

FAVORITE THINGS

The great escape

Weekend getaways to get used to

BY MAGGIE HAWRYLUK

As the weather warms up and the majority of Manhattanites flee the steaming streets of the city for greener, cooler pastures, brokers also take some time off from their hectic schedules for a quick weekend getaway to recoup. This week *Brokers Weekly* asked readers to spill about their favorite places to get away from it all for a few days.

Century 21 NY Metro executive vice president Wesley L. Stanton does his best to steer clear from the ordinary with his getaways.

"Definitely not the Hamptons — too crowded, too much attitude, overpriced and not at all as fun as it used to be," he said. "As a born and raised Manhattanite, it is a shame because it used to be such a wonderful summer destination. I prefer Greenwich, Conn. or the towns around Dutchess County; not far away and much more relaxed despite not having access to a beach."

For Crystal Green, of Citi Habitats, a vacation isn't a true escape unless there's a beach involved. She opts for some South Beach sand between her toes, "because it's less than three hours away."

"The ocean; the nightlife is very similar to New York," she continued. "My friends and I consider it the sixth borough. I go several times a year."

Tracie Hamersley, of Citi Habitats, agreed. "Miami Beach because the weather is almost always lovely, especially in the winter," she said. "It is just a short and inexpensive direct flight. Plus I have a condo on the beach there. And it is almost the sixth borough of New York City."

While everyone is escaping the city during long weekends, Mary Jo, senior vice president and associate broker at Barak Realty, is enjoying it.

"I can wake up and go to Sarabeth's without waiting outside on Amsterdam Avenue for an hour and a half. I can shop without waiting in line, and everything is on sale. Even SoHo is

navigable on Saturday," she said.

"I've taken this vacation many times over, on Memorial Day weekend, July 4th weekend, Labor Day weekend.... and not



Citi Habitats' Carla Kupiec trades in hustle and bustle for bucolic and serene when she escapes to Candlewood Isle.



Bryan Park, of Platinum Properties, said his favorite weekend trip, Block Island, is one of Rhode Island's "best-kept secrets."

once have I ever been disappointed. I love my accommodations, my traveling companions — my friends — my restaurant experiences, my movies, my shows."

Bryan Park, an agent with Platinum Properties, on the other hand, likes to go somewhere that is the furthest thing from the city.

"My favorite summer weekends are when I escape to Block Island, which is one of Rhode Island's best-kept secrets," he said. "The area offers a quaint and friendly atmosphere with 17 miles of beaches and everything from boating, fishing and horseback riding to kayaking, parasailing, cycling and yoga.

In addition to its sporting activities, visitors can also indulge in the island's many unique shops, freshly caught seafood, and casual nightlife."

Seth R. Hirschhorn, of Citi Habitats, also loves visiting Rhode Island, specifically Newport, for his weekend escapes.

"I get to look at all the amazing homes and mansions along Block Island and Rhode Island Sound," he said. "You can tour the beautiful homes or just drive along the water and admire the historical architecture. Beaches and real estate: what's better?"

Darren Sukenik, executive vice president at Prudential Douglas Elliman, and his partner also like to get far, far away.

"We love Litchfield County Connecticut," he said. "We really feel like we are away when we are there. Much to my partner's chagrin, there is no Scoop store — but that's the magic!"

Carla Kupiec, of Citi Habitats, also favors Connecticut as the best place to avoid weekend traffic and any nonsense. Her favorite getaway is Candlewood Isle in New Fairfield.

"The Isle is made up of about 300 cottages hidden away in the woods where cars and golf carts travel down the narrow single lane road to get to the sandy private beach," she said. "Don't plan on bringing your Hamptons attire if you are coming up to the lake, its 100% laid back: shorts and

t-shirts with campfires that replace nightclubs."

Leif Johansson, sales associate at Barak Realty, opts for a place where he can work and play.

"I'm working virtually at least once a week from the quaint little town of East Stroudsburg, Penn. In this nestled paradise I have an office with a real view of God's creations," he said. "The picturesque Delaware Water Gap National Creation Area is only 10 minutes away which offers mountain climbing, white water rafting and other exciting outdoor activities.

"To catch a summer blockbuster, hit movies during matinee in East Stroudsburg will cost you \$6. If you're into shopping you will find mesmerizing antique shops to high end outlet stores just 10 to 15 minutes away. After spending many

summers in the Hamptons and upstate I can vouch that there is no other place that offers such a variety of activities as East Stroudsburg."

Mike Simon, president and CEO, of Century 21 NY Metro said a weekend getaway isn't complete until his family is completely worn out from the day's activities. He loves spending time at his family's beach house in Southold, Long Island, which his grandmother purchased in the late '50s.

"The North Fork is very laid back and we just spend all day on the beach, come back to the house for a BBQ and then sit around the fire-pit in front of the bay until everyone passes out from exhaustion," he said.

Robin Schneiderman, of Citi Habitats, likes to feel like she's away from it all, while still having access to the finer things in life. She said the perfect spot for her personal escape is Shelter Island.

"There is something about taking a ferry to a secluded spot that really makes you feel like you are on vacation. Especially because you avoid all the Hamptons traffic by traveling through the North Fork," she said. "The little island is beautiful and peaceful. And if you want to party, you can always go to Sunset Beach Hotel by hotelier Andre Balazs. Tennis, golf and boating give you all the sports you need, and there are just enough restaurants to pick from."

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— Wesley L. Stanton, Century 21 NY Metro