

CAPE MAY MAC GROUP TOURS

Traveling to Cape May with Friends

Cape May MAC's Group Tour Manager Sue Gibson tells why groups absolutely love coming to Cape May, N.J.

MAC's Director of Media Relations, Susan Krysiak, sat down with MAC's Group Tour Manager, Sue Gibson, to talk about why groups love traveling to Cape May and, consequently, why she's so busy.



Krysiak: What makes a visit to Cape May a unique experience for groups?

Gibson: Cape May is a very safe, very walkable small city with the comforts of a small town. There is a multitude of historic, architectural and cultural tours, activities and events available all year long to visitors. These three qualities—its safety, its perfect size and its multitude of offerings—make it an ideal destination for groups. Its beauty and charm make it a delight to explore. Considered "America's First Seaside Resort" and granted the elevated status of a National Historic Landmark City, it is a unique experience for any visitor.

Krysiak: I see on the website that a trolley tour is recommended for first time visitors. What other landmarks/tours are popular for groups?

Gibson: Groups are always keen on exploring the Emlen Physick Estate, Cape May's only Victorian house museum. Groups can choose a tour that spans the first two floors of the 1879 Emlen Physick house museum with guides who will relate the fascinating story of the wealthy Philadelphians—the Physick family—who built the house and lived here, and how the demands to save this house from destruction in the 1970s helped launch the movement that resulted in Cape May becoming a National Historic Landmark City and a nationally renowned tourist destination. The tour features a new theme each year and this year's theme helps visitors understand how Victorians shopped, with specific examples and stories related to the Physick family. In addition to the Physick Estate, two additional historic sites, the 1859 Cape May Lighthouse, and the World War II Lookout Tower (Fire Control Tower #23), are a natural for groups. Additionally, there are tours and activities tailored just for groups that tell many different fascinating stories of Cape May: "Cape May Seaside Adventure," "Haunted Cape May," "Tinkering Tasting," "Proudly We Serve," "Victorian Weekend," "Christmas in Cape May," "Cape May's African-American Heritage" and "Welcome

to Cape May." Group tour managers and operators can contact me at the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts & Humanities (MAC), Group Tour Manager Sue Gibson, at 609-224-6030, to explore all these options.

Krysiak: Is the area bus friendly in general, in terms of dropping off and parking?

Gibson: Cape May has become more and more bus friendly in recent years, with wonderful improvements in accessibility and parking for buses. For questions about the permit process, the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May is a big help. For more information visit <http://www.capemaychamber.com/pages/BusPermits>

Krysiak: Anything you'd like to add/highlight?

Gibson: Cape May welcomes groups all year long. Even though we are America's First Seaside Resort, and many people visit here to take a dip or play in the waves along the beautiful beachfront, there are a wide variety of educational and entertaining offerings for any curious traveler, offered by the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts & Humanities (MAC). Christmas is also a delightful time for groups to visit, with a variety of holiday season tours and events offered from mid-November through New Year's. As well, the Carriage House Cafe & Tearoom at the Physick Estate is a perfect lunch spot for groups, but we also can provide box lunches to groups or recommend restaurants. The Physick Estate and the Cape May Lighthouse also both have museum gift shops for visitors to explore.

For information about planning your group travel to Cape May, whether it's an intimate group or a group of dozens, contact Sue Gibson, MAC's Group Tour Manager, at 609-224-6030. She will help you organize your activities here in Cape May.

