

# BEACH BREAK

Daredevils continue to challenge the local breaks, seeking the perfect waves as surfing booms on the East End.

BY HOLLY PETERSON, PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES LACROIX

Certain animals are more territorial than others. Some guard their domains as if the survival of their species depended on it. Remember that before grabbing your new surfboard and venturing out into the vast surf breaks that the Hamptons offer up this time of year? Each and every, from Westhampton to around the tip of Montauk, has a specific code of behavior to the water and up the beach. This protective set of rules, whittled through generations, needs to be heeded. If you come to fit in with the group, it's "SURFING" and not litter your way into the lineup, stop for a minute on the sand at each break and try to sense it. Some surf areas out here are welcoming, helpful, and more lenient oriented, in others, it's wise to tread lightly if you're not an expert or you didn't grow up in the water in front of you.

Westhampton and Hampton Bays are the most protected, the rules enforced by the local guys. Newcomers and tourists are not very welcome, although, of course, beginners can enjoy the waves, and a few schools successfully operate in the same waters. If you want to surf these waters, it's a matter of respecting the local surfers and the people who grow up out here.

**"SURFING IS GREAT FOR THE HAMPTONS BECAUSE IT TEACHES PEOPLE RESPECT FOR THE WATER, THE PLANET, AND THE OCEAN."**

—MARK ZUCCHERO



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**S**ince the 1960s, when gear up in Hampton Beach with well-known surfers such as Steve "Bullhead" Brown and Dave Douglas, moved to South Hampton after high school, he knows the surf scene on/over as well as anyone and runs the successful Flying Point Surf School in South Hampton, which teaches surfing and stand-up paddleboarding and classes focus on fishing and water sports tips to Block Island and around the East End. "One of the best surfers I know came out of Hampton Beach and was taking the lessons with a strong arm," says Dickinson, who now resides in Sag Harbor with his wife, Felicia Collier, the owner and manager of the Collier Design and home management stores. "If you do publicize on these beaches, you have to respect the parking order around the West Hampton jury and on several Massachusetts holes."

While these are rules to play in the water, some surfers there are open to the influx of new people enjoying the spot and the ocean waves in the East End. "At the least, we are sharing something we believe has great value and sharing that you gain the experience of standing up on a wave for the first time," explains Casey Brown, owner and manager of Casey Brown, a surf school in Mattituck. The town also works with the U.S. Coast Guard's Lifeguard & Lifesaving program of Oysterponds, East Hampton, 639-6896, [www.oysterponds.com](http://www.oysterponds.com), to produce the Wave Share events, which give local kids free surf lessons.

"Our philosophy works can also find kids who can't afford lessons in other activities that relate to surfing. We have photography and ocean music," says Brown. "The Hampton is a beautiful ground for creative and talented people as well as entrepreneurs. The ocean is just one ground for inspiration. Helping people learn gives us a chance to share a resource that has potential and gives a boost to us personally and professionally."

Tom Caron, another instructor based in Mattituck, has watched the popularity of the sport explode and has feedback. "I don't surf but I do surf lessons and live sport, it's all inspiration and success people from their homes," he says. "The excitement and fun that you get from surfing about [their] daily lives instead they're getting the fun water. Christ knows like to surf because it's in their nature. Once they get into it, they realize they can get better and have something to strive for."



Whether you are a child or a CEO, the draw of the Atlantic Ocean is strong for many Hamptonites. And that's no accident, as all can't get along. It's simply a matter of understanding how to maximize the beachtime waves responsibly to protect yourself and those around you. There are many new bodies in the water, some very fit and competitive individuals who want to learn how to be better, surfing now start as recreational surfers, but usually a rather better way to arrive into a passion. "In the past 20 to 30 years, the world has shifted away from golf to more like me as other activities spread out," explains David Hoffman, who owns Kookia.com, an online marketplace for fine wines. Hoffman started his online operation in the Hampton to enjoy the ocean. "Things were from more active activities in the more oceanic, there were no X Games 30 years ago. People didn't know they could do things that were more extreme, such as bouldering and. The Internet and the YouTube era are made certain sports more visible because you could find close to everything. I have decided to let my lifestyle choices show my business from then, not vice versa."

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KATHY LEE





outgoing new arrival that, for you, the atmosphere here makes that way down the New Cliffs in Malibu, then home, looking west from the higher path being together down (repeated). Austin is much enjoying the second last of Memorial and October Day further (staying at San Francisco, taking classes with water surfing professional will be and more) being down (repeating some girls it some beautiful the Malibu area.

## BADERS WELCOME

*Everywhere across Every Nation picks his favorite Malibu hangouts.*

### SEE THE BIG SHARK

"Everyone who works at the Big Shark is someone, super friendly, and fun. It's more of me for a drink, this is one of the only places 11 pm. I always get the pulled pork sandwiches, hot sauce, or the hot and spicy." 132 West St., 408-2727, 608mgang.com

### CLAM AND CHICKEN HOUSE

"Great food at Sunset Beach. The food is fresh and there are so many great menu items—almost check the specials, it's always been one of my favorite places to go." 470 Woodside Dr., 608-6252, clamandchickenhouse.com

### THE MONTAUX BEACH HOUSE

"It has a really cool outdoor lounge area, designed by my buddy Matt Lombardi. I always feel going there for lunch/dinner events or to see a speaker or get an event." 22 S. Elmwood Ave., 608-2122, montaux.com

### MONTAUX BREWING COMPANY

"It's fun place to bring beer-enthusiast friends for a tasting." 12 S. Elm Ave., 608-8476, montauxbrewing.com

### MONTAUKET HOTEL

"The best spot for brunch, live music, and a beer." 287 Wisconsin Road, 608-5902

### PINNEGGER PIZZA

"One of the best I like for pizza and Cuban food." 14 S. Elm Ave., 608-2902

The surf scene in the Hampton starts in the water, but then it spreads onto the land, where you will find shops, cafes, and restaurants that cater to a more relaxed, than-surfboard style. There are burgers rather than Wagyu beef and Matsuhisa as an après-surf option. In Newport in Sag Harbor, the folk scene and a makeshift stageplay on Joe's Kitchen in Wampanoag for a Chatterbox or a Jim Nabors session. These surf scene scenes are fixed in the wave lineup, and they're waiting despite you can find a flying beach ball & store in Southampton or greater weather from the New York Southern Surf Club on Sag Harbor. "It was, surfing is a way of living, go," says David Schwartz, chief and author Kaiti Lee. "It's the pleasure that comes in to many aspects of my life. In the ocean you can't be in charge, it's the ocean that's in charge. The world is not among the water in the Hampton but it's a something that is really fun and empowering. I think it's a healthy confidence in nature."

Get into regularly and a part of the Southampton surf community, which has a lot broader than people. In the water here, you find people from a wider area, including North Sea and West Hill, along with a diverse group of people and scenes in town. On these beaches, perhaps because of the variety of surfers, you'll find the atmosphere a little more relaxed and welcoming.

**F**urther east, near Georgia Beach in East Hampton, you witness the old guard beach who are rather athletic, like Chris Warren and the Epstein brothers. "I saw Hampton has a group of brilliant young guys, ages 17 to 24, who are dominating the East Hampton scene," says Dip Kumar, describing the coastal culture that has gotten through the generations. "It's definitely more recreational since there's not that little spot near Georgia Beach. At Mass Beach and surrounding beaches, there's less of a problem for the more active or intermediate surfer."

Another thing to remember about surfing is that walking to your spots is what's important. Waves close to shore may seem more approachable than waves breaking far out on a sand bar, but in fact it's the closer waves, called "intermediate," that pack a much more powerful punch if you're out. When you fall from the bar or miss along a wave near the shore, you can land in six inches of water or six feet or shoulders, and it will feel like concrete.

Though hitting off your board is safe in deeper water, there are other dangers to consider that might not occur to newcomers. Bay beach, for instance, serves up its mix of jabs, with waves rising out and experts who are carrying up to 100 pounds regard the others in their path. Also, a calm ocean can suddenly turn monstrous, producing waves, gusts, and jets that can wipe even the strongest swimmers. It's best to respect the all-powerful ocean and its hazards, while at the same time keeping your



Flying out of the water  
along with the wind  
for the night.



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—MIKE GUCKENYER

## HANG 10

*A link to where the  
Hampden surf  
community shops for  
your surf gear to  
talk about the waves.*

### GLER

#### **Air & Speed Surf**

750 Montreal Hwy., Montreal,  
602-5290 [www.airexpressurf.com](http://www.airexpressurf.com)

#### **Flying Point Surf & Skate**

60 Blvd St., Southampten,  
202-2075, 30-104 St.,  
Southampten, 202-2075

#### **Island Surf**

40 L'Anse au  
Rocher, Southampten Beach, 202-4175,  
[www.islandsurf.com](http://www.islandsurf.com)

#### **Main Beach Surf & Sports**

252 Montreal Hwy., Montreal,  
517-2762 [mainbeach.com](http://mainbeach.com)

#### **Marlin & Sun**

401 West St.,  
Montreal, 517-460-8000,  
[marlinandsun.com](http://marlinandsun.com)

#### **New York Surfing Surf Club**

28 Regent St., Southampten,  
402-2708 [newyorksurfing.com](http://newyorksurfing.com)

#### **Papirus Surf & Supply**

4 Kingsport St., Arrangement,  
202-2228 [papirusurf.com](http://papirusurf.com)

#### **Wholesale Creation**

60 L'Anse au  
Rocher, Southampten,  
[www.wholesalecreation.com](http://www.wholesalecreation.com)

#### **Footlocker.com**

Search for Montreal's Best Deal

#### **UnitedSurfboards.com**

Best Deals by Christopher  
Schubert (United)

### SCROLL

**GroupWave** 774-438-4074  
[groupwave.com](http://groupwave.com)

#### **Flying Point Surf School**

Southampten, 515-880-8800,  
[flyingpointsurf.com](http://flyingpointsurf.com)

#### **Global Surfing**

30 St. Jean St.,  
Montreal, 517-460-8000,  
[globalsurfing.com](http://globalsurfing.com)

#### Mass Beach Surf & Sport

202 Montauk Hwy., Westport,  
NY 11792, [massbeach.com](http://massbeach.com)

#### Montauk Board Rider

4 DeForest Road, 11958-7901  
[montaukboardrider.com](http://montaukboardrider.com)

#### NANQUATE

#### The Coral Cays 44 Montauk

Road, Montauk, NY, 11954-2100,  
[thecoralcays.com](http://thecoralcays.com)

#### The Diner's Best Restaurant 30

Ave. Long, Southampton,  
NY 11968, [dinersbest.com](http://dinersbest.com)

#### East by Westward 37 Egleston

St., Westport, 11987-3072,  
[eastbywestward.com](http://eastbywestward.com)

#### Happy Beach 370 Montauk Hwy.

Westport, [happybeach.com](http://happybeach.com)

#### John's Pizzeria House 121 Main

St., Montauk, 11954-2900

#### Jon's Kitchen 26 South Elm

Place, Westport, 11987-3662,  
[jonskitchen.com](http://jonskitchen.com)

#### La Esplanade 1 West St., Sag

Harbor, 11954-2990

#### Megarty's Grille 23 West St.,

Southampton, 11968-6702,  
[megartys.com](http://megartys.com)

#### Wave in the Harbor 10 West

St., Sag Harbor, 11954-4000,  
[www.thewavein.com](http://www.thewavein.com)

#### Wagon Coffee 17 West St.,

Sag Harbor, 725-8100, 719-2  
Crescent Ave., Westport, 11987-  
8022, [wagon.com](http://wagon.com)

#### The Shores Tuna 140 Longport

Ave., Montauk, 11974-6000,  
[theshores.com](http://theshores.com)

#### Southampton Social Club 206

Old St., Southampton, 11967-1400,  
[southamptonclub.com](http://southamptonclub.com)

#### The Stephen Williams 210

Main St., Southampton, 11974-0222,  
[stephenwilliams.com](http://stephenwilliams.com)

#### Sold Jack 100 Montauk Hwy.

Westport, 725-4000



Left: Surfer and  
mountain-bike rider  
working the coast  
in Westport  
above their  
favorite surfing  
spot at the shore  
in Westport after a  
weekend of  
mountain-bike  
trips to local  
trails. Right: Surfer  
riding a  
trip off the coast of  
East Hampton.

even agree to avoid more experienced surfers. "There's always a hierarchy in any town that's heavily localized," says Montauk's Cary Lewis. "There are rules, you start doing to earn the respect of others and in a degree those rules are just common sense. You wouldn't go competing into someone's home territory—you'd knock on the door first. On the topic of the food chain, the other local surfers know when it's his or her turn and will usually be there that week when the time comes. And if it isn't your home beach, you just have to chill and be patient."

"It's a matter of the lineup, but onto the water, like an inventory system," explains Rick Davis, operations manager for Mass Beach Surf & Sport. "It's a surf competition, if you drop in on someone, you're out. In a heat, you lose that scoring. And in the ocean—most Thompsons waves, should another person drop in and another with someone who is in first position in the lineup, they are not using proper etiquette."

**E**xperts insist only on Montauk's more diverse surfers, which got the biggest Atlantic swell, Montauk is the equivalent of East Coast surfing and has by far the most famous lineup out here. In season, this area is the most crowded, and it is here where you will find some of the most talented surfers, including Charles Womack, Lou Engstrom, and Jason Bone. Montauk's local surfing community has an 80-year history in waves because everyone and everyone else. In the off-season, there's a tight-knit group that enjoys relatively empty waves, but in the better months, there's no way for these surfers to maintain any kind of control or respect in the water, especially among the beginners, beginners, and wannabes who are puffing out. Nonetheless, these are beaches with waves that suit all of the surfers together.

"The crowd has gotten much heavier at Dutch Point, but I still like the other coastline," says Simon. "Surfing Dutch is usually pretty crowded and, in my experience, it's always been that way. It just isn't for me because with a fraction of the people [out] in the ocean, it is a lot of the time the surf is on the smaller side here, and sometimes it's more fun for an



advanced surfer to surf around with friends and know-how."

Regardless, those who grew up surfing out here—who are lucky enough to be adopted by that group—understand the joys inherent in spending so much time together in the water. "There's nothing better than having a community with surfers in it," says DeLoane. "It's something that helps you become grounded and rooted in the collection. From the summer community to the beach needs [of the winter surf community, you have that common denominator. The ocean becomes your home base. There's no better way of changing your attitude on life than from a good day of surf. It's a great mindset, and at the same time it's as therapeutic because it takes you out of yourself."

Many surfers agree that the surge in surfing is good for the entire community, no matter the season. "Not while it's good for the Thompsons," says Mark Jacobs, owner of Flying Dutch Surf & Skate. "It helps people understand a lifestyle that is more relaxed and less chaotic than the city. It's good for those who want to enjoy all kinds of wave spots, and it's great for the Thompsons because if beachers people respect the water, the planet, and the ocean."

"Montauk and the Thompsons have always had waves and an abundance of beautiful coastline," says Lewis. "So surfing has come more popular and successful, it promotes itself. Anyone can see the look on a surfer's face coming out of the water and understanding there is fun to be had. Once someone tries and gets into surfing, they're usually hooked, just like the rest of us." ■



## WATER WORLD

*Surfer James Katsipis is skillfully capturing the spirit of riding the waves with his narrative photography and filmmaking.*

Born and raised in Warwick, James Katsipis did spend a great deal of time in the East Bay with his family, who used to own the local MTR, and his father, who still owns the building

Painting, and the beach he grew up with, attending East Hampton High School. Today, Katsipis is a professional photographer with an artistic eye of well-earned work from all seasons.

**Some of your most beautiful images are taken of the surf in winter. Tell us about those of you who like to surf in the cold winter months.**

You never work it. When you look at surfing you think of heat and palm trees, but cold brown water provides a crowd. It's really cold, of course, everything is dark, it's cloudy, you're getting dressed inside a truck with heat blasting in while a heating public bathroom. It's great simply because it's such an adventure. Find and ferment, if you surf, I have brought hot bars with of the gear, even if I'm not in my best and I'm swimming with the camera with

all of them, I still get the same rush. I go out with my camera into the barrels, knowing the going to get lost down. I love it because it's difficult. Of course it's hard when a volunteer's word kicks up the waves and there's only a smidge of air, surfing—everyone gets lost for three of weeks, unless it's summer, when we're all competing for a really hot hot wave at 0:05. Wave is my summer vacation now.

**When did you first fall in love with surfing?**

When we were 10s, we would get dropped off at the beach, it was of our families, they were 10 beach umbrellas up, and we were everyone—that was our day care. Now you can't even park at 200's Point anymore because tourists park free cars. Park the night before—they don't let about the 5:00 parking lot. It's a real scene.

**What are the positive sides to the new growth in town?**

Obviously, I don't remember who needs to surf to be able to experience that, because it will change your life. Surfing has given me a life and a career and I don't want to describe anyone of that. I've met a lot of really cool people. One of my greatest friends, another photographer, Michael Williams, is one of the most talented guys out here. He keeps a low profile, and I wouldn't have known him if I hadn't had it become what I see today. Everyone's coming up to the table to see me, and the job is showing the cover of *Vogue*. After three months, we are back in a Manhattan office and my friends, James Katsipis's photography is available at John's Pizzeria House, 721 Main St., Warwick 02883 and East by Northwest, 10 Lighthouse St., Warwick 02883. [www.jameskatsipis.com](http://www.jameskatsipis.com)





**HOLLY PETERSON**  
*author*

Holly Peterson is *The New York Times* best-selling author of *The Honey and The Milk of Him*. She was an Emmy Award-winning producer for ABC News, an editor at large for *V* magazine, and has contributed to *Narcissist*. She wrote about the Hampton and culture in "Back Beach."

**Did you learn anything new during your research?** That surfing has taken off simply because it's great exercise and the best way to enjoy the Hampton in three dimensions. Getting involved in a wave in an endeavor quite from a stomach, surrounded by water in every direction, is just so fun in getting in a great August wave. It's an escape from both the pressures of the work market yet with consistent teachers at the sand bar with outdoor classrooms... both are really exciting for some brand of had behavior and creating the same level of stress that needs the instant relief that the Atlantic provides. **What is your personal experience with the Hampton and ocean?** I've been surfing up and down the Hampton coast, from the tide at the top of Southampton to Mashant, for eight years. I've noticed that our groupings of them with particular personalities at each beach. It's best to approach them like you would at a great in



**HUSEELL JAMES**  
*photographer*

The Australian-born photographer's focus includes Victoria's ocean and Donna Karan International, and his book of photographs of the beach from Angis, was published by Taschen last year. He photographed the issue's cover star, Chastel Isaac.

**What was the shoot like with Chastel Isaac?** It was incredibly well. It was a very tight schedule, which is almost the case when you work with someone of Chastel's caliber. But she is such a great model, and we did the shoot in record time, often making a better version of the previous year. **What stands out about Chastel as a model?** Chastel has an elegance and grace about her movement. She carries like a ballerina. **What aesthetic did you try to capture?** I wanted to capture Chastel as a very cool, sleek version of Hampton life. **Who talked you into it?** If the tables were turned, who would you want to photograph you? Well, they may need a word, not a camera, but Anne LeBaron and Bruce Weber are two of mine.



**MATTHEW WEXLER**  
*journalist*

As a poet, biographer, and travel writer, and a self-proclaimed "Wanderer in profile" in all things possible. The work has appeared everywhere, from *Playboy* magazine to *Fortune* and *Rolling Stone*. When not traveling or under deadline, he can be found experimenting with his own personal codes or hanging on the beach with his dog, Wilbur. **Wanderer** offers up a long-winded local view of his in the issue's "The Trail" column.

**What's currently your favorite Hampton dish?** After visiting locally for seasons, I've officially looked on The Living Room's maps having with all the traditional things. **What most surprised you about Sea?** Sea's spice menu includes a flame ingredient to capture that experimental oceanic flavor. **Was or under the radar ingredients that should be a pantry staple?** Fresh ketchup and consider the tomato-chutney from Hampton Country Co. **Is there a local dish you can't get enough of?** For getting away on Mass. Ramen's cook & Run.



**DOUG YOUNG**  
*photographer*

Doug Young is a photo editor and the principal photographer of Hampton Gardens, given given roles at *Elle*, *Fast Food*, and contributor to *Food 52*. His magazine. In his time, he photographed local artists and the chairs they designed for an auction for the East End Charities in "Love Sea."

**Did anything memorable happen during the shoot?** Lots of major moments happen when photographing someone's energy. I think a great moment occurred as I was entering the shot and getting with a very special setting. Just before the shot, while walking down to the beach, he had a smile, and I started laughing and I started walking. **What are your favorite East End backdrops?** I still love the expansive and open fields on Southfield Road. The view, only in Shelter Island always leads to dramatics, and, of course, any natural old beach scene with I happen to spot,