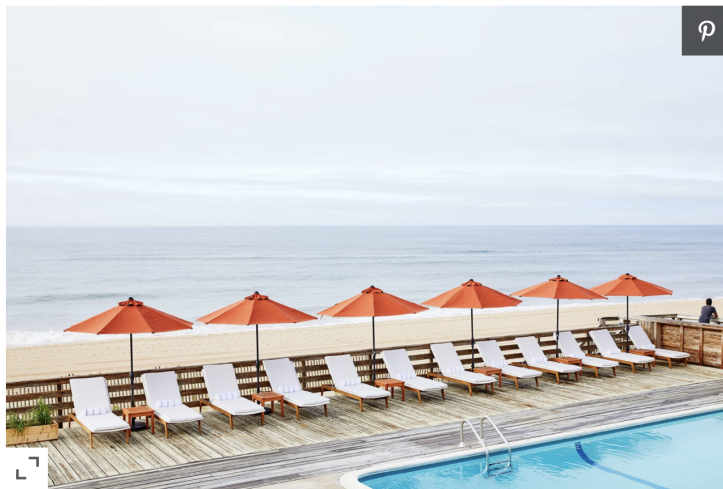


TRAVEL+ LEISURE

This Beachfront Hotel Offers a Quieter Alternative to Montauk's Party Scene With Surf Lessons, Evening Bonfires, and Poolside Yoga

At Marram, travelers looking for a relaxing retreat will find soothing yoga and nature strolls in place of blaring music and booze-fueled nights.



CREDIT: READ MCKENDREE/COURTESY OF MARRAM MONTAUK

On a balmy June morning, I found myself at the End of the World, eyes pressed shut, closely observing my breathing as it coincided with the rhythm of the crashing waves mere steps away. I had meditated before, my mind always maniacally wandering: Inhale, exhale, what's for lunch? Inhale, exhale, how long is this going to take? Inhale, exhale, your inbox is getting longer.

But this time felt different. It had been more than a year since I had heard the ocean. And not long ago, we weren't sure if we could sit in a group without putting one another on a ventilator.

Tasked with sitting still for a five-minute meditation felt like a tall order after months in lockdown, but [Marram](#), a quiet beachfront hotel in [Montauk](#), made it easy.

After all, the 96-room property — having breathed new life into a 1960s motel — is a rarity in this part of town, which has, in recent years, been largely eclipsed by [trendy nightlife swarms](#) spilling over from [the Hamptons](#). Getting its name from the wild grass that grows on the area's dunes, Marram takes up prime real estate — both on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean, yet still within a fleeting, five-minute walk of the town's cafes, shops, and restaurants.

Despite being close to the action, however, Marram is more soothing yoga and nature strolls, less blaring music and booze-fueled nights; more chilled-out families and surfers, less rowdy partiers and big-name



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DJs. It's the kind of place where you wake with the sun for meditation, not spend the better part of an afternoon nursing a hangover. Best of all? Though it sounds worlds away, this blissful beach getaway sits just about a [three-hour drive](#) (or four-hour [train ride](#)) from NYC.

And Marram's calm, comforting atmosphere permeates the property, from its very first impression. The cedar-clad exteriors are a quiet extension of the area's sandy surroundings, and interiors are equally serene, with crisp, white linens, exposed oak beams,

hand-textured plaster walls, cool concrete floors, and bedside tables made from reclaimed wooden boats — the latter a reminder of the hamlet's previous life as a peaceful fishing village. Cozy, in-room daybeds are perfect for catnaps, as are the lounge chairs perched under bright orange umbrellas by the pool.



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The décor is purposefully hushed to attract your eye to the scene's leading character: the ocean. A path cuts through the center of the property, leading directly to the sandy shores, and upon entering my room, I beelined it straight for the balcony (found in most rooms) to take in the waves on the other side.

For those who want to test out the waters — Montauk is known for its stellar wave breaks — Marram is home to a surf shop, Engstrom Surf, where guests can rent equipment and book lessons with siblings and world-renowned surfers Leif, Ariel, and Lexi Engstrom, who ensure even beginners feel comfortable paddling out. For a water activity that requires less of a workout, book a private sunset sailing with Catamaran Mon Tiki, where the captain takes care of everything as you cruise around Lake Montauk. BYO snacks and drinks for the voyage.

Landlubbers, meanwhile, can fill their days with nature walks along the bluffs in nearby Shadmoor State Park, poolside yoga overlooking the Atlantic, a friendly round of cornhole, or morning meditation. Nights are for bonfires in the hotel courtyard with complimentary s'mores (or on the beach for an added cost). Bikes are also on offer for guests wanting to explore the area — the scenic views in Montauk Point State Park and of the oldest lighthouse in New York state are worth the short drive from the property.

There's even an on-property café, Mostrador Marram, led by Uruguayan chefs Fernando Trocca and Martín Pittaluga. A spin on the classic Latin American *mostrador* (or counter), the café serves a healthy breakfast (think scrambled organic eggs with homemade sourdough, yogurt with fresh fruit and granola, and raspberry chia pudding) and lunch (think carrots and chimichurri, a beet and goat cheese medley, and meats like freshly caught fish or pork shoulder). A selection of to-die-for sweet and savory pastries are available all day.



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Every detail is thoughtfully chosen with guests' wellness in mind. "It's hard to be mindful these days," Teach Mayer, the hotel's general manager, told me during my visit. "Do we do it all the time? No, but it's about trying to be as mindful as possible. Doing things with purpose, doing things with intent — whether things do or don't work out, at least you're doing them with intent."

As my mind drifted from one thought to the next during that morning meditation, I remembered what Mayer said. Whether or not I could focus my mind while meditating, I was doing it with intent, carving out time to unplug, unwind, and reconnect — to my breath, the people around me, and my natural surroundings.

Just then, the alarm buzzed. The five minutes were up. I slowly cracked open my eyes, looked out at the ocean in front of me, and my mind rambled to one last thought: how lucky I was to be here, experiencing this beautiful slice of Montauk, after a year of being tethered to home.