

Mount Desert Island, Maine

1 UP WITH THE SUN >

Every day the sun's first rays touch the nation at the summit of Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park, which takes up much of Mount

Desert Island. The 1,530-foot peak, the highest point on the eastern seaboard, is a mecca for sunrise enthusiasts, who congregate as early as 4 A.M. for the spectacle. Bring hot coffee and a blanket, find an east-facing niche on the stark granite slopes, and settle in to watch the predawn light slowly creep down over the forested landscape and onto a string of islands in a glimmering sea.



Ben R. Frakes

2 MILLION-DOLLAR STROLL

The town of Bar Harbor once went by the name of Eden, and it was truly a paradise for the turn-of-the-century aristocrats who summured on Mount Desert. Steamboats

ferried du Ponts, Vanderbilts, and Drexels from the mainland to their elegant, mansion-size "cottages." But after a 1947 inferno destroyed many lavish homes, the town languished. You can get a glimpse of the glamour days with a stroll along the Shore Path, a ¾-mile gravel walkway that follows the curve of Frenchman Bay, past surviving

Tudor-style mansions and their manicured gardens. At the pier, turn inland to reach the town's boutiques and galleries. Or, for a longer walk, head to the end of Bridge Street at low tide and

slosh across the sandbar to Bar Island, where meadows and a fir forest await.

3 HORSING AROUND

Industrialist John D. Rockefeller Jr. may have owned Standard Oil, but when he retreated to his sprawling summer estate here, he wanted to leave automobile exhaust fumes behind. In the early 1900s he ordered the construction of a 57-mile network of gravel roads – for the exclusive use of horse-drawn carriages. Now part of Acadia National Park, these "carriage paths" wind beside tranquil ponds and over picturesque granite bridges, past pines, cedars,

and maples, attracting bicyclists in summer and cross-country skiers in winter. Enjoy the millionaire's largesse with a horse-drawn carriage tour from Wildwood Stables. For a cost of \$16.50 per person, you can take a two-hour ride to Day Mountain to watch the sunset or to the Jordan Pond House for tea and popovers.

4 BLUEBERRY FIELDS FOREVER

In August and September the island's "barrens" are laden with wild blueberries. To fill a basket, try the bushes along the park's trails, including those radiating from the summit of Cadillac Mountain. Too pooped to pick? Then stop at the Sunday Farmer's Market on Main Street for a pint of blueberries and other local specialties, like strawberries, raspberries, and maple syrup.

5 EDIBLE EXOTICS

Restaurateur Michael Boland named his Main Street bar and grill Rupununi, after a river in Guyana. The exotic name complements his creative menu, which includes ostrich, buffalo burgers, and wild mushroom risotto. (For less adventurous eaters, there's also that Down East mainstay – lobster, served any way you want it.) Upstairs, the Carmen Verandah bar overlooks the Village Green, where the town band performs on Monday and Thursday

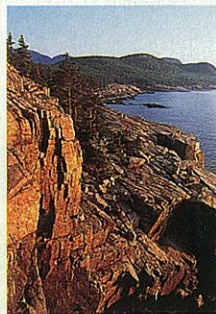
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evenings in summer. For more rowdy tunes, wait for nightfall, when blues, rock, or jazz bands energize Carmen's. Finish off the evening with a smoke at Boland's upscale cigar bar, also on the premises.

6 HERE, KITTY, KITTY

There is nothing meek about *The Cat*, the sleek, black, high-speed catamaran that whisks travelers across the Bay of Fundy to Nova Scotia. What was once a six-hour-long journey now takes a mere 2 hours and 45 minutes aboard the 300-foot-long motorized vessel, which even has a gambling casino. A day trip to the Canadian fishing port of Yarmouth allows for five hours on shore to see the town's lighthouses and white-sand beaches.



Ben R. Frakes

7 THAR SHE BLOWS

Each summer a teeming smorgasbord of herring and krill lures pods of whales into the Gulf of Maine, where they breach, "spyhop," and "lobtail." Humpback whales are the most acrobatic – sometimes launching their gargantuan bodies completely out of the water – but fin whales, the second-largest animal on earth, and the more diminutive minkes also give astounding performances. The gulf's

skies are the domain of shearwaters, which skim the ocean surface for food, and northern gannets, known for spectacular dives. Getting a close look at the behemoths and birds requires taking a blustery 25-mile boat ride out of Bar Harbor. For the weak of stomach, the *Friendship V* catamaran promises the smoothest ride.

< 8 ROCK ON

Granite cliffs loom throughout Acadia National Park, beckoning those who love heights. Several local climbing schools offer instruction in rock climbing, from basic techniques and rope skills to scaling and rappelling. When you're ready for a challenge, grab your ropes and pitons and head for the top of Otter Cliffs, a 110-foot-high oceanfront wall within the park. The reward? A mesmerizing view of the coast and the rolling Atlantic Ocean. Beyond lies Europe.

9 SWEET SOMETHINGS >

Tempting treats abound in Bar Harbor, but Ben and Bill's Chocolate Emporium on Main Street makes oversize indulgence irresistible. Of

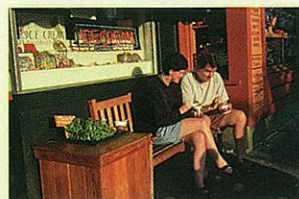
course, there's homemade fudge, but also peanut and macadamia nut brittles, truffles weighing in at a fifth of a pound, two-foot-long gummy snakes, and chocolate-covered everything, including not-to-be-missed chocolate-covered blueberries in season. Want more temptation? Try a waffle cone with a couple of the 64 ice cream flavors – from lobster (with real lobster chunks) to "moose droppings," a chocolate mousse taste-alike with malt balls.

10 WINDOWS INTO HEAVEN

Maine's largest collection of Tiffany stained-glass windows shines at St. Saviour's Episcopal church, built in 1878 in Bar Harbor. A noted New York surgeon donated the first colorful installation – a three-panel depiction of the resurrected Christ placed above the original altar – in 1886. Since then, members of the congregation have added additional awe-inspiring Tiffany windows and others crafted as far away as England and France. The Victorian stone church offers tours

during summer, but the building is open year-round. Next door, cemetery buffs can wander the old graveyard, where the maze of tombstones memorializes the town's distinguished founders and their families.

Claudia Armann



Judy Grieselbeck/Corbis