

# Sunapee Harbor



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## The Magic of Sunapee Harbor

By Debbie Campbell

There is no fancy boardwalk, no amusement park or video arcade, just a beautiful spot for family fun and relaxation. This is my tenth summer in Sunapee Harbor and it is still my favorite place to be on a beautiful spring or summer day or any day for that matter. Whether you love boats, water, shopping, walking, beautiful gardens or eating, Sunapee Harbor has something for everyone. Let me take you on a tour.

As you travel up Main Street toward the harbor, cresting the hill you are immediately presented with a picturesque scene of crystal clear, sparkling water, boats bobbing, restaurants and small quaint shops that make up Sunapee Harbor. One of the things I feel is really special about the harbor is the beautiful flower gardens that are lovingly cared for by the dedicated women of Sunapee Harbor Gardeners. They work tirelessly to bring the gardens in the Harbor to a symphony of color and texture all summer long.

If you're itching to get out on that crystal clear water you can rent a kayak or canoe in the harbor and explore the beautiful shoreline or head for a quiet cove. If you want a real workout paddle out around the bend, you will be rewarded with a view of the widest part of Lake Sunapee, a majestic view of Mount Kearsarge in the distance and a glimpse of one of Lake Sunapee's three working lighthouses. Now if this all seems like more work than you had intended you can always sit back and relax

on the MV MT. Sunapee II tour boat. It leaves from the harbor once a day for an informative, narrated tour of Lake Sunapee. The MV MT. Sunapee II has been cruising Lake Sunapee for over forty years and is a favorite of young and old. I don't want to tell you how many times I have taken the tour. It is a great way to experience the lake and its history.

Is shopping your bag? Then you can relax and wander through the unique shops located throughout the harbor. There is the Wild Goose Country Store with everything from teddy bears and gifts to penny candy. You'll also find unique things for the garden and cottage at Deck Dock, clothing at the Harborside Trading Company and wonderful treasures and jewelry at Lakeside Treasures. Art lovers will not want to miss the Harbor Gallery where you will discover the works of many local artists. I can honestly say that I don't have to leave the Harbor when I need a special gift for a birthday, graduation, anniversary or wedding.



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Do you still have energy? Why not take a nice peaceful walk along the river. The Riverway Natural Path is a self-guided nature footpath that takes you along the Sugar River. Start in the parking lot of the Lake Sunapee Protective Association, follow along the river and loop back to the Harbor.

Now with all this activity you are probably getting hungry. If you want coffee and something sweet you can visit the Sunapee Harbor Sweet Shoppe for fresh coffee, homemade pastry, and incredible fudge. Treat yourself to

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something cooler with a visit to the Quack Shack and a vast selection of ice cream creations. They even have something for our four legged friends with free dog bones and a bowl for water or ice cream if your dog is lucky. If you are thinking about something more substantial, like lunch or dinner, what better place than sitting on the deck overlooking the lake at the Anchorage Restaurant? Or ... if you haven't had enough boating yet, you could take a dinner cruise on the MV. Kearsarge, a replica of one of the original steamboats that cruised Lake Sunapee at the turn of the last century. We call this our "two-deck-day", lunch at the Anchorage and dinner on the MV. Kearsarge.

For the history buffs, be sure to stop in at the Historical Society located in the gray barn and experience first hand the history of Lake Sunapee. They have many displays of artifacts and treasures from the area. Admission is free to all, although donations are encouraged.

Combine all this with the sounds of regional musicians and you get the idea why the Harbor is so magical. Wednesday evening features free town sponsored concerts at the Gazebo. Bring the family and a blanket to enjoy the early evening in Sunapee Harbor. The Riverway Corporation with sponsorship from local companies provides entertainment on Saturday and Sunday afternoons on the Flanders Bandstand (next to the Wild Goose Country Store). The bands in both locations vary and include: Country, Jazz, Reggie, Folk, Big Band, Rock N'Roll and anything in between. Ask one of the local merchants for a schedule. As you can see, there are many ways

to have a good time in the Harbor, without spending a fortune.

Does this sound like too much to experience in a day? Why not stay, play and enjoy for a while longer? Located right in the heart of the Harbor is Sunapee Harbor Cottages, where guests experience the ambience of true "cottage style" lodging in this picturesque harbor setting. The Knowlton House, a beautifully restored Victorian home overlooking the Harbor and the Harbor House specialize in group lodging. There is also The Inn at Sunapee, and The Burkehaven Lodge located just up Burkehaven Hill Road, as well as many other fine inns in the area.

For the Sunapee Harbor regulars, you'll be happy to know there are a few new things in the harbor this season including the opening of the Woodsum Gallery in newly rebuilt Pete's Shed and a surprise in the old Harbor Falls Deli location. I can't tell you more, you'll just have to come and check it out for yourself!



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To find out more about Sunapee Harbor you can visit [www.sunapeeharbor.com](http://www.sunapeeharbor.com) or pick up a Harbor Map at the Information Booth on Route 11 or at local shops. The real "magic" of Sunapee Harbor is the people. Wherever you go, you are greeted with a welcoming smile. I highly recommend experiencing and exploring Sunapee Harbor for a day, or two, or more. Come experience the magic!

*Debbie Campbell is a freelance writer, graphic designer and owner of Beyond Design, a graphic design firm in Sunapee, NH.*