



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 20, 2025



Discover the Spirit of the Holidays in
Salem, Massachusetts

(SALEM, Mass.) – Salem is set to shine once again this holiday season with a vibrant calendar of events for all ages. From discovering handmade gifts at the Salem Arts Association Holiday Artists' Market and showing your love for local shops on Small Business Saturday, to greeting Santa at his grand arrival and tree lighting, the city is brimming with seasonal cheer. Families can ride the Gingerbread Holiday Trolley, explore one-of-a-kind creations at holiday markets, and even enjoy a delightfully eerie twist at the Grave Tidings Dark Holiday Market.

This season also introduces Salem Holiday Happenings, a new collaborative initiative focused on connecting visitors with Salem's local businesses, holiday shopping, and seasonal dining experiences. Co-organized by Salem Main Streets and Creative Collective, Salem Holiday Happenings provides a

business-focused guide to downtown's participating merchants and their holiday offerings at www.salemholidayhappenings.org.

The festivities culminate with Salem's New Year's Eve Launch, offering a family-friendly countdown to 2026. Join us in downtown Salem to experience the warmth, wonder, and community spirit that make the season truly magical.

Here are some of the highlighted events for the 2025 holiday season:

Ghosts of Christmas Past: A Haunted Holiday Stroll

Beginning November 22

Uncover Salem's fascinating and ghostly holiday history, from strict Puritan bans on Christmas making it illegal even to celebrate, to Victorian Holiday ghost stories originally told around the fireside. With warm Yuletide cheer, we examine ancient customs of Yule and other Pagan winter solstice traditions of Krampus, Frau Perchten "the Christmas Witch," and Mary Lwyd! Spend your holiday season with us for a storytelling experience you'll never forget. Visit spots including Old Town Hall, the Witch House, Ropes Mansion, Hamilton Hall, and more—each being a portal to spirits and stories from Salem's past, lingering even in the holiday season. Each guest on our tour will receive complimentary hot cider and hand warmers! www.witchcitywalkingtours.com

Santa's Arrival at the Hawthorne and Holiday Tree Lighting

Friday, November 28, 5:45 p.m. to 8 p.m., Hawthorne Hotel / Salem Common and Lappin Park

A beloved annual tradition, Santa Claus will arrive at the top of the Hawthorne Hotel at 18 Washington Square – with assistance from the Salem Fire Department, of course! Santa's arrival will be followed by a procession down the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall for the annual lighting of Salem's Holiday Tree at Lappin Park (next to the Bewitched Statue at the intersection of Essex Street and Washington Street).

www.salemmainstreets.org/festivals/holiday-happenings/santa-arrives-in-salem/

Small Business Saturday

Saturday, November 29, Downtown Salem

For a city like Salem, where the community and business presence are strong all year round, Small Business Saturday isn't just another day to go shopping,

it is a time to celebrate the city's amazing retail and restaurant scene with fellow community members. So come out, take advantage of the free parking (YES, FREE PARKING), and enjoy Small Business Saturday in Salem.

www.salem-chamber.org/small-business-saturday

**Salem Arts Association Holiday Artists' Market at Salem Old Town Hall
Saturday, November 29, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Old Town Hall**

Holiday Artists' Market at Salem Old Town Hall features a festive market with live music and a holiday theme. This year's event offers a broad collection of creative treasures for yourself, friends, and family. Showcasing a variety of local artisans and crafters offering original fine art, unique gifts, and hand-made housewares to delight yourself or gift to others.

www.salemarts.org/Holiday-Artists-Market-2025

8th Annual Holiday Marketplace in Salem

Saturday, November 29, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Finz Seafood & Grill & Sea Level Oyster Bar & Kitchen

Two Salem restaurants, Finz Seafood & Grill and Sea Level Oyster Bar, will host their 8th Annual Holiday Marketplace that features vendors and artists from across the state. www.salem.org/event/8-annual-holiday-market/

Grinchmas & Cocktails Spectacular!

Sunday, November 30, Noon to 6 p.m., Village Tavern Governors Hall at Witch City Mall

It's beginning to look a lot like Grinchmas & Cocktails Spectacular in Salem MA 2025! That is right! It is our 1st annual GRINCHMAS! This is going to be your one-stop shop for all your holiday needs with 30+ vendors to shop from. There will be a special feature on the big screen showing all three Grinch movies, a Grinch Photo Booth, and a visit from the Grinch himself. There is holiday music, free kids creation stations with coloring, and holiday card making. Raffle to benefit the Talie Marie Foundation.

www.salem.org/event/grinchmas-and-cocktails-spectacular/

Twisted Christmas Tour

Fridays & Saturdays starting December 5, 5 p.m.

The Salem Night Tour is keeping the spirit of storytelling alive this winter with The Twisted Christmas Tour, a haunting holiday experience that blends ghostly lore with Victorian Christmas tradition. Running Friday and Saturday evenings throughout December, this one-hour walking tour guides guests

through downtown Salem, where eerie tales of Yuletide mischief, curses, and ghostly visitations await. www.salemghosttours.com/TwistedChristmas.html

Christmas in Salem: 46th Annual Christmas in Salem House Tour
Saturday, December 6, 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. & Sunday, December 7, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Few communities have the rich legacy of historic houses that Salem, Massachusetts boasts. These homes, spanning four centuries, help define the character as well as the appearance of the city. Every year a number of their owners invite visitors to view their homes decked out in full holiday regalia, with the help of professional decorators and florists. Christmas in Salem features a glimpse into private homes in the Federal Street and Essex Street neighborhoods that have been decorated for the holiday season as well as a series of special events such as walking tours and wine tastings that are exclusive to Christmas in Salem ticket holders. www.historysaalem.org/cis.html

Grave Tidings: Dark Holiday Market

Saturday, December 6 & Sunday, December 7, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., \$5 admission, Old Town Hall, 32 Derby Square

Grave Tidings is a haunted holiday market, hosted by Witch City Wicks, featuring a carefully curated selection of 50+ of the area's best spooky, dark, witchy, creepy, strange and macabre artists for one-of-a-kind holiday gifts. www.salem.org/series/grave-tidings-haunted-holiday-market/

Breakfast with Santa at Finz Seafood & Grill

Saturday, December 6, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., \$40 per ticket, Finz Seafood & Grill, 76 Wharf Street

Join us for a jolly morning filled with delicious food and holiday cheer. Santa will be stopping by to say hello and take photos with all the good boys and girls. Don't miss this opportunity to share your Christmas wishes with the man in red himself! Bring your family and friends for a festive breakfast that's sure to put you in the holiday spirit. www.salem.org/event/breakfast-with-santa/

Holiday Window Decorating Contest

Starting Sunday, December 7, Downtown Salem

Every year, downtown businesses decorate their windows especially for the holidays. Judges nominated by Salem Main Streets make the rounds to vote on the best windows, and the competition is always fierce!

www.salemmainstreets.org/festivals/holiday-happenings/holiday-window-contest

Salem Main Streets' Wassail Weekend

Saturday, December 13 & Sunday, December 14, Downtown Salem

Salem Main Streets is making the local shopping experience extra merry this weekend, with great finds and specials at local retailers and restaurants all around town. On Sunday, you'll be serenaded by festive roaming carolers and brass bands, with special appearances by Santa and Mrs. Claus! Follow along online for the latest list of participants and shopping details.

www.salemholidayhappenings.org/event/weekends-in-december-wassail-weekend-special-events/

Holiday Trolley: Catch the Gingerbread Man with the Good Witch of Salem

Saturday, December 13 & Sunday, December 14, 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Downtown Salem

Join the Good Witch of Salem on a quest to find the Gingerbread Man aboard the Holiday Trolley! The race through downtown Salem will begin at The Good Witch of Salem's shop with a story time all about the Gingerbread Man! Attendees will take part and interact with the story through the use of motions, props, and baking tools. After story time, together we will view and discuss how gingerbread cookies are made. Be on the lookout because one of the adorable Gingerbread Men will come alive! Rides available – 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, & 2:30 pm. www.goodwitchofsalem.com/

Chanukah Celebration

Saturday, December 20, 6:30 p.m. at Lappin Park

Celebrate the Festival of Lights in downtown Salem. Join Chabad of Beverly-Salem at Lappin Park on Saturday, December 20 at 6:30 p.m. for the Grand Menorah Lighting, festive music, giveaways, prizes, Gelt Drop, and latkes and doughnuts. www.chabadofbeverly-salem.com

New Year's Eve LAUNCH!

Wednesday, December 31, 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., Artists' Row

Come ring in the New Year in downtown Salem! Salem Main Streets returns to Artists' Row to throw a community New Year's Eve party, with live music and family-friendly activities. Programming will include art-making activities, magic shows, face painting and temporary tattoos, a silent disco, and more! There will be an early countdown promptly at 6 pm.

www.salemmainstreets.org/events/new-years-eve-launch

2025 FREE Parking Dates

Parking in municipal lots, garages, and meters will be FREE Friday, November 28, Saturday, November 29, Sunday, November 30, Saturday, December 20, Sunday, December 21, Monday, December 22, Tuesday, December 23 and Wednesday, December 24. Additional information on shopping, dining, and accommodations can be found through Destination Salem at salem.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.

Image captions:

- 1) Santa's arrival in Salem for Holiday Tree Lighting, Photo by Kate Fox.
- 2) Bewitched Statue and holiday tree adorned with ornaments in downtown Salem. Photo courtesy of Destination Salem.

High-resolution images available [here](#).

For media inquiries:

Kristen Levesque
Destination Salem
207-329-3090
kristen@kristenlevesquepr.com

Ashley Judge
Executive Director
Destination Salem
ajudge@salem.org