



Here Comes

It's sweet summertime on the East End, and with the sunshine comes a chance to spend full days outdoors. The Hamptons and North Fork offer an abundance of options for fun in the sun. Whether you want a full cardio workout or a gentler introduction to outdoor living, check out the tips below for making the most of your East End summer.

OUTDOOR YOGA

There's no better way to salute the return of sunshine and warm breezes than to take an outdoor yoga class. Yoga and nature have always been paired. "All yoga poses are based on nature," says Jenna Raynell, a local yoga instructor who recently launched East End Mermaid with musician Joe Van Asco. Raynell continues: "They say that there are eight million different yoga poses, and eight million species in the world."

East End Mermaid (eastendmermaid.com) is new this year, and features classes that combine outdoor yoga and live music to bring a unique, perfectly Hamptons experience to the summer scene. Raynell teaches, and Van Asco DJs and plays a variety of instruments, including ukulele and guitar. Classes develop organically, as the duo play off of each other, and read the energy of the students. "Music, like yoga, is a powerful tool to uplift your spirit," says

Raynell. "It makes people lighthearted and gives them the energy and willingness to try new things in class."

East End Mermaid class times and locations are still being finalized, but some of the sessions will be held on the beach. "There's nothing like hearing the waves crashing and feeling the elements around you as you practice," says Raynell. "It's beautiful." Though doing yoga on the sand is more challenging than practicing on a solid surface, it encourages yogis to let go of control and adapt to the surroundings. Plus, a dip in the ocean is perfect for washing off sand.

"I've fallen in love with teaching outside," adds Raynell. "And I love how teaching outside celebrates this beautiful place where we live."

Outdoor yoga has become a trend on the East End in recent years, with many venues and wineries hosting their own programs. Wölffer Estate Vineyard in Sagaponack (wolffer.com) began offering yoga in the vines last year, and classes will start up again over Memorial Day weekend. "Practicing yoga outside has so many powerful benefits," says yoga instructor and Wölffer event assistant Erica Valesquez. "Whether it's simply breathing in clean air, feeling the sunshine on your skin or challenging your balance on the earth's surface. [I love] being

upside down gazing at the vineyard. It's a fun open-eye meditation, and it helps me dream new ideas."

In addition, One Ocean Yoga (oneoceanyoga.com) holds yoga classes at Channing Daughters Winery in Bridgehampton year-round. Classes overlook the vineyard and sculpture garden. And the Parrish Art Museum (parrishart.org) in Water Mill is partnering with Ananda Yoga for the second consecutive summer to host yoga on its outdoor terrace. Classes will be held every Sunday in July, August and September at 11 a.m. The terrace offers sweeping views of the vines of nearby Duck Walk Vineyards. The patio is covered, so classes will be offered rain or shine.

STAND UP PADDLEBOARDING & KAYAKING

Stand up paddleboarding (SUP) and kayaking provide a unique perspective of the East End's waterways. Both offer an alternative to the adrenaline rush of being in the Atlantic, and both can be either an intense form of exercise or a leisurely but health-conscious mode of transportation.

"Stand up paddling is a unique sport any place, but we have so many perfect bodies of water out here that you can never see it all," says Jim Dreeben, owner of Peconic Paddler (peconicpaddler.com), based in Riverhead. The experience of paddleboarding is akin

the Sun

by Kelly Laffey



to walking on water, and this trendy outdoor exercise continues to gain traction on the East End.

"Kayaks are a bit easier to use and can be paddled easier in wind than SUPs," notes Dreeben.

For stand up paddleboarding beginners—and kayakers who want a break from some of the elements—Dreeben recommends calm spots that are sheltered from the wind. Some of his favorite locations are Red Creek Pond off of Red Creek Road in Hampton Bays; to the left of Long Wharf in Sag Harbor; along Long Beach in Sag Harbor; Georgica Pond in East Hampton; and Cold Spring Pond in Southampton.

Shinnecock Bay, larger and thus more challenging to paddle in than more sheltered areas, is home to an abundance of wildlife. "Last summer, we saw fist-sized baby seagulls on an island 200 yards east of Old Ponquogue Bridge," says Dreeben. "It was so exciting, we went three days in a row. The best time to see them is between June 25 and July 10." He's also spotted scallops and starfish—a more rare occurrence—out here.

"I am impressed that so many people take to SUPing immediately," continues Dreeben. "I give them a few pointers and they get right up, and usually stay up. It is a bit tiring at first, but you get built up fast. SUPing is great for core strength."

More experienced paddlers (both SUPers and kayakers) can showcase their skills at the Paddle Battle Long Island, held on July 18 in the Peconic River in Riverhead. With a number of different categories, a 2.5-mile recreational race, a 5-mile competitive race and a 12-mile elite race, as well as a 200-yard SUP sprint race for ages 12 and under, the event is accessible to paddlers of all abilities. Visit paddlebattleli.com for additional information.

Paddlers who want to push themselves a little more can take part in the 2015 Block Challenge on Saturday, August 29. The 18-mile open ocean paddle leaves from the Montauk Lighthouse and ends at Block Island, Rhode Island. The event raises money for Paddlers for Humanity, a local organization that benefits East End organizations dedicated to bettering the lives of local children. For more info, visit p4h.org.

SURFING

The East End's breakers come as a surprise to some. Casual beachgoers should note that the Atlantic front can be stronger than in other family-friendly areas. If you have kids, stick to lifeguarded beaches, outlined in our beach guide on page 25.

Surfers, however, often rank the East End—and Montauk in particular—among the top breaks on the East Coast. With the ever-changing tides and currents, there's no telling where specifically to find a good break on a given day, so your best bet is to go see for yourself or to ask around. While no surfer will give away their secret spots, a few time-tested, surf-friendly locations are Flying Point in Southampton; Jetty Four in Westhampton Beach; Sagg Main in Sagaponack and Shinnecock Inlet, aka "The Bowl," in Hampton Bays.

And, of course, it's no secret that Ditch Plains in Montauk will always reign supreme as the undisputed surfing capital of Long Island. You should beware of its choppy conditions, rocky bottoms and wild currents, but this is the East End surfing mecca for the experienced wave riders.

Board rentals and lessons are available at both Flying Point Surf & Sport (flyingpointsurf.com) in Southampton and Main Beach Surf & Sport (mainbeach.com) in East Hampton.

A rush for adrenaline junkies, surfing also has therapeutic health benefits. Surfers Healing, an organization dedicated to giving kids with autism an experience on the water, will return to Montauk on September 25. Visit surfershealing.org to learn more, and to sign up to be a volunteer. ☀