



On The Jitney

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photos by M.R. Coughlin



The Gateway to Long Island's Wine Country

-Steve Mirsky

*S*erving as a gateway to Long Island's wine country along Great Peconic Bay and close to the Shelter Island ferry, Southold Village's low-key, family-centered vibe is far from the Hamptons' crowds and posh social scene. A few miles up Main St. which is also Route 25, strawberries, sweet corn, and other fresh grown produce sold at roadside farms stand shoulder-to-shoulder with loads of wine tasting opportunities. Vineyards range in ambiance from the homey Old Field Vineyard with roosters pecking at your feet and a vintage tractor parked within stones throw of the outdoor wooden deck to the sprawling Duck Walk estate's spacious wine tasting bar complete with a tropical fish tank built into the wall and a surround stereo system cranking out the hottest tunes. Depending on the time of day, reasonably priced down-home cooking can be hard to find as you travel further away from Southold into North Fork wine territory. So if cheese and crackers aren't staving off the hunger pangs, fried clams won't cut it, and you're looking to get a taste of the region's heritage, Southold is the perfect stop off. Main Street is lined with 50's-style storefronts and a handful of cafes perfect for lingering with the morning paper and a cup of coffee or sitting down for a full meal. Country Corner Café Luncheonette and Ice Cream Parlor and the Main Street Grill are clearly local joints where everybody knows your name, if you stay long enough, serving up generous portions of good ole fashioned comfort food. Further down Main St. toward the marina, Grateful Deli is the stop for made-to-order sandwiches. If you want to go a bit more

upscale for either picnic fixings or indoor dining, hop over to the The Piping Plover Café and Gourmet Market located in the middle of Southold's only shopping plaza.

After taking a closer look around Main St., you'll quickly notice that Southold's Historical Society commands a major presence maintaining over a dozen historic buildings as they stood hundreds of years ago. Most are concentrated at the corner of Main St. and Maple Lane in a village square layout. Key dwellings include The Thomas Moore House built around 1750 and now filled with pre-industrial artifacts and displays. The Gagen Blacksmith Shop, built in 1842 operated continuously for over 100 years before closing. Now restored, the shop regularly hosts blacksmith demonstrations. The Shed houses a burgeoning farm equipment collection including a cauliflower planter acquired from the Zilnicki Farm in Riverhead. And for those seeking the arts, the late Victorian Joseph N. Hallock/Ann Currie-Bell House constructed in 1900, showcases the work of artist Thomas Currie-Bell, once an important member of the Peconic School of painters.

Another establishment, The Prince Building, is a distinguishing white trimmed 19th century brick building also operated by the Society. On one side, The Treasure Exchange, an antiques and collectibles consignment is the perfect venue for shoppers with a cause. Eclectic goods like pottery, depression-era glassware, and handcrafted jewelry are brought in from all over Long Island and each purchase benefits the Society's work. The Prince Building has

gone through various incarnations as a dry goods business, housing the once-popular Oyster Bar, to having its second floor converted to apartments. By 1990, the building was in severe disrepair with the original porch long since removed. The Society purchased the building that same year restoring it to its original grandeur. Today, it also houses the Society's headquarters, archives, and museum shop.

Beyond Main St., meander south down some side streets to the bay and chances are you'll discover a tiny marina or a community of mammoth waterfront homes to ogle. If staying the night is on your itinerary, nearby Shorecrest B&B overlooking Long Island Sound and Ashamamoque Pond and the more modern Acorn Hollow B&B await your weary feet.

