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## 10 Lighthouse Vacations

By Kerri Fivecoat-Campbell

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NEW YORK (MainStreet) — If your dream has always been to be marooned on a deserted island or rocky point of land near the sea, acting as a 19th century lighthouse keeper, you're not alone.

In an effort to preserve crumbling lighthouses in the 1970s and '80s, historical societies began refurbishing them and financing the effort by selling nightly stays.

There's plenty of takers. As technology encroaches on our everyday lives, vacationers are getting back to basics and realizing that staying in a lighthouse is still one of the quieter and more relaxing getaways one can find.

Here are 10 lighthouses around the world that will shine their beams and welcome you for a night, weekend or longer stay:

- 1. East Brother Light Station, Richmond, Calif.:** This lighthouse, in operation since 1874, is on an island in San Francisco Bay. Since you can only reach it by boat and you're not allowed off of the island until your stay is over, this could be the perfect way to unplug. Guests are picked up at 4 p.m. and taken off of the island at checkout time, 11 a.m. the next day. Reading materials are provided to help you relax, but you can also bring your own. Operates Thursday-Sunday nights. \$325-\$415 per night.
- 2. Grebeni Lighthouse, Drovnik, Croatia:** When Americans think of lighthouses, they most likely do not think of Croatia, but the country does have several lighthouses in which vacationers can stay. Grebeni is on the islet of Grebeni only some [300](#) meters from the Babin Kuk tourist resort in Dubrovnik. Dubrovnik, a Unesco Heritage Site, is Croatia's most well-known summer destination. \$159-\$299 per night.
- 3. Rose Island Lighthouse, R.I.:** If you want a real 19th century lighthouse-keeper experience, you can stay here either overnight or do the lighthouse-keeper-for-a-week program. Guests can take a boat to the lighthouse from Jamestown or Newport, R.I.; it is a mile offshore in Narragansett Bay. The lighthouse was restored in 1912. \$100-\$225 a night.
- 4. Big Bay Point Lighthouse Bed and Breakfast, Big Bay, Mich.:** Residents on the Great Lakes know you don't have to go to the coasts of the United States to find historical lighthouses. Big Bay Point Lighthouse is 28 miles from Marquette, which features shopping, dining and historical museums. The whole Lake [Superior](#) shoreline area abounds with forest trails, waterfalls, lazy trout streams and the Huron Mountains, offering the outdoor enthusiast possibilities in all seasons. \$137-\$214.
- 5. Smithfield Station, Smithfield, Va.:** Located on the Pagan River, this lighthouse is modeled after the Hooper Strait Lighthouse in Maryland. It is across from a park with more than four miles of walking trails, and it's close to the downtown historic colonial era seaport. \$219-\$269 per night.
- 6. The Point No Point Lighthouse, Seattle, Wash.:** Point No Point Lighthouse and Keeper's quarters is less than one hour from Seattle, which gives guests only a short distance to travel for shopping and restaurants. But if it is nature you're seeking, the positioning of the lighthouses next to wetlands gives you an excellent opportunity for birdwatching. It was the first lighthouse built on Puget Sound. \$215 per night.
- 7. Brancombe Lodge, Dorset, England:** Across the pond, you can explore the fossils and stunning beaches of Dorset's Jurassic Coast or visit historic Sherborne and Shaftesbury. Located in the village of Fortuneswell, on the Isle of Portland peninsula joined to the mainland via Chesil Beach, Fortuneswell has charming shops, pubs and restaurants with walking and climbing opportunities, watersports and the harbor at Weymouth. \$756-\$1,694.

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**8. Sand Hills Lighthouse Inn, Ahmeek, Mich.:** Back on the Great Lakes, the Sand Hills Lighthouse, listed on the National Registry of Historic Places, is the largest and last staffed lighthouse on the lakes. Built in 1917 to house three light keepers and their [families](#), it remained active until 1939. The lighthouse is on the picturesque Keweenaw Peninsula in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, making it a great place to explore the outdoors. Area attractions include the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum; America's only island National Park, Isle Royale; and Mackinac Island. \$165-\$225 per night.

**9. The Keeper's House, Isle au Haut, Maine:** More than half of Isle au Haut has been protected permanently as part of Acadia National Park, making this ideal for outdoor adventures. "You can also rent bikes to explore the island or go lobstering with a local aboard his boat," says James Kaiser, the author of *Acadia: The Complete Guide*. "But the best thing to do is relax and enjoy the peace and quiet." \$350 per night with a two-night minimum in July and August.

**10. The Old Lighthouse, Pembrokeshire, Wales:** The Old Lighthouse at St. Ann's Head has been entirely renovated to form spacious and comfortable accommodations. 360 degree ocean views and a romantic double bedroom in the tower make this rental perfect for couples and newlyweds. \$512-\$997 per night.

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