



## Pilgrim spirit prevails in Plymouth

Plymouth, Massachusetts, sits on the site of the, then named, *Plimouth Colony*, which was founded in 1620 by a group from England who became known as the Pilgrims.

Among the first to settle in 'new world', they were in search of the chance to live a simple life of religious devotion.

Plymouth also lays claim to USA's the first *Thanksgiving* feast, and the town's historical relevance is cherished by its residents and exploited, in the right way, as part of the town's visitor experience.

A replica of the Mayflower floats in Plymouth harbour, the Plimouth Plantation offers a 'living history' representation of the 17th-Century settlement and a number of smaller attractions all combine to give an insight into the lives of these first settlers.

All eyes in Plymouth are now looking towards 2020 and the year long 400th Anniversary celebrations that will take place in the town.

**Ashley Gibbins**  
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[www.plimouth.org](http://www.plimouth.org) : Kristen Oney





www.seeplymouth.com : Jack Costello

# A fine place to start a tour of Cape Cod

By Ashley Gibbins

**Much as I hate to admit it, Plymouth was a bolt on.**

We were planning a visit to Cape Cod and wanted somewhere to stop off after the long transatlantic flight from London into Boston.

Plymouth lies midway between this city and Sandwich, the start of the Cape, and it was its convenient location rather than a long standing desire to visit that saw us in Plymouth.

I confess this now, without shame, as we were pleasantly surprised and genuinely impressed with what we found.

## Proud of the Pilgrims

Plymouth is rightly proud of its association with the Pilgrims.

And although time and a good book (*Of Plymouth Plantation* by William Bradford) have greatly enhanced the historical relevance of these early settlers, it is indeed a tremendous tale of human spirit and perseverance.

Many of Plymouth's residents today will take on the persona of their forebears when volunteering for stints on the Mayflower, at the Plantation or while grinding flour in the Grist Mill.

And this is no theme park 'cast member' approach. The concept of living history is taken seriously in Plymouth, and there can be no better proponent of it.

Those who play the parts of the early settlers, will know as much as there is to know about the individual they become, and will adopt the accent with which the Pilgrims spoke.

For the visitor, it really does enhance the experience.

And so, with just a day and a half in Plymouth, our stay was driven by the need to learn as much as about those early settlers.

## Aboard the Mayflower

**First stop was inevitably going to be the Plymouth Waterfront and the Mayflower (the Mayflower II to be accurate)**

This is a full-scale reproduction of the original ship that sailed to Plymouth in 1620.

Looking around the vessel itself, and hearing the tales of the sailors and Pilgrims who were aboard, brings to life the ship's remarkable voyage.

## The Mayflower voyage

In September 1620, a merchant ship called the Mayflower set sail from Plymouth, England for the Americas with 102 passengers on board.

The first half of the voyage went fairly smoothly, bar the sea-sickness but, by October of 1620, the Atlantic storms made the voyage treacherous, with many of the passengers dying on route.



While the settlers had planned to land in Northern Virginia, they ended up at what is now Provincetown on Cape Cod.

Exploring the coastline they then chose what is now Plymouth as the place to start building their first homesteads.

[www.MayflowerHistory.com](http://www.MayflowerHistory.com)

Founded in 1897, The Mayflower Society keeps alive the story of the Pilgrims.

[www.themayflowersociety.org](http://www.themayflowersociety.org)





www.seeplymouth.org : Jack Costello

## The Plimoth Plantation : bringing earlier times back to life

The Plimoth Plantation, first established in 1947, has a dual role in telling the story of the first Plymouth colony from the perspective of those settlers who established it while also celebrating the Native Wampanoag people.

### The Homesite



Visiting the museum, which is a Smithsonian Institution Affiliate, it is appropriate to begin with the *Wampanoag Homesite*.

Here is the chance to get a insight into the native Wampanoag people who lived here long before the Europeans first came to New England.

Their way of life was a simple one of moving camp seasonally with the shoreline preferred for late spring, summer and autumn before moving inland during the colder winter months.

As such they are also able to keep alive the tribal living and traditions of their ancestors.



Descendants of these tribesmen and women maintain the camp here, dressing in traditional deerskins and cooking fish and clams caught in the local waters.

### The settlement

This is a representation of the original settlement of the Plymouth Colony, established by English colonists, some of whom later became known as Pilgrims.

The village is based on first and second-hand records, accounts, articles along with paintings and artefacts from the time.

To create a genuine authenticity, the villagers dress, speak and act in character while 'present day' interpreters answer any general inquiries guests may have.



### Of Plymouth Plantation

William Bradford, the leader of the Plymouth Colony, wrote *Of Plymouth Plantation*, detailing the struggles of the Pilgrims during the colony's early years.

Written between 1630 and 1651, the journal relates events from 1608, when the Pilgrims left England to settle in Holland, through the 1620 Mayflower voyage up to 1647.

The book ends with a list, written in 1651, of the Mayflower passengers and what happened to them.

The journal, which made little impact at the time, was lost during the Revolutionary War.



It was discovered in 1776, in the Diocese of London and remained there until presented to the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1897.

Its publication was a literary phenomenon with the Pilgrims status elevated, in American history and folklore, to that which they enjoy today.

www.plimoth.org

# Other historic reflections of Plymouth

Journalists will tell you one never lets facts get in the way of a good story and this might be the case here.

The Plymouth Rock is a boulder surrounded by the grandest of monuments in Pilgrim Memorial State Park on the shore of Plymouth Harbor.

Although no historical evidence exists to confirm Plymouth Rock as the Pilgrims' actual steppingstone to the New World, the then 10-ton boulder was identified as such in 1741.

However, this was 121 years after the arrival of the Mayflower.

This claim was made by Thomas Faunce, a 94-year-old church elder who said his father, who arrived in Plymouth in 1623, along with several of the original Mayflower passengers assured him the boulder was the exact landing spot.

Whatever, the Plymouth Rock became a symbol of the American ideal and 400 years later it is gazed upon, and photographed by more than one million people each year (including Ann and myself in 2016).

## Plimoth Grist Mill



Located alongside the Town Brook, the Plimoth Grist Mill is a reproduction of a 1636 grist (corn grinding) mill built by the Pilgrims in Plymouth Colony.

After more than a decade of laboriously grinding corn by hand in wooden mortars, the colony authorized the construction of a water-powered corn grinding mill on Town Brook in 1636.

During a visit, one can explore the mill and learn about the importance of mills in the 1600s, the process of grinding corn and the ecology of the Town Brook area, including the annual herring run.

[www.plimoth.org/mill](http://www.plimoth.org/mill)



Plymouth Rock : [www.seeplymouth.org](http://www.seeplymouth.org) : Jack Costello

## The Pilgrim Hall Museum

The Pilgrim Society was founded in 1820 to preserve Plymouth's unique history, and in 1824, opened the doors of Pilgrim Hall Museum to the public.

It is the oldest continuously operating public museum in the country and America's museum of Pilgrim possessions.

The museum has a fascinating collection of 17th century artefacts, some of which actually came on the Mayflower, and which illuminates the story of early Plymouth Colony.

All helps to paint the picture of the families struggle, sacrifice, courage, and perseverance.

[www.pilgrimhallmuseum.org](http://www.pilgrimhallmuseum.org)

Nearby, Burial Hill Cemetery is the resting place of many early settlers.

Other heritage attractions include Richard Sparrow House, an art gallery in a 17th-century home.

And across the Town Brook river is the restored Jabez Howland House, which was owned by original Mayflower passengers.

On a hilltop to the north of Plymouth, the National Monument to the Forefathers is a huge statue dedicated to the Pilgrims.

## The Waterfront



While in Plymouth, one is also going to want to relax and 'wine and dine'.

The attractive downtown Plymouth, has a number of interesting vintage and antique stores and some lively bars and restaurants.

However, most visitors will opt for the Plymouth Waterfront. There is something more pleasing in eating to a bay backdrop, and here that of the Mayflower II.

It spreads along Water Street and around Plymouth Harbour and Bay, with the Pilgrim Memorial State Park dominated by the Pilgrim Rock's epitaph.

Here one also finds a string an excellent, bustling, bars and restaurants.

## More information

[www.seeplymouth.com](http://www.seeplymouth.com)



# Mirbeau Inn & Spa at The Pinehills



By Ann Mealor

**With the look and feel of an old world French manor, the Mirbeau Inn and Spa stands proud as the first and only five star hotel in Plymouth.**

In peaceful and picturesque surroundings, overlooking the 18th fairway of the Pinehills Rees Jones golf course, a stay at the Mirbeau is a treat.

Built only a few years ago, all the fixtures and fittings are in excellent condition and the comfortable sofas still have a lively spring to them.

Our room was very well furnished in beige, brown and cream with warm and homely antique style furniture and a cosy fireplace.

## The Mirbeau bed

The bed (made exclusively for the hotel) was large and feather soft - it was unbelievably comfortable - with crisp, white linen bedding.

The bathrobes were kitten soft plush, just the thing for relaxing in front of the fire, which we did with a chilled glass of sauvignon.

The evening turn-down service, an American tradition, included an exquisite, ribbon tied box of two Belgian chocolates, a delightful little luxury.

## The bar at the Mirbeau

When in the States, we enjoy sitting at the bar enjoying a beer or martini.

The bar at the Mirbeau proved the ideal watering hole; chic and elegant with our barman able to shake up a perfect cocktail. Casual dining took place in the 'French bistro, with fine dining in the Henri Marie Art Deco-styled 'chapel'.

The welcoming lounge had lit fireplaces, comfy seating, gold framed mirrors and fresh flowers, recreating the ambience of a romantic, French country chateau.



Rare antique items can be found throughout, including an Aubusson Floral Country Scene Tapestry from France.

For those looking for peace, relaxation and pampering, the large, state-of-the art spa is the place to be for a bit of 'me-time' and a rejuvenating body treatment.

## Breakfast on the porch

After a good night's sleep, we enjoyed a delicious breakfast, on the Bistro Porch overlooking the Monet inspired pond gardens, watching the colourful, Koi fish between the lilies.



We can recommend the French style smoked salmon, cream cheese and spinach omelette, which was one of the best around.

[www.mirbeau.com/pinehills-plymouth/](http://www.mirbeau.com/pinehills-plymouth/)



## A snapshot of Plymouth





# Doing the airport in style with the executive lounge



How often have you heard it said that it is the airport that is the worst part of flying.

The time it takes to get through security, the panic at the thought of checking in late and missing the flight and then the wait in crowded departure areas.

So is the best approach to spend as little time there as possible?

## Get there early

No. To avoid the stress and pressure of flying, get to the airport three hours earlier than necessary, check in and clear security in a leisurely 'no sweat' fashion and then head to one of the airport lounges to relax or work in style.



This costs a little more but, with all that lounges offer to make guests comfortable, it is money very well spent



## All you need

Comfortable chairs and a good view of the aircraft; Wi-Fi access and power points; a complimentary choice of hot and soft drinks and a selection of fine food and a wide range of newspapers and magazines (for reading there and on the plane).



It makes the airport experience a pleasure.



Nº1

LOUNGES

Passengers flying out of London (as I tend to do) should opt for the premium lounges by No.1 Lounges.

No.1 Traveller offers 'pay-as-you-go' airport lounges at Heathrow Terminal 3, Gatwick North and South Terminals, Stansted and also at Birmingham.

## Other services

In addition to its premium lounges, No.1 Traveller also offers chauffeur-driven airport transfers for 'driveway to runway', as well as travel spas and bedrooms.

You can then look forward to enjoying the flight in a fit state.



[www.no1lounges.com](http://www.no1lounges.com)

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[www.allwaystraveller.com](http://www.allwaystraveller.com)



**The International Travel Writers Alliance** is the world's largest association of professional travel journalists.

[www.itwalliance.com](http://www.itwalliance.com)



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