

Title:

The Cape Cod National Seashore Treasure

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Summary:

Take a captivating trip through Massachusetts' Cape Cod National Seashore Park. With miles of splendid white sand beaches, inspiring walks and trails, and stunning fragile dunes, the park is a remarkable geological wonder thousands of years in the making. Just keep reading and you can visit it right here...

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Article Body:

Take a captivating trip through Massachusetts' Cape Cod National Seashore Park. With miles of splendid white sand beaches, inspiring walks and trails, and stunning fragile dunes, the park is a remarkable geological wonder thousands of years in the making. Just keep reading and you can visit it right here...

The Cape Cod National Seashore is a 4,308-acre park 60 miles south of Boston, Massachusetts. It was set aside by an act of congress in 1961 to preserve and protect a unique geological area and wild life habitat of New England. Cape Cod was formed when the last of the great glaciers melted about 12,000-years ago leaving a large lake, which eventually drained exposing the sediment and deposits left by the glaciers from earlier times.

Nature has reshaped the whole of Cape Cod especially the Atlantic-facing National Seashore area, and it continues to this very day. But this is the place to come to escape. This is the place to come to experience nature, especially off-season. So let's take a brief Cape Cod vacations trip together. Are you ready?

NAUSET BEACH

The first stop on your trip is Nauset Beach in the town of Orleans. This is a striking beach to walk and see the relentless work of nature. The Atlantic storms batter the dunes each winter and beach erosion is a major problem here. Protection is the name of the game at Nauset not just for the dunes, but the birds nesting in the spring. Always pay close attention to erosion and bird

nesting protection signs anywhere during your trip to Cape Cod.

The entrance to Nauset beach is located in East Orleans at the end of Beach Road, where there's a large parking lot. The lot is about 2 miles from Routes 6/6A, and during the summer months you'll pay to use it.

NATIONAL SEASHORE EASTHAM VISITORS CENTER

The National Seashore has two visitor centers. The Salt Pond Visitor Center in Eastham will orientate you to the park, and provides short films, a museum, and free maps for hiking and biking trails. The salt pond itself is a glacial kettle pond that was once freshwater but the ocean has seeped through. Take time to discover the easy-walking trails near the pond, and learn about the varied birds and plants the area supports.

THE LIGHTHOUSE BEACHES

These next two beaches are very popular and during the summer the parking lots fill up quickly. Many people use their bicycles to get to these locations - plenty of parking for bikes and the price is right - free!

Coast Guard Beach in Eastham can be reached by bike from the bike trail from the Salt Pond Visitor Center, or by car from Nauset Road off Route 6 directly after the Visitor Center. This beach is a favorite walk of mine at low tide, and was the area where Henry Beston wrote "The Outermost House." Sadly the blizzard of 1978 washed the cottage where he lived while writing the book - out to sea.

Nauset Light Beach can be reached from Brackett Road also off Route 6. Overlooking the beach is the red and white picturesque Nauset Lighthouse. Originally built in Chatham in the late 19th century, it was moved here shortly after, and moved again in 1996 when erosion of the cliff threatened to collapse the lighthouse. This beach is popular for the imposing and towering cliffs.

GREAT ISLAND HIKE IN WELLFLEET

The Great Island hike in Wellfleet is a 6-mile hike, so allow yourself at least half-a-day to explore this wonderful area. Located on the Cape Cod Bay side of the Cape in Wellfleet, drive to the trailhead off Chequesset Neck Road, and prepare yourself -and camera - for an exhilarating hike.

This is a real nature hike. There's no sandwich bar or coke machine waiting for you at the end, so take your own snacks and drinks. Of all the trails in the Cape Cod National Seashore Park, this is perhaps the most remote - and I like

that!

NATIONAL SEASHORE PROVINCE LANDS VISITOR CENTER

The second of the visitor centers in the National Seashore Park is in Province Lands off Route 6 and on Race Point Road. This is the northern extremity of the park, and is the final stop on our brief Cape Cod National Seashore tour.

The Visitor Center has an observation deck where you can view the ocean, Province Lands forest, and the towering dunes. Province Lands is jam-packed with swimming beaches, a bike trail, a walking trail, and a beautiful lighthouse at Race Point. Take time to tour this area and enjoy this unique area of the Cape.

Cape Cod National Seashore is one of the most popular summer vacation destinations in New England. But in my book it's a great place to visit anytime of the year. If you're prepared to explore and walk a bit you can discover your own secluded and pristine piece of Cape Cod.