

mind your manors

Newport's historic estates, along with a wave of chic hotels and restaurants, are drawing a new generation of glitz-and-glamour seekers to one of America's original seaside resort towns

BY CHRISTOPHER BOLLEN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARCUS LLOYD



Newport Harbor, a key Revolutionary War site

Nearby, a new museum devoted to the sport of sailing opened in 2022 along the souvenir strip of Thames Street. Naturally, sailing is huge in Newport, home to one of America's biggest annual regattas. **But when I wasn't grinding the gears of my MG, I chose to tour the city in a 2001 Jaguar XJ8 in British racing green, thanks to Bruce Spitzer's unconventional new business, Newport Jaguar Tours.** As we looped through the historic center, he recounted the religious groups of all faiths who had gravitated to tolerant, bohemian Newport as Puritanism swept New England. (The titans of industry and future presidents came later.)

At the same time, much of Newport's early, pre-Gilded Age prosperity owed to its involvement in the "triangular trade"—ships sent first to West Africa for enslaved people, then to the West Indies for sugarcane and molasses, and finally back to Newport for exploitation. No amount of gold leaf can obscure that Newport was once the capital of enslaved people in New England. A monument memorializing those who died in the Middle Passage is in development for Liberty Square.