

'How a Beach-Side Stay at The Rockaway Hotel Made Me Feel Immediately Less Stressed'



Not too long ago, I found myself in a familiar state: stressed out. It was the beginning of summer, I'd just received my first dose of the vaccine, and things were finally starting to rebound. But all this good news coincided with my obligations expanding like a helium balloon coming dangerously close to bursting.

Friends were reaching out again, working (from home) for a website that covered all things wellness was beginning to take a toll, and, like many Americans, I began to consider where I could live outside of where I had been living for so long. Thoughts were plentiful, but in this case, an abundance mindset was anything but helpful.

What I did know for sure was that it was time to get away. But while I knew I wanted to leave my city (or at least my apartment), I wasn't prepared for a full-on vacation. At least, not yet. I thought back to all the times when I was sans stress, and realized that they all centered around one thing: water.

Whether in the bathtub (my favorite ritual), on a boat rocking with the waves, or sitting on a beach, water has a way of calming me down. And I'm not the only one: Studies show that [living alongside water and on the coasts](#) can increase health and well-being, and that in general, we're [calmer when we're around water](#). Marine biologist Wallace Nichols even studied this phenomena and coined the term "[blue mind](#)" to describe the positive mental effects of a close-proximity to rivers, lakes, oceans, or even pools and tubs.

So to the water I went. Being in Brooklyn, I got far enough away (but still close to home) by heading to The Rockaways, a beach-side community in Queens, New York. There, a room at [The Rockaway Hotel](#), a newly opened hotel with 53 guest rooms—and eight fully-furnished, extended-stay “bungalows”—awaited me.

No joke: Just walking into the hotel lobby made me feel calmer. In a sea of neutrals and surf-inspired prints, I was immediately transported from my everyday, New York state of mind to somewhere different, somewhere serene. I walked around the pool, put in a reservation at [The Rooftop](#), the aptly named bar atop the hotel, and then I took a nap. Rest and relaxation was on the docket.

Having already won accolades (including being named one of the [Best New Hotels in the World](#) by *Travel+Leisure*) and only being open since late summer 2020, I’m clearly not the only one who fell for its charms the second they walked through the door. After I woke up, it was time to eat. Heading upstairs, I sipped one of their classic cocktails—the Shark Bite (with tequila, cucumber, watermelon, lime, and Tajín, a chili/lime seasoning)—and watched the orange sun set over the Atlantic.

After taking the hottest shower I could (sorry, skin), I slipped into bed and slept a solid eight hours. (Something I hadn’t done in quite some time.) Waking up to an ocean sunrise outside of my window, going out onto the balcony for fresh salt air, and walking just one block to the beach to hear the sound of the waves was the reset I needed. Looking out to the horizon, I felt relaxed and happy. Blue-mind living, indeed.

Reservations start at \$350 during peak summer season (less in off season), and you can book your room at [TheRockawayHotel.com](#).

