

Gilded: How Newport Became America's Richest Resort

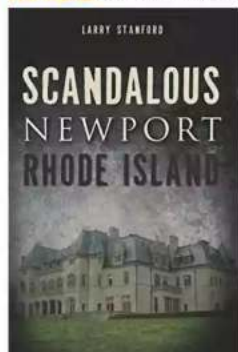
Newport, Rhode Island is a city that exudes wealth and opulence. Nestled on the coast, this picturesque haven has long been a playground for the affluent and influential. Its rise to becoming America's richest resort during the Gilded Age is a fascinating tale of wealth, ambition, and excess.

The Early Years

Newport's history dates back centuries, but it wasn't until the mid-19th century that the city began its transformation into a luxurious resort. Wealthy industrialists from New York and Boston sought refuge from the hustle and bustle of city life and found solace in Newport's charming landscape and refreshing sea air. They began building grand mansions along the coastline, turning Newport into a vibrant summer getaway.

These early elites, such as the Vanderbilts, Astors, and Morgans, spared no expense in constructing their opulent summer residences. These "cottages," as they were modestly referred to, were actually sprawling estates with lavish interiors, magnificent gardens, and stunning ocean views. The attention to detail and grandeur showcased the growing wealth and power of the upper class.

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Gilded: How Newport Became America's Richest

Resort by Deborah Davis (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

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Gaining Prominence

As Newport gained popularity among the elite, more amenities were added to cater to their luxurious tastes. The city's architecture flourished with the construction of private clubs, casinos, and grand hotels. The Newport Casino, an architectural masterpiece designed by McKim, Mead & White, became a hub for social activities and extravagant parties. Its manicured tennis courts attracted the country's top players, further establishing Newport's prominence.

Yachting also played a crucial role in Newport's rise to prominence. The city's natural harbor and ideal sailing conditions made it the perfect destination for regattas and boating events. The America's Cup, one of the most prestigious yachting races in the world, was held in Newport for decades. This further solidified Newport's reputation as a playground for the wealthy and added to its allure as a resort town.

The Gilded Age

The Gilded Age, which spanned from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, marked a period of unprecedented wealth and excess in America. This era saw the rise of industrialization, the creation of vast fortunes, and an immense gap between the rich and the poor. Newport became the embodiment of this opulence, with its extravagant mansions and lavish lifestyle.

The Vanderbilts, one of the wealthiest families of the time, built their infamous "Breakers" mansion in Newport. This 70-room Italian Renaissance-style villa

showcased their immense wealth and extravagant taste. The Astors, another prominent family, constructed their own impressive mansion, "Beechwood," which featured opulent ballrooms, marble fireplaces, and intricate chandeliers.

During this period, Newport hosted extravagant parties and social events that captured the imagination of the nation. These events were filled with champagne, dancing, and indulgence on an unimaginable scale. The elite would compete with each other to host the most impressive soirées, resulting in a constant display of wealth and extravagance.

The Decline and Revival

By the early 20th century, the Gilded Age had come to an end. Changing social attitudes, economic shifts, and two world wars led to a decline in Newport's prominence as America's richest resort. Many of the grand mansions fell into disrepair, and the city's allure faded.

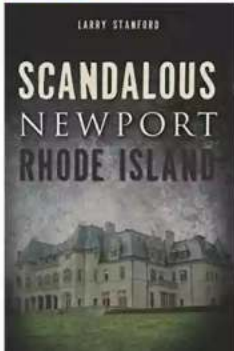
However, in the latter half of the 20th century, efforts were made to revive Newport's former glory. The preservation and restoration of the historic mansions began, allowing visitors to step back in time and experience the opulence and beauty of the Gilded Age. Tourism became a vital part of Newport's economy, with visitors flocking to explore the city's rich history and stunning architecture.

Today, Newport stands as a reminder of the illustrious Gilded Age. Its beautiful mansions, picturesque coastline, and vibrant culture continue to attract visitors from around the world. The city's rise from a small coastal town to America's richest resort is a testament to the allure of wealth and the enduring charm of this enchanting city.

Newport's transformation into America's richest resort during the Gilded Age is a captivating story that showcases the power and influence of the wealthy elite

during that era. The city's grand mansions, prestigious social events, and yachting culture all played a significant role in establishing Newport's prominence. Despite its decline after the Gilded Age, Newport has managed to revive its former glory, allowing visitors to experience the luxurious lifestyle of that bygone era. Newport remains a symbol of affluence, luxury, and the timeless allure of America's richest resort.

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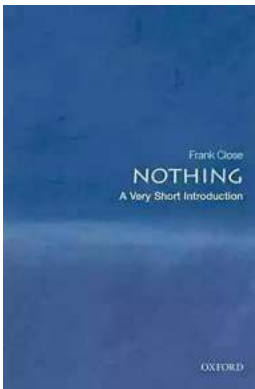
A beautifully written history of high society in Newport, Rhode Island, from the acclaimed author of Party of the Century

Newport is the legendary and beautiful home of American aristocracy and the sheltered super-rich. Many of the country's most famous blueblood families?the closest thing we have to royalty?have lived and summered in Newport since the nineteenth century. The Astors, the Vanderbilts, Edith Wharton, JFK and Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Doris Duke, and Claus and Sunny von Bulow are just a few of the many names who have called the city home. Gilded takes you along as you explore the fascinating heritage of the Newport elite, from its first colonists to the newest of its new millennium millionaires, showing the evolution

of a town intent on living in its own world. Through a narrative filled with engrossing characters and lively tales of untold extravagance, Davis brings the resort to life and uncovers the difference between rich and Newport rich along the way.

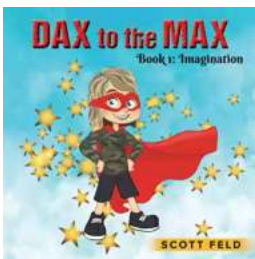
- An engrossing multigenerational saga that tells the real story of the rich and famous in Newport
- Vibrant, praiseworthy writing: "[Davis] brings splendidly colorful behind-the-scenes action and players up front" (the New York Times on Party of the Century)
- 34 evocative black-and-white photographs

Written with insight and dramatic flair, Gilded gives you a rare peek into the cloistered coastal playground of America's moneyed elite.



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