

HUDSON VALLEY

MARCH 2010 ■ FREE

life

A hearty tavern feast
Why we make mistakes

BIG SOUNDS

WOODSTOCK COUPLE CREATES
NEW MUSIC LABEL FOR KIDS

5
SPRING
GARDEN
PREPS



FIND OFF-SEASON ADVENTURES IN MYSTIC COUNTRY

HUDSON VALLEY

life

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Photo by James Ferrara; jamesferrara.com

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ON OUR COVER

Kate Hyman & Kevin Salem form the perfect combo to launch Little Monster, a new record label created as an alternative to the standard kiddie song catalog. Cover photo © James Ferrara, jamesferrara.com or 845-534-5025.

WEB EXCLUSIVE hvlife.com

■ Hudson Valley Life video presents an interview with mystery writer Joanne Dobson, who talks about her latest book, *Death Without Tenure*, published by Poisoned Pen Press. Dobson also has some insightful thoughts on the future of book publishing in the digital age. (Aspiring writers, don't quit your day jobs.)



A Mystic Experience

THIS CONNECTICUT TOWN ON LONG ISLAND SOUND HAS GETAWAY APPEAL FOR ALL SEASONS

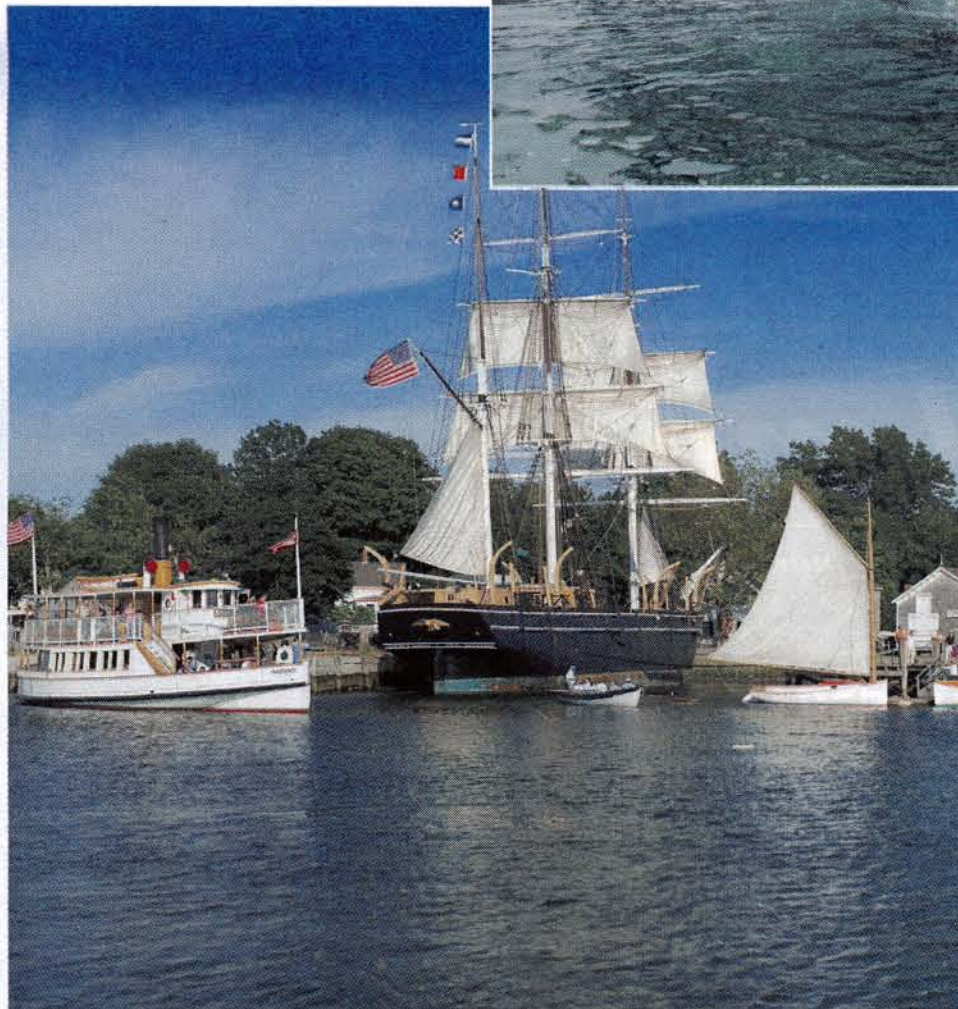
Just two hours away from the Hudson Valley, Mystic is a quintessential New England shore town. Though the beaches along Long Island Sound don't open until Memorial Day, there are plenty of attractions and activities to make Mystic worth your while any month of the year. If time allows, set aside a few days to explore the greater "Mystic Country" region, which includes New London, Norwich, Storrs, Putnam and Woodstock.

By TRACI L. SUPPA

Tall ships and beluga whales

The two largest and most popular attractions, the Mystic Seaport and the Mystic Aquarium, are open all year long. A 19th-century coastal village has been recreated at the **Mystic Seaport**, complete with general store, school, bank, and light-house. Tall ships and steamboats, including the 1841 Charles W. Morgan and the 1908 Sabino, line the waterfront, inviting exploration. Mysticseaport.org

Nearby, the **Mystic Aquarium** houses one of the largest outdoor Beluga whale exhibits in the U.S., accommodating up to 13 at a time. Current melon-headed residents Inuk, Kela and Naku squeak, smile, and charm young and old alike. The Institute for Exploration is part of the Aquarium, as well as an active oceanic research facility directed by Dr. Robert Ballard, famous for discovering the remains of the Titanic in 1985. Several mul-



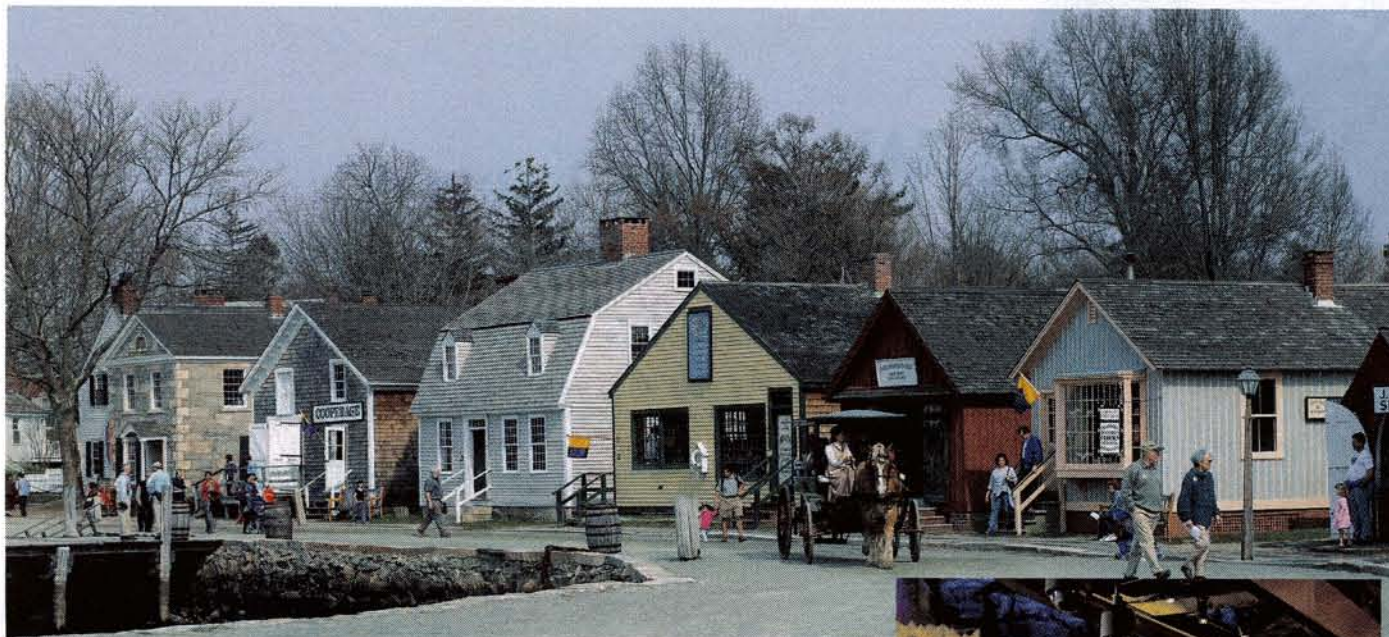
Above: Feel the splash of a beluga whale or go beak-to-nose with a penguin at the Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration. Left: Mystic has always been a bustling seaport and today the waterfront is as lively as ever.

timedia exhibits showcase the findings of his deep-sea expeditions. Mysticaquarium.org

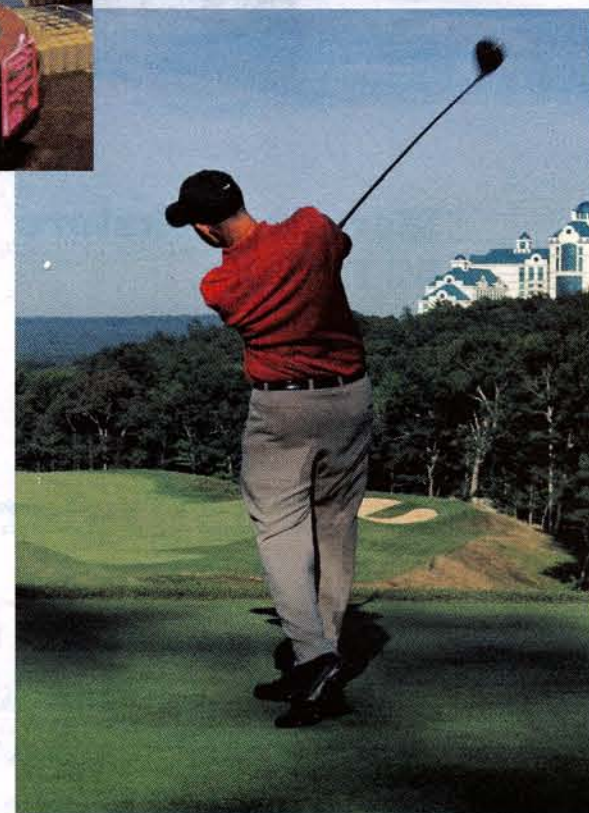
Bogart & Bacall slept here

Mystic boasts accommodations to fit any visitor, but there is a sizeable selection of elegant and comfortable inns and B&B's. Looking for romance? Try the historic Inn at Mystic, where Bogart and Bacall honeymooned back in 1945. Innatmystic.com or book "his and her" massages at the **Marriott**

[Continued on page 20]



Above: Be transported back to a bustling 19th century maritime community with ship smiths, coopers, woodcarvers and more. Right: Return to the 21st century at night by visiting Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun, two casinos 15 minutes from Mystic.



night out, even if gambling isn't your thing. In addition to thousands of slots and hundreds of table games, both offer a variety of restaurants and shops. The nightlife buzzes with dance clubs, live concerts, sporting events, and off-Broadway shows.

Top public golf course

You can tee off at your choice of ten public golf courses in the Mystic Country region, including **Shennecossett** in Groton, featured in *Golf* magazine as one of the best public courses with fees under \$50. Shennygolf.com

Plan your escape

The "Mystic Country" tourism organization offers recommendations from locals on its website, as well as a series of podcasts, a customizable "personal itinerary planner," a mapping function, and an up-to-date list of special offers and discounts. Mysticcountry.com

Traci L. Suppa is a travel writer living in Dutchess County. WordScapesny.com

A Mystic experience

EXPLORING A NEW ENGLAND SHORE TOWN

[Continued from page 18]

Mystic Hotel & Spa, an AAA 4-diamond property. Marriott.com

A stop along the CT Wine Trail, **Stonington Vineyards** offers daily tours and tastings.

Stoningtonvineyards.com

For just \$25, you can purchase the Art Pass, valid for admission to the four area museums on the Connecticut Art Trail. Arttrail.org

Fish & Mystic pizza

Here in clam shack country, lobster, clams, shrimp, and mussels are all local, fresh, and available any time of year. Claim your picnic table at the **Cove Fresh Fish Market**, then order up their acclaimed cod sandwich, which is served with fries and cole slaw. Their award-winning New England "chowda" is a succulent combination of clams and potatoes in a thick, silky broth. Covefishmarket.com.

The best meals in Mystic are served at the least pretentious

eateries, like diners, pizzerias, and ice cream stands. Get an early spot in line at **Kitchen Little** (860-536-2122) for affordable breakfasts with a gourmet touch, like Lobster Benedict or gingerbread pancakes. **Mystic Pizza**, a casual restaurant made popular by the 1988 Julia Roberts movie, is worthy of the hype, serving up a delectable pie with a light, airy dough. Mysticpizza.com

One of a kind shops

The colonial-style **Olde Mystick Village** is a quirky collection of over 40 stores, many of which are independent retailers you won't find anywhere else, including Irish Eyes, Yankee Silversmith, and the Grey Goose Cookery.

As you walk from shop to shop, you'll likely stop to enjoy the view of the duck pond with the waterwheel, or to peruse the comprehensive selection of brochures at the visitor information center. There are also several eateries serving hot breakfasts and tasty lunches to fuel

your shopping excursion. Oldmystickvillage.com

Shopaholics will also delight in the dozens of unique "mom and pop" shops lining West Main Street and several cross streets in downtown Mystic, offering gifts, clothing, jewelry, art, books and more.

Let it roll

Not one, but two major casinos are within a 15-minute drive from Mystic; **Foxwoods** (Foxwoods.com) and **Mohegan Sun** (Mohegansun.com). Both offer an entertaining

It's not too early to hit the links. Many of the area's 10 public courses are open in March.