

USA New England: New Bedford in Massachusetts – Port Town with many faces

Jun 19, 2017



A travel tip by the authors of the volume "USA North East" and "USA East Coast",
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"Call me Ishmael" who does not know him, the famous beginning sentence of Herman Melville's terrific novel "Moby Dick". Before the fatal hunt for the whale, however, the hero first stops in the harbor town of New Bedford. Located just 100 miles south of

Boston, Massachusetts, the site has made a name for itself as a starting point of the Moby Dick, a major port of the whaling industry, but also as a temporary home to Frederick Douglass, Politician, and writer who, as a runaway slave, vehemently championed the abolition of slavery, civil rights, and equal rights.



Important station of the "Underground Railroad"

Frederick Douglass (1818-1895) lived and worked in New Bedford, where he settled after his flight and the marriage with free African American Anna Murray in 1838. Especially the Quakers, who lived here from England, a religious community, which rejected, among other things, slavery, Douglass also actively supported the so called Underground Railroad, with New Bedford as a tolerant city. Especially the Quakers, who lived here from England, a religious community, which rejected, among other things, slavery, helped many slaves who had fled from the south. The city became an important station on the "Underground Railroad", not a railway line, but a nationwide aid network for escaped slaves. One of them was Frederick Douglass, who was born in Liberal New Bedford, where an African Quarter, the "Abolition Row" (7th Street, photo)



Hard business: whaling



New Bedford's main attraction, however, is the New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (www.nps.gov/nebe), where the whaling and textile industry, fisheries and freedom struggle are very closely linked today. Around 1780, the first whaling boat, owned by a quaker named William Rotch Jr., had left the Bedford Village, the starting shot that made New Bedford the world's largest whaling port and the richest city in the 19th century. Through the historic district there are interesting free ranger tours. Along the route are historic buildings, murals (as above) and institutions, such as the prayer house mentioned by Melville, Seamen's Bethel, where sailors prayed since 1832 before they set sail.

Portuguese whose influence is still felt today in the culinary and cultural scene and immigrants from the Cape Verdi islands on the west coast of Africa were once decisively involved in whaling, whose main goal was the extraction of the valuable whale oil, (As shown by the historical photo of Ferry Termina I). By the way: In 1841, Melville went to search for





"MobyDick" on board the "Acushnet" and experienced from his own view how hard and dangerous the work was. Today, the New Bedford Whaling Museum (www.whalingmuseum.org) is reminiscent of whaling . In the lobby, impressive whale skeletons are hanging from the ceiling, there is a walking whale boat half sized , full, Scrimshaws in large numbers , ship models and maritime exhibitions, but mainly about whale hunting and trade , But also the threat of the whales in the present time comes not too short.. From the roof terrace of the museum there is also a magnificent view (cover picture) of the historic city center and the fishing and ferry port and one asks whether Melville admired this beauty at the time.



From whale oil to cotton and fishing

The town prospered, and boatowners, captains, and merchants built splendid houses. When the whale oil was replaced by other fuels, the textile industry took over the leadership position around the middle of the 19th century. New Bedford became famous for cotton yarns and textiles. Around 1920 there were about 70 textile factories in the city some of them are still used



today, As used as antiques malls, which employed more than 40,000 people. In addition, fishing has always played an important role, and to this day New Bedford is one of the largest active fishing ports in the United States . But also for the ferry service, New Bedford is still significant, from here regularly ferries to Block Island and fast ferries to Martha's Vineyard. Today, the city center presents itself with the Seaport Cultural District in an enormous variety, with lively art and cultic scene, with antiques, Art Museum, stages, Seaport Art Walk and music festivals. New Bedford has restaurants, cafes and pubs - such as the Moby Dick Brewing Company – in abundance and the local restaurants are renowned for fresh seafood directly from the fishing boat. On the waterfront you can catch a glimpse of the catches:

scallops (scallops) are among the delicacies, but also lobster, mussels, shrimp and a variety of fish are delivered.

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Stormy harbor with new promenade

For a picnic or for recreation, New Bedfords South End, the southern tip of the peninsula, also referred to as "Clark's Point", is nestled in Buzzards Bay. Fort Taber / Fort Rodman Park, once a fortification dating back to the middle of the 19th century. To protect the harbor and today a popular recreation area. Only in the spring a new promenade (photo) was opened. It complements the Waterfront Path along the waterfront, ideal for cycling or walking, and runs along the crest of the Hurricane Dam, which was inaugurated in 1966. It is to secure the port and the city by approaching storm. Since it can be completely closed, New Bedford offers a safe haven for the entire surrounding area.



USEFUL TIPS

- Information: Destination New Bedford, Fisherman's Wharf/Pier 3, <http://destinationnewbedford.org>, or New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park Visitor Center, www.nps.gov/nebe/planyourvisit/basicinfo.htm, 33 William Street
- Stay: Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriot, www.marriott.de/hotels/travel/ewbfi-fairfield-inn-and-suites-new-bedford
- Excursion: Seastreak Ferry Terminal, New Bedford to Martha's Vineyard, <https://seastreak.com>
- Moby Dick Brewing Co., 16 S. Water St., <https://mobydickbrewing.com>
- Tia Maria's, 42 N. Water St.,