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Nantucket Restaurants 101: How to Navigate the Island's Dining Scene



Sandbar at the Jetties. Photo by Lindsay Battey, courtesy Indagare

Nantucket, a small island off the southern coast of Cape Cod in Massachusetts, is a summer destination for Indagare members. The cobblestoned streets lined with cedar-shingled buildings, buzzy restaurants and local boutiques make the perfect setting for a relaxing escape. Since the pandemic, Nantucket's popularity has only grown: "It's the busiest people have ever seen it," says Indagare's [Lindsay Battey](#), who has spent summers on Nantucket since 2014. To help you navigate the Nantucket food scene, we've gathered our favorites below.

Our team can help find availability at our favorite hotels on Nantucket. [Contact Indagare](#) or your Trip Designer to start planning an end-of-summer vacation on the island—this year and beyond, and match you with the accommodations, restaurants and experiences that are right for you and much more.

Nantucket Lunch Tip: No Reservations Needed

For lunch, Lindsay notes many places don't take reservations, if they're even open at all. "Sandwich culture is big around here," she says. The island's top spots are still [Something Natural](#), [Provisions](#) and Fresh. For more than sandwiches, 167 Raw's food truck on Hummock Pond Road offers excellent options if you're coming from or going to Cisco Beach—including fare such as ceviche, ahi poke, fish tacos and lobster rolls—and is a quick and easy way to grab lunch while avoiding town crowds. And The Green, a popular smoothie and juice bar, has added The Green Market, offering prepared meals alongside specialty groceries, coffee and flowers.

Dinner Hot Spots

While lunch is usually a grab-and-go enjoyed at the beach, dinnertime is where the reservations can be key. Spots like [Via Mare](#), which opened inside the Greydon House in the spring of 2019, and [Ventuno](#) are popular as ever, especially their outdoor seating areas. Likewise for Bar Yoshi, the bigger-and-better iteration of Sushi by Yoshi on Old South Wharf, which serves sushi, ceviche, oysters and poke.

One suggestion for getting tables during the peak season: make reservations as soon as you can—even staples such as [Millie's](#), which used to be fully first-come-first-serve, now accepts limited reservations for post-sunset seating. "As long as you're not a big group, it's relatively easy to get in on the earlier side, especially if you're open to bar seating," says Lindsay. And when all else fails—or even if it doesn't—"Sayles Seafood is a great place to order a pre-cooked lobster dinner," says Lindsay.

Nantucket's Best Restaurants on the Water

But the main question everyone wants to know, says Lindsay, is where to eat on the water. "[Galley Beach](#) is one of the few toes-in-the-sand spots, and is gorgeous for sunset," she says of the perennial favorite, an island institution since opening in 1958. [Sandbar at the Jetties](#) is a more casual option that's ideal for families. And if water views are the goal, but sandy feet aren't, the always-fashionable [Topper's](#) at the Wauwinet has outdoor dining by the lawn overlooking the bay (and the island's largest wine collection). The best options in town are [Straight Wharf](#), [Cru](#) and—for something more casual—[Slip 14](#), which has a great outdoor seating area overlooking the harbor's docks.

Where to Hear Live Music

And of course, nothing beats a Nantucket summer filled with live music. Lindsay's favorite places to enjoy good tunes in the summer air include Cisco Brewery during the

day, and Gaslight (the “fun younger sister” restaurant to [Nautilus](#)) and The Chicken Box come sundown. The latter opened a popular outdoor patio last year that is thankfully here to stay. “That’s definitely the most popular late-night bar,” she says of this authentic, “very Nantucket” spot.

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- Peter Schlesinger on June 20, 2022

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