

Norhegan Island

an art lover's guide





WELCOME!

What's in this guide

- How to get to Monhegan
- Provisioning for a day trip or a multi-day stay
- Places to eat & places to stay
- Learn about the Monhegan Museum of Art and History and its current shows
- How to visit Artist Studios on the island
- A guide on what to expect when you are on the island
- How to be a good guest and steward

Download the guide to your smartphone or mobile device to click through on the links.

Use [Google Lens](#) to help you explore more about each of the photos.





THE ISLAND & ITS HISTORY

very brief

Monhegan Island is situated 12 nautical miles off the coast of Maine. Once a seasonal hunting and fishing ground for the Wabanaki people, the island's name, **Monhegan** means **out-to-sea island**.

It is a remote, breathtaking, and serene setting that has long been a source of inspiration for artists.

In the late 19th century, Monhegan's rugged cliffs, dense forests, and sweeping coastal views began to attract artists hoping to capture its daily life and landscape. By the early 1900s, it became a thriving artist colony, welcoming notable figures like Edward Hopper, Rockwell Kent, and the Wyeth family. The island continues to be a haven for contemporary artists, who are drawn to its quiet beauty.

Today, the Island is home to busy fishing and tourism industries. At its heart is The Monhegan Museum of Art & History, which preserves its cultural and artistic legacies, and showcases dynamic works from both past and present.

For visitors, exploring Monhegan's art studios and galleries offers a glimpse into the island's enduring creative spirit, where art and nature come together in a way that feels both vital and embracing.



GETTING TO MONHEGAN

COFFEE, LUNCH, AND PROVISIONING SPOTS ALONG YOUR ROAD TRIP



- Stop at Honey's in Thomaston for takeaway. Grab a fried chicken sandwich or the hand-dipped tenders with scratch-made dipping sauces. **Pro tip:** Get the Fried Chicken Tikka Masala sandwich and the Elote Potato Wedges. This is the perfect spot to get a to-go lunch to eat on the ferry.
- Visit Honey's sister shop in Tenants Harbor, Ancho Honey for grab-and-go salads and gourmet grilled cheeses. Check out their extensive daily specials and the Friday Fish Fry sandos.
- Pack your cooler at Main Street Markets in Rockland. Get pre-made sandwiches (like the curried chicken salad wrap), cheeses, wine, and savory biscuits, perfect for afternoon snacking while on the island.
- Squid Ink Coffee - Grab a locally made coffee at this sweet spot in Port Clyde. Follow them on social media and watch out for the seasonal "squid hunts." Search for handmade crocheted squids around the shop. Bring your squid back to the cafe for a free coffee and keep your new stuffie friend.
- Ruckus Donuts- is highly sought after by locals and visitors alike, their creative flavors are outstanding, but the classic glazed brioche is a fan favorite for a reason. **Pro Tip:** order online ahead of time and pick up in the morning on your way to/from the ferry!



THE FERRY & ARRIVAL

THERE ARE THREE MAIN PORTS FROM WHICH YOU CAN TAKE A FERRY TO MONHEGAN ISLAND

1. Port Clyde: Monhegan Boat Line

Offers multiple daily departures, providing flexibility for day trips or overnight stays. Known for its reliable service and comfortable boats. The only year-round service. monheganboat.com

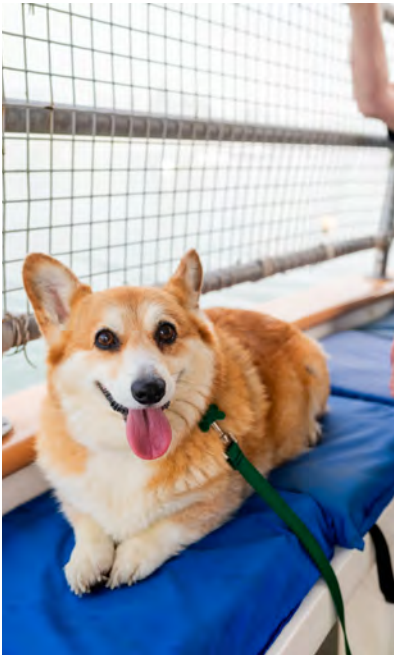
2. New Harbor: Hardy Boat Cruises

Offers daily round trips during peak season, with a focus on passenger-only cruises. Provides opportunities for wildlife viewing and other marine experiences. hardyboat.com

3. Boothbay Harbor: Balmy Days II

Offers daily round trips during the summer season, combining a ferry ride with a scenic cruise around Monhegan Island. balmydayscruises.com

Important Notes: There are no car ferries to Monhegan Island. All ferries are passenger-only. Arrive early to park and secure your luggage, pets, and coolers. Once on Monhegan, many Island accommodations have dockside trucks that will help transport your luggage.





THE MONHEGAN MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY

A Glimpse into Island Heritage

The Monhegan Museum of Art & History invites visitors to explore the Island's captivating history and vibrant artistic legacy. Housed at the iconic Monhegan Light Station, the museum offers a unique hub from which to explore the Island's past and present.

The mission: "Monhegan Museum of Art & History stewards and shares the cultural memory of the Island to connect people to this place, its history, and each other. Our vision is to be an enduring tribute to the power of place to foster community and artistic creativity." (monheganmuseum.org)

A visit is **essential** for understanding the Island's character and the people who have shaped its story.

Highlights include:

- Art Collection: Embark on a journey of discovery as you encounter a diverse array of artistic styles and mediums, each one a unique interpretation of Monhegan's breathtaking beauty.
- Island History: Journey through time, exploring the Island's early inhabitants, its thriving fishing industry, and the development of its renowned artist colony.
- Lighthouse Legacy: Uncover the fascinating history of the Monhegan Lighthouse and the dedicated individuals who tended its light.
- Artistic Titans: Explore the lives and works of influential artists Rockwell Kent and James Fitzgerald through the museum's preservation of their historic homes and studios.

Jennifer Pye, Director of the Monhegan Museum of Art & History, emphasizes:

"Our collection is a remarkable resource of artistic and historical pieces. Thanks to the countless talented residents and visiting artists who have captured the island's essence, we have a wealth of material to share. Each season, we curate exhibitions that showcase different facets of island life and history and that tell the island's stories in new and engaging ways."



THE COLLECTIONS

Fine Art: The best part about seeing the art, is that you will live and breathe its imagery around you in the daily life of Monhegan. At the museum, you can immerse yourself in a comprehensive collection showcasing the work of artists captivated by Monhegan's enduring allure. From the early Impressionists to contemporary masters, the museum presents various styles and perspectives. You can expect to see landscapes that showcase the Island's rugged beauty, abstract and figurative works that reflect diverse perspectives, and vibrant color palettes that bring the Island's essence to life.

You will see through the eyes of pioneering artists such as Robert Henri, Jamie Wyeth, Maud Briggs Knowlton, George Bellows, and Lynne Drexler, whose works are profoundly influenced by the Island's unique charm. Uncover the talents of lesser-known artists who found inspiration on Monhegan and contributed to the Island's vibrant artistic tapestry.

Through the museum's preservation of their historic homes and studios, you can dive deeper into the creative worlds of Rockwell Kent and James Fitzgerald.

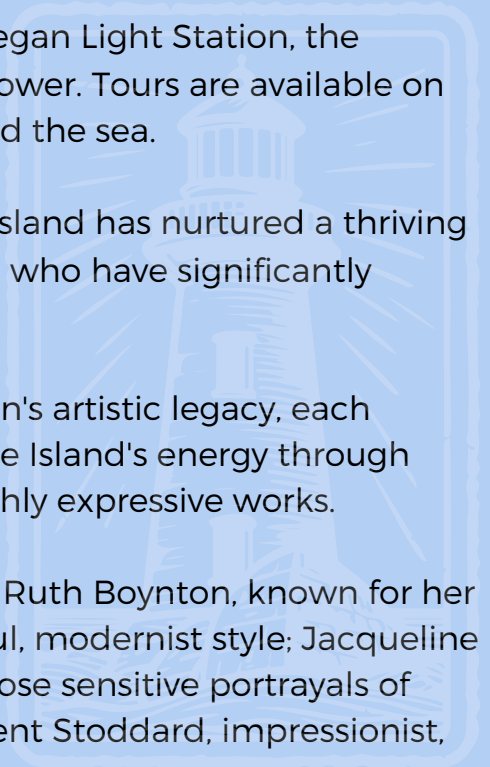
Historical Artifacts: Step into the lives of Monhegan's inhabitants as you journey back in time through a collection of artifacts. Each item, from fishermen's tools, military uniforms, and band instruments - to everyday household items, tells a personal story and documents the Island's transformation over the years.

A Maritime Monument: Housed within the historic Monhegan Light Station, the museum offers an opportunity to explore this iconic light tower. Tours are available on select days and provide unparalleled views of the Island and the sea.

Women Artists: Often associated with male masters, the Island has nurtured a thriving and powerful community of women artists since the 1800s who have significantly contributed to Monhegan's artistic legacy.

These talented women left an enduring mark on Monhegan's artistic legacy, each reflecting a unique, personal perspective. They captured the Island's energy through dramatic landscapes, intimate details of island life, and highly expressive works.

Notable women artists associated with Monhegan include Ruth Boynton, known for her striking landscapes; Marguerite Zorach, for her bold, colorful, modernist style; Jacqueline Hudson, renowned for her vibrant colors; Sylvia Alberts, whose sensitive portrayals of island life are highly sought after by collectors; and Alice Kent Stoddard, impressionist, and famous portrait painter.





Lighthouse Hill



The harbor approach

THE WOMEN ARTISTS OF MONHEGAN (WAMI)

WAMI, the Women Artists of Monhegan Island, significantly impacted the island's modern art scene. Founded in 1990 by Elena Jahn and Frances Kornbluth, the group formed to create more exhibition opportunities for women artists both on and off Monhegan. During its tenure, WAMI fostered a strong sense of community and shared purpose among its members.

In 2024, the Monhegan Museum of Art & History celebrates WAMI's legacy with the exhibition "A Common Bond." Featuring works by 16 long-time members, the show presents a rich tapestry of artistic expressions that flourished within the group, including watercolor, oils, and sculptural pieces.

Artist and Poet Kate Cheney Chappell, a longtime WAMI member, shared her thoughts:

"We were individuals who came together in a circle, listened and heard each other. At a particular time and in a rare place, we supported one another as a community through our stories, our resilience, and our mutual passion for art." (WAMI Essay, A Common Bond pg. 98)

See more about the 2024 exhibition and learn more about this remarkable group at monheganmuseum.org



Sculpture by Monhegan Artist, Daphne Pulsifer, made from recycled beach floats and found objects



ART & ARTISTS

You can visit artists' studios on Monhegan Island.

Many artists on Monhegan welcome visitors to their studios. (Yes it's true!) It's a wonderful opportunity to see their creative process firsthand and purchase original artwork.

To find out which artists are open to visitors and their studio hours, you can:

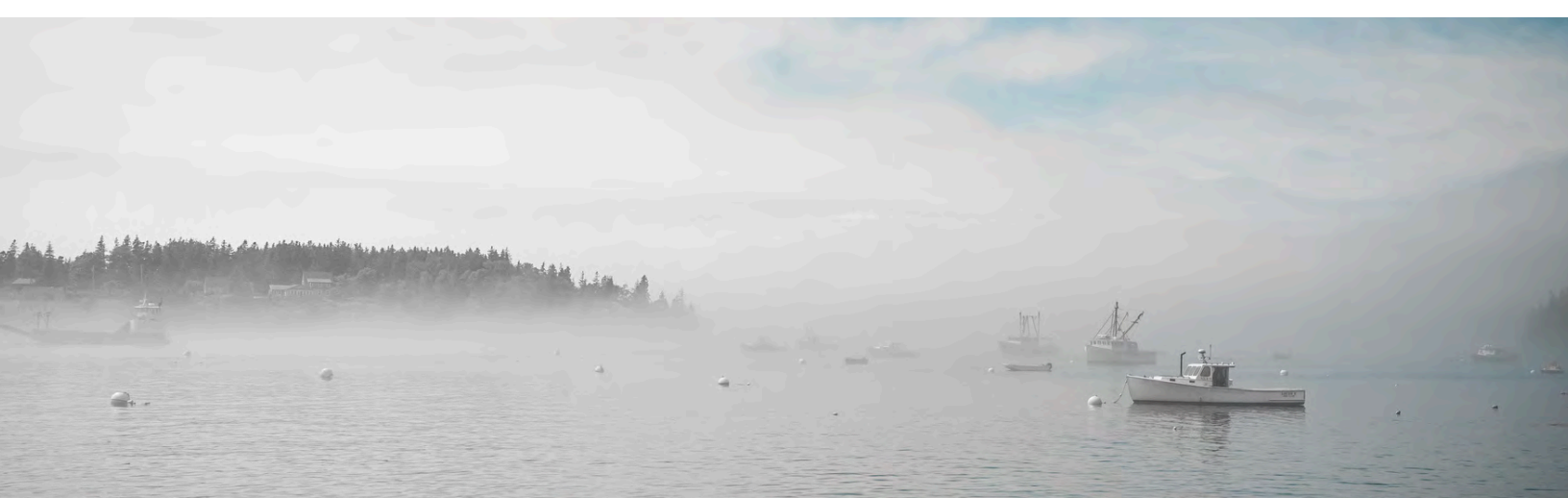
- Check the bulletin boards located around the island's village. Inquire at local galleries for information about artist studio hours.
- Ask locals or your innkeeper for recommendations. They often know which artists are welcoming to visitors.

Remember, as with any visit, it's essential to be respectful of an artist's time and space. Enjoy the experience and appreciate the opportunity to connect with the island's artistic community.

Pictured: Top: Miss Monhegan by Daphne Pulsifer at the Edison Studio. Middle: The Donna Cundy Studio

The Lupine Gallery offers artists a chance to restock supplies with a curated selection of papers, paints, and brushes. It is also a wonderful gallery and mounts shows seasonally featuring island artists.





ACCOMMODATIONS

MONHEGAN ISLAND OFFERS A VARIETY OF ACCOMMODATIONS TO SUIT STYLES, PREFERENCES, AND BUDGETS.

Hotels

- The Island Inn: This classic hotel offers stunning ocean views, a restaurant, and a charming atmosphere. It's a popular choice for couples and families.
- The Monhegan House: A historic bed and breakfast with individually decorated rooms and a focus on comfort and hospitality.
- Trailing Yew: A rustic retreat with a focus on simplicity and nature. Offers a unique experience with shared dining and limited electricity in some buildings.

Bed and Breakfasts

- Shining Sails Bed & Breakfast: Offers modest rooms and apartments, some with ocean views, and a continental breakfast.
- John Sterling Harbor House: A quaint B&B with harbor views, offering a cozy and welcoming atmosphere.
- Cracked Mug B&B: A small and charming B&B with attention to detail and a personalized experience.

Cottages and Apartments

- Hitchcock House: Offers a variety of accommodations, including rooms, efficiency apartments, and cabins.
- Tribler Cottage: A relaxing cottage with meadow views, perfect for a peaceful getaway.
- Monhegan Cottage Rentals: Offers a range of cottages and apartments with different sizes and amenities.



FOOD & DRINK

Dining & Takeaway

- The Island Inn Dining Room: Enjoy fine dining with stunning harbor views. Locally sourced ingredients and fresh seafood. Reservations recommended.
- The Barnacle: Casual dining offering sandwiches, salads, chowder, and pastries. Perfect for a quick bite or picnic.
- Fish House Fish Market: Fresh seafood to-go or dine-in. Enjoy delicious fish and chips or lobster rolls. Insider tip: Try the shrimp tacos, a plate of oysters, and the hot buttered lobster roll. It does not get any fresher or better in Maine. Grab a table on Fish Beach and dig in. The salt air and the water views of Manana Island add to the flavor and the ambiance.
- Palette Crêperie: Offers a variety of sweet and savory crepes in a mini food truck.
- The Novelty: Pizza restaurant serving up classic pies and unique island specialties. Try the “Red Ferrari” with house-made burrata and Calabrian hot honey. Great spot for beer and wine.
- The Monhegan House Dining - Three course or a la carte dining options. Exquisite menu featuring local specialties.
- Nite Nite Fatty's - Nightly bakery hosted on the porch of the Monhegan House. Serves a variety of stellar cakes, pies and cookies, including gluten free and vegan options. “Fatty Hour” runs from 6-8pm in season.

Markets, Cafés, and Breweries

- The Black Duck - Coffee Spot and Emporium, serving coffees and pastry, showcasing Maine-made crafts.
- Monhegan Brewing Company - Located on the Southside of the Island - this is the perfect stop after a hike or a day of painting. Grab a tasting flight of locally brewed beer and a light bite at the nearby food truck, “The Bait Bag.”
- Monhegan Coffee Roasters at the Mooring Chain - Freshly Baked Bagels, Pastries, Sandwiches and Coffee.
- The Monhegan Store - Locally made provisions, veggies, groceries, and wine. Try the house made chicken nuggets and garlic toum.





SUSTAINABILITY & PRESERVATION

ISLANDERS ARE CAREFUL TO PRESERVE THE LONG-STANDING CULTURAL TRADITIONS & RESPECT FOR NATURE. OVER 2/3 OF THE ISLAND IS COVERED BY A NATURAL PRESERVE.

With that in mind, here are some helpful tips to be a good guest when visiting the island:

- Visitors come to Monhegan for the relaxed pace and serenity. “Monhegan Midnight” is 8pm. Respect local quiet hours and take a deep breath. This is the perfect place to unwind and connect with yourself, the beauty of nature, and other guests.
- Be mindful of electricity, internet, and water use. These utilities are extremely expensive on the island. There is little to no A/C on the island - so cool off at one of the beaches, or get a cold drink or an ice cream when the weather gets warm. Turn off your phone and streaming services and enjoy the scenery and conversation.
- Do not smoke or use open flames for campfires. Signs are posted everywhere on the island stating “Serious Fire Potential” and they mean it. Wood buildings, offshore winds, dry brush and driftwood are the perfect kindling - and that means that it takes a concerted effort to keep the island safe from fire. If you do have to smoke, ask your hotel or rental host about protocols and where to best dispose of refuse.
- Make way for Island Vehicles - They have the right-of-way at all times. Island Roads are unpaved and at times narrow. Be mindful of the trucks that are making deliveries of everything from luggage, mail, and groceries, to hotel supplies.
- There is a lot of walking on Monhegan. The roads are rocky and can be difficult to traverse if you use any devices for mobility assistance. Many visitors bring trekking poles for hiking and daily outings. A small handful of golf carts are available for rent for medical necessity only.
- Monhegan is a dog-friendly paradise. You will meet many canines on a daily basis. Pick up after your dog and follow all local laws. Dogs MUST be leashed AND under voice control.
- For all local rules and regulations, visit monheganwelcome.com





ENHANCING YOUR TRIP

MUSEUMS & WORKSHOPS



Monhegan on Canvas: The Farnsworth Art Museum is home to a remarkable art collection that captures the allure of Monhegan Island. Open year round, visitors to the museum in Rockland are invited to fully immerse themselves in works showcasing the island's rugged beauty and captivating atmosphere. The collection offers a unique opportunity to experience Monhegan through the eyes of some of America's most celebrated artists. *(Middle picture: Artist Jamie Wyeth speaks with Chief Curator, Jaime DeSimone)*

Learn more at farnsworthmuseum.org.



Take A Workshop: Oil, Watercolor, Fiber, and Multimedia Artists offer seasonal workshops and demonstrations on Monhegan. A quick web search for **“Monhegan Artist Workshops”** provides countless opportunities to explore your creative side. Most Monhegan Accommodations also offer listings of hosted workshops each season. Check your Inn or B&B website for more information.



Created for:



MAINE.

VISITMAINE.COM

Created by:

CAPSHORE
Photography



**Kristin
Fuhrmann-Simmons**



This itinerary was researched and produced on the unceded ancestral lands and waters of the Wabanaki Nation. We are grateful for their historic stewardship of these lands and waters.