serious craving for seafood. But no fear: S&P Oyster Co has got it covered. This Holmes Street spot is great for lunch and dinner; if you want a waterfront table, call ahead to get on the list (www.sp-oyster.com). **Pizzetta is the best place in town for a slice or more, with thin-crust pies you won't forget (www.pizzettamystic.com).** **And if you're lucky, maybe you'll catch the owner's pride and joy: a fire engine converted into a mobile pizza kitchen, complete with beer taps and onboard ovens.** Wrap up your eve at the Daniel Packer Inne for a pint and feel like a character straight out of *Moby Dick* (www.danielpacker.com).

SLEEP

The Whaler's Inn in downtown Mystic is a block from the Mystic River and has all the atmosphere and sea breezes you'd expect from a coastal enclave. The prices aren't bad to boot, topping out at \$199/night in peak season for a king size room (doubles from \$109; www.whalersinnmystic.com).

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