

Back Road Trips to Horseneck Beach



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I have always preferred driving on back roads as opposed to highways. I guess I'd rather enjoy the drive than fly down the road. One of my favorite back drives is the one heading to Horseneck Beach. Currently, I live in Fairhaven, but my memories of taking the back roads to Horseneck go back to early childhood, when I lived in New Bedford.

A day at the beach was an event and we would make sure to pack all the essentials: a big blanket, beach chairs, a radio, a cooler full of food and drinks, and anything else that would allow us to spend the entire day at our favorite beach. Then we'd pile into Mom's car and be on our way. We'd head out to Dartmouth, past Davoll's General Store that has been there for



over two hundred years. Then we'd go over the little hill and soon mom was pointing out the cows and horses in the pastures and the flowers growing along the sturdy old stone walls. This was all a prelude to the beautiful vistas we knew awaited us upon our first glimpse of the ocean. I guess this is why I believe so firmly that it's not only the destination, but the journey that matters.

Eventually, we turned onto Horseneck Road, which I always recognized because the first part of the drive reminded me of a long horse's neck. I loved to visualize this part of the journey and anxiously awaited our arrival at the top of the horse's head. The road eventually spilled out to meet the ocean and we couldn't wait to get our toes in the sand!

My love affair with Horseneck continued through the years. When I finally got my license at sixteen, it was always a favorite destination. Strutting along those two miles of beautiful coastline in my bikini with my girlfriends was a favorite pastime as well as checking out the waves and the cute lifeguards. The ride home would always include a stop for clam cakes, something we couldn't get if we took the fast way home.

After college, I moved to California. It was a very adventurous time and I enjoyed discovering all the beautiful stretches of beach along the coastline drive in California. Still, Horseneck Beach remained my favorite and memories of my back road drives to the beach always brought a smile to my face.

Fast forward many years later. I found my way back to New England and settled in Fairhaven, right over the bridge from New Bedford. Only now I was the mom and my little girl Danica and I would carry on the tradition of the back road drives to Horseneck. This time her eyes were peeled for the cows and horses and flowers and rock walls. The drive home was even better if you can imagine that!

We spent the day in the sand and the waves and left feeling sun-drenched and salty. It felt great to roll down the windows, feel the ocean breeze, and take in the beautiful seascapes from Westport to Dartmouth and on to New Bedford. We stopped at a farm stand



along the road to pick up some corn on the cob for dinner that night and of course a stop for ice cream was a requirement for the drive home.

The years have flown by since those days and teenage Danica recently requested a surfboard for her birthday. Our trips to Horseneck Beach still include all the essentials: big towels, food and drink and a radio. Only now, those items are joined by a hope for gnarly waves. Things may change over the course of time, but the route taken has always stayed the same.

These days, anytime I need a good walk, a good cry or just need to think, I find myself driving that same old road out to my favorite place. A walk along the beach always seems to restore my peace of mind. So next time you're heading out to Horseneck Beach, ditch the highway. The road less traveled can bring you pleasant memories that will last you a lifetime!