

## The Five-Point Weekend Escape Plan

## Forgo Fist-Pumping on the Jersey Shore

Leave the guidos behind to soak up Spring Lake's pristine beaches, uncrowded surf, and vintage boardwalk.

By Cemile Kavountzis  
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## Where to Stay



Enjoy beachfront views at the Breakers.

(Photo: Courtesy of The Breakers)

Sleep steps from the beach at **the Breakers on the Ocean** (from \$220), the sole beachfront hotel among Ocean Avenue's tony residential mansions. It's also one of the few places in town with a liquor license, so order a cocktail on the wraparound porch.

Request the Turret room at the **Spring Lake Inn** (from \$199) to get a Jacuzzi tub and sprawling ocean views.

Lounge among ten-foot-high canopy beds and decorative parlor chairs at the historic **Normandy Inn** (from \$159), a B&B adorned in ornate Victorian-style décor. Complimentary beach passes (forgoing the \$8 cover charge) and ten free loaner bikes are available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

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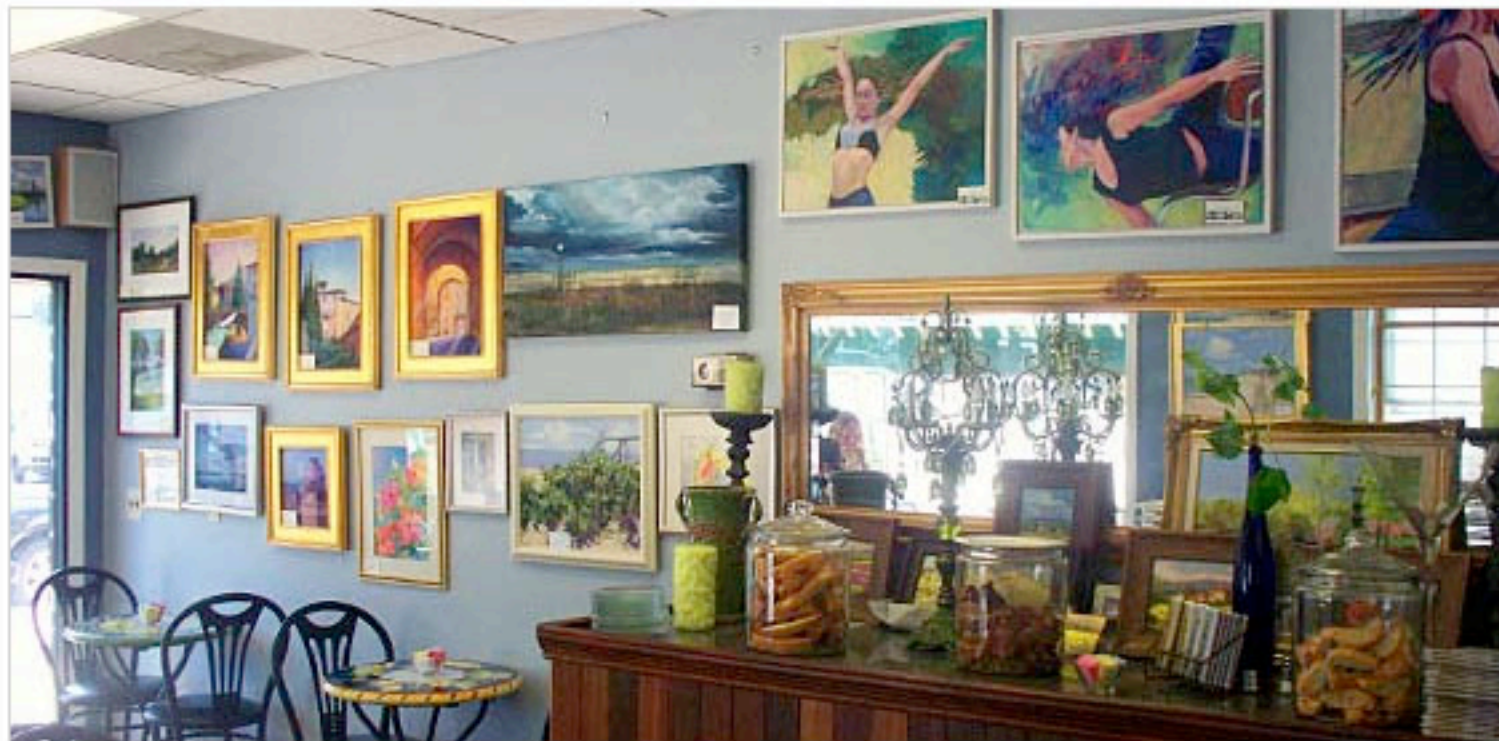
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### Where to Eat



Gorge on salads, pastas, and tiramisu at Café Artiste.

(Photo: Courtesy of Café Artiste)

Pick up some wine at **Egan's** (516 Warren Avenue; 732-449-7090) and BYO to **Whispers** (200 Monmouth Avenue; 732-974-9755), a dimly lit, fourteen-table eatery serving seafood from the New Fulton Fish Market and locally sourced produce.

Delve into fresh pastas, hefty panini, and made-to-order Tuscan-style salads at the family-run **Café Artiste** (306 Morris Avenue; 732-974-3433), where the menu changes daily. Leave room for the tiramisu, served from a ceramic pan inherited from the owner's nonna.

Order turkey-salad slugger sandwiches at **Who's on Third** (1300 Third Avenue; 732-449-4233), a baseball-themed, fifties-era luncheonette. The restaurant roasts several 40-pound turkeys a day and bakes its own rye bread.

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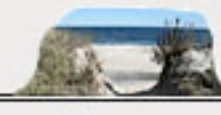
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## What to Do



Sign up for surf lessons at Barewires Surf &amp; Skate Shop.

(Photo: Courtesy of Barewires Surf &amp; Skate)

Snag one-of-a-kind bikinis at **Waterlily** (1203 Third Avenue; 732-223-1008), where owners Abbey Holloway and Catherine Devine handpick hard-to-find specialty lines like Bantu from Colombia and Maaji from Ethiopia, featuring vibrant African prints. All swimwear is half-off during the annual sidewalk sale August 21 to 22.

Admire hand-shaped surfboards from small manufacturers at **Barewires Surf & Skate** (219A Morris Avenue; 732-359-7780), which opened last May. Get a private lesson (\$45 an hour) on beginner-friendly soft boards; avoid the \$8 beach fee by going out before 9 a.m.

Watch the Marbleheaders model yacht club hold remote-controlled mini-regattas at the town's spring-fed namesake lake (Saturdays at 2:30 p.m.; Sundays at 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.).

Coast the waves on a body board from the **3rd Ave. Surf Shop** (\$35 per day to rent; from \$40 to buy), a beach and skateboarding store a block from Divine Park. The best spot for beginners to catch a wake is on the south side of the jetty at North End Surfing Beach.

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## Insider's Tip



Avoid the crowds at Essex Avenue Beach.

(Photo: Stinkie Pinkie's [Flickr](#))

While most day-trippers flock to the North End and South End pavilions for easy access to food, find a secluded strip of shore on **Essex Avenue Beach**. You're within ogling distance of the surfers at Monmouth Avenue Beach, without any of the 'tude.