

# WEEKEND GETAWAYS

We've got escape plans for the whole summer. Start marking your calendar—and go to [timeoutnewyork.com/getaways](http://timeoutnewyork.com/getaways) to find trips every weekend from Memorial Day to Labor Day, plus extended info about where to stay and what to do.



## Wildwood, NJ

Get high with a little help from the Wildwood International Kite Festival—and some wild rides—on Jersey's girthiest beach. By **Cristina Velocci**

**WHY GO:** It's a bird! It's a plane! It's... an enormous kite in the shape of a scuba diver? Yes, you can spot that and dozens of other colorful, unusual kites flying high above the beach at the **24th Annual Wildwood International Kite Festival** ([wildwoodsnj.com](http://wildwoodsnj.com)), the largest, longest-running such thing in the country. "It's very similar to figure skating," says event organizer Beatrix Pelton of the spectacle, where two- and four-line creations are flown based on a routine set to music. "It's the same thing, but with kites." (And fewer sequins, like it or not.) It all kicks off on May 22 at 9pm with a Nite Kite Fly, featuring illuminated oddities strung with lights, followed by fireworks. Then you can catch the East Coast Stunt Kite Championships on Saturday and Sunday near Rio Grande Avenue, where most of the weekend's events

take place, including kite flying lessons, a craft market, *rokkaku* and fighter kite competitions (as in *The Kite Runner*), and the lofting of giant inflatable creatures that Pelton likens to hot-air balloons. "I never knew kites could look like that," says Jen A. Miller, a Jersey Shore guidebook author ([downtheshorewithjen.com](http://downtheshorewithjen.com)) who attended the festival last year. "Most of them are handmade and they're huge. The boardwalk is a great place to watch it." Best part? Every bit of it is f-r-e-e.

**WHY STAY:** It wouldn't be Memorial Day weekend without sunburn (not that we're condoning it, Leatherface); get yours on New



Jersey's widest beach. At some points the sugar-fine sand stretches a mile between water's edge and the parking lot, so be prepared to walk. Avoid scorching your soles and stock up on flip-flops at local favorite **Sand Jamm Surf Shop** (2701 Boardwalk; 609-522-4650, [sandjamm.com](http://sandjamm.com)), which also sells sunglasses, bathing suits, and surf- and skateboards. The two-mile-long boardwalk is chock-full

of attractions thanks to **Morey's Piers** (3501 Boardwalk; 609-522-3900, [moreyspiers.com](http://moreyspiers.com)), which operates more rides than Disneyland. A \$55 combination day pass gets you unlimited access to amusements including the 140-foot Ferris wheel and two water parks, Ocean Oasis



The Great White roller coaster at Morey's Piers



and Raging Waters, so you can float on the lazy river and shoot down waterslides and hydrochutes

until you're pruney. When you've rid yourself of swimmer's ear, head to North Wildwood to embrace the cheeseball bar scene (hey, it goes nicely with that sunburn of yours).

**Keenan's Irish Pub** (113 Olde New Jersey Ave; 609-729-3344, [keanansirishpub.com](http://keanansirishpub.com)) promises to be packed with a younger crowd both indoors and out.

**Flip Flopz Beach Bar & Grill** (300 North New Jersey Ave, 609-522-3350) also boasts outdoor seating, plus a laid-back seashore vibe. The closest specialty cocktail you'll find in these parts (aside from draft beer) is at **#1 Tavern** (Atlantic Ave at First Ave; 609-522-1775, [supertullynut.com](http://supertullynut.com)), home to the Super Tully Nut (\$9), a five-liquor-strong concoction only owner Mark Tully knows the recipe for. Miller assures us that it's "very strong and very pink."

**WHAT TO EAT:** Like overly gelled hair and cutoff-jean shorts, saltwater taffy and fudge are iconic of the Shore, and most locals agree the chewiest,



creamiest varieties can be found at family-run **Douglass Fudge** (3300 Boardwalk; 609-522-3875, [douglasscandies.com](http://douglasscandies.com); \$8.95 per pound). If you still haven't satisfied your sweet tooth, head to **Duffer's** (5210 Pacific Ave; 609-729-1817, [dufferswildwood.com](http://dufferswildwood.com)) for homemade scoops (single \$3.75, double \$4.75) and a round of minigolf (\$5 before 5pm, \$7 thereafter). Locals flip for the flapjacks at **Samuel's Pancake House & Fudge** (1610 Surf Ave, 609-522-6446), as evidenced by the lines snaking out the front door, but unlike in New York, you won't have to wait two hours for chocolate chip pancakes

(\$6.25) and fruit waffles (\$8.25). When afternoon hunger pangs set in, hit the walk-up window at **Mack's Pizza** (4200 Boardwalk, 609-729-0244) for a plain slice, which should tide you over for the day. For dinner, get your red-sauce fill at **Little Italy** (5401 Atlantic Ave; 609-523-0999, [littleitalywildwood.com](http://littleitalywildwood.com)), where Beatrix Pelton and the rest of the kite flyers who stick around gather on Monday night.

Pelton usually orders the chicken marsala (\$19.95) and assures us that with the big portions, you get bang for your buck: "Trust me, it's reasonably priced or us kite flyers wouldn't be going."

### WHERE TO STAY

For hotel recommendations for all our getaways, go to [timeoutnewyork.com/getaways](http://timeoutnewyork.com/getaways).

**GET THERE:** Whether you plan on driving yourself or hitching a ride on an NJ Transit—run bus, expect to get to know the traffic-clogged Garden State Parkway South intimately (it's Memorial Day weekend, what else did you expect?). By car, it should amount to a three-hour drive; from Port Authority, with a transfer in Atlantic City, the trip takes nearly six hours and costs \$67.50 round-trip. Once you get there, wheels won't be necessary: A tramcar runs the length of the boardwalk and costs just \$2 a ride.

