



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 3, 2026



Salem Celebrates 400 Years with a Yearlong Calendar of Festivals, Events, and Commemorations

(SALEM, Mass.) – As Salem marks more than four centuries of history, creativity, and community, the city invites residents and visitors alike to celebrate a milestone year filled with festivals, commemorations, and cultural experiences that reflect Salem’s enduring spirit. This year, Salem proudly celebrates its 400th anniversary, honoring the people, stories, and traditions

that have shaped the city from its earliest days to the vibrant, forward-looking destination it is today. From winter festivals and historic anniversaries to summer waterfront celebrations and beloved seasonal traditions, Salem's yearlong calendar offers countless opportunities to experience the city through the centuries.

"Salem's 400th anniversary is both a celebration and a reflection," said Ashley Judge, Executive Director of Destination Salem. "This milestone year allows us to honor Salem's deep history while showcasing the creativity, diversity, and community spirit that define the city today. Our events invite people to connect with Salem in meaningful ways through art, culture, food, music, and shared experiences across every season."

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

WINTER FESTIVAL & EVENTS

Salem's So Sweet

Friday, February 6 through Sunday, February 8

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 24th year, Salem's So Sweet has become one of the most popular winter events on the North Shore. Sweet treats and deals at many of the amazing local shops and eateries all weekend! FMI:

[SalemSoSweet.com](https://www.SalemSoSweet.com)

SPRING FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Salem Film Fest: Come to Salem, see the World

Thursday, March 26 through Sunday, March 29

The largest all-documentary film festival in Massachusetts returns to Salem for its 19th 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. [SalemFilmFest.com](https://www.SalemFilmFest.com)

389th Anniversary of the First Muster of the National Guard

Saturday, April 11

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. SalemMA.gov

Fiber Witch Festival 2026: Song of the Sea

Friday, April 24 through Sunday, April 26

Come to the Salem Fiber Witch Festival hosted by practicing witches in historic downtown Salem, Massachusetts, aka the Witch City! The main event is the Fiber Witch Market, hosted at Old Town Hall, which you may recognize from the beloved 90s movie, Hocus Pocus, and features indie yarn, farm yarn, arts, and handmade goods with a witchy vibe. The festival also includes exclusive tours around Salem, an exclusive party at the Hotel Salem, workshops, and more! FiberWitchFestival.com

Salem Arts Festival

Friday, June 5 through Sunday, June 7

The Salem Arts Festival returns to historic downtown Salem for its 18th year, featuring a vibrant, citywide showcase of local art, music, dance, and theatre. This free, family-friendly festival transforms outdoor spaces into performance stages and creative hubs, with interactive art-making, a makers' marketplace, pop-up exhibitions, a live mural slam, and public art installations that invite the community to engage with art throughout the city.

SalemArtsFestival.com

SUMMER FESTIVAL & EVENTS

Salem Farmers' Market

Thursdays, June 11 through October 8

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.

SalemFarmersMarket.org

Juneteenth Jam

Thursday, June 19

The City of Salem is excited to invite all community members to this year's Juneteenth Celebration, taking place 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. SalemMa.gov

North Shore Pride Parade & Festival

Saturday, June 27

Celebrate Pride with local businesses and community organizations at the annual North Shore Pride Parade and Festival. All are welcome to attend this day-long event celebrating unity in the community, which includes the North Shore Pride Parade and Festival, North Shore Pride Afterparty, and the North Shore Pride Drag Brunch. NorthShorePride.org

Salem Celebrates the 4th!

Friday, July 4

Bring your beach blankets and folding chairs to enjoy Live Orchestra music on Derby Wharf at the Salem Maritime National Historic Park for a grand celebration of our nation's Independence Day. Featuring live music, family fun, and fireworks launched over Salem Harbor, this is a quintessential celebration of the 4th of July. SalemMA.gov

Tall Ship - Pride of Baltimore Visits Salem

August 1 & August 2

Visitors are invited to cross the gangway and step aboard *Pride of Baltimore II* for an up-close maritime experience. Guests can explore the deck, meet the ship's captain and crew, and learn about the history of Baltimore Clippers and the story behind *Pride II*. Crew members will also share firsthand insight into what it's like to sail a tall ship today. Tours are open to guests of all ages, and groups are welcome. Salem400.org

Salem 400+ Heritage Days Parade

Saturday, August 1, 10 a.m. at The O'Keefe Complex at Salem State University

After more than 30 years, the beloved Salem Heritage Days Parade returns, brought to life through a collaborative effort between the City of Salem, the National Park Service, Salem State University, the Salem Police Department, Salem Trolley, the Salem Chamber of Commerce, and the North Shore CDC. Guided by the theme "Salem Through the Centuries," the parade offers a unique chronological journey through more than 400+ years of the city's history, beginning with Salem's Indigenous roots and continuing through the major eras that have shaped its identity.

Salem400.org

Salem 400+ Heritage Day Festival & 4th Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta

Saturday, August 1

The Salem Maritime Festival returns to Salem Maritime National Historical Park with the Great Salem Maritime Cardboard Boat Regatta. Teams will launch handmade cardboard boats from Derby Beach and race around a buoy and back to shore, celebrating creativity, engineering, and Salem's maritime heritage. NPS.gov/SaMa

Chestnut Street Car Meet

Sunday, August 9

Visitors are invited to take a leisurely stroll down historic Chestnut Street and admire an impressive display of vintage and antique vehicles, including Phillips House's own Model A Ford. HistoricNewEngland.org

Salem Jazz & Soul Festival

Saturday, August 15

On Saturday, August 15, the Salem Jazz and Soul Festival will return to the Salem Willows for its 20th 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. salemjazzsoul.org

FALL FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Trails & Sails

Saturday, September 12 through Sunday, September 27

Celebrating its 25th 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. trailsandsails.org

Salem Food Truck & Craft Beverage Festival

Saturday, September 19 through Sunday, September 20

Food Truck & Craft Beverage Festival returns to Salem with a full day of food trucks and craft beverages. The event features a wide range of local and regional eats - from burgers, BBQ, and wood-fired pizza to seafood, sweets, and international flavors - alongside craft beer, cocktails, and other beverages. Guests can enjoy a lively outdoor atmosphere while sampling offerings from

some of the area's most popular vendors.

FoodTruckFestivalsOfAmerica.com/Salem

Salem Haunted Happenings

Thursday, October 1 through Saturday, October 31

Renowned as one of the largest Halloween celebrations in the world, Salem Haunted Happenings begins with a spectacular parade on the first Thursday of October. Throughout the month, Salem comes alive with vibrant seasonal events, creating weeks of thrilling activities and festive fun for visitors of all ages! HauntedHappenings.org

Salem Lit Fest

Thursday, November 12 through Sunday, November 15

The Salem Literary Festival brings readers, writers, and artists together for a weekend celebrating books, storytelling, and creative expression. The festival features author readings, writing workshops, panel discussions, and performances that highlight the many ways stories are shared across art forms. SalemLitFest.org

HOLIDAY FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Santa's Arrival & Holiday Tree Lighting

Friday, November 27

On Friday, November 27, Santa Claus makes his grand arrival atop the Hawthorne Hotel at 6:00 p.m., with a little help from the Salem Fire Department. Attendees are encouraged to gather on the Salem Common by 5:45 p.m. to catch the moment. SalemHolidayHappenings.org

Salem Holiday Happenings

Friday, November 27 through Thursday, December 31

From Chris Kringle to Krampus, Salem offers a holiday season that blends

tradition with creativity. Holiday Happenings is a collaborative initiative between Salem Main Streets and Creative Collective, bringing together events, experiences, and local businesses to create a vibrant, community-centered holiday season throughout the city.

SalemHolidayHappenings.org

Christmas in Salem

Saturday, December 5 through Sunday, December 6

Held annually on the first weekend of December, the Christmas in Salem™ House Tour invites visitors inside a rotating selection of historic homes decorated for the season. With a new neighborhood and theme each year, the tour offers a festive way to experience Salem's architecture, history, and community. HistoricSalem.org/CIS

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 caption: Photo courtesy of John Andrews - Creative Collective.

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