



MV VACATION · THE ISLAND, VERIFIED

What Martha's Vineyard Really Costs

The honest budget guide: ferry fares by the day of the week, the room tax every town charges, what a lobster roll and a gallon of gas cost this summer, and four whole trips added up line by line.

THE HONEST BUDGET GUIDE · EDITION 2026-27 · PRICES CHECKED AGAINST OPERATORS' OWN PUBLISHED RATES, SEPTEMBER 2026



MENEMSHA · 41°21'N 70°46'W · THE HONOR-SYSTEM FLOWER STAND ON THE COVER



ONE ISLAND, FOUR VERY
DIFFERENT BILLS • THE DOTS
ARE THE FERRY TOWNS AND THE
FAR END OF THE ROAD

HOW TO READ THE PRICES

Every figure is an operator's own published 2026 rate or a range read off real menus and rate cards, checked in August and again in September 2026. Ranges are honest ranges, not averages. **Prices move every season;** the structure of the bill does not.

11.7%

ROOM TAX IN ALL SIX TOWNS

5.7% STATE + 6% LOCAL • ON RENTALS TOO

START HERE

The honest number

The Vineyard is not one price. The same week costs \$1,218 or \$7,105 depending on four decisions you make before you book anything.

The four decisions

- 1. The car.** Bringing it adds \$254–\$336 round trip in summer plus mainland-lot maths if you leave it behind instead. The buses are free. This is the biggest single swing on the bill.
- 2. The week.** A bed that costs \$600 in the first week of August costs \$250–\$350 in late September, and the beaches are warmer.
- 3. The kitchen.** A rental or a kitchenette room turns a \$100 food day for two into a \$50 one. The island's groceries cost more than the mainland's; the island's restaurants cost far more than its groceries.
- 4. The tax line.** Add 11.7% to every lodging quote you see, including the cleaning fee on a rental. It is the line most budgets forget.

Four trips, added up

Each of these is worked line by line on page 10, from the rates in this guide. Planning figures, not quotes.

TRIP	TOTAL
Shoestring week • two adults, September, hostel, bus, cooking	\$1,218
Sensible week • two adults, June or September, inn, car left in Falmouth	\$3,304
August family week • two adults, two kids, car on the boat, 2-bedroom rental	\$7,105
Long weekend, done well • two adults, three August nights, luxury hotel	\$4,762

WHAT A DAY COSTS, PER PERSON, BEFORE THE BED

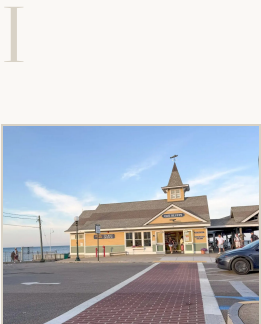
STYLE	FOOD	GETTING AROUND	DOING THINGS	DAY, PER PERSON
Cook and walk	\$25–\$35	\$0 (bus)	\$0–\$20	\$25–\$55
Casual	\$45–\$65	\$25–\$35 (bike)	\$20–\$30	\$90–\$130
Comfortable	\$80–\$120	\$0–\$50 (bus, taxi)	\$50–\$70	\$130–\$240
Upscale	\$150–\$250	\$75–\$125 (car, split)	\$100–\$140	\$325–\$515

Food bands are the ones our Trip Cost Calculator uses; they assume three meals and a coffee. Getting-around figures are per person per day for a rented bike, or a rental car split two ways. Room tax and meals tax are on page 4.

The one rule: *the ferry is the only cost you cannot negotiate with. Everything after the boat, from the bed to the lobster roll, has a cheaper honest version, and this guide names it.*



VINEYARD HAVEN AND OAK
BLUFFS · WHERE EVERY BOAT
LANDS



OAK BLUFFS

The Steamship Authority terminal at the foot of the pier, where the summer boats land

THE DAY-OF-WEEK TRICK

*Sail the car over Monday to Thursday in summer and back the same way: **\$82 saved** on the round trip against a Friday-to-Sunday crossing, and the boats are emptier.*

THE BOAT AND THE CAR · I

Getting there: the fixed cost

Passengers are cheap. Cars are not. The Steamship Authority publishes every fare, and the calendar decides most of them.

STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY · WOODS HOLE, ONE WAY

WHO OR WHAT	RATE	NOTES
Adult	\$11.00	Round trip \$22; walk-ons never need a reservation
Child 5 to 12	\$5.75	Under 5 sail free
Bicycle	\$5.25	Cheaper than one day of island bike rental
Car under 17 ft · May 15 to Sep 14	\$127 Mon–Thu · \$168 Fri–Sun	Everyone in the car pays the passenger fare on top
Car · Sep 15 to Oct 31	\$127 every day	The premium ends September 15
Car · Nov to Dec	\$79	From October 23 every boat lands at Vineyard Haven
Car · Jan to Mar	\$73.50	The cheapest crossing of the year
Car · Apr to May 14	\$115.50	Summer weekends sell out months ahead
Mainland parking · Falmouth lots	\$25 a day Apr–Oct · \$20 winter	Rate on the day you enter; free shuttle to the boat

Boats land at Vineyard Haven or Oak Bluffs; rates published on steamshipauthority.com, checked September 2026. Over 17 feet pays length-bracket rates. First date change free, then \$10 each; cancellations refund less \$10; standby is never cheaper and not offered on summer weekends. 2027 fares unpublished as of September 2026; 2027 reservations open October 20, 2026.

PASSENGER-ONLY BOATS · 2026 · SEASONAL

ROUTE	ADULT	PARKING	SEASON AND NOTES
Falmouth to Oak Bluffs	\$20 OW · \$30 RT	\$20 a day, cash	Late May to Columbus Day; 35 minutes; under 5 free; bikes \$8 RT
Hyannis to Oak Bluffs, high speed	\$41 OW · \$78 RT	\$10–\$30 a day	May to October; about an hour; includes a \$2 fuel surcharge; children 5 to 12 \$25; off-site lot \$5–\$20
New Bedford to Oak Bluffs, high speed	\$49 OW · \$84 RT	\$15 lot · \$30 valet	Mid-April to Columbus Day; an hour, no Cape traffic; children 3 to 12 \$29; from New York on summer weekends \$175 OW
Chappaquiddick ferry · Edgartown	\$5 RT · car \$17 RT		Three minutes, on demand, cash; bike and rider \$8 RT

THE CAR QUESTION, IN DOLLARS

SEVEN SUMMER DAYS	BRING THE CAR	LEAVE IT IN FALMOUTH	FLY IN, RENT THERE
Boat or plane	\$254–\$336 + fares	\$44 for two	from about \$199 each way, Boston
Parking or rental	\$0 (free town lots, time-limited)	\$175 (7 × \$25)	\$150–\$250 a day in August
Getting around	island gas	\$0 bus, or bikes	included
The honest floor	about \$300–\$400	about \$220	varies widely

Most first-time visitors bring the car and use it twice; the buses reach every town and ferry, and the shore bike path links the three down-island towns.



SIX TOWNS, ONE ROOM-TAX

RATE • TWO TOWNS ADD TO THE

MEALS TAX

II

6.25%

MASSACHUSETTS SALES TAX

CLOTHING UNDER \$175 IS EXEMPT

WHY THE CAPE COSTS MORE

Cape Cod towns add a 2.75% wastewater fund fee to lodging. No Vineyard town belongs to it, so the island's 11.7% beats the Cape's 14.45%. Small mercies.

THE TAX LINE • II

Taxes, translated

The Vineyard's taxes are simple once someone writes them down. Here they are, town by town.

ROOM OCCUPANCY TAX • EVERY KIND OF BED

TOWN	STATE	LOCAL OPTION	TOTAL ON YOUR BILL	MEALS TAX
Edgartown	5.7%	6.0%	11.7%	6.25%
Oak Bluffs	5.7%	6.0%	11.7%	7.0% • town adds 0.75%
Tisbury (Vineyard Haven)	5.7%	6.0%	11.7%	7.0% • town adds 0.75%
West Tisbury	5.7%	6.0%	11.7%	7.0% • since July 2025
Chilmark (incl. Menemsha)	5.7%	6.0%	11.7%	7.0% • since July 2025
Aquinnah	5.7%	6.0%	11.7%	6.25%

Rates per the Massachusetts Division of Local Services local-option tables, data current September 18, 2026. Older guides still print 9.7% for Edgartown, Chilmark and Aquinnah; that ended when the three raised the local rate to 6% in 2024 and 2025. West Tisbury and Chilmark adopted the local meals option on July 1, 2025.

What the room tax touches

Everything on the lodging invoice. State law defines taxable rent to include cleaning, linen and booking fees, not only the nightly rate. A \$4,200 week with a \$350 cleaning fee is taxed on \$4,550: \$532 of tax, not \$491.

Not taxed: stays over 31 consecutive days, and homes an owner rents 14 days or fewer a year (the owner's exemption to claim, not yours to assume).

The other rental rules: every short-term rental must be registered with the state and carry \$1 million in liability insurance. A community impact fee of up to 3% exists in state law; no Vineyard town levies it, and Tisbury voters rejected one in April 2026.

What the meals tax touches

Every restaurant, takeout counter, food truck and bar tab: 6.25% statewide, 7% in Oak Bluffs, Tisbury, West Tisbury and Chilmark, which adopted the local 0.75%; Edgartown and Aquinnah have not. Groceries are not taxed; prepared food from a grocery deli is.

No happy hour. Massachusetts has banned discounted-drink promotions since 1984 and still does as of fall 2026, with a town opt-in proposal pending on Beacon Hill. The specials that stretch a Vineyard budget are food specials: lobster night, pasta night, the family barbecue plate.

Sales tax: 6.25% on most goods; clothing and footwear are exempt up to \$175 per item, which makes the sweatshirt-shop economy a little kinder than it looks.

Budget rule of thumb: multiply every lodging quote by 1.117 and every restaurant estimate by 1.07 in four of the six towns, then add the tip. A \$4,000 week of rooms is a \$4,470 week of rooms.



III

\$40

THE HONEST FLOOR, PER PERSON
HOSTEL DORM BED, MAY 15 TO SEP 28 • PUBLISHED "FROM \$45"

TWO DATES THAT MATTER

The hostel closes for the season on **September 28** and the campground on **October 1**. After that the floor rises to the cheapest motel room, around \$120–\$160 in the shoulder weeks.

WHERE THE MONEY SLEEPS • III

The bed is half the bill

Lodging is the largest line on every Vineyard budget and the one with the widest honest range. Here are the bands, by category and season, before the 11.7% tax.

NIGHTLY BANDS • 2026 • BEFORE TAX

CATEGORY	OFF-SEASON • NOV TO APR	SHOULDER • MAY, JUN, SEP, OCT	PEAK • JUL AND AUG
Hostel dorm bed, per person	closed	\$40–\$50	\$40–\$50
Campground tent site	closed	about \$50 • 2-night minimum	\$100–\$150 weekends • 3-night minimum
Budget motel or guesthouse	\$100–\$160	\$150–\$250	\$250–\$400
Mid-range inn or hotel	\$150–\$250	\$250–\$400	\$400–\$700
Bed and breakfast	\$125–\$250	\$200–\$400	\$300–\$600
Luxury hotel or resort	\$200–\$400	\$400–\$700	\$700–\$1,200+
Rental studio or 1-bedroom	\$100–\$200	\$150–\$350	\$250–\$500
Rental 2-bedroom	\$150–\$300	\$250–\$550	\$400–\$800
Rental 3-bedroom	\$200–\$450	\$400–\$800	\$600–\$1,200
Rental 4 bedrooms and up	from \$300	from \$600	\$1,000–\$3,000+

Bands from property booking engines and island rental listings, compiled August 2026 and re-checked September 18; the same bands drive our Trip Cost Calculator. Two live examples of the swing: a year-round Vineyard Haven hotel quoted \$231–\$664 for a February weekend and \$494–\$988 for the same July one; a ten-room Edgartown inn lists \$195–\$225 in winter and \$525–\$625 in August.

Renting a house: the real total

Weekly is the unit. Island rentals go Saturday to Saturday in summer, and the listed rate is rarely the number you pay. Summer 2026 asking prices for a 3-bedroom in Edgartown ran \$3,500–\$9,500 a week, \$2,000 at the floor and \$14,000 at the top; a 2-bedroom in Oak Bluffs listed at \$2,600 in September. Add the **cleaning fee** (\$200–\$700 on most listings, \$1,000 at the top), an agency admin fee of \$75–\$175, the **11.7% tax on all of it**, and on the big platforms a service fee: the largest moved US hosts to a host-only 15.5% on September 15, 2026, so it now hides in the nightly rate.

Resort fees are rare on the island, but the two big Edgartown hotels charge one, well over \$100 a night in July at the one that discloses it. Ask.

Sleeping cheap, honestly

The hostel in West Tisbury sits on a bus route with a full kitchen: the cheapest bed on the island, mid-May to late September. **The campground** near Vineyard Haven prices by date and site and bars dogs in peak; book it in winter.

The Falmouth base camp: a mainland motel at \$90–\$200 plus the \$30 passenger boat beats a \$350 island room for a one- or two-day visit, at the price of a curfew set by the last boat.

The kitchenette is the quiet hero: a fridge and two burners turn a restaurant bill into a grocery bill.

The spread: the same August night runs from a \$40 hostel bunk to a \$1,400 harbor-front suite, thirty-five times over. No other line on the bill moves that far, which is why the bed is the decision to make first.



MENEMSHA, THE FISH-MARKET

END OF THE INDEX · THE

HARBOR TOWNS, THE

RESTAURANT END

IV



KATAMA

A general-store chalkboard, summer 2026: egg sandwich, lunch sandwiches, a lobster roll in the twenties

THE TIP AND THE TAX
Menus show prices before the meals tax (7% in four towns, 6.25% in Edgartown and Aquinnah) and before the tip. A \$42 lobster roll in Oak Bluffs is \$53 by the time you leave the table.

THE LOBSTER ROLL INDEX · IV

Eating: what the menus say

We read the menus so you can budget from real ones. The lobster roll is the island’s reference price, so it gets its own index: the same sandwich runs from \$20 to \$46 depending on where you sit.

\$20	\$24	\$32–\$38	\$42–\$46
THE CHURCH SUPPER FRIDAYS 4 TO 7, MID-MAY TO LABOR DAY · CHIPS AND A DRINK INCLUDED · VINEYARD HAVEN	LOW: COLD, AT THE COUNTER FISH-MARKET ROLL, MENEMSHA · HOT WITH BUTTER \$32	TYPICAL, SIT-DOWN HARBOR-TOWN RESTAURANTS AND CAFES, 2026 MENUS	HIGH THE WATERFRONT TAVERNS: \$42 COLD, \$43 BUTTERED, \$46 WITH BACON; SOME LIST ONLY “MARKET PRICE”

THE REST OF THE INDEX · FROM 2026 MENUS

ITEM	LOW	TYPICAL	HIGH	WHERE THE LOW END LIVES
Ice cream cone, small · large		\$6.60	\$7.60	One harbor stand’s 2026 menu; a dipped cone runs to \$9.75. Most shops post no prices; the board is the price list
Pizza, a slice	\$3.50	\$4	\$5	Slice windows in Edgartown and Oak Bluffs; a whole cheese pie from \$10 at the counter to \$25 at a table
Fish and chips	\$26	\$30	\$32	Six 2026 menus, harbor shack to tavern, land between \$26 and \$32
Breakfast plate, two eggs	\$13	\$15–\$17	\$21	Market cafe to diner to a hotel-district cafe; a benedict \$19–\$23, a lobster benedict \$39
Lunch sandwich or salad	\$15	\$16–\$18	\$28	Cafes and delis at the low end; harbor-room and hotel-district handhelds at the top
Dinner entree, casual	\$22	\$30–\$40	\$49	Burgers \$22–\$28; a 1.5-pound steamed lobster dinner \$40 on two harbor menus
Dinner entree, upscale	\$38	\$50–\$75	\$90	Edgartown dining rooms; specialty cuts go far past this
Four-course prix fixe, up-island		\$139		The island’s one published tasting price, wine extra
Coffee, drip · latte	\$3–\$3.75	\$5–\$5.50		Two 2026 cafe menus; the general stores pour the cheapest cup
Beer, a draft · cocktail	\$8–\$10	\$15–\$19		Tavern drafts; Edgartown dining rooms take cocktails past \$20

Read from 22 posted and online 2026 menus, August and September 2026; a menu is a snapshot and summer prices run above the fall ones. Categories only: we do not rank businesses.

The one BYOB town

Chilmark, Menemsha included, is the island’s only dry town: its restaurants sell no alcohol and you bring your own, paying a charge for chilling, glassware and setups that no 2026 menu prints; ask when you book and expect a per-bottle figure in the teens. West Tisbury and Aquinnah restaurants pour beer and wine only, and the Aquinnah inn forbids bringing your own. The harbor towns have full bars.

Specials nights are the budget

With happy hour illegal, the deals are on plates: a Monday lobster roll at \$27 where the regular one is \$35, a Tuesday steamed lobster with corn at \$25, a midweek barbecue plate, a winter pasta night, dollar oysters on set days. Every harbor town has two or three; the board changes weekly, so read it the day you arrive, not the month before.



WEST TISBURY, THE UP-ISLAND
MARKET AND THE FARM STANDS
· VINEYARD HAVEN, THE YEAR-
ROUND GROCERY



ISLAND PUMP, 2026
*Regular \$5.29, plus \$5.79,
premium \$6.09, diesel
\$6.39, all taxes included*

\$5.29
REGULAR, THE ISLAND
PUMP
SUMMER 2026 · ALL TAXES
INCLUDED

GROCERIES, GAS AND WHEELS · V

The everyday island

Nobody budgets for groceries and gas, and the island charges for both. Then it hands you a free bus, which changes the arithmetic.

Groceries: the island premium

Everything arrives by boat, and the shelf shows it. The only formal study, by the island’s commission in 2007, put groceries **37% above the national average** and 13% above Boston; nobody has measured since, and our own shelf reads say the gap has not closed. Full-service supermarkets serve Vineyard Haven, Edgartown and West Tisbury; small markets fill in every town.

The stock-up move: if you drive, shop in Falmouth before the boat; a discount grocer opened on Davis Straits in November 2024, minutes from the ferry lots. Coolers ride the car deck free.

Farm stands run on the honor system, cash box and price board; not cheap, but the best food on the island and no restaurant required. The **West Tisbury Farmers Market** runs Saturdays June to October and Wednesdays June to August, 9 to noon, at the Ag Hall; admission and parking free.

Gas and the car you brought

Island gas ran \$5.29 a gallon for regular in summer 2026, well above the mainland; fill up in Falmouth. The island is 20 miles end to end, so one tank lasts most visitors the week.

Parking on the island is free in every town, no meters, but time-limited by posted signs on the main streets and scarce in July and August. Edgartown runs a **free park-and-ride lot** by the Triangle with a free shuttle bus downtown; the beach lots are where the fees hide (page 8).

GETTING AROUND, PER DAY · 2026

MODE	COST	THE FINE PRINT
VTA bus, any route	\$0	Fare-free through June 30, 2027, funded by the state; the fare it replaces is \$2 per town in season; every town, every ferry, the airport, the main beaches; bikes ride the front rack free
Rental bicycle	\$25–\$45	Helmet, lock and map included at most shops, some deliver free; a week runs \$110–\$160; e-bikes \$69–\$90 a day, \$320–\$340 a week
Moped	\$65 an hour · \$200 a day	Oak Bluffs is the only town that rents them; Edgartown bans rentals; one rider, no passengers; posted rates vary by the day
Rental car, on island	\$60–\$105 off-season · \$150–\$250 in August	Island agencies price by the day and publish little; Jeeps list from about \$200 a day; sold out on August weekends, so book with the room
Taxi	\$16–\$44 · \$30–\$59	Vineyard Haven to Oak Bluffs, and ferry to Edgartown or the airport, per one operator’s posted zones; ask the fare first. Rideshare works in season, rarely up-island.
Chappaquiddick ferry	\$5 walk-on · \$8 bike · \$17 car, all RT	Cash or card at the ramp; runs on demand

Bike, car, moped and taxi from posted rate cards, August and September 2026. The free bus is why the shoestring week on page 10 works.



AQUINNAH, THE PAID LOT AT
THE CLIFFS · KATAMA AND
EDGARTOWN, THE FREE BEACHES

VI



RENTAL ROW
*The August fleet: the top
of the car-rental band,
every one of them spoken
for on a weekend*

THE LIBRARY TRICK
*The Edgartown and
West Tisbury libraries
lend a **free vehicle
pass** for Long Point or
Wasque, the way they
lend museum passes.
Ask at the desk; it saves
\$25 a day.*

ADMISSIONS, PASSES AND FEES · VI

Doing things: the price list

Most of the island is free to look at. Here is what the rest costs.

BEACHES AND LAND · 2026 FEES

PLACE	FEE	WHO PAYS AND WHEN
South Beach, State Beach, town beaches	\$0	No sticker, free parking; the two big public beaches cost nothing
Moshup Beach lot, Aquinnah	\$35 a day	Land Bank lot below the Cliffs, in season; walk-ins free
Trustees: Long Point, Wasque, Cape Poge	\$25 a day per car	Non-members; Long Point needs an advance pass mid-June to August; on foot or by bike, free
Over-sand vehicle permit (Trustees)	\$250 or \$380	Cape Poge and Wasque, or all island, per the 2026 permit sheet
Norton Point over-sand permit (Edgartown)	\$90 or \$140	Resident and non-resident, last published; the January 2026 breach cut the drive to Wasque, ask first
Lambert's Cove, West Tisbury	\$75 car, \$15 walk-on	Season stickers, residents and West Tisbury renters only, no daily pass; free outside posted hours
Lucy Vincent and Squibnocket, Chilmark	\$100, \$65, \$25 walk-on	Season stickers, residents and Chilmark renters only, confirm with the town; open to all from mid-September
Mytoi garden, Chappaquiddick	\$10, free Nov to Apr	Trustees; children 12 and under free; the Chappy ferry to reach it is on page 3

Admissions, 2026

MV Museum, Vineyard Haven	\$21 · \$18 senior · \$7 child
Polly Hill Arboretum	\$10 · \$5 in winter
Edgartown Lighthouse climb	\$5 · 12 and under free
Gay Head Lighthouse climb	\$6 · ages 13 and up
Cape Poge Lighthouse tour (Trustees)	about \$25 · \$12 child
Flying Horses Carousel, a ride	about \$5 · brass ring rides free
Cottage Museum · Campground walking tour	\$3 · \$15, museum included
Felix Neck sanctuary trails	\$4 · \$3 child
Film Center ticket	\$15 · \$12 members and under 14
Mini golf, Vineyard Haven	\$15 · \$12 child
Alpaca farm visit	\$8 · free Nov to Apr
Derby registration, Sep 13 to Oct 17	\$70 · \$45 senior · \$25 junior

On the water and the road, per person unless noted

Kayak or paddleboard, two hours · day	\$35-\$50 · \$55-\$75
Guided kayak tour	\$75-\$175
Public sunset sail, two hours	\$200
Private sail, the boat, sunset to half day	\$725-\$1,100
Fishing charter, the boat	\$550-\$850 half day · \$1,050-\$1,650 full
Island bus or van tour, shared	\$60-\$65
Walking tour, Preservation Trust	\$30 · \$15 child
Golf, 18 holes, public courses	\$160-\$350 summer · \$100-\$230 shoulder

Admissions from the institutions' own pages, activity bands from operators' 2026 rate cards, September 2026. Public sails are now rare; most boats sell the whole boat. Charters are per boat, split among up to six.



TWENTY THINGS THAT COST

NOTHING, IN FIVE TOWNS

VII

20

FREE THINGS, VERIFIED

EACH ONE CHECKED AGAINST THE
OPERATOR, 2026

THE SEASONAL ONES

The concerts, the Community Sing, the Derby weigh-ins and the flea market are summer and fall fixtures. The beaches, the harbors, the trails and the sunset are year-round.

THE FREE ISLAND · VII

Twenty things that cost nothing

The best of the Vineyard has no ticket window.

EVERY TOWN

The bus

Every route fare-free through June 30, 2027; down-island every 15 minutes in summer, up-island to Menemsha and the Cliffs.

EDGARTOWN · KATAMA

South Beach

Three miles of Atlantic surf, lifeguards in season, free lot, free bus.

OAK BLUFFS TO EDGARTOWN

State Beach

Two calm miles on the Sound, free roadside parking, a bike path the whole way.

MENEMSHA

The sunset

The beach by the jetty at dusk, applause included. A \$24 roll from the fish market makes it the island's cheapest great dinner.

AQUINNAH

The Cliffs overlook

The view is free; only the beach lot below charges. Lighthouse grounds open; the climb is \$6.

OAK BLUFFS

The gingerbread cottages

Three hundred Carpenter Gothic cottages around the Tabernacle; walking the lanes costs nothing, any hour.

OAK BLUFFS AND VINEYARD HAVEN

Sunday band concerts

The town band plays free every Sunday evening in July and August, alternating Ocean Park and Owen Park.

OAK BLUFFS

Community Sing

Wednesday nights at 7:30 in the Tabernacle, July and August, older than anyone alive.

OAK BLUFFS

The brass ring

A ride is about \$5; catch the brass ring and the next one is free, since 1884.

EDGARTOWN

The Derby weigh-ins

Dock Street, daily 8 to 10 AM and 7 to 9 PM, September 13 to October 17. Evenings are the show.

EDGARTOWN

Lighthouse Beach and the harbor walk

North Water Street to the lighthouse past the captains' houses; grounds open, town beach below.

CHAPPAQUIDDICK

The Trustees on foot

Cape Poge, Wasque and Long Point charge cars, never walkers or cyclists. Bike over and walk in.

VINEYARD HAVEN

First Fridays

Main Street and Owen Park open late on the first Friday, June to October and again in December: art, music, no ticket.

ISLANDWIDE

220 miles of trail

Land Bank and Sheriff's Meadow preserves: Menemsha Hills, Cedar Tree Neck, Waskosim's Rock, the State Forest. No fee.

THE LIBRARIES

The passes

Edgartown and West Tisbury lend a free Trustees vehicle pass; most island libraries lend an MV Museum pass for two adults and four children.

VINEYARD HAVEN

Owen Park and the harbor

A town beach a block from the ferry, a bandstand, schooners at anchor.

AQUINNAH

The Thursday flea market

Artisans and vendors on the church grounds, Thursdays from 10 in the morning into late October. Looking is free.

EDGARTOWN

Felix Neck, nearly

Not free, but \$4 buys a whole day of osprey nests and salt-marsh trail.

MENEMSHA AND EDGARTOWN

The working harbors

Draggers unloading at Dutcher Dock, the charter fleet at Memorial Wharf: free, and better than most museums.

EVERYWHERE

The honor-system stands

Flowers, eggs, tomatoes, a chalkboard and a cash box on the roadside. Not free, but the fairest prices on the island and the best souvenir.



FOUR BUDGETS, FOUR BASE

TOWNS

VIII

HOW THESE ARE BUILT
Every line uses a rate from this guide: the ferry table on page 3, the lodging bands on page 5, the food bands on page 2. Lodging is priced mid-band, then taxed. **Your numbers will differ**; the shape will not.

6×

THE SPREAD BETWEEN THE CHEAPEST AND DEAREST WEEK
SAME ISLAND, SAME SEVEN NIGHTS

FOUR TRIPS, ADDED UP · VIII

Four budgets, line by line

The same island, priced four ways. Change one decision from page 2 and watch the total move.

The shoestring week

TWO ADULTS · SEVEN NIGHTS IN SEPTEMBER · WALK ON · HOSTEL · BUS · COOK AND ONE MEAL OUT A DAY

Ferry, two adults round trip	\$44
Hostel dorm, two beds, seven nights at \$45	\$630
Room tax 11.7%	\$74
Food, cook plus one counter meal, \$30 a day each	\$420
Bus, all week	\$0
One paid thing each (a lighthouse, a kayak hour)	\$50
Total, taxes in	\$1,218

The sensible week

TWO ADULTS · SEVEN NIGHTS IN JUNE OR SEPTEMBER · WALK ON, CAR IN FALMOUTH · BUDGET-TO-MID INN · BIKES THREE DAYS

Ferry, two adults round trip	\$44
Falmouth lot, seven days at \$25	\$175
Inn, seven nights at \$250 shoulder rate	\$1,750
Room tax 11.7%	\$205
Food, casual to comfortable, \$100 a day for two	\$700
Two bikes, three days	\$180
A sail, a museum, a tour	\$250
Total, taxes in	\$3,304

The August family week

TWO ADULTS, TWO CHILDREN · SEVEN NIGHTS · CAR ON THE BOAT, FRIDAY TO SUNDAY CROSSINGS · TWO-BEDROOM RENTAL · HALF THE MEALS COOKED

Car round trip, Fri to Sun rate	\$336
Passengers: two adults, two children 5 to 12	\$67
Two-bedroom rental, seven nights at \$600	\$4,200
Cleaning fee	\$350
Room tax 11.7% on rent and cleaning	\$532
Food, groceries plus dinners out, \$150 a day	\$1,050
Beach lots, a charter split, the carousel, ice cream	\$500
Island gas, one fill	\$70
Total, taxes in	\$7,105

The long weekend, done well

TWO ADULTS · THREE AUGUST NIGHTS · FAST FERRY, NO CAR · LUXURY HOTEL · THE GOOD TABLES

High-speed ferry, two adults round trip	\$156
Luxury hotel, three nights at \$900	\$2,700
Room tax 11.7%	\$316
Dinner and lunch out, \$350 a day for two	\$1,050
Taxis, ferry to hotel and back	\$40
A private sail and two bikes for a day	\$500
Total, taxes in	\$4,762

Change one line and watch the total move: put the sensible couple in the hostel and the week drops by \$1,300; give the August family the same rental in the third week of September and it drops by \$2,000; hand the long weekend a car on the boat instead of the fast ferry and it rises by \$300.



Before you spend, ask five things.

Five questions that move a Vineyard budget more than any coupon:

Q1	The car	Do I need it at all, with free buses and flat bike paths? If yes, can I cross Monday to Thursday and save \$82?
Q2	The week	Would the same room in the third week of September, warmer water included, cost half?
Q3	The tax	Is the quote before or after 11.7%, and does it include the cleaning fee, which is taxed too?
Q4	The kitchen	Is there a fridge and a stove, and a supermarket on a bus route? That is a \$50-a-day question for two.
Q5	The free list	Which of the twenty things on page 9 are open my week, and which library will lend me the beach pass?

THE SHELF CONTINUES AT MVVACATION.COM

Trip Cost Calculator	The bands in this guide, priced for your dates, party and style in a minute. mvvacation.com/martha-vineyard-trip-cost-calculator
Martha's Vineyard on a Budget	The under-\$1,200 week, with the specials nights and the 26 meals under \$20. mvvacation.com/blog/marthas-vineyard-on-a-budget-2026
Where to Stay, the guide	Every kind of island bed by town and price band, with the booking rules. mvvacation.com/blog/where-to-stay-marthas-vineyard-hotels-inns-2026
Getting Around by Bus	Exact routes, minutes and transfers from every town, with a live map. mvvacation.com/how-to-get-there-marthas-vineyard-bus

Questions? Reply to any email from us, or write info@mvvacation.com; a real person reads these. Researched August 2026 and re-checked in September 2026 against operators' published fare tables, state and town tax tables, institutions' own admission pages and menus and rate cards read on the island; aggregator figures used only as labeled, indicative bands. We name public operators, towns and nonprofits; private businesses appear as categories on purpose. We work to keep this current, but prices on the island change without notice and beyond our control, and none of this is a quote, tax advice or a guarantee: confirm every rate with the operator before you pay. © 2026 MV Vacation.

The island, priced

The whole budget guide on one card.

— THE BOAT · ONE WAY

Walk on · \$11 adult · \$5.75 child 5–12 · \$5.25 bike

Car, summer · \$127 Mon–Thu · \$168 Fri–Sun · \$127 from Sep 15

Falmouth lots · \$25 a day Apr–Oct, free shuttle

— TAXES · ADD THESE TO EVERY QUOTE

11.7% room tax, all six towns, cleaning fee included

7% meals tax in four towns · **6.25%** in Edgartown and Aquinnah

— GETTING AROUND, PER DAY

Bus \$0 through June 30, 2027 · **Bike** \$25–\$45 · **E-bike** \$69–\$90

Car rental \$150–\$250 in August · **Moped** \$200, Oak Bluffs only

— THE LOBSTER ROLL INDEX

\$20 church supper · \$24 fish-market cold · \$32–\$38 typical · \$42–\$46 high

Cone \$6.60–\$7.60 · slice \$3.50–\$5 · two eggs \$13–\$21 · fish and chips \$26–\$32

— BEDS, AUGUST, BEFORE TAX

Hostel \$40–\$50 · budget \$250–\$400 · mid \$400–\$700 · luxury \$700–\$1,200+

Rental 2-bed \$400–\$800 a night · cleaning fee \$200–\$700

— FREE, ALWAYS

South Beach · State Beach · Menemsha sunset · the Cliffs overlook · gingerbread cottages · Trustees on foot · 220 miles of trail · Derby weigh-ins

Four weeks, added up: shoestring \$1,218 · sensible \$3,304 · August family \$7,105 · luxury long weekend \$4,762. Page 10 shows every line.

