

## 5 Newport Mansions Where Fans of HBO Max's *The Gilded Age* Can Book a Room

The waterfront city in Rhode Island is home to an impressive collection of historic homes turned hotels

It may be an unpopular opinion, but from a design standpoint, Newport mansions are on par with their English countryside counterparts. Fans of the highly stylish *Downton Abbey* tend to wish they were born into English aristocracy during the elegant and luxurious Edwardian era. After all, the centuries-old manor houses on acres of lush, manicured gardens make a case for swapping iPhones and central air conditioning with a 1921 Ford Model T and a long string of pearls. But there's no need to send your romantic imagination to Europe when there's a perfectly extravagant golden era right here in the U.S. *The Gilded Age* lasted roughly between 1870 and 1910, when the simultaneous success of industries including rail, oil, and steel led the country's economy into quite a lengthy boom.

During the economic roar, such famous families as the Rockefellers, Carnegies, and Vanderbilts moved to New York City—specifically, Fifth Avenue—and built palace-like mansions that are the backdrop to HBO Max's new series, appropriately titled *The Gilded Age*. Because only a handful of the residences still stand, the aesthetically charged series was filmed in Newport, where most of New York's elite—the *Astors* and the Morgans, among others—built summer houses. And unlike the few estates still standing in New York, including the James R. Turner- and William G. Killian-designed 991 Fifth Avenue, many of the ones in Newport have been transformed into boutique hotels where fans of the show and Golden Age thinkers (those nostalgic for an earlier era) can spend a few nights holed up in a sophisticated space overlooking the city's famous Cliff Walk.



Built right against the Cliff Walk, the Chanler is in a prime location for anyone who loves a view of the water. Photo: The Chanler at Cliff Walk

### The Chanler at Cliff Walk

New York congressman John Winthrop Chanler started building his now famous home on the edge of Easton Bay at the start of the Gilded Age in 1870. The “cottage,” as he called it, was finally completed three years later and made for the perfect summer retreat for him and his wife, Margaret Astor Ward. As is the case with the world's wealthiest set, the Chanlers eventually relinquished the home, and it became the Toilethorpe School for Girls, summer home to bishop Francis Patrick Keough, an apartment building for naval officers, and even a historical museum. Shortly after the Second World War, though, the architectural masterpiece opened as a 30-room hotel.

Today, there are 20 guest rooms and villas inspired by a specific moment in time: There are Regency, Louis XVI, Renaissance, and English Tudor rooms, all of which reflect the period for which they are named. The one amenity they all share, however, is the aromatherapy bath service, which is as relaxing as it sounds.