

## Jersey Girl

**TV reporter Jayne Miller enjoys vacationing on the beaches of Ocean County, N.J.**

By Stephanie Citron, Special to The Baltimore Sun



Jayne Miller, WBAL-TV's investigative reporter, delights in exploring environments foreign to her. An ardent traveler, she has been dazzled by the likes of East Africa, Turkey and the wild Western United States.

But asked to cite her favorite travel destination, Miller said her favorite getaway is practically next door.

It's the place she considers her second home — property on the remote Barnegat Peninsula, along New Jersey's north-central coast, that has been in her family for two generations.

### **What is your favorite travel destination?**

I have been very lucky to have traveled many places, but my favorite destination is Island Beach State Park, along the Jersey shore.

### **How long have you been frequenting this spot?**

Since I was just 6 weeks old. In the 1940s after World War II, my family began vacationing in that area. Ultimately, my father bought a house

on Barnegat Bay, near Seaside Park, which I still own with my brother. I discovered Island Beach State Park when I started having dogs, because you can take your dog there.

### **What inspires you most about this destination?**

Island Beach State Park is miles of untouched, undeveloped natural coastland. You know the East

Coast: There is practically no undeveloped land. This is a pristine, peaceful place. There is nothing like going there first thing in the morning, because the only people out are the fishermen, and it's not yet hot.

This [Ocean County] is an area that is rich with history, with really old bay-head towns. New Jersey has gone to great lengths to restore and maintain its beaches in recent years, and there are fabulous beaches along the coast. Of course, Seaside Heights has now been made famous by Snooki [of MTV's series "Jersey Shore"] ... and by the way, it's all real!



**Is this a bustling beach town?**

Nearby me, there are mostly family houses and very few motels. Our property is on Barnegat Bay, near Toms River. I have my best memories of my parents there. My brother and I now own it, so our families and friends are visiting all the time.

**What regular rituals do you follow when you visit?**

Every morning we head over to the park, where the dog runs and swims, and we just walk for miles. We're avid boaters, which is why we're on the bay...even the dog comes in the boat.

**Do you have a favorite restaurant?**

You know what? It's the backyard grill — because the best food we get is the fresh fish from the Ortley Fish Market in Ortley Beach and the fresh Jersey produce available at vendors along Route 35.

There's nothing quite like steaming some clams, boiling some corn on the cob, packing it up and taking it out to watch sunset over the bay by boat. We, and many of the locals, do a lot of cooking while we're there.

When we do eat out, one of our favorites is Lobster Shanty in Point Pleasant Beach, N.J. It's on the Manasquan Inlet and a great spot to watch fishing boats come and go.

### **Considering all the travel you have done, what other destinations do you recommend?**

I visited Africa last year — Tanzania and Kenya. It was the trip of a lifetime. I travel a few times a year, with really big trips every two to three years. I just returned from a trip out West to the Rockies and the Grand Tetons. It's hard to beat the majestic beauty that lies within this country.

### **Do you plan your travel online or hire a professional?**

Our "go-to" agency is Poe Travel in Arkansas. I found them when planning my Turkey trip years ago, and they helped us with Africa and other places.

### **What is the one item you will not travel without?**

My camera. It is a Nikon D-70, a really good digital camera. I started my career as a film photographer. I spend a lot of time photographing while I am traveling.

### **Do you travel with recording devices, in case the destination might turn up a story to cover?**

I am keenly aware that any trip could turn into a working vacation, so I always make certain I have international service on the cellphone, and I have a smartphone.

### **Do you have an all-time favorite travel read or author?**

I often buy books that are inspired by where I am. I just read "The Children's Blizzard" when I was in South Dakota. It is the story of the 1880s blizzard, in the midst of the Norwegian and German settlement of the Dakotas.

### **If you go**

#### **Ocean County, N.J.**

Jayne Miller's beloved Barnegat Bay peninsula is dotted with tiny historic towns and long stretches of white beaches. The coastal region includes the popular resort areas of Seaside Heights and Point Pleasant Beach.

#### **Getting there**

Ocean County is north of Atlantic City and about 160 miles from Baltimore. Take Interstate 95 north to the Jersey Turnpike. Merge onto Route 73 via exit 4 and go to Route 70 E. After three roundabouts, turn right onto Route 37 for about 13 miles. [oceancountygov.com/areamap.htm](http://oceancountygov.com/areamap.htm)

#### **On the beach**

New Jersey beaches require beach tags. In Ocean County, the tags range from \$5-\$10 per day and can be purchased from a beach patrol officer. Many hotels provide them to their guests. [oceancountytourism.com](http://oceancountytourism.com)

#### **Lodging**

**Vacation rentals.** Staying on Long Beach Island affords you access to the ocean and Barnegat Bay. If you have at least a week, immerse yourself in the scene and opt for one of the family rentals via [discoverseasideheights.com/accommodations/rentals](http://discoverseasideheights.com/accommodations/rentals).

**Daddy O**, 4401 Long Beach Blvd., Brant Beach, 609-494-4401, [daddyohotel.com](http://daddyohotel.com). Hipsters favor this boutique beach hotel. Summer rates from \$280 a night.

**Sandcastle B&B**, 710 Bayview Ave., Barnegat Light, [sandcastlelbi.com](http://sandcastlelbi.com). For a posh, romantic getaway, try this adult-only hotel with summer rates starting at \$325 a night.

**Engleside Inn**, 30 Engleside Ave., Beach Haven 609-492-1251. This oceanfront inn, near the boardwalk and eateries, is best for families. Summer rates start at \$170.

## Dining

**The Gables**, 212 Centre Street, Beach Haven 609-492-3553 [Gableslbi.com/dining-bistro.htm](http://Gableslbi.com/dining-bistro.htm). Who can choose between the banana-stuffed baguette French toast and the crab-fried jasmine rice with poached eggs at the Zagat-rated Victorian Sunday Brunch? Brunch entrees from \$10.

**Singing Man Ice Cream Shop**, 2305 Grand Central Ave., Lavallette, 732-854-2779, [themusicman.com](http://themusicman.com). The best licks can be found here as the wait staff performs vaudevillian caberet music while serving delicious homemade ice cream.

## Attractions

**Barnegat Lighthouse.** The best vistas can be had from the top of this lighthouse on the northern tip of Long Beach Island, which features nature trails, bird-watching perches, beaches and information center. \$1 entry fee.

[longbeachislandjournal.com/attractions/barnegat-lighthouse](http://longbeachislandjournal.com/attractions/barnegat-lighthouse)

**Jenkinson's Boardwalk**, 300 Ocean Avenue, Point Pleasant Beach, [jenkinsons.com](http://jenkinsons.com). The century-old boardwalk includes an aquarium, amusement park, restaurants and private beach.

**Long Beach Island Historical Museum**, Engleside and Beach avenues, Beach Haven, 609-492-0700, [lbimuseum.org](http://lbimuseum.org). Housed in an old church, the museum stages exhibits celebrating maritime history, including whaling and commercial fishing. Later, take a walking tour of LBI's famous Victorian houses.

