

36 Hours Woods Hole



FROM LEFT The sun sets behind the iconic Landfall; pedestrians and peddlers stopped by the raised drawbridge; boats settle in at dusk on Eel Pond.

The tiny village of Woods Hole, for centuries an important whaling, fishing, and shipping center, is often thought of as a mere passing point between mainland Massachusetts and the elite summer haven of Martha's Vineyard. (As a TV newsreporter once mentioned in her live shot from Woods Hole — it's a "lovely fishing village off the coast of Martha's Vineyard.") It may only claim a year-round residence of 966, but to experience the bustling summer scene that drifts easily through the temperate fall, one would never know it. Patrons of the several world-renowned scientific institutions that exist here mix easily with laid-back local fisherman fresh off their boats in what is easily one of the most unique spots on the Cape.

Friday

7 p.m.

① **Start With a Dip**
Toes in the water, a crisp fall weekend doesn't start much better than a seat on the dock behind the Landfall. A venerable Woods Hole institution, the Landfall Restaurant (2 Luscombe Avenue; 508-548-1758; woodshole.com/landfall) serves up unrivaled harbor views, along with classic Cape Cod (read: seafood in endless incarnations) fare. Having weathered

hurricanes and shipwrecks in its 60+ years, when you're lured to the dance floor after dinner by whichever of the rocking local cover bands is performing that night, you'll question whether the sway you feel is from the lapping ocean or one too many fresh-squeezed drinks. Entrees range from \$9 to \$38.

Saturday

11 a.m.

② **Seasoned With Views**
Post-jog around Eel Pond or simple stroll through town, if the hand-chalked sign outside of the Fishmonger (56 Water Street; 508-540-5376) announcing their tempting daily brunch specials doesn't sufficiently entice, the water views from the wall of windows in the back should.

1 p.m.

③ **Under the Sea**
The Woods Hole Science Aquarium (166 Water Street; 508-495-2001; aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov) is the oldest marine aquarium in the country, and since it's run by the federal government, you've already paid for it — admission is free. This small gem houses over 140 species of marine animals, touch tanks with local marine life, and even seals, which are fed in public twice daily from an outdoor tank (at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.). Open 11

a.m. to 4 p.m. Don't miss the rare blue lobster.

4 p.m.

④ **Shop Local**
Fellas, take your girlfriends or wives (not at the same time) to Liberty House (89 Water Street; 508-548-7568) for hand screened cotton t-shirts that won't break the bank. The co-op gallery Handworks (68 Water Street, 508-540-5291, woodsholehandworks.com) has an excellent collection of handcrafted items. But if you don't happen to like the pottery, scarves, woodcuts, or jewelry, keep it to yourself, because this gallery is run by the (over 15) artists themselves. Under the Sun (22 Water Street; 508-540-3603; underthesunwoodshole.com) gallery and fine gift shop also showcases an eclectic mix of local artists. With their locally crafted pottery, jewelry, leather, glass, and original watercolor prints, along with Birkenstock, Dansko, Reef, Chaco, Ariat, and Teva shoes and sandals, the kids will be sure to find a souvenir and dad can get some comfy walking shoes before heading out for a walk on Quissett Harbor's famous "knob." Rope swings can be found along this mile-long trail (qhpt.org) so be sure to bring the kids (or at the very least the kid inside of you).

7 p.m.

⑤ **Quirky Lobstah Fix**
Cape Cod meets Baja, California at Quicks Hole (6 Luscombe Avenue; 508-495-0792; quicksholewickedfresh.com). The motto of this bite-sized order-at-the-counter restaurant with a great adjoining deck is "wicked fresh, wicked local," but should also include "wicked delicious." Salsa lovers can rejoice over the free salsa bar, and housemade sangria compliments local beers on tap. The typical crowd ranges from local fishermen and visiting scientists to bigwigs headed to the Vineyard — their website features Vineyard-loving celebs like Steve Carell and Lori David posing for a picture in front of their 5-foot fiberglass lobster statue. The lobster tacos are a must-try.

10 p.m.

⑥ **Ay Ay, Captain**
Grab a growler of Cape Cod hefeweizen beer at this old-school pirate bar. The noisy, mostly local crowd at The Captain Kidd (77 Water Street, 508-548-8563, thecaptainkidd.com) isn't the scene for a peaceful glass of pinot, but the people you'll meet and the waterfront location both make for a good time. The Hell's Angels left this place 20 years ago, but it's still got a cool castaway vibe.

Sunday

8:30 a.m.

⑦ **Baked in the Hole**
Snag a popover and a large coffee to start your day off right at Pie in the Sky (10 Water Street; 508-540-5475; woodshole.com/pie), a bakery and café with a huge assortment of pies, cookies, bread, croissants, and more, all baked from scratch daily. With coffee brewed from freshly ground organic beans and made to order sandwiches, it's no surprise that this little bakery (an institution in Woods Hole since 1982) is busy year-round. They're open 7 days a week from 5 a.m. - 9 p.m., 364 days a year (you're out of luck on Christmas). Still hungry? Don't miss the bread pudding.

10 a.m.

⑧ **From Shining Sea**
Named for a line in "America The Beautiful" (its author, Katherine Lee Bates, was a local resident), the Shining Sea Bikeway (woodshole.com/bikewaymap.pdf) is a paved, 10.6-mile path that follows the coast up to North Falmouth and grants unparalleled views of Vineyard Sound and Buzzards Bay. Bring the kids to this family-friendly path where the only potential congestion comes from fellow joggers and bikers.