

# Marvelously Maine

## Bar Harbor



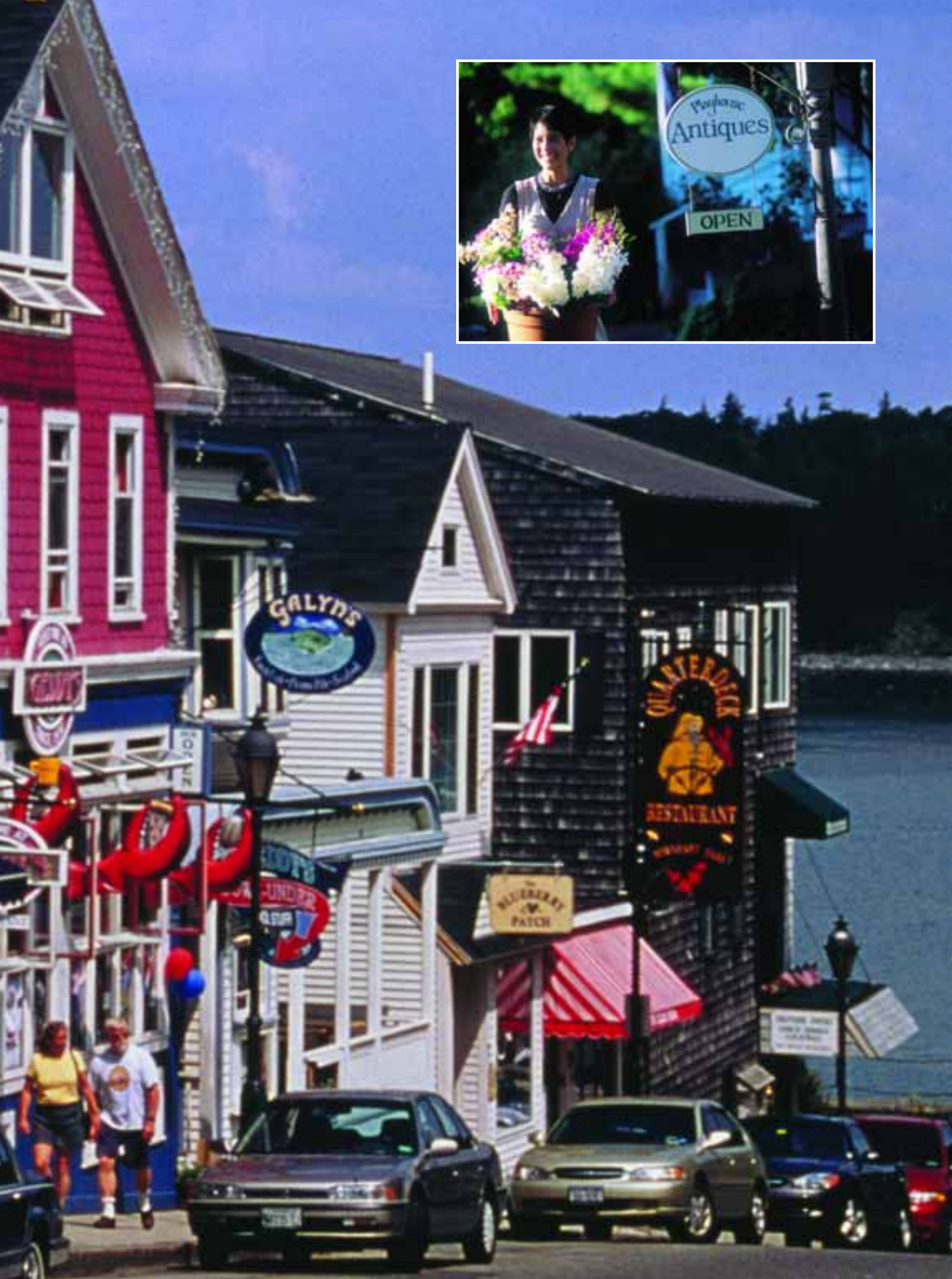
*Summertime  
And the livin' is easy.*

- Ira Gershwin, Porgy & Bess, 1931

Let's say I'm a Vanderbilt. And let's suppose my buddies are an Astor, a Rockefeller and a Carnegie. About this time we'd be sitting around after a hard day of work as wealthy industrialists, and one of us would say, Man, I sure could use a vacation. Then another of us would tout me, too, and pretty soon all we guys who set the world on fire with our wealth-making industrialism would get pretty excited – and just plain stuck.

So, where do you want to go? one particularly industrious industrialist would ask. I don't know, the other perplexed industrialists probably would answer, where do you want to go? I know! I'd say, showing off my own especially fine industriousness. Let's go to Bar Harbor, Maine!

And so they did. I, Pilot Michael, naturally am no



Antiquing and sightseeing along streets of authentic local charm (left); whalewatching, sailing and seaside lobster feasts - followed by a sunset stroll (above) - are a Bar Harbor classic for family summer fun.

Vanderbilt. But I am right behind this country's crew of early entrepreneurs who knew a great vacation spot when they saw one - and promptly built opulent summer "cottages" upon it. Bar Harbor, snuggled into the rugged coast of Maine's Mount Desert Island where the Atlantic Ocean flows into Frenchman Bay, is an historic outdoorsy destination where the lobster

alone will make you happy the wealthy industrialists of old christened it Summer Central for the east coast. No longer the "it" spot of all summering magnates, Bar Harbor does all right by Pilot Michael's ever-discerning standards for a getaway that rates. Whale-watching, gallery-going, bike riding, and a room in a rambling, antique-filled Italianate manor that

feels like a trip to Great Aunt Agatha's - rich Great Aunt Agatha's - the attractions of Bar Harbor mean seaside fun and summer living that's easy.

I mean, how hard is *that* to rise at 4:15 a.m. so the town's Acadia Downhill cycling shop guides can van me to the summit of Cadillac Mountain to be among the first in the U.S. to watch the sun rise, slap me

awake with coffee and breakfast, and let me whiz back down to town on a bike? Hardly hard at all (call 207.288.9605 for the thrill). And how E-Z it is indeed to bounce aboard the *Royal Miss Belmar* in the morning – to ride this jet-powered whale-seeker run by Acadian Whale Adventures ([www.whalesadventures.com](http://www.whalesadventures.com)) on an enthralling photo safari for humpback, finback, minke and the occasional right whale feasting just offshore on krill.

Ah, how interesting to stroll through the top-rate collection of Native American artifacts at the Abbe Museum ([www.abbemuseum.org](http://www.abbemuseum.org)). How romantic to cuddle with your love in the exclusive upstairs loges of the 1932 Art Deco masterpiece, the Criterion Theatre. How amusing

indeed to stroll through Alone Moose Fine Crafts for authentic “Made in Maine” wildlife sculptures in bronze and wood.

I say, say I, a vacation to Bar Harbor is a summertime breeze!

Although in 1947 a fire leveled most of the town and the magnificent cottages built by Vanderbilts, Astors and other worldly “rusticators” who in the late 19<sup>th</sup> c. made Bar Harbor synonymous with the grand resort lifestyle, the shores and hillsides once cluttered with boardinghouses that each season accommodated mobs of steamboat and rail arrivals from eastern seaboard cities today are no less crowded: like many popular resorts, the town has its share of kitschy shops and corndog outlets. Never mind. There’s history a’plenty and architec-

ture most distinguished. There’s the Shore Path that overlooks fabulous Frenchman Bay, Nova Scotia beyond, and affords views of both elegant summer houses (some converted to inns) and the Porcupines – the spruce-studded offshore islands glacier-sculpted to resemble a pod of porcupines migrating south. Close by lies Acadia National Park, where rugged cliffs, restless ocean and quiet woods seduce seekers of the Great Outdoors to connect with their inner Thoreau. With such beauty it’s no wonder in the late 1840s Hudson River School painter Thomas Cole set up easel here, captured the local scene of fishermen, boat builders and surging surf and inspired city-weary souls from all over to summer in this garden of “Eden” – Bar Harbor’s name until 1919.

I bet Vanderbilt and his cronies didn’t skimp on consuming scads of the local delicacy: lobster. Maine’s \$130 million business, the lobstering skills of area “high-liners,” independent fisherpeople in small boats who each typically work 1,000-1,500 traps, are legendary. Translation: local “lobster pounds” are places where the lobster eating is *whoopie!* At Bar Harbor Lobster Bakes at Hull Cove, one seating per night (reservations required: [www.barharborlobsterbakes.com](http://www.barharborlobsterbakes.com)), you’ll watch your lobster steam its way to succulence in a giant steel cooker; at Fisherman’s Landing on the dock (207.288.4632), you’ll feast on steamed clams as you wait. Lots and lots of lobster: I love it served any which way as long as it’s unique. Lobster strudel at the elegant clapboard cottage (and Bar Harbor classic) called George’s ([www.georgesbarharbor.com](http://www.georgesbarharbor.com))? Lobster ice cream at Ben &

Bill’s Chocolate Emporium at 66 Main Street? *Whoopie*, indeed! A little do-si-do with crab for variety, like the crabcakes with tequila lime sauce at hip Café This Way, and sweet-potato ravioli with crabmeat-chipotle Béchamel sauce at Havana, and *man*, I might say to the guys – Astor, Rockefeller and Carnegie – you certainly foresaw some serious summer fun when here in marvelous Maine! There’s even the L.L. Bean outlet 6 miles from town (in Ellsworth). I just might style-out in Bean’s Double-L polo, shoot 18 holes at Keho Valley Club, the “oldest golf grounds in America” (since 1892), and prove what I’ve known all along: wealthy industrialists have nothing on Bar Harbor for industriousness: this town is diligence-plus when it comes to serving-up fun.

For more information on Bar Harbor and accommodations, visit [www.barharborinfo.com](http://www.barharborinfo.com). x



West Quoddy Head Lighthouse

### HANCOCK COUNTY - BAR HARBOR AIRPORT (BHB)

#### AIRPORT DATA

Elevation: 83'  
 Runways: 4/22 5,200 • 17/35 3,364"  
 Approaches: ILS, LOC/DME  
 ATIS / ASOS: 207.667.7364

#### FIXED BASE OPERATIONS / FUEL / SERVICES

Columbia Air Services 207.667.5534

#### TRANSPORTATION

Airport Taxi and Car Service 207.667.5995  
 Budget 207.667.1200  
 Hertz 207.667.5017  
 Enterprise 800.RENT A CAR

#### AIRPORT LODGING

Harborside Hotel and Marina (10 mi) 207.288.5033  
 Marriott-Bar Harbor (10 mi) 207.288.8983  
 Blue Nose Inn-Bar Harbor (10 mi) 207.288.3348

#### Instrument Conditions

CAN HAPPEN IN VFR

