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*While New Jersey may be considered one of the smaller states in the country, and it's sometimes overshadowed by its neighbors, there are so many wonderful destinations packed into such a compact area: great cities, towns, parks, and other must-see places to visit. Here are 15 fantastic destinations across the Garden State.*

## **Hoboken**

*Located on the Hudson River across from New York City (and just south of Weehawken), the hometown of world-famous singer Frank Sinatra is popular with commuters who travel into the city daily. It may not be as busy or bustling as Manhattan, but it's filled with great restaurants, bars, music venues, cool boutiques, and other retail shops. You can also stroll along the river and admire a jaw-dropping view of the NYC skyline. If you wish to venture into the Big Apple, it's an easy trip via the PATH train from the local station.*

## **Liberty State Park**

*In northern New Jersey, Liberty State Park is the optimal spot to gaze upon the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Over 1,200 acres and featuring a 2-mile paved pathway called the Liberty Walk, this park has many options for things to see, including the Empty Sky 9/11 Memorial, Liberty Science Museum, and the historic Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal. While you're here, you can also take a boat cruise to see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island up close (advance tickets are recommended).*

## **Island Beach State Park**

*If you want to get a glimpse of what the New Jersey shore was like before it was built up with boardwalks, homes, beach bars, and carnival rides, check out Island Beach State Park. This area is situated on a 10-mile barrier island and requires an entrance fee (\$6 per car for residents and \$10 for*

*non-residents). It's open year-round, and offers plenty of amenities during the summer season, including lifeguards, picnic areas, restrooms, a sundry shop, and a snack bar with casual treats. For a more secluded experience, visitors can choose to park in a number of different spots along the shore and enjoy some tranquil beach time.*

## **Morristown National Historical Park (Jockey Hollow)**

*Nature lovers and hikers flock to Morristown National Historical Park (Jockey Hollow) in western New Jersey for its marked trails, picnic areas, and plenty of opportunities to spot wildlife (you're almost guaranteed to see deer). As the area was used as the Continental army's winter encampment from 1779 to 1780, guests seeking to learn about culture and history will be treated to incredible iconic sights, such as the Washington's Headquarters museum.*

## **Cape May**

*With exquisite Victorian architecture and a quaint town center, Cape May is a lovely and historic destination that captures the essence of days gone by. It's one of the oldest shore towns in the state, with many highly-rated farm-to-table restaurants, iconic beach bars, and points of interest like the Cape May Point lighthouse. In the evening, enjoy a horse and carriage ride, join a ghost tour, or play a round of mini-golf. Of course, if you're into fun in the sun, you can surf and paddleboard in the ocean and bay, or relax on the beach.*

## **Lambertville**

*Located just across the river from the historic town of New Hope, Pennsylvania, [Lambertville, NJ](#) is a charming, culture-filled destination that's fun to explore on foot. It's home to the [Howell Living History Farm](#), a fascinating 130-acre farm with unique activities for kids and adults,*

*including New Jersey's oldest corn maze. Meanwhile, art lovers adore the town's many antique shops and art galleries that feature the works of local artisans.*

## ***Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area***

*With hiking trails, scenic vistas, historic landmarks, and waterfalls, the 70,000-acre Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area is an exceptional destination for a day trip. Stretching across the river to Pennsylvania, visitors here can enjoy an abundance of outdoor activities, including swimming, boating, picnicking, fishing, camping, and paddling. Additionally, you can learn about history throughout the area, which is home to the Millbrook Village, Foster-Armstrong House, and Neldon Roberts Stonehouse. The park is open 24 hours a day, but check the [NPS website](#) in advance of your visit for closures and alerts.*

## ***Wharton State Forest***

*Considered by many to be a hidden gem, Wharton State Forest encompasses the most extensive land area within the New Jersey State Park System. With rivers and lakes, trails and open fields, outdoorsy types come to partake in activities such as canoeing, hiking, riding horses, and mountain biking. Animal lovers should be on the lookout for local wildlife, including bald eagles, great-horned owls, river otters, and foxes. The site is also home to the historic Batsto Village; once an iron and glassmaking industrial center in the late 19th century, many of the structures here are still intact.*

## ***Barnegat Lighthouse State Park***

*Situated on the northernmost point of Long Beach Island, the local landmark that lends Barnegat Lighthouse State Park its name towers above the waves. The park is part of the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, where you can*

learn about local lore, walk along a paved pathway by the ocean, and see the lighthouse's original lens on display at the [Barnegat Lighthouse Historical Society and Museum](#). Be sure to climb to the top of the lighthouse and soak in the stunning views that stretch for miles.

## **Hammonton**

Known as the “Blueberry capital of the world,” the once sleepy town of Hammontown now offers an array of day and evening activities. Come during blueberry season in the summer, when you can pick the juicy fruit at several farms in the area, including [Di Meo Farms](#). When you're finished, stroll around downtown Hammonton to check out the many restaurants, cafés, artsy boutiques, and clothing shops.

## **Spring Lake**

[Spring Lake](#), an upscale northern New Jersey shore destination, may be under-the-radar for some, despite its proximity to the high-adrenaline city of Belmar. With a posh yet low-key vibe, Spring Lake features beautifully well-kept Victorian homes (many of which have been turned into B&Bs), a number of independently-owned boutiques and cafés, and of course, a lovely lake in the center of town.

## **Princeton Battlefield State Park**

History was made at Princeton Battlefield State Park in January of 1777: General George Washington's troops held a surprise attack on the British during "The Ten Crucial Days" of the Revolutionary War (after the famous crossing of the Delaware River). In fact, the Battle of Princeton became Washington's first true victory against the British on the field. While here, you can view the famous Mercer Oak that once stood in the battlefield, as

*well as the Clarke House, which features period furniture and exhibits related to the war.*

## **Montclair**

*Just a few miles outside of New York City, the leafy town of Montclair is a small yet vibrant community with several interesting cultural sights and a great dining scene. The [Montclair Art Museum](#) is a noteworthy destination featuring several rotating and permanent exhibits, and they frequently show films and host special events. Nearby, visitors can admire the [Van Vleck House and Gardens](#), a peaceful 12-acre oasis that's open every day of the year.*

## **Parvin State Park**

*Parvin State Park is located deep in the expansive pine barrens in southern New Jersey, with a diversity of terrain ranging from swamps to forests. Home to hawks, deer, fox, owls, and many migratory birds, it's a popular spot for wildlife watching. In spring and summer, visitors can admire more than 200 diverse species of colorful flowering plants, and go swimming and picnicking at Parvin Lake.*

## **Frenchtown**

*Situated in rural northwestern New Jersey, [Frenchtown](#) is a picturesque destination that offers activities for everyone, from annual food festivals to great hiking along rolling hills and wooded areas. Bicycle riders are in luck, too, as the entrance to the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park—which features a flat towpath that winds along the river for miles—can be found here. If you prefer to meander around town, you'll find delightful boutiques, coffee shops, and cafés.*