



Surprising Stays

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW AYER

*Whether you are in town
visiting or live locally and
need a unique getaway,
check out these quirky
accommodations.*



Originally outfitted with a fixed red light, Borden Flats Light now boasts a Vega Rotating Beacon VRB-25, with a white flash every 2.5 seconds. When it's time for sleep, you turn off the lights from the first floor and find your way up to the bedroom with flashlights.



TO THE LIGHTHOUSE

Borden Flats Light sits perched in the Taunton River, not far at all from the bustling activity of Fall River. But once you arrive, you'll feel removed from everything. Sitting on the lower gallery in comfortable Adirondack chairs, you can while away the hours: reading, dozing off, snacking and waving to passing boaters.

Owner Nick Korstad bought the lighthouse in a government auction in 2010, sight unseen. He moved from Oregon to assess his purchase and quickly realized how much work it needed. He spent three years renovating it, with a painstaking attention to detail.

It practically sparkles. Korstad says he paints something inside or outside the lighthouse every single day the weather allows. Since he bought the lighthouse, he's gone through at least 200 gallons of paint and sometimes rises at 4 a.m. to paint outside in order to avoid the wind that is often the lighthouse's only companion. Window boxes boast cheerful and colorful petunias. When a heavy storm takes the flowers out, Korstad quickly plants new ones.

Once you arrive by launch and climb up the ladder to reach the lower gallery, Korstad gives a tour, a cozy 500 square feet of living space spanning four round floors. You sleep in the topmost

floor just under the light so you can easily sneak up and see the lights of Fall River when it's dark.

Korstad knows a lot about lighthouses and he knows everything about this one. As a kid, he always wanted to be a lighthouse keeper. Now, he is.

Staying overnight at the lighthouse is a more luxurious form of camping. Korstad supplies the linens and drinking water. You supply the food. There's a bathroom but no shower. When it's time for sleep, you turn off the lights from the first floor and find your way up to the bedroom with flashlights. It's a comfortable adventure.

After Korstad finishes the tour, he climbs back down into his boat and waves, "see you tomorrow!" For the next 18 hours, you're alone on an improbably small spit of concrete and iron in the middle of the Taunton River. It's glorious.

Overnights starting at \$299. For more information, go to www.bordenflats.com or call 503-809-9627. Best viewed from the Borden Light Marina, 1 Ferry Street, Fall River.

TRY A HAY-CATION



You could be in Ireland looking across at sheep grazing in green fields, a lazy river and stone walls in the background completing the perfect vista. Or you could be in Westport, ready to roll up your sleeves and learn what it takes to be a farmer.

Virginia Merlier owns Stonehaven Family Farm, which provides overnight visitors with a taste of farm life. After you settle into her comfortable home, you'll have time to explore the local beaches, shops and sights, but Merlier will remind you that afternoon chores are at 4:30. As you gather chicken eggs, herd the ducks, and make the animals ready for night, she'll tell you about the heritage breeds she raises here and chat with you about

The sheep at Stonehaven Family Farm are Horned Dorsets, originally from the south of England. All are raised naturally — no hormones or antibiotics — and depend on grazing for a major part of their diet.



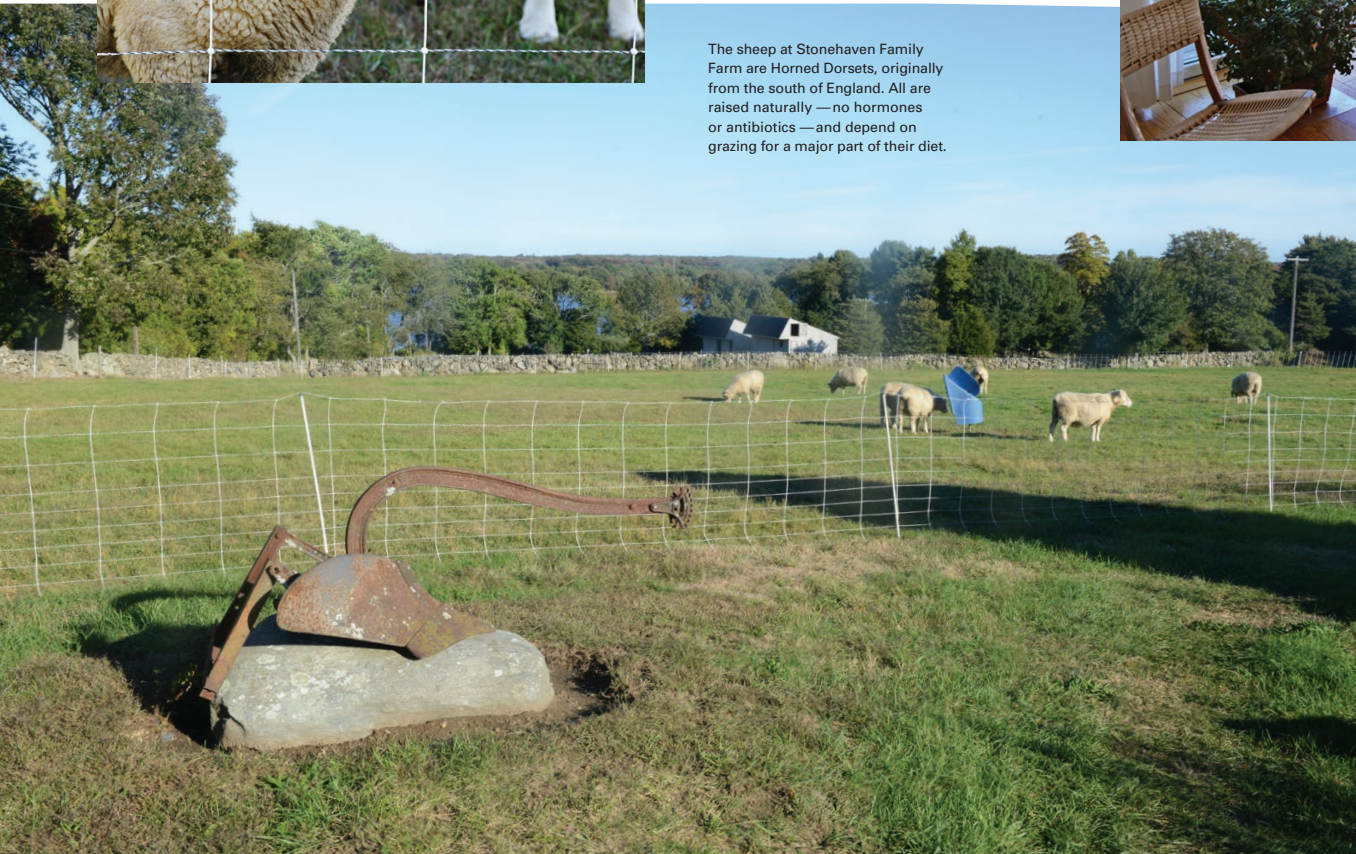
The rooms are light and airy and feature views of sheep grazing in green fields, a lazy river and old stone walls.



farming. In the morning, you'll enjoy the eggs you collected for breakfast before another round of chores. Fresh flowers from the garden will probably grace the table.

Farm stays are popular in Europe and are gaining popularity in the United States with people who are intrigued by farm life. In Westport, Merlier has hosted visitors from near and far, including many international visitors. Maybe you've always wanted to see where your food comes from. Maybe owning a farm has been a romantic dream of yours. Maybe you just like being surrounded by outdoor beauty and animals. Stonehaven Family Farm is the place to go.

For more information, go to www.stonehavenfamilyfarm.com or call 508-636-1361. Stonehaven Family Farm, 1506 Drift Road, Westport.





Thousands of children come to Big Mamie each year to enjoy an overnight stay in the nation's oldest maritime camping experience.

to participate in like Morse code, rope tying, Navy lingo bingo, storytelling and World War II-era cartoons.

Like real WWII sailors, you'll find yourself bunking in narrow cots stacked four cots high. You'll line up for dinner and breakfast chow-line style in the officer's mess. If the weather cooperates, you can bring your sleeping bags up and sleep under the big guns (and the stars). You can't beat it for a piece of living history.

Overnight stays start at \$55 per night and include dinner and breakfast, as well as two days' admission to Battleship Cove. For more information, go to www.battleshipcove.org/nautical-nights/ or call 508-678-1100. Battleship Cove, 5 Water Street, Fall River.



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UNDER THE GUNS

Docked in the Taunton River is the USS Massachusetts, a steady and impressive presence in Fall River for over 50 years. Christened by her wartime crew as Big Mamie, she was rescued from the scrap heap by them and by Massachusetts' citizens in 1964. At the time, thousands of Massachusetts schoolchildren helped by contributing their pennies to bring the World War II battleship home. It's appropriate then that today, thousands of children come to her each year to enjoy an overnight stay in the nation's oldest maritime camping experience.

Along with scout and school groups, the USS Massachusetts also provides overnight accommodations for families. It's clear the staff has as much fun with the overnights as the families. They lead in depth and knowledgeable tours of various parts of the ship. They answer any question you can think up. They provide additional activities for families



ALL THE PRESIDENT'S ROOMS

George Washington didn't sleep here. But Franklin Delano Roosevelt did.

The Delano Homestead was the family home of Sara Delano Roosevelt, the mother of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Young Franklin spent summers, as well as holidays, at this home. He continued to visit as an adult, even visiting with Eleanor when he was president.

After Sara Roosevelt died in 1941, the Federal/Greek Revival home was sold at auction. In 2001, Paul Beauchamp bought the grand home, decorated it with period furnishings and graciously opened the doors to guests. Old home fans will love the original details: a majestic rosewood banister that gracefully sweeps you upstairs, handmade keys to fit the original hardware on the doors, the arched fan



History buffs will appreciate all the historical pictures and books that owner Paul Beauchamp has collected.



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transom windows and gingerbread bracket mouldings. History buffs will appreciate all the historical pictures and books that Beauchamp has collected. Set on a quiet, lovely street that still retains hitching posts from the days of horses and carriages, the neighborhood looks much the same as it did a hundred years ago.

Overnight stays from \$140–\$170/night (depending on the season). For more information, go to www.delanohomestead.com or call 508-992-5552. Delano Homestead Bed & Breakfast, 39 Walnut Street, Fairhaven.



Even though one Westport couple lives just twelve miles away, a few times each summer, they pack up their RV and spend several nights at Horseneck Beach.



online as soon as they become available 6 months before the reservation date at exactly 9 a.m. No worries, though. There is more flexibility with the other sites, all of which are within a short walk of the beach.

For more information, go to www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/massparks/region-south/horseneck-beach-state-reservation.html or call 508-636-8817 (seasonal). Horseneck Beach State Reservation, 5 John Reed Road, Westport.

One has to be ready to book the beachfront spots online as soon as they become available 6 months before the reservation date at exactly 9 a.m.



LIFE'S A BEACH

There is nothing more luxurious than falling asleep to the sound of waves breaking onto the shore, then tripping over rocks as they recede. Waking up to it is pretty lovely too.

You could pay plenty of money for this. Or you could reserve a campsite at Horseneck Beach State Reservation on the shores of Buzzards Bay. The 100-site campground provides you with spectacular beachfront property at \$22/night. Not surprisingly, Forest and Parks Supervisor John Darcy says that many campers are repeat visitors, year after year.

John and Gracia Tripp are among the Horseneck faithful. The Westport residents live just twelve miles away but a few times each summer, they pack up their RV and spend several nights at Horseneck Beach. Darcy understands the draw. He came to work at the campground twelve years ago as a summer job in high school and he never left. "I've been here since I was 17," he says, "I understand the need to come back every summer."

Your insider tip: You need to know there is fierce competition for the sixteen sites directly on the waterfront. John Tripp says that getting a spot in the front row during the busiest months is "like hens' teeth" or rare. According to Tripp, you have to be ready to book the beachfront spots





LIZZIE. IN THE SITTING ROOM. WITH A HATCHET.

It's a real-life game of Clue when you visit Lizzie Borden Bed and Breakfast and listen to the well-informed tour guides show you around the house where Mr. and Mrs. Borden were found bludgeoned to death on a steamy August day in 1892. The guides provide you with the evidence; you form your own conclusions.

It's a popular spot. Several thousand people each year take the tour of the Borden home. Only a few hundred are brave enough to stay here overnight. Overnight visitors get a longer tour and the privilege of saying they spent the night at a home where one of the nation's most infamous murders took place. The very bravest stay in the John Morse room where Abby Borden was discovered in a pool of blood.

Make it through the night and you'll be rewarded with a breakfast that is much the



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same as the Borden's enjoyed on the day of their death (minus the mutton broth).

Suzanne Keefe and her sister Julie Wack took their daughters to the bed and breakfast one cold February night last year. After the tour, their guide told them she would see them in the morning. To Keefe's surprise, she said, "Oh, I don't stay here!" The only guests at the house that night, they settled in to the Borden sisters' rooms and lived to tell the tale. Their overnight was not without incident. In the middle of that winter night, the heat stopped working. Stay here if you dare.

Overnight rates are between \$200 and \$250, depending on the room. For more information, go to www.lizzie-borden.com or call 508-675-7333. Lizzie Borden Bed and Breakfast, 230 Second Street, Fall River. 🍷



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