

The Street

Delicious Off-Season Getaways

BY [Marilen Cawad](#) 12/05/13 - 12:34 PM EST

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NEW YORK ([TheStreet](#)) -- The ocean is beautiful any time of year, but a beach or waterfront resort in the Northeast isn't exactly the place to be in the winter. Some resorts, in fact, choose to close for the off-season.

For those that remain open, luring guests might seem like a tall order. When sunbathing and beach swimming are off the agenda, what's a waterfront resort to do?

For these New England properties, the way to travelers' hearts, especially during the chilly months, is through their stomachs.

An in-house food forager, a mansion dining [experience](#) and private cooking classes with a top-rated chef -- these are just some of the elements that, in the winter, make these waterfront destinations ideal for traveling foodies.



Ocean House
Westerly, R.I.

The [Ocean House](#) in Watch Hill, R.I., is an upscale New England seaside resort that takes the farm-to-table concept to a whole new level: It employs its very own food forager who serves as liaison between local farmers and the hotel's chefs.

Janice McEachen, whose resume includes serving as personal chef in the Los Angeles homes of well-known personalities, is the Ocean House's food forager and director of culinary [education](#). Every morning she goes out in search of ingredients, visiting famers' markets and small, locally owned and operated grocery stores.

Back at the hotel, McEachen gives cooking demonstrations using her locally sourced ingredients and teaches guests how to host a dinner party (crafting homemade gifts and centerpieces, arranging the table, etc.). She also gives one-on-one cooking lessons for a fee -- a service often requested by soon-to-be brides.

At *Seasons*, the resort's fine-dining restaurant, guests can sample farm-to-table cuisines while enjoying a stunning view of the Atlantic Ocean. McEachen's hard work is evident in such menu items as mixed Rhode Island greens, New England artisanal cheese, soft-boiled Watch Hill farm egg and Blue Slope veal. The menu changes daily, but always highlights local and regional ingredients.

"A trip to the Ocean House in the winter is a one-of-a-kind culinary excursion," says Daniel Hostettler, the Ocean House's president and group managing director. "In the off-season, it is the property itself -- not the beach in front of it -- that becomes the destination."

Aside from cooking demonstrations and workshops, the Ocean House holds its *Farm + Vine* dinner series, where New England chefs prepare meals using ingredients grown or bred on local farms and pair them with wines selected by the resort's sommelier, Jonathan Feiler.

For an extraordinary winter culinary vacation, guests can book a suite and arrange for a private cooking [class](#) or enjoy a private dining experience. Each of the Ocean House's 15 suites has a full kitchen and dining area.

The Ocean House is about a three-hour drive from New York City and an hour and a half from Boston. A beautifully restored mansion overlooking a private white-sand beach, it is the only five-star property (Forbes Five-Star and AAA Five Diamond Hotel) in the state of Rhode Island.

In the summer, the hotel's 49 guest rooms sell out fast, with nightly [rates](#) starting at \$855. When temperatures begin to drop, the luxury cabana beach service ends and rooms start at \$320 per night.