

## Hamptons, Fire Island, North Fork summer rentals: What's heating up, what's cooling off



**By Stacey Altherr**  
Special to Newsday

Summer at Long Island's favorite retreats — Fire Island, the Hamptons and the North Fork — had a bit of a slow start.

"The season took a long time to wake up," said Judi Desiderio, chief executive officer at Town and Country Real Estate in the Hamptons. "There are more rentals available than ever before."

Even on Fire Island, where renovated houses replaced cottages and vacation websites are now prevalent, homes are still available this late in the year.

"You can still get an affordable home," says Maureen Putman of Netter Beach Estates on Ocean Beach, "from \$4,000 a week for a small cottage to \$14,000 a week for a large house with a pool."

While rentals are now being snapped up, real estate agents say the scene is vastly different from the height of the pandemic when everything was renting at top dollar.

There are still some deals to be found in these popular areas. Real estate agents reminded vacationers that offseason months like September and October are a perfect time to rent, because traffic winds down and the weather is usually still delightful.

But for those still looking to rent this summer, agents were united in one thought: When it comes to dates, type of home and location, be flexible.

"People waiting to get a discount could be disappointed," said Abigail Mago of Fire Island Sales & Rentals.

## Fire Island



Fire Island has escaped the rental market shift. Mago said that last year's building boom, especially in the Village of Ocean Beach and neighboring Seaview and Ocean Bay Park, has kept the prices high and the rentals filled.

"Anything new and renovated with a pool is booked up," she said. "Numbers are still higher than pre-COVID levels. It is typical to see 100% occupancy [for an average house] for the summer months."

Rental prices for these pool homes, usually with central air conditioning and four to five bedrooms, rent from \$11,000 to \$15,000 a week, said Mago.

However, she noted, inflation is having an effect, so lower-end places — rented by those who may be more affected by the cost-of-living increases over the past year — are not as full. Some of these homeowners are resistant to lowering prices, but as time goes on, they may change their minds, Mago said.

"You can still get a weekly full-house rental for \$4,500," she said.

Martin Curran, a lifetime Bay Shore resident, has been taking his two sons to Kismet for more than 20 years.

Kismet, the westernmost Fire Island community, about a 6-mile walk from Robert Moses State Park Field 5, is summer home to many Long Islanders.

Through the years, Curran, 53 and a retired New York City firefighter, has not only seen rents rise in Kismet, but said it is harder to find a rental. Many years ago, he said, he could just go to Kismet Out (now Dive) and meet someone over a game of pool who would rent to him for a week or two.

"Airbnb and VRBO has messed with that," he said. Still, he was able to find a rental this year for \$4,000 a week.

But vacationing so close to home, taking the ferry to start the vacation week, the beach and the familiarity make it worth it to Curran.

"You are either 1,000 feet from the ocean or 1,000 feet from the bay," he said.

## **Still available on Fire Island**

**\$7,500 per week; price drops in the offseason**



This completely updated Ocean Beach home has three bedrooms, one bathroom and has a heated pool and screened-in porch. The large west-facing deck (think sunsets) includes an outdoor shower and shed. Only 375 feet from the beach, it sits between Midway Avenue and Ocean View Walk. Joan Wolesky, Fire Island Sales and Rentals, 631-583-8898.

**\$7,500 a week for July and August; price drops in the offseason**



This recently renovated home has four bedrooms and two full baths. With two bedrooms and a full bath on one floor and two bedrooms and one full bath on another floor, it's a good home for two families. The home has two decks, an outdoor shower and a full kitchen. Maureen Putman, Netter Beach Estates, 631-583-6100.

## The Hamptons



In the Hamptons, the houses languishing on the rental market tend to be those with a higher price tag. In Southampton, that tends to be \$100,000 per season or more, agents say.

"I am finding that is where we have the most inventory," said Desiderio. "It tells me that the uber wealthy are deciding what to do with their money."

Real estate agents said those who bought during COVID, to keep themselves and their families safe from New York City's density, are now looking to rent those homes and spend the summer elsewhere. European travel is has mostly rebounded following the pandemic, according to Eurostat, and these "COVID buyers" have caused a glut on the market.

Desiderio noted that usually East End rentals are priced at 5% of the market value of the home. That means a home valued at \$1 million would likely rent for \$50,000 per season. During COVID, that percentage went up to 8% or higher, and those rentals are now finding their pre-pandemic levels, she said.

## Still available in the Hamptons:

**\$13,000-\$15,000 for either July or August, or \$517 per night**



This East Hampton rental is within walking distance of Lion's Head Beach. Credit: StayMarquis

A renovated three-bed, two-bath home in East Hampton is walking distance to Lion's Head Beach and has a view of Gardiners Bay. The 2,000-square-foot cottage has a fireplace in the living room, a wraparound deck, gas grill, outdoor shower, large yard with deck, and a Peloton bike for use. The white cabinetry and white marble countertops lighten the room. [travel@staymarquis.com](mailto:travel@staymarquis.com), 631-301-2964.

**\$15,000 for July; \$20,000 for August through Labor Day**



This two-bedroom, one-bath condominium has a private rooftop deck. Sitting on Main Street in the heart of Westhampton Beach, it has easy access to the beaches. Deborah Fink, Town & Country Real Estate, 631-288-3030.

## North Fork



On the North Fork, rentals never had the high leap that happened in the Hamptons, according to local real estate agents.

During COVID, the rentals weren't "grossly inflated" but they were listed as available well into autumn and winter, which gave the owners more income over the year, said Gerry Cibulski of Century 21.

"That made landlords happy," he said.

In addition, there is more homeownership as a second vacation home than rentals on the North Fork, he said, adding that available rentals are in high demand and have been rented out through the season early, "from Riverhead to Orient."

Todd Bourgard, CEO of Douglas Elliman of Long Island, Hamptons and North Fork, said seasonal rentals in the under \$100,000 per season range are doing well now, even though it was a slow start.

"We see an uptick in our signed leases every day," he said.

### **Still available on the North Fork:**

**\$12,500 for July; \$15,000 for August; \$25,000 for July through Labor Day**



This Cutchogue property is available for July, August or both months. Credit: Corcoran

This two-bedroom, two-bath home in Cutchogue is a quick drive to Causeway Beach as well as shopping and restaurants. Close to water access, it has a large yard and a patio with a front porch and manicured grounds. Sheri Winter Parker, Corcoran Real Estate, 631-848-7730.

**\$14,000 for July; \$18,000 for August through Labor Day**



This three-bedroom property in Southold is on the water. Credit: Liz Glasgow Studios

This three-bed, three-bath ranch house in Southold has central air conditioning, a large living room and dining room. The kitchen's sliding doors lead to a deck with water views and a dock to fish or launch a boat or paddleboat. Two kayaks are included in the rent. Amy Kirincic, Sotheby's International Realty, 631-379-3138.



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