

Condé Nast Traveler

REVIEW:

Gurney's Montauk

When you want the ideal of summer vacationing in the Hamptons.

🏆 READERS CHOICE AWARDS 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021

Reviewed by [LARA KRAMER](#)





HOURS

Open Daily 12:00 AM-11:59 PM

AMENITIES

Bar	Wifi
Beach	Credit Cards
Spa	

ROOMS

158

Why book?

The only luxury hotel in the **Hamptons** that is located right on a private beach, Gurney's is the epitome of summer vacationing offering warm sun, an excellent seaside food and drink program, a destination spa, and fabulous people watching.

Set the scene

Gurney's is undoubtedly a staple of **Montauk**, opening in its first iteration in 1926 as a small 20-unit hotel named Gurney's Inn. Now a behemoth of luxury and exclusivity, the resort is a beacon for city dwellers and well-to-do vacationers looking for their summer escape. Drawing a monied crowd, you'll find a lot of couples and celebratory parties looking to get the perfect tan amidst flowing cocktails and elevated food. Pack your Ralph Lauren shorts and your chic swimsuit coverups and be prepared to be at *the* scene in Montauk.

The rooms

The resort has 158 rooms, suites, and beachfront cottages which all deliver ocean views. You'll find king-sized beds and complimentary Wi-Fi in all the rooms, with spa perks like walk-in rain showers, Lather toiletries, robes, and slippers. The style is minimalist and sleek, with a neutral color palette that helps draw your attention through the floor-to-ceiling windows to the real focal point: the ocean. All rooms also come with access to **The Beach Club** which is, frankly, the best perk of them all.

Food and drink

Gurney's offers three main dining spaces, each with their unique charm. The most relaxed setting is at The Beach Club, where you can enjoy proper beach eats like chicken fingers and crispy fish tacos, washing it all down with an impressive beer, wine, and cocktail menu. What makes The Beach Club extra special? The fact that it sits on a 2,000-foot long private beach where you can dine directly from your beach chair in the sand or just up a few steps at their bar and lounge area. The vibe is energetic and celebratory, enhanced by the DJ spinning tunes every weekend during the summer. Also offering a relaxed atmosphere is **The Firepit**, an all-outdoor venue providing ocean views during the day and a party scene at night. The focus here is more on the cocktail and spirits scene, though they do offer a handful of light American bites and desserts. Cigar aficionados will especially appreciate a nice selection of premium cigars on the menu. When you're really looking to have an epic meal, though, you have to head to Gurney's onsite modern Italian restaurant, **Scarpetta Beach**. Gorgeous with its generous ocean views, elegant lighting fixtures, and open-air design, the interior dining room offers 148 seats with an additional 106 seats on the outdoor deck. The menu is seafood heavy though non-fish lovers and vegetarians can certainly find drool-worthy dishes. If you order anything, be sure to get the creamy polenta with truffled mushroom, and the black bass: The decadence of the polenta will have your head spinning and the crunch from the perfectly seared, locally caught bass will remind you why you came to Montauk. No meal is complete without dessert, and my personal favorite was the white chocolate mousse: A beautifully deconstructed plate of almond dacquoise, blueberry compote, lemon cream, and blackberry sorbet, you get to experience so many textures and flavors in just one dish. Come morning, the Scarpetta Beach venue becomes **Tillies**, open only for breakfast and lunch, and shifts towards an American offering featuring omelets, salads, and burgers. My advice? If your priorities are a well-made cappuccino with incredible views, Tillies is a worthwhile stop. However in terms of value (and \$26 for a vegetable omelet) I would make Scarpetta Beach your dinner destination and head into town for breakfast.

The spa

Having just completed an extensive \$20 million dollar renovation led by Alonso Designs—the team behind Manhattan destination spa Aire Ancient Baths—Gurney’s Seawater Spa is the pinnacle of relaxation and pampering. The 30,000 square-foot destination is filled with soft color palettes and carefully designed to ensure consistent, unobstructed views of the Atlantic Ocean as you float from room to room. Take a dip in the ocean-fed seawater pool or indulge in their full bathhouse experience including a caldarium, thermal baths, sauna and steam rooms, a salt room, and an indoor/outdoor fitness center. If you’re looking for a treatment, you’ll find a smorgasbord of body massages, facials, and scalp and hair therapies; however, if you want a personal recommendation, book a facial with Alba: Having been with Gurney’s for decades, her gentle demeanor and expert skincare knowledge made the experience truly above and beyond. Plus, a special shoutout goes to the spa’s investment in their massage and facial beds which are truly state-of-the-art luxury experiences. From their thick, quality padding to the fully adjustable settings that make you feel dreamily cradled, the beds were the best I’ve ever experienced. Note that Gurney’s has recently introduced a dedicated spa membership option for those who wish to visit the spa without staying as a guest. In addition to access to the pool and bathhouse experiences, spa members also receive one-on-one fitness coaching and wellness classes along with curated spa treatments. Heads up, though, annual memberships start at \$17,500.

The neighborhood/area

Gurney's is a community in itself when you're staying as a guest. However, if you want to explore charming Montauk, it's just a seven-minute drive east. Must-dos include breakfast at Anthony's Pancake House, dinner at il Buco al Mare, a margarita at TT's, and visiting the famous Montauk Point Lighthouse at the easternmost point of the island.

The service

You can expect a team that is truly eager to please. Front desk staff and porters especially going above and beyond with warm welcomes and offers of assistance at every turn. While not stuffy, there is certainly a hint of luxury and exclusivity in the air. If you're looking to get into town, the staff is happy to call you a car or you can rent one of their complimentary bikes and treat yourself to a relatively easy 20-minute ride to the local shopping and dining scene.

For families

With an entire weekend program dedicated to kids, parents can relax at The Beach Club or explore the town while their kids enjoy arts and crafts, bingo, movie nights, and more. The program is complimentary for all guests, and open to kids ages 5-12.

Eco effort

The team has focused their sustainability efforts around their spa, with their onsite pool being the only ocean-fed seawater pool in North America. The recent renovations have also provided opportunities to lessen their environmental footprint including changes to their filters that reduce water waste, using energy saving heating systems, and the use of UV to limit the need for harmful chemicals.

Anything left to mention?

If you're planning on using Uber or Lyft while in the area, be warned: the wait times can be brutal. I often found myself waiting 20 minutes for a car (after having already waited five minutes for the app to connect us to a nearby driver). Plan accordingly!