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New England

In every issue, we scout a spot that's perfect for tying the knot away from home.

by Jenna Mahoney

There is something inherently romantic about being by the sea. The salty breezes, sparkling waves and open skies make oceanfront settings wildly popular wedding destinations. And New England, with its classic coastal offerings, really ups the ante for beachy destination weddings thanks to historic architecture, numerous lighthouses, awesomely fresh seafood and excellent hospitality. These three resort properties from Maine to Cape Cod promise sophisticated celebrations with natural flair.

CHATHAM BARS INN RESORT AND SPA, CAPE COD, MASSACHUSETTS

With its rambling cedar-shingled buildings, wide ocean-facing veranda and colorful, manicured hydrangeas, this 103-year-old, 217-room property set on Cape Cod's famous elbow is a cinematic example of the region's spectacular beauty. And

weddings here celebrate it all. Most are held in the resort's Beach House following a ceremony on the golden sand beach. Host your rehearsal dinner in the property's organic garden or have a fresh-from-the-sea traditional clambake complete with s'mores at one of the property's sea-view private dining rooms. Other only-on-Cape Cod offerings include excursions where guests help track and tag great white sharks and a local oyster-tasting class. Accommodations range from guest rooms in the historic main inn to beachside cottages and spa suites that come equipped with saunas, steam showers and waterfall Jacuzzis. *Wedding packages start at \$350 per person and location fees start at \$2,500; chathambarsinn.com.*

CLIFF HOUSE MAINE, OGUNQUIT, MAINE

Positioned on 70 sprawling acres overlooking the rocky shores of Bald Head Cliff, this 132-room hideaway recently underwent a massive revamp and every room has a private terrace and Atlantic views. The new spa offers treatments that highlight the ocean—the 80-minute Salt of the Sea massage is a don't miss. Weddings here highlight the best Maine has to offer. The meat, fish and produce are locally sourced and line-caught, →

A wedding marquee at Chatham Bars Inn Resort and Spa.



Happy couple on the dunes in Cape Cod.



Cliff House Maine.

PHOTOGRAPHY: (TOP) OCEAN HOUSE (BOTTOM FROM LEFT) CHATHAM BARS INN RESORT AND SPA (2) CLIFF HOUSE MAINE

WEDDINGS AWAY



A guest room at Chatham Bars Inn.

and all reception areas overlook the wind-tossed sea. Host the welcome party at Nubb's Lobster Shack, a classic New England seafood eatery with a casual ocean-view setting and large local brew menu (the state is nearly as famous for its craft breweries as it is for *lobstah*). Ceremonies can be held at a variety of outdoor locations. Hold the main event in the Atlantic Room, an impressive space overlooking the ocean with a vaulted cedar-planked ceiling that is the epitome of rustic sophistication. Bespoke wedding experiences can accommodate from 25 to more than 200 guests. *Wedding packages start at \$130 per person and include two-hour open bar, hors d'oeuvres, three-course meal, cake and some decor; destinationhotels.com/cliff-house.*

OCEAN HOUSE, WATCH HILL, RHODE ISLAND

This elegant oceanfront property combines the glamour of Rhode Island getaways with haute service of Relais & Châ-

teaux. The 67-room property, which opened in 1868 and was renovated in 2010, is an idyllic wedding setting throughout the year. Then there are the excellent photo-op settings—the lemony-hued main building, verdant croquet lawn, golden private beach and quaint private chapel. Reception venues are as light-filled and classically good looking as the cozy accommodations. The Seaside Ballroom with floor-to-ceiling windows imparts an unparalleled sense of place, while the pristine private beach can host up to 400 guests. The ocean-view South Lawn holds 300 people, who can dance the night away under a customized marquee. More intimate gatherings of up to 60 are set in the wood-paneled Drawing Room. Menu options feature local seafood and the all-custom celebrations are expertly crafted by an in-house team who cater to the couple's preferred tastes. *Wedding packages start at \$3,500; ocean-houser.com. ■*



A reception at Ocean House.

LEGALLY WEDDED

Massachusetts, Maine and Rhode Island all require licenses to marry. All applications must be requested in person with both parties present. Couples must furnish proof of age and, if applicable, a divorce decree or death certificate. Massachusetts has a three-day waiting period.