

Fall Fashion Preview • Tour the Islips

Distinction

long island



AUGUST 2006 \$3.95



www.distinctionmagazine.com

The Islips: SHARED NAME, DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

by Claudia Gryvatz Copquin
Photography by Elizabeth Glasgow

Central Islip, Islip Terrace, East Islip, West Islip, the hamlet of Islip . . . While these five Long Island neighborhoods share a common moniker and a township (Islip, of course), it would be very rare to hear someone make a comment about The Islips as a single

my town

Islip Town Hall.





Shops along Islip's Main Street

community. That's because they're quite distinct from one another in terms of character as well as geography.

While all the other Islips are situated more or less along the South Shore of Long Island, for example, Central Islip (commonly referred to as CI), is actually north of the Southern State Parkway. Currently undergoing a residential boom with a variety of housing complexes under construction, most Long Islanders know that this bustling community also serves as a law center — a Federal Courthouse and County Court Complex are located here, and the Touro Law School campus is expected to open at its new location for the fall semester. New York Institute of Technology also has a campus in CI. For recreation, Citibank Park, a 6,002-seat ballpark, is home base for the Long Island Ducks, a minor league baseball team.





Islip landmarks reflect diverse architecture.



Head south and you'll reach the small residential community called Islip Terrace, which was known as Germantown in the 1900s. Islip Terrace and East Islip are divided by Sunrise Highway. Overlooking the Great South Bay, East Islip claims the magnificent Heckscher State Park, featuring 20 miles of trails, a swimming-pool complex, picnic areas, a boat-launch ramp, playing fields, a playground and 69 camp sites. Smaller parks and recreation areas can be found throughout this community, among them the East Islip Beach & Marina Park. But in addition to nature, there's also art. The Bayway Arts Center, featuring the Broadhollow Theater Company, is based on Main Street, and not far away on Irish Lane is the Islip Art Museum, which presents five contemporary exhibitions a year in its main galleries. A variety of modest home styles can be found in East Islip, but there are also a good number of opulent structures, particularly in The Moorings, a gated community along the Great South Bay.

It's most surprising to discover private, gated multi-million-dollar waterfront mansions also tucked away in the hamlet of Islip. Here, Main Street is marked by independent retail stores. But the simplicity of this neighborhood's commercial area is exactly what



endears it to long-term residents such as Suffolk County Legislator Cameron Alden, who has lived in this hamlet his entire life.

"It's almost like a snapshot of rural America," says Legislator Alden. "You have a well-defined downtown area that you can walk in less that

five minutes and that's part of what I love most about it, the smallness, the uniqueness of it."

You can't go into the bakery without running into friends and neighbors, adds Alden, a sentiment that is echoed by Lori Zegel, owner of Nook & Cranny Gifts and Collectibles

Multi-million-dollar homes in The Mooring, East Islip, take advantage of the easy access to the waters of the Great South Bay.

on Grant Avenue. "This is an old-fashioned town and everyone knows each other here," says Zegel. A

LOCAL EYES



"I've lived here for 17 years," says Lori Zegel, Islip hamlet resident and owner of Nook & Cranny Gifts and Collectibles. When she bought the store four years ago, it was "more of a collectibles store," she says. Zegel began stocking different merchandise — fashion jewelry, handbags and gifts. "Now, it's more of a boutique."


An active member of the Chamber of Commerce and of The Historical Society of Islip Hamlet, Zegel says she grew up in nearby Bay Shore, which also has a Main Street, albeit one that's far more expansive than the one in Islip. But Zegel prefers the small-town charm and peace of her adopted neighborhood. "The hustle and bustle doesn't go on in this town," she says.

Main Street is a vital part of Islip, notes Zegel, stressing that with malls and large national retailers proliferating on Long Island, it's critical that people continue supporting small local businesses. Not only does that keep a town like Islip thriving, but it also instills a strong sense of community among locals. "We're like a big family here," she says, adding, "My heart is in this town."

— Claudia Gryvatz Copquin



testament to her comment can be found in Poppy's Luncheonette, a nondescript little diner that is, by all accounts, a neighborhood hangout. "It's like everybody's home kitchen," she adds.

While Poppy's offers home-made grub, down the road a bit at 107 Main Street is a fast-food restaurant of certain national notoriety. This is Long Island's first McDonald's, which opened in 1958 and is still at the same location today. Also famous in its heyday until the Islip location closed in 1905 was the Duxsee Clam & Seafood Canning Company. Founded in 1865, Duxsee was a food canning innovator, shipping their products worldwide. A marker, installed by the Historical Society of Islip Hamlet, commemorates the cannery location at Maple Avenue Dock. Other plaques throughout the community highlight Willow Brook Racetrack (1907-1915), First Town Hall (1869-1907), called "Union Hall" originally, and Islip Beach, marking the land that was donated to the town in 1924 at the tip of South Bay Avenue. The tiny beach offers expansive views of the bay and the Robert Moses Causeway, which can be accessed via West Islip. Boating, beaching and fishing are a main source of recreation for West Islip residents, but while the town has its own beach and marina, at arm's reach are miles and miles of enviable sand and ocean . . . Robert Moses State Park, Captree Boat Basin and Jones Beach. 

Claudia Gryvatz Copquin is editor of Newsday's Long Island Weddings and an award-winning freelance writer.



The *Destiny* Home Elevator.
Invest in your *Dreams*. Invest in your *Life*.
Call today for more information.

HANDiLiFT

ACCESSIBILITY WITH DIGNITY, Est. 1975

Made in the U.S.A. by
National
Wheel-O-Vator

800-432-LIFT (5438)

Exclusive *Destiny* Dealer
in New York City & Long Island
www.handi-lift.com

WADE ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE DESIGN SINCE 1961



- landscape design
- gunitite pools & spas
- retaining walls
- custom driveways
- perennial & seasonal planting
- masonry & walkways
- irrigation systems



LANDSCAPE | DESIGN | BUILD

201 Main Avenue, Wheatley Heights 631.643.6644

Licensed & Insured in Nassau & Suffolk Counties