

---

## American Heritage

# TRAVEL

---

Many chapters have been written, and are waiting to be written, in the ongoing story of America and her many and diverse peoples. Among the most interesting are those that stretch from the Indian trails used by both natives and our early Colonists to the expansive ribbons of concrete and asphalt that connect every American community today. These modern “trails” extend upward into air routes that have reduced to mere hours what, at one time, would have been a journey of months or even years (it took the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804 - 1806 around two years, four months, and 10 days to complete their journey from “Camp Dubois” in Illinois to the Pacific Ocean and then return to St Louis, Missouri).

Today, it doesn't require a team of oxen, prairie schooner, and what must have seemed a lifetime to see the wonders of our wonderful Western Regions, the notable Northeast, exceptional South, or magnificent Midwest. From “sea to shining sea,” your citizenship is your passport to the many wonders of America, and this section of our “New Colonies Almanack” will feature American destinations that are historical, recreational, educational, and just plain fun!

Let's “Hitch up the Horses” and start our adventure where our history, as a country, first began.



---

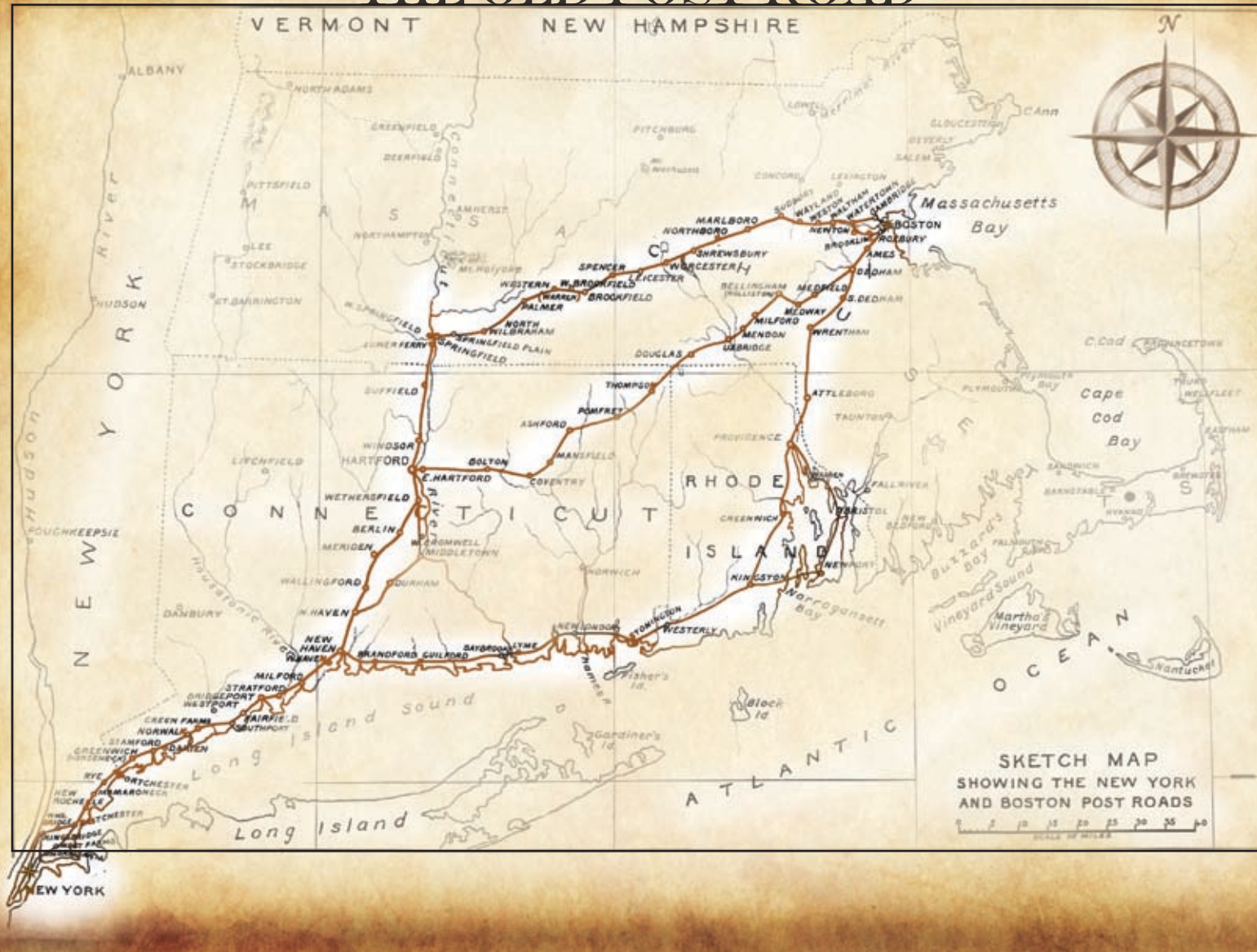
Edited by New American Colonies Enthusiast -S. Romsey

©2010, Published by the New American Colonies, LLC, All Rights Reserved

---

[www.jointhecolonies.com](http://www.jointhecolonies.com)

## THE OLD POST ROAD



-New York City to Boston via U.S. 1- The Old Post Road



## The Old Post Road

In Colonial times, the Old Post Road (or Boston Post Road) served as the major mail and traveler access route between New York City (“NYC”) and Boston. There were actually three separate branches of this route (Upper Post Road, Middle Post Road, and Lower Post Road), but in this issue of the “Almanack” we will concentrate on the Lower Post Road, which extended from Lower Manhattan in NYC to the streets of Boston via Long Island Sound and Narragansett Bay.

A very picturesque route, indeed, with stops in such places as New Haven, New London, Newport, and Providence. Also, initially a very dangerous road, with early travelers braving a number of obstacles in what was then a two week journey covering a distance of over 200 miles.

In olden times, one could expect taverns at frequent stops along the way. While some were fairly comfortable and offered palatable fare, others were uncomfortable, overpriced, and barely better than camping along the road.

As an 18th century traveler complained of one Old Post Road establishment, “It was a very mean house at which we breakfasted, the worst I have seen; the accommodations equally bad, and for which, as is generally the consequence, we paid very dear. Our bread was cake made of rye, and only half baked; beef-steaks fried in lard; veal-cutlets greasy and black; the tea and coffee smoky.”

It is obvious that, today, travel along this old route is much more comfortable and enjoyable, and there are now numerous opportunities for sightseeing, dining, shopping, and family activities. By automobile, a one-way trip can be made in around four hours.

Let’s begin our journey on what is now known as “U.S. 1” as it leaves NYC and heads north into Connecticut, then east to Rhode Island, and north to Massachusetts (we’ll save New York City and Boston for a separate “Almanack” issue...both deserve greater attention). For brevity’s sake, we are recommending just some of the wonderful places to see...and additional information on those places shown can be found by visiting their respective websites.



## U.S. 1 Through CONNECTICUT

Want to find the best restaurants, antique stores, Inns, and historical sites? We recommend you visit [www.visitconnecticut.com](http://www.visitconnecticut.com) or [www.ctvisit.com](http://www.ctvisit.com), where there is a great deal of useful information of what to do along the route, to include where to dine, shop, and stay the night. Here are just a few of our favorite activities and restaurants:

### PARKS & ACTIVITIES-LOWER POST ROAD/CONNECTICUT

SEASIDE PARK & LIGHTHOUSE (BRIDGEPORT). This beautiful park was designed by the same individuals who designed Central Park in Manhattan (Vaux and Olmstead). Large park, great setting, ball fields, picnic areas, Hiking trails and, of course, beaches.

BOOTH MEMORIAL PARK (STRATFORD). Free to the public, this 32 acre expanse of gardens, historic buildings, and playgrounds hosts a number of annual events, to include the Great Pumpkin Festival (not to be missed if you're in the area).

LIGHT HOUSE POINT PARK (NEW HAVEN). A 1920's era carousel anchors this well maintained facility with playgrounds, canoe and kayak rentals, concessions, and plenty of shade trees. Among other things, explore tidal flats, nature trails, and a bird sanctuary within this 82 acre gem.



HAMMONASSETT STATE PARK (MADISON). With over 2 miles of beach front, this exceptional State Park offers plenty of sun and sand...as well as a nature center, walking trails, camping, a boardwalk, and saltwater fishing.

ROCKY NECK STATE PARK (NIANTIC). With 160 camp sites, this family friendly State Park encourages exploration, not to mention crabbing, bird watching, and fishing (from either the beach or stone jetty) for mackerel, striped bass, blackfish, and flounder.

MYSTIC SEAPORT AND SURROUNDING AREA (MYSTIC). So much to see and do, and so little time! Shows, nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, tall ships, and a seafaring village to explore! Winery's and cider mills add to the local "flavor," and Mystic is a great launching point for salt water tours or Mystic River tours. For more information on this exceptional tourist destination, visit [www.mystic.org](http://www.mystic.org). This is truly one of the best spots to vacation in Connecticut.



### DINING-LOWER POST ROAD/CONNECTICUT

STEW LEONARDS (NORWALK). One of the largest dairy stores in the country, and famous for it's cooking demonstrations. Stew Leonard's is a real show, and the New York Times has dubbed it the "Disneyland of Dairy Stores." Not to be missed! [www.stewleonards.com](http://www.stewleonards.com)

AUGUSTYN'S BLUE GOOSE RESTAURANT (STRATFORD). Good food and reasonable prices highlight this long running dining establishment. From prime rib to stuffed lobster tails, this place has it all. [www.augustyns-blue-goose.com](http://www.augustyns-blue-goose.com)

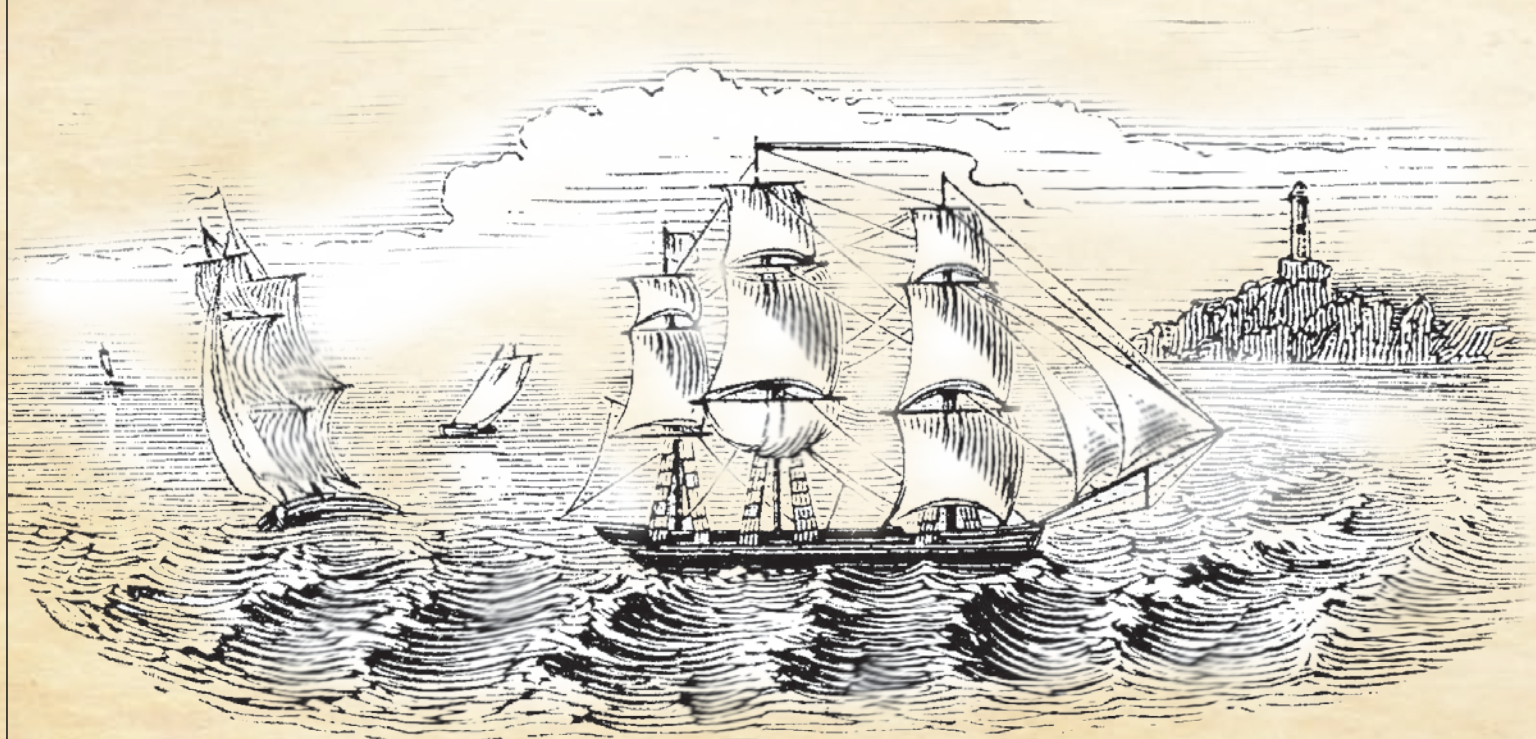
STONEBRIDGE RESTAURANT (MILFORD). Great setting and facilities, shell fish and raw bar, fresh seafood, wonderful pastas and steaks, and an impressive list of Chef's Specialties. Even their dinner salads are exceptional. Offers both formal dining room and casual pub room. [www.stonebridgerestaurant.com](http://www.stonebridgerestaurant.com)

LOUIS' LUNCH (NEW HAVEN). Established in 1895 this "masterpiece of American culinary art" (known for their hamburgers) has been voted by the Travel Channel as the number one place to "chow down" in America. The menu is neither fancy nor expensive. Be sure to try their homemade pies and birch beer. Louis Lunch claims credit for invention of the first hamburger sandwich in 1900. [www.louislunch.com](http://www.louislunch.com)

SAGE OYSTER BAR (NEW HAVEN). Not cheap, but well worth the price, and its setting along Long Island Sound (with balcony, deck, and large windows for viewing) is exceptional. Known for their American classics and just about anything to do with seafood (but don't overlook the prime rib). [www.sageamerican.com](http://www.sageamerican.com)

FRED'S SHANTY SNACK SHOP (NEW LONDON). This is a fun place to dine right along the Thames River and not far from the New London Lighthouse. Typical Clam Shack food...whole belly clams, scallops, fish & chips, jumbo lobster rolls, and you can even get a traditional (and very good) hamburger or hot dog. Open daily between March and late October. [www.fredsshanty.com](http://www.fredsshanty.com)

ABBOTT'S LOBSTER RESTAURANT (NOANK). Not just lobsters, but mussels, crabs, and clams as well. Outdoor dining and harbor views at their best. If you're adventurous, try the New England Seafood Feast (clam chowder, shrimp in the rough, steamers, mussels, and - of course - steamed lobster). The "Feast" even includes coleslaw and potato chips in case you're still hungry. Open May to October. [www.abbotts-lobster.com](http://www.abbotts-lobster.com)



## U.S. 1 Through RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island offers over 400 miles of coastline complete with more than 100 salt and fresh water beaches. Water activities are obviously a big deal in this small State, but there are many activities to be enjoyed by us landlubbers as well. We recommend you review [www.visitri.com](http://www.visitri.com) for up-to-date tourist information.

### PARKS & ACTIVITIES—LOWER POST ROAD/RHODE ISLAND

FORT ADAMS (NEWPORT). The story of Fort Adams begins even before the Revolutionary War, but this largest of America's early shore fortifications stands today as witness to a bygone era and bygone wars. The Naval War College maintains a very interesting exhibit at Fort Adams, and guests are free to explore its very interesting corners, redoubts, and casements. Great for history buffs!

NEWPORT CLIFF WALK (NEWPORT). Designated as a "National Recreation Trail," this world famous 3.5 mile public walking trail leads hikers along the wild Atlantic on one side and estates of the very rich (and usually famous) on the other....although in this case, the rich and famous who originally built these American palaces were mostly from a bygone area. This is a "must see" for anyone who "hasn't seen," and a "repeat see" for those who have experienced its wonder.

LIGHT HOUSE POINT PARK (NEW HAVEN). A 1920's era carousel anchors this well maintained facility with playgrounds, canoe and kayak rentals, concessions, and plenty of shade trees. Among other things, explore tidal flats, nature trails, and a bird sanctuary within this 82 acre gem.

NEWPORT MANSION TOUR (NEWPORT). From American's Colonial era through its gilded age, this must see tour of 11 historic, exceptional estates has captivated visitors for years. The mansion tours are augmented with lectures, art and flower shows, wine and food festivals, holiday dances, and other fun activities. Don't miss it!

BLOCK ISLAND (BLOCK ISLAND). With 17 miles of beaches, some overlooked by towering bluffs, Block Island resembles an adventure movie set. Located about 12 miles off the coast, its wild beauty is enhanced by its accessibility for water sports, hiking, biking, and just...well...relaxing. Featuring two light houses, this unique blend of Americana extends from its pristine shores to its historic inns and wonderful shopping and restaurants. Great place for a honeymoon!

THE QUONSET AIR MUSEUM (NORTH KINGSTON). Great stop for aviation buffs. Housed in an original Navy Air Station, this unique attraction offers 28 aircraft covering a period of history spanning over 65 years. Highlights Rhode Island's aviation history through "collections, research, education, and exhibits."

HISTORIC WICKFORD VILLAGE (WICKFORD). Established in 1663, this beautiful American village has been transformed, over the years, to a shoppers paradise...with over 50 locally owned, unique shops. Gifts, galleries, jewelry, and apparel stores abound, and check their year-round events schedule. Known as the "Venice of New England," it also offers many historic buildings for review.

AUDUBON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER (BRISTOL). This natural history museum and aquarium is located on the 28 acre McIntosh Wildlife Refuge. Offerings include school programs, nature walks, photography classes, story times for kids, workshops, and a number of special tours. With many interactive exhibits, guests are able to look inside a 33 foot whale, explore a tide pool, and travel through marshes on a ¼ mile boardwalk. Fun, educational, and supports a great organization.

COLT STATE PARK (BRISTOL). Play fields, picnic groves, over 400 picnic tables, boat ramp, and over four miles of walking, jogging, and biking trails highlight this 464 acre "Gem" of Rhode Island that also features groomed fruit trees, flowering bushes, and beautiful, manicured lawns. The entire western border is open to Narragansett Bay (can't beat the views!).

EAST BAY BIKE PATH (PROVIDENCE TO BRISTOL). This 14.5 mile, 10' wide, paved bike path takes riders over bridges and through marshes and State Parks. It's always open and always beautiful, and there are restrooms and picnic areas along the way.



## DINING—LOWER POST ROAD/ RHODE ISLAND

NORDIC LODGE (CHARLESTOWN). OK, so it's one of the more expensive meals you can find along U.S. 1...it's also one of the best! For around \$50 you can have your fill (literally) of lobster, king crab, filet mignon, oysters on the half-shell, jumbo shrimp and scallops, and the list goes on. Paradise for seafood lovers (not to mention dessert lovers). Enjoy! [www.nordiclodge.com](http://www.nordiclodge.com).

AUNT CARRIES RESTAURANT (NARRAGANSETT). This must be a great place since it's been open around 90 years! Wonderful and well priced. Every type of seafood imaginable, plus homemade pies and "Indian Pudding." Awards too numerous to print, but we might mention the American Classics Award from the James Beard Foundation. You can even buy an Aunt Carries T-Shirt! [www.auntcarriesri.com](http://www.auntcarriesri.com).

IGGY'S DOUGHBOYS & CHOWDER HOUSE (WARRICK & NARRAGANSETT). Lucky travelers have two chances to swing by Iggy's on their Lower Post Road route. As highlighted by Rhode Island Monthly and its readers, Iggy's has been voted "Best Clam Shack, Best Fish & Chips, Best Guilty Indulgence, and Best Place to Trip Down Memory Lane." It just doesn't get much better than that...at least for a Clam Shack! Check it out! [www.iggysdoughboys.com](http://www.iggysdoughboys.com)

WHITE HORSE TAVERN (NEWPORT). How do you describe an American institution that first became a tavern in 1673? The White Horse Tavern offers exceptional surroundings, exceptional food, and (fairly) exceptional prices, but with its 17th century architectural features and centuries old tradition of good fellowship, good food, and good cheer, dining here is a cheap price to pay for a trip back in history. They do offer a tavern menu as well (try the lobster mac & cheese). [www.whitehorsetavern.us](http://www.whitehorsetavern.us)



## DINING –LOWER POST ROAD/RHODE ISLAND

TUCKER'S BISTRO (NEWPORT). OK...want to impress that special someone? Take them back to Paris in the 1930's. Beautiful settings complete with beautiful foods! What a place! Menu is exceptional, and be sure to try their signature apricot, white chocolate, and pecan bread pudding. [www.tuckersbistro.com](http://www.tuckersbistro.com)

NEWPORT DINNER TRAIN (NEWPORT). "A unique taste of a bygone era." During a 22 mile trip that takes around 2 ½ hours, diners are treated to an impressive menu served in impressive dining cars being pulled through an impressive landscape of New England beauty. Select from Rail and Sail events, Murder Mystery Trains, Cabaret Cars, Polar Express Trains at Christmas, or just tour for pure enjoyment. [www.newportdinnertrain.com](http://www.newportdinnertrain.com).

PROVIDENCE CHAUFFEURED DINE AROUND (PROVIDENCE). Billed as the "ultimate progressive dinner party"...this unusual and fun dining experience involves guest selection of six restaurants from a list of fifteen with which to enjoy an entire evening of menu tastings. Yes, a limo is included, and pricing is based on groups of at least 10 (currently \$79 per person). [www.alloccasionlimo.com](http://www.alloccasionlimo.com)

AL FORNO (PROVIDENCE). For the Italian in all of us...we are highlighting this staple of Providence RI dining. If you're tired of munching on seafood, try their pizzas, roasted duck, or bacon wrapped wild boar. You can also get about any type of pasta desired. Ever had a pear and walnut tart? Us neither...so maybe we'll all have to try it. By the way, "Al Forno" means "From the Oven." Buon Appetito! [www.alforno.com](http://www.alforno.com).

BLACKSTONE CULINARIA- FOOD TOUR (PAWTUCKET). Series of foodie tours laced with the rich cultural diversity of the Blackstone Valley. These events, held once weekly during the spring, not only show you how to make wonderful dishes, you actually get to eat a full meal along with the shn, but be sure to make a reservation (401-714-2200). [www.tourblackstone.com](http://www.tourblackstone.com)