

OFF THE BEATEN PATH: LOCAL FAVORITES

BY TERRY WEBER MANGOS

AMONG THE MANY UNIQUE experiences that Cape Ann has to offer, this sampling of local favorites gives an insider's view into the region's food, culture and natural resources. Eat, relax or even learn a new skill like a Cape Ann native.

A TASTE OF HISTORY

Cape Ann Foodie Tours

Gloucester

(617) 902-8291

capeannfoodietours.com

Embark on a walking culinary tour that satisfies your hunger for tasty treats and local lore. Ask about the Taste of Gloucester Tour, Ales and Tales Pub Tour, or the fabulous new Land and Sea Lobster Tour. Clothing with expandable waistlines recommended—yet at least you'll be walking!

WINTER CHEER

Lobster Trap Tree

167 Main Street,

Gloucester

(978) 283-3888

arthaven.org

New England's best nautical-themed holiday tree is entirely

constructed from lobster traps and decorated by local students. The Tree Lighting party in early December regales visitors and locals alike with caroling, children's art activities and holiday treats. Make the tree a part of your downtown stroll for hot chocolate or a cozy dinner through early January.

UNDER THE STARS

Cape Ann Camp Site

80 Atlantic Street, Gloucester

(978) 283-8683

capeanncampsite.com

Family owned and operated, this camp

features 200 RV and tent sites with hook-ups available. Close to Wingaersheek Beach, most sites are shaded and offer views of the tidal estuary. You can stay in touch with the world via Wi-Fi, but why would you want to? Mid-May to mid-October.

LAUNCH AN ADVENTURE

Thacher Island

Located a mile off Rockport's shore.

Launch (boat) reservations: (617) 599-2590

Camping/mooring reservations:

(508) 284-0144

thacherisland.org

Just offshore yet a world away, this rocky island offers two lighthouses and opportunities for hiking, bird watching and camping. Arrive in your own kayak/boat or arrange for the island's launch to take you. Beginning in mid-May, reservations are accepted for the mid-June to September 1 season excursions.

A HIDDEN HIKE

Coolidge

Reservation

Summer Street

(Rt. 127)

Manchester-

by-the-Sea

(978) 526-8687

thetrustees.org

This hidden gem features groomed walking trails opening into the expansive Ocean Lawn. There you'll enjoy sweeping views of the Atlantic as you picnic or soak up the sun. Connecting trails lead past a scenic pond, wetlands and a meandering stream. Cross-country skiing is permitted in winter. Open year round.

► For more area hikes, see page 34.

PADDLE AWAY

Cape Ann SUP

2 Southern Avenue, Essex

(978) 233-1787

capeannsup.com

Stand up paddling looks like so much fun, right? Call Cape Ann SUP and learn to paddle in just one day on the calm waters of the Great Salt Marsh in Essex. Advanced and ocean paddling experiences are also available.



Charlene Delaney



coastal-exposure.com



Michelle Budrow