



## CAPE COD FACT SHEET



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### Location/region:

Cape Cod, Massachusetts

### Geographical description:

Cape Cod is situated at the extreme southeast corner of Massachusetts, approximately 70 miles from the Cape Cod Canal to Provincetown's Race Point. The Cape is 20 miles at its widest point and completely surrounded by water: Cape Cod Bay on the north, Buzzards Bay on the west, Vineyard and Nantucket Sounds on the south and Atlantic on the east. Cape Cod projects into the ocean in an east-west direction for approximately 35 miles, then becomes narrower and turns northward.

### About Cape Cod:

Cape Cod comprises 15 towns, each with a constellation of villages. There are four regions—Upper, Mid, Lower and Outer Cape. Upper Cape towns comprise Bourne, Sandwich, Falmouth and Mashpee; Mid-Cape towns comprise Barnstable, Yarmouth and Dennis; Lower Cape towns comprise Harwich, Brewster, Chatham and Orleans; Outer Cape towns comprise Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro and Provincetown.

### Area History:

Cape Cod's enduring appellation was coined by English explorer Bartholomew Gosnold on May 15, 1602, after he took 'great stock' of cod from the peninsula's surrounding waters near the Elizabeth Islands and Woods Hole. On November 9, 1620, the *Mayflower* sailed into Provincetown Harbor in Cape Cod Bay, after a 65-day stormy trans-Atlantic voyage. Although several days off course and, given the dangerous waters they knew lay ahead, the Pilgrims decided to settle on Cape Cod. Before doing so, the *Mayflower Compact* was formed, committing all male passengers to cooperate in the new government. On December 15, 1620, *Mayflower* left Cape Cod and sailed for Plymouth, where its colony was established. As the colony grew, different groups decided to move to Cape Cod after being granted permission by the Plymouth government. First settled were Sandwich, Barnstable, Yarmouth and Eastham, where marshes provided acres of wild salt hay and fodder for farm animals. The new Cape Codders farmed and fished (including whaling) and planted seeds brought from England. They plowed acreage, planted corn and vegetables and cut lumber which they fashioned into square, neat little houses. The government in Plymouth taxed net fishing for mackerel, bass and herring on the Cape, using the taxes thus collected for the upkeep of schools. Independence, more than any other attribute,

typified Cape Codders, who grew increasingly belligerent towards British rule culminating in the great war of independence with Great Britain.

Today, countless historic sites & landmarks tell the proud role that Cape Cod has played in American history. The homes of long-ago sea captains line historic 6A. The wealth of the 18th century China trade makes Yarmouth an architect's dream. Ship-building created frame for Dennis during the Golden Age of Sail. Patriotic residents repelled an attack by the British warship Nimrod in 1812 in historic Woods Hole. And, at the tip of the Cape, Provincetown proclaims its living history as an artist's colony and fishing village

**Population:**

Approximately 225,000 year-round residents. That number nearly triples in the summer months of July and August.

**Climate:**

Cape Cod's maritime climate is changeable from day to day. It is more temperate than surrounding areas (*cooler in summer, warmer in winter.*)

*Mean temperatures (Falmouth-Otis Weather Station; all expressed in degrees Fahrenheit):*

	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>
January.....	37°	23°
February.....	38°	24°
March.....	44°	30°
April.....	53°	38°
May.....	64°	47°
June.....	73°	57°
July.....	75°	60°
August.....	77°	62°
September.....	70°	55°
October.....	61°	46°
November.....	52°	37°
December.....	42°	27°

**Cape Cod by the numbers:**

- 115 pristine beaches
- 42 premier golf courses
- 13 historic lighthouses
- 83 museums
- 475 art galleries
- 78 band concerts
- 2,400 places to shop
- 1,100+ places to dine
- 19,000 guest rooms

**Cape Cod beaches:**

Cape Cod has 115 pristine beaches—from the calm and refreshing Vineyard and Nantucket Sound beaches to the glorious, beautiful (and sometimes wild and wonderful) beaches of the Cape Cod National Seashore. And with 559.6 miles of coastline, even in the height of the summer season, one can almost always find some waterfront real estate to be alone. The Cape is also home to 365 ponds. Water sports can be enjoyed practically year-round. Visitors can sail, motorboat, wind and wave surf, canoe, kayak, fish or water ski. There are interesting and informative nature excursions from several locations, including whale watches.

### **Cape Cod Lighthouses:**

Lighthouses are as much a part of Cape Cod as the sea. In fact, for centuries they have guided mariners to safety through treacherous shoals. There are eight working lighthouses on the Cape, mile-for-mile one of the largest concentrations of working lighthouses in the world. Cape Cod, indeed, is the sort of place you would expect to find lighthouses. Sweeping far out into the ocean, the Cape is a substantial obstacle to navigation. In the last 300 years, there have been more than 3,000 documented shipwrecks along Cape shores.

### **Arts & culture:**

Cape Cod is recognized as one the 25 top arts destinations in the country by *AmericanStyle* magazine. Starting at the Canal and extending to Provincetown at the Cape's tip, and in every town and village in between, visitors will find an array of arts & cultural pursuits—everything from symphony concerts, galleries and fine art museums to historical sites and America's oldest theater. Cape Cod now offers a way for residents and visitors to experience twice the culture on Cape Cod at half the price with the *Arts Passport to Cape Cod*, offering 2 for 1 admission to select arts & cultural venues.

### **The Golf Coast:**

There are few areas in the world that can rival Cape Cod when it comes to quality golf. Our reputation for excellence speaks for itself: Cape Cod has produced some of the best golfers in the world, including current Nationwide Tour player Jason Caron, as well as past standouts Jim Hallet and Jeff Lewis and LPGA Tour members Sally Quinlan and Carri Wood. Cape Cod has four of the Top-10 courses in Massachusetts (according to Golf Digest) and one of the Top-four Par-3 layouts in the country. Some of the greatest golf course architects in the world have had a hand in sculpting Cape Cod's most scenic golf vistas, including Donald Ross, William Mitchell, Geoffrey Cornish and Brian Silva, the 1999 *Golf World Magazine* Architect of the Year. And Cape Cod's courses have hosted some of the world's greatest personalities, from President John F. Kennedy and Speaker of the House Thomas "Tip" O'Neill to Arnold Palmer and Chi Chi Rodriguez.

### **The Kennedy Connection:**

The Kennedy family has been connected to Hyannisport on Cape Cod since the 1920s, when family patriarch Joseph Kennedy bought a summer home here. The 1960 presidential election, during which John F. Kennedy was elected the 35<sup>th</sup> US President, helped land Hyannisport on the world map. The Kennedy compound is still a tourist draw today, and the JFK Museum and JFK Memorial in Hyannis remain among the most popular Cape Cod attractions.

### **"Photogenic" Cape Cod locales:**

- Province Lands & Provincetown Dunes, Provincetown
- Top of Pilgrim Monument, Provincetown
- Highland Links Golf Course & Highland Lighthouse, Truro
- Cape Cod National Seashore
- Skaket Beach, Orleans
- Chatham Fish Pier
- Cape Cod Rail Trail (26-mile trail Dennis to Wellfleet)
- Top of Scargo Tower in Dennis
- Main Street, Hyannis & Hyannis Harbor
- JFK Memorial, Downtown Hyannis
- Historic Route 6A (Yarmouthport-Barnstable)
- Sandwich Boardwalk
- Heritage Museums & Gardens, Sandwich
- Woods Hole Village, Falmouth
- Cape Cod Canal

**Travel & tourism information:**

*Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce*

Offices: Routes 6 & 132 / P.O. Box 790

Hyannis, Cape Cod, Massachusetts 02601

1-888-33CapeCod (888-332-2732) or 508-362-3225

Website: [www.CapeCodChamber.org](http://www.CapeCodChamber.org)

*Visitor Information Centers:*

Route 6 & 132 Welcome Center, Hyannis

Route 3 South (exit 5) Plymouth

Route 25, Plymouth (approx ½ mile before Bourne Bridge)