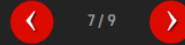


## Behind the Hamptons Hedges

The Hamptons were once an idyllic enclave where Manhattanites decamped to escape the bustle of city life. But in recent summers, the sleepy community on the Atlantic Ocean has become infested with pop-up shops, bass-thumping nightclubs, and publicity parties. If you look for it, though, the romantic charm of Long Island's South Fork *does* still exist. We asked eight young people who do the East End right to show us around their Hamptons habitats.

Written and produced by Jessica Flint • Photographs by Alix Smith



### THE SURFER

#### *Rob McKinley*

Montauk, the tiny hamlet at the end of the Long Island Rail Road line, was the sleepest of all the Hamptons communities—until 2008, when a couple of big-city nightclub guys opened the Surf Lodge. The hotel, bar, and restaurant, situated near the fabled surfers' beach Ditch Plains, was an immediate hit with the party crowd and, perhaps inevitably, a bust with the locals, who feared an onslaught of trendy imitators. Even the Surf Lodge's critics, however, express respect for its co-founder Rob McKinley, a true Hamptons surfer dude who has been trekking to the East End for decades. "I first went to Montauk in the summer as a kid at eight years old," says McKinley, who dates TV producer Summer Strauch. "I started summering in East Hampton in the early 90s and have had a home in Amagansett for the past six years." McKinley says he appreciates the natural beauty of the Hamptons and the mix of characters that the area attracts, but the ocean at Montauk is what really keeps him coming back.

*Rob McKinley on a beach in Montauk that is not Ditch Plains. Let's just keep it at that.*