



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Salem, Massachusetts, Gears Up for Another
Spellbinding October**

Salem Haunted Happenings kicks off on October 1, 2025



(SALEM, Mass.) Each October, Salem casts its spell as the ultimate fall destination, where Halloween, history, and community spirit come together in unforgettable ways. With its cobblestone streets transformed by autumn colors and costumed revelers, the city comes alive with parades, vendor fairs, haunted tours, and marketplaces that celebrate Salem’s storied past and vibrant present. [Salem Haunted Happenings](#), the city’s beloved Halloween celebration, draws over a million visitors each year, and 2025 promises to be more thrilling than ever.

“October in Salem is unlike anything else in the world. It’s magical, unforgettable, and full of people who’ve come here to celebrate in their own way,” said Ashley Judge, Executive Director of Destination Salem. “We work all year with partners across the city to make Haunted Happenings safe, welcoming, and filled with the enchantment visitors return for year after year. Whether you’re visiting for the history, the Halloween, or just the vibe, planning ahead makes all the difference.”

Many traditional favorites return this year, including the **28th Annual Salem Chamber of Commerce Haunted Happenings Grand Parade**, which kicks off on Thursday, October 2 at 6:30 pm. Markets and pop-ups abound, including the **Haunted Biz Baz Vendor Fair** and the **Creative Collective Haunted Happenings Marketplace** in Derby Square and Salem Common. Plus, a food court at **Old Town Hall** on weekends all month long. On Saturday, October 11 at 11 am, Salem Main Streets will host the iconic **Howl-o-ween Pet Parade** at Derby Wharf. **The Salem Night Faire** returns to the beautifully eerie Pioneer Village on two consecutive weekends: October 17–18 and 24–25.

Salem's haunted happenings don't end downtown — follow the Harborwalk for a waterfront adventure packed with spooky surprises and seaside charm. Start with a freaky good confection at **Funhouse Donuts**, then uncover real shipwreck artifacts at **Real Pirates Salem**. Head to **Pickering Wharf** for a seriously haunted house and lots of shopping options — including gothic flair at **COVEN**. Treat yourself at **The Chocolate Pantry**, then make your way to the **House of the Seven Gables** — because no visit to Salem is complete without a stroll by the sea.

Throughout the month, visitors can enjoy hundreds of events, including the **Hollowed Harvest jack-o'-lantern festival**, **Sips and Myths at Salem Wine Imports**, and the **Ghosts and Legends Trolley**. A perennial favorite, The **Peabody Essex Museum's** historic **Ropes Mansion** will once again be decorated with holiday flair from Friday, October 24 to Sunday, November 2. As the month comes to a close, Salem hosts an epic finale with live music starting at noon on the **Salem Common** and a new drone show over the North River at 10 p.m., lighting up the sky in celebration of the season's end.



Plan Ahead

Download the [**Destination Salem App**](#) for maps, parking, restrooms, events, and attraction info. Begin your trip at the Visitor Information Center at 245 Derby Street guidance on how to make the most of your visit. Advance reservations are strongly recommended for attractions, tours, and events, especially on weekends. The City of Salem encourages visitors to utilize public transit, including trains, ferries, and satellite parking with shuttles.

About Salem Haunted Happenings

Salem Haunted Happenings began in 1982 as a weekend festival and has grown into a month-long celebration that draws visitors from around the world. Each October, the city welcomes families, couples, history buffs, and Halloween lovers for ghost tours, psychic readings, costume balls, haunted harbor cruises, and more. Salem's modern Witch and Pagan communities also celebrate Samhain, sharing their traditions with locals and guests alike. As the Halloween Capital of the World, Salem offers something for everyone. For complete information, visit [HauntedHappenings.org](https://www.hauntedhappenings.org).

About Destination Salem

As the official destination marketing organization for the City of Salem, Destination Salem promotes Salem as one of the world's most captivating destinations — a city where history, culture, and enchantment converge. Welcoming travelers from around the globe, Salem offers an authentic New England experience rich with American history, cultural discovery, exceptional dining, one-of-a-kind shopping, and year-round fun. For more information, visit [Salem.org](https://www.salem.org).

High-resolution image available [HERE](#).

Image captions:

- 1) Salem Haunted Happenings, 2022. Photo by Creative Collective.
- 2) Black Craft, Photo by Ben Rekemeyer
- 3) The Ropes Mansion at the Peabody Essex Museum, decorated as Allison's house, as it was for the 1993 filming of *Hocus Pocus*. Photo by Kathy Tarantola.

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