

Montauk

Blustery, wind-battered

MONTAUK

, beyond Amagansett on the farthest tip of Long Island, never quite made it as a resort; plans to develop it were shattered by the Wall Street Crash of 1929. This town isn't chic or quaint, but real people actually live here and it provides access to the rocky wilds of Montauk Point , whose rare beauty figures in all the tourist brochures. A

lighthouse

- New York state's oldest, dating from 1796 - forms an almost symbolic finale to this stretch of the American coast.

Motels

in the town center offer fairly priced rooms (a rarity in the eastern end of Long Island); rates at the Oceanside Beach Resort

(tel 631/668-9825; \$75-160) at 626 Montauk Street Highway, vary seasonally but reasonably; if you want something fancier, try Gurney's Inn on Old Montauk Highway (tel 631/668-2345; \$250+). The ultimate Montauk dining

experience is

The Lobster Roll

(tel 631/267-3740) on the highway, which serves excellent fresh fish, including the eponymous sandwich. Other good options include the moderately priced Shagwong

on Main Street (tel 631/668-3050), as well as the delicious sushi at super-basic Westlake Clam & Chowder House

: from the tables here, you can watch the fishermen bring home their catch and have it delivered to you via the kitchen in minutes.