



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 24, 2025**



**Salem, Massachusetts Announces Festivals for 2025**  
***A schedule of events with art, history, and more***

SALEM, Mass. — Salem is set to dazzle visitors and residents alike in 2025 with an exciting lineup of festivals and events that celebrate the city’s rich history, thriving arts scene, and diverse cultural offerings. From the laughter-filled *Salem Comedy & Spirits Festival* in January to the world-renowned *Salem Haunted Happenings* in October, there’s an event for every season and interest. Whether you’re looking to enjoy delicious local treats at *Salem’s So Sweet*, commemorate historic moments like *Leslie’s Retreat*, or dance the night away at *Fiesta en la Calle*, Salem’s festivals promise unforgettable experiences all year long.

“Salem is a city that thrives on creativity and community,” said Ashley Judge, Executive Director of Destination Salem. “Our 2025 festival line-up reflects the energy and spirit that make Salem such a unique destination, and we can’t wait to welcome

everyone to experience it firsthand.”

The full schedule of Salem’s events and festivals are posted on the Destination Salem website [www.Salem.org](http://www.Salem.org)

### **Salem’s So Sweet**

#### **Friday, February 7 through Sunday, February 9**

Salem Main Streets and the Salem Chamber of Commerce invite you to participate in the annual Salem’s So Sweet Chocolate & Ice Sculpture Festival – a decadent tradition of delectable chocolate, sparkling ice sculptures, and Valentine’s Day shopping! Now in its 23rd year, Salem’s So Sweet has become one of the most popular winter events on the North Shore.

Elements of this year’s Salem’s So Sweet festival include:

- Ice sculptures around town, starting with installation on the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall on Friday, Feb. 7
- Evening illumination of ice sculptures on Friday, Feb. 7 and Saturday, Feb. 8 from 5 pm to 9 pm
- A Kickoff Party and late-night shopping on Friday, Feb. 7
- The Chocolate Hearts Challenge on Saturday, Feb. 8 and Sunday, Feb. 9 – an interactive game in businesses around town with prizes for participants.

Sweet treats and deals at many of the amazing local shops and eateries all weekend! [salemsosweet.com](http://salemsosweet.com)

### **Salem Commemorates the 250TH Anniversary of the Historic "Leslie's Retreat"**

#### **Saturday, February 22 & Sunday, February 23**

The City of Salem announces a series of events commemorating the 250th anniversary of "Leslie's Retreat," the first armed resistance to British authority in the lead-up to the American Revolution. On February 26, 1775, British Lt. Colonel Alexander Leslie's attempted seizure of colonial weapons in Salem resulted in a peaceful resolution through negotiation - just weeks before the battles of Lexington and Concord. While bloodshed was narrowly avoided in Salem, the confrontation was the first active resistance by the colonists during the war. This year’s events are particularly momentous as they mark the start of Rev250 and the 250th commemoration of the American Revolution and the nation’s independence. <https://www.salemma.gov/home/news/salem-commemorates-250th-anniversary-historic-leslies-retreat>

### **Salem Film Fest: Come to Salem, see the World**

#### **Thursday, March 27 through Sunday, March 30**

The largest all-documentary film festival in Massachusetts returns to Salem for its 18th season. For four days, attendees can view films from around the world and engage with visiting filmmakers at screenings, parties, and forums. Each year, Salem Film Fest also showcases a variety of local musicians and bands. The annual Lineup Reveal Party is planned for March 2. [www.SalemFilmFest.com](http://www.SalemFilmFest.com)

## **388th Anniversary of the First Muster of the National Guard**

**Saturday, April 12**

A grand commemoration of the anniversary of the country's first muster in 1637 in Salem, Massachusetts. Each year, the city honors the First Muster with a ceremony conducted by service members, veterans, and community supporters. [www.SalemMA.gov](http://www.SalemMA.gov)

## **Massachusetts Poetry Festival**

**Saturday, May 31 through Sunday, June 1**

The Massachusetts Poetry Festival is a biennial celebration of contemporary poetry held in Salem, showcasing an all-star roster of poets from across the Commonwealth and beyond. The Festival features more than 100 poets and performers from across Massachusetts and beyond. There are headline readings, workshops, panels, a small press fair, multimedia events, open mics, and more.

<https://masspoetry.org/massachusetts-poetry-festival/>

## **Salem Arts Festival**

**Friday, June 6 through Sunday, June 8**

The Salem Arts Festival, now in its 17th year, celebrates the arts in all its forms: painting, photography, sculpture, installation, dance, music, writing, film, new media, performance, theater, poetry, culinary, visual art, and more. The 2025 festival will consist of a gallery of juried artists' work, performances in an outdoor stage venue, indoor performances, a street fair, and opportunities for the community to actively participate in the arts. Individuals are welcome to contribute at multiple venues and events. [www.creativecollectivema.com](http://www.creativecollectivema.com)

## **Salem Farmers' Market**

**Thursdays, June 12 through October 9**

The Salem Farmers' Market is a tradition that dates back to 1634. The Salem Farmers Market features local farms every Thursday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. [www.SalemFarmersMarket.org](http://www.SalemFarmersMarket.org)

## **Fiesta en la Calle**

**Saturday, June 14**

Fiesta en la Calle is North Shore CDC's annual festival celebrating the vibrant culture of the Point neighborhood that includes live music, dancing, art, and the premiere of a new collection of murals in the Punto Urban Art Museum by New England-based artists and Point residents. The annual Block Party celebrates the diverse community and culture of the people who live and work there. [www.salemma.gov](http://www.salemma.gov)

## **Juneteenth Jam**

**Thursday, June 19**

The City of Salem is excited to invite all community members to this year's Juneteenth Celebration, taking place on June 19th at Charlotte Forten Park. This significant event, known as the Juneteenth Jam, will commence at noon and is an inclusive, free

community event celebrating freedom and unity. [www.salemma.gov](http://www.salemma.gov)

## **North Shore Pride Parade & Festival**

**Saturday, June 28**

A day to celebrate Pride with local businesses, faith groups, and community organizations at the fifth annual North Shore Pride Parade and Festival. All are welcome to attend any activity during the day-long event celebrating unity in the community which includes the North Shore Pride Parade and Festival, North Shore Pride Afterparty, North Shore Pride Drag Brunch, and North Shore Pride Interfaith service. [www.NorthShorePride.org](http://www.NorthShorePride.org)

## **Salem Celebrates the 4th!**

**Friday, July 4**

Bring your beach blankets and folding chairs to enjoy the 42-piece Hillyer Festival Orchestra on Derby Wharf at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site for a grand celebration of our nation's Independence Day. Featuring a Pops concert, a Kid Space play area, and fireworks launched over Salem Harbor, this is a quintessential celebration of the 4th of July. [www.Salem.com](http://www.Salem.com)

## **Salem Heritage Days**

**Saturday, August 2 through Sunday, August 10**

Celebrate the past and the present during the annual Salem Heritage Days. Highlights for Heritage Day include activities at the Community Life Center, Ice Scream bowl on the common, Concerts at the Willows and Touch a Truck for kids. [www.Salem.com](http://www.Salem.com)

## **Salem Maritime Festival & 3rd Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta**

**Saturday, August 9**

Join us for the second annual Salem Merry-time Fest at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site on Derby Street. This event is free and open to the public and includes the Cardboard Boat Regatta. [www.NPS.gov/SaMa](http://www.NPS.gov/SaMa)

## **Salem Jazz & Soul Festival**

**Saturday, August 16**

On Saturday, August 16, the Salem Jazz and Soul Festival will return to the Salem Willows for its 19th season! The free, all-day, community-run concert will feature talented musicians from around the region, an education tent, and a curated vendor's fair. [www.salemjazzsoul.org/](http://www.salemjazzsoul.org/)

## **Salem Lit Fest**

**Wednesday, September 3 through Sunday, September 7**

The Salem Literary Festival aims to inspire and promote literacy and a love of books and reading by creating connections through sharing stories. The Festival hosts readings, writing workshops, panel discussions, and artistic expression in music, theater, dance, etc. Lit Fest primarily features local and regional authors of recently published work, some of whom have an international audience. Held in historic venues in and around Salem, Lit Fest unites published authors and book lovers, and

encourages aspiring writers. [www.salemlitfest.org](http://www.salemlitfest.org)

### **Trails & Sails**

**Saturday, September 13 through Sunday, September 28**

Celebrating its 24th year, Trails & Sails is an event series that brings awareness and appreciation for heritage resources around Essex County, which is a federally designated National Heritage Area. Historically, Trails & Sails has focused on outdoor activities such as guided hikes and excursions on the water, but over the years it has grown to include historic house tours, lectures, community celebrations, special exhibitions, craft demonstrations, and many other diverse activities. [www.trailsandsails.org](http://www.trailsandsails.org)

### **Salem Food Truck and Craft Beer Festival**

**Saturday, September 20 and Sunday, September 21**

Food Truck Festivals of America returns to Salem with the ultimate food truck experience for a two-day festival that will feature some of the area's most popular food trucks. The vendors will be dishing out fan favorites as well as dozens of regional and national craft breweries.

[www.FoodTruckFestivalsOfAmerica.com](http://www.FoodTruckFestivalsOfAmerica.com)

### **Salem Haunted Happenings**

**Wednesday, October 1 through Thursday, October 31**

An internationally renowned celebration of Halloween and fall in New England. What started as a Saturday in 1982 has grown to become the largest celebration of Halloween in the world. Events include the Grand Parade, Howl-o-Ween Pet Parade, Family Film Nights on Salem Common, costume balls, ghost tours, haunted houses, live music, and chilling theatrical presentations. [www.HauntedHappenings.org](http://www.HauntedHappenings.org)

### **Salem Holiday Happenings**

**Friday, November 28 through Thursday, January 2, 2026**

Celebrate, shop, and dine in Salem during the holiday season. Festival highlights include Historic Salem, Inc.'s annual Christmas in Salem Historic House Tour and Santa's arrival atop the Hawthorne Hotel. And don't miss the annual Launch! on New Year's Eve, featuring an early family-friendly event. These events are just a sampling of the programming that takes place in Salem each year. In addition to these annual events and incredible exhibitions, programming at the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem State University, the House of the Seven Gables, Historic New England's Phillips House, and the many restaurants and bars guarantee a different experience for every visit. [www.Salem.org](http://www.Salem.org)

For a full list of events, visit [www.Salem.org](http://www.Salem.org) or reach out to Destination Salem any time to find more information on everything happening in Salem, Massachusetts.

### **About Destination Salem**

As the destination marketing organization for the City of Salem, Destination Salem cooperatively markets Salem as one of Massachusetts' best destinations for families,

couples, and domestic and international travelers who are seeking an authentic New England experience, cultural enrichment, American history, fine dining, unique shopping, and fun. Stay connected with us on social media @DestSalem. For more information, visit [Salem.org](http://Salem.org).

*High-resolution images are available [HERE](#).*

Image caption: Salem's So Sweet Ice Sculptures, Photo by Creative Collective.

**For media inquiries:**

Kristen Levesque

Destination Salem

207-329-3090

[kristen@kristenlevesquepr.com](mailto:kristen@kristenlevesquepr.com)