10 Best Family Vacation Bets for 2014

9.
Coastal Rhode Island
America's smallest state is not called the Ocean State for nothing. Rhode Island's 384 miles of coast has a wide array of sites, from Newport's **mansions** and **Cliff Walk**, to its rock-rimmed peninsulas and numerous coves and harbors. Take a 90-minute ride along Narragansett Bay aboard the **Newport Dinner train** -- a moving dinner train with an ice cream parlour and Candyman conductor. As of summer 2013, you can launch yourself from the ramparts of North America's largest coastal fortress, **Fort Adams State Park**. Its new 430-foot zip line will allow solo or tandem zip liners to sail across the fort's complex land defenses. The **Block Island Ferry** will introduce high-speed service between**Newport** and **Block Island** beginning in June, allowing riders to enjoy a full day in either place and return in the evening.

Three unique waterfront home bases to consider are: Block Island's **The Darius Inn on Dodge Street**, which has six family-friendly guest rooms (some with kitchenettes) and is walking distance to the ferry landing and beach. Coming in the spring of 2014, Narragansett's **The Break Hotel** will debut, with four suites that can

fit a family of four. On a grander scale, the fairly new seaside resort, **Ocean House**, located in southern Rhode Island, near **Connecticut's Mystic Seaport**, has a Sandcastles program for kids that includes sailing, scavenger hunts and croquet. For an affordable home base two miles from downtown Newport, consider the pet-friendly **Homewood Suites by Hilton**.