



Martha's Vineyard island is home to five unique lighthouses:

1. East Chop Lighthouse
2. Edgartown Lighthouse
3. West Chop Lighthouse
4. Cape Poge Lighthouse
5. Gay Head Lighthouse

These lighthouses are all very special, each for their own reasons. Let's explore them together. If you are able, maybe taking a drive to each of them would be a great way to spend an afternoon. Let's get started!

East Chop Lighthouse



Fun Facts about the East Chop Lighthouse

1. Around the rails at the top of the lighthouse, there are miniature lighthouses on each post.
2. The lighthouse was painted brown shortly after its original white color; it had to be changed back to white because the brown was causing excessive heat and condensation on the tower.
3. When it used to be painted brown it was known as the "chocolate lighthouse" locals were sad when the preservation society decided to paint it back to white.
4. Definition of "chop" is entranceway into a body of water The East Chop lighthouse was the entrance to the Oak Bluffs harbor

East Chop Lighthouse photos from MVM archives...can you spot the differences?



Edgartown Lighthouse



Fun facts about the Edgartown Lighthouse

1. It used to be connected to land by a bridge, not the sand bar it is now. They called the bridge “the bridge of sighs” because families would bid their sailors (whalers) adieu from the bridge and sigh with sadness.
2. Before the bridge there was no connection to the mainland! The lighthouse keeper had to row a boat back and forth every time he needed to leave.
3. This is actually the second lighthouse in this place. The first lighthouse was destroyed in the great hurricane of 1938.

Edgartown Lighthouse photos from MVM archives...can you spot the differences?



West Chop Lighthouse



Fun Facts about the West Chop Lighthouse

1. This first West Chop lighthouse keeper (James Shaw West) tended the lighthouse for 30 years and his annual pay was \$350!
2. The West Chop Lighthouse is the last of Martha's Vineyard lighthouses with a residence on site. It was occupied as recently as two years ago.
3. West Chop was the last lighthouse on the island to become automated

West Chop Lighthouse photos from MVM archives...can you spot the differences?



Cape Pogue Lighthouse



Fun Facts about the Cape Pogue Lighthouse

1. At least four different structures have been built here, with many moves, due to erosion. Once with a helicopter!
2. The current light is solar powered, do you know what solar power is?
3. The Cape Pogue lighthouse is famous...it is featured in the movie "Jaws"

Cape Poge Lighthouse photo from MVM archives...can you spot the differences?



Gay Head Lighthouse



Fun Facts about the Gay Head Lighthouse

1. A lighthouse at Gay Head was needed because of difficulty of navigation around the Devil's Bridge (a line of big rocks just beneath the surface of the water) Even with the lighthouse there were still many wrecks.
2. During the whaling boom, this waterway was one of the busiest in all the country, because of all the whaling ships passing through.
3. Gay Head lighthouse was home to a first order Fresnel lens, a beautiful glass lens made of 1,008 prisms. You can see the lens at the Martha's Vineyard Museum.
4. The Gay Head lighthouse has been a tourist destination for many years. At one time a ferry brought tourists from docks in OB and VH to visit. A horse drawn carriage would bring them from the Gay Head dock to the lighthouse

Gay Head Lighthouse photo from MVM archives...can you spot the differences?



