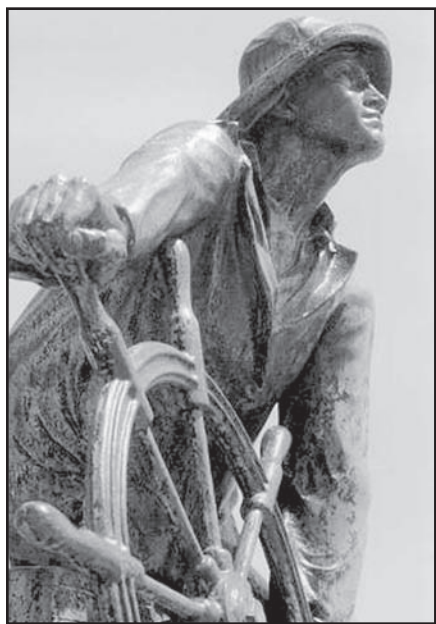


# Witches; Whales; Lobsters and Lighthouses

By Barbara McGovern

Everyone knows about Boston; the history, the museums, the Red Sox's, the Patriots, the great food, the Swan Boats, the book, "Make Way for Ducklings" and the shopping. You've done all that, now what? Did you know that just north of Boston is an area so diverse that you could spend weeks exploring it? Anytime of the year is the perfect time to go "North". There is something for every family member to enjoy. Best of all you don't even need a car to get there. The area is accessible by public transportation, and the Boston area had a great one. You can go by the "T", the commuter rail and the Salem Ferry. You can get most places in less than a half hour. Don't you envy them? Depending how much time you have to spend I would recommend that you visit Salem, Gloucester and Rockport for sure. If time allow, include Marblehead and Newburyport also.

The first day, take the Salem Ferry from Boston to Salem. Enjoy the views as you slip along at 30 knots. When you arrive go right to the Salem Trolley at 8 Central St., 978-744-5469, and book a tour. It will give you an overview of the town from one of their charming trolleys.



Man at the Wheel

You will cover 400 years of history in about an hour. You will learn about witches, architecture, pirates, maritime treasures and the House of the Seven Gables. You might even meet a real witch or a pirate, you never know around here. You get same day shuttle service between 12 different sites and attractions. Get here early and stay late, there is so much to do in town. Be sure to visit the Salem Maritime National Historic Site. It is worth a visit.. You can also take the "T" from Boston to Salem in about 25 minutes. The kids would enjoy this.

Next, take the "T" to Gloucester, about a 25 minute ride. Gloucester is America's oldest seaport, founded in 1624. Go to the Seven Sea's Wharf and you'll enjoy the sight and the smell of the sea. The perfect way to begin today's adventure is the board "The Schooner Thomas E. Lannon," which leaves from the wharf. This is a family operation, owner Tom Ellis, his wife Kay and his son Heath at the helm, welcome you aboard. This is a peaceful sail, no sea sick pills necessary. Your kids will help to raise the sails and as the wind fills the sails you can imagine it might be 100 years ago. You will sail around the harbor, enjoying the beautiful views. You will pass Hammond Castle (yes, a real castle) and the Eastern Point Lighthouse before you return to port. Next go next door to the Gloucester House Restaurant. This is the spot to enjoy a New England tradition, a dine in the rough lobster bake. The lobsters are trapped by the lobstermen who tie up right here on the 359 year old wharf. One of the best parts of the dinner is meeting Lenny Linquata, the owner. He delight you with stories about local history during the meal. Lenny will ever demonstrate the proper way to eat a lobster. After lunch be sure to go to Stacy Blvd. where you can view the famous stature of "The Man at the Wheel." Visit the sites and props from the film, "The Perfect Storm" and be sure to visit the Maritime Heritage Center, only a block from the wharf. Learn about the wonder of the sea. This is a fun, hands on way to learn about



Schooner

the historic waterfront. Whale watching is another fun thing to do. There are several whale watching cruises in Gloucester, Rockport, Salem and Newburyport. If lighthouse's are your thing, there are 6 on Cape Ann alone. You can even book a cozy dinner for two through the Lighthouse Preservation Society in Newburyport.

Your next port of call is Rockport. I must admit that this is one of my favorite places. It is a little village that begs you to photograph every thing you see. One place you have to get a photo of the old boat house, it's called Motif #1 and if one of most photographed place on the East Coast. You will see why. If you are town for the 4th of July you will catch the Fireman Parade with fire engines from all over New England and beyond. After the parade there is a huge bonfire on the beach and then a concert by the American Legion Band. It is truly a Norman Rockwell painting come to life. If you like to shop or just brows this is the place to come. Steeped in a rich seafaring and art history it has the same charm it has had for over 170 years. It is a charming town with good food, beautiful views and the sea all around you. Again, we are talking about 25 minutes from Boston on the good old "T".

It is amazing that there is so much to see in an area that is so close to one of the great American cities, Boston. I have only shown you a some of the beauty of the area. Experience for yourself the sights and tastes of this lovely region.

To get information please call Julie Cook at 978-977-7760: 1-800-743-5306 at North of Boston or go to [www.northofboston.org](http://www.northofboston.org) and [www.escapenorth.com](http://www.escapenorth.com).