

# Salem without its masks

Night and day, city offers sights, scenes, arts, history, and food

By Steve Holt  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

SALEM — You won't need long to discover why people on the North Shore relish this city year-round (not just in October). In one weekend my family and I ate well, shopped, enjoyed frighteningly good coffee, and browsed great art. Our 5-year-old's obsession with trains meant we could have turned back for home after our short trip up on the commuter rail, but even he enjoyed much of what Old Salem has to offer. Whether you go by train or car, be sure to get a room downtown. A number of self-guided walking tours are available for downloading at [www.nps.gov/sama](http://www.nps.gov/sama).

## Saturday

### 2 p.m. STROLLING FOR SNACKS

You will need healthy provisions, and **Milk and Honey Green Grocer** (32 Church St., 978-744-6639) is a local favorite. Call ahead about their next food tasting and the special for the week. Make the stroll leisurely, checking out the impressive architecture of the **McIntire District** (Chestnut, Federal, Essex, and Broad streets), named after 16th-century architect Samuel McIntire, who designed and built homes for some of the city's wealthiest merchants.

### 3 p.m. SECONDHAND SALEM

Stop in at **Witch City Consignment and Thrift** (301 Essex St., 978-744-4433) — known to many locals as either Jerry's Army-Navy Store or Jerry's Department Store — and wander through Salem's most eclectic year-round, indoor yard sale. If you are in the market for a wigged female mannequin, an antique Hess truck, a couple of unopened packs of 1980s baseball cards, or any number of unusual table lamps, this is your place. Next, head to **Derby Square Bookstore** (215 Essex St., 978-745-8804), which features thousands of precariously stacked books, many of them organized by subject and author. (There's a nice children's and young adult section toward the back). But hurry in — owner Ted Monroe has for years threatened to close up and move to a warmer climate, saying he can't compete with the chains.

### 4 p.m. KIDS' CORNER

The year-round success of **Mud Puddle Toys** (221 Essex St., 978-740-5400) is indicative of a more family-oriented Salem. You need not be a child to enjoy this independent shop, which carries off-beat, educational, and creativity-inducing playthings. Younger kids will be drawn to the trains that stay out for their enjoyment while others can try any number of unusual board games.

### 5 p.m. TREAT YOURSELF



PHOTOS BY STEVE HOLT FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Witch City Consignment and Thrift on Essex Street is an eclectic, indoor yard sale with off-beat items children can find fascinating.



Red's Sandwich Shop on Central Street looks like its from the Colonial era on the outside and like a nonstop 21st-century diner on the inside.



The Art & Nature Center at the Peabody Essex Museum lets children do what they often don't in a museum: touch and play and have fun.

Stop in for a coffee or a pint of craft beer at **The Gulu Gulu Cafe** (247 Essex St., 978-740-8882, hot chocolate \$2.50, coffee \$1.50, draft beer \$4-\$6), easily Salem's best spot for both. Since its opening in 2006, the Czech-inspired cafe has become a local favorite for its unique drink offerings, above-average food, and laid-back vibe. Here, you are just as likely to see a family engrossed in a game of Monopoly as you are work pals sampling from Gulu Gulu's extensive craft beer list or a student on her laptop in the corner.

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### 6 p.m. DINNER

With dark wood and plush chairs, the warm and cozy **Tavern on the Green** (18 Washington Square, entrees \$13-\$23, children's meal \$7) occupies one corner of the historic Hawthorne Hotel, built in 1925. A bit more casual than Nathaniel's across the lobby, the Tavern still features a nice wine list that complements its menu of American favorites, from roasted chicken

and mashed potatoes to seafood. The best item on the menu, however, has to be the bowl-lickingly delicious Tiger Brownie-Nut Sundae, a sinfully sweet bar of Dutch chocolate, golden chocolate chip brownie, and chewy coconut, topped with walnuts, vanilla ice cream, warm chocolate sauce, and whipped cream.

### 8 p.m. STAY THE NIGHT

At the family-owned **Salem Inn**, (7 Summer St., 978-741-0680, [www.saleminnma.com](http://www.saleminnma.com), rates April 15-Sept. 30 \$159-\$279 with breakfast), let the kids play at your feet as you collapse in front of the fire with a complimentary glass of sherry and plot the next day's itinerary. The inn, originally built in 1834, is actually three separate historic homes, one of which was built by Revolutionary War hero Nathaniel West. Consider staying in the spacious, sunlit penthouse family suite.

### Sunday

#### 9 a.m. REVOLUTIONARY BRUNCH

On the outside, it's a late-18th-century coffeehouse where patriots met to plan the Revolution. Inside, it's **Red's Sandwich Shop** (15 Central St., 978-745-3527, [www.redssandwichshop.com](http://www.redssandwichshop.com), \$3.95-\$8.50), a fairly regular-looking diner that is one of Salem's top attractions. You are likely to see locals and tourists alike enjoying breakfast. The off-season is a great time to visit Red's and see what all the fuss is about, as the summer line stretches out the door and up the street.

#### 11 a.m. CULTURAL STOP

Salem's cultural and artistic jewel, the **Peabody Essex Museum** (East India Square, 978-745-9500, [www.pem.org](http://www.pem.org), adults \$15, under 16 free), is usually a positive experience for everyone. The eclectic collection ranges from maritime art to its celebrated Yin Yu Tang Chinese House. Its hands-on nature gallery, guided family tours, and abundant restrooms make it most family-friendly.

#### Noon SECOND BRUNCH?

Hit up **Scratch Kitchen** (245 Derby St., 978-741-2442, brunch entrees \$8-\$12) before 2:30 p.m. for eggs Benedict, beans and toast, or a Frisbee-sized pancake. Or, if you prefer, go with a seasonal sandwich (vegetable and goat cheese panino, anyone?) and a side of chowder. Either way, pair it with a bottle of North Shore beer. The atmosphere is casual and fun, and you can peek in on Chef Bill Fogarty as he works wonders at the griddle.

#### 2 p.m. HISTORICAL ENDING

Before you head home, see a few of the historic sites. Just a short walk eastward down Derby Street showcases the Custom House, the Salem Maritime National Historic Site, House of the Seven Gables (which includes Nathaniel Hawthorne's home), and many of the city's first homes.

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At Coastal Extreme Brewing Co., Lindsay Locker, left, offers samples of beers and rums.

## Rum made with a long Rhode Island history

By Ellen Albanese  
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

NEWPORT, R.I. — Microbreweries have come into their own in New England, but how many can claim to brew spirits in the tradition of the 18th century? Already successful with its menu of Newport Storm beers made since 1999, Coastal Extreme Brewing Co. saw an opportunity to combine its fermenting expertise with the city's history by brewing rum the way it was made in 1769, when Newport was considered the rum capital of the world.

The result is Thomas Tew Rum, made in a small-pot still using blackstrap molasses and local water. Thomas Tew was a Newport pirate, and his silhouetted bent arm wielding a cutlass adorns the rum bottles on package store shelves and the souvenir glasses visitors take home from the brewery.

The brewery is open for "tours," though tours is probably too generous a term. What you can do is observe the brewing area from a catwalk while listening to an informative talk about the process, then taste the beers and the rum.

Our guide, Lindsay Locker, described the company's start with seasonal beers and ales in a small facility in neighboring Middletown, then explained how the move to larger quarters in Newport opened up the opportunity to brew rum.

Rum-making starts when molasses — about a ton of molasses to a ton of water — is added to a beer fermenter where yeast is ready and waiting. Yeast and the sugar from the molasses interact to create a "caramel wash," which is then moved to a copper pot still. When the wash is boiled, the alcohol burns off; the vapors travel up a cylinder until they are pushed out and fall into a condenser, where they turn back to liquid. As Locker explained the process, we could see the liquid dripping off the side of the condenser below us on the brewery floor. This is the rawest form of rum, which starts at 180 proof or 90 percent alcohol.

From there it's "proofed down" to 108 or 54 percent alcohol and added to old bourbon barrels, which impart bourbon, oak, and vanilla flavors to the rum as it ages. The rum ages for up to two years, Locker said.

In the tasting room, visitors can sample three stages of rum: white raw rum, sharp and tasting strongly of molasses; cask-strength rum, more aromatic but still a bit sharp; and the final product, dark, deeply flavored, and smooth. An assortment of beers are also available for tasting.

**Coastal Extreme Brewing Co.**  
293 J.T. Connell Road, 401-849-5232, [newportstorm.com](http://newportstorm.com). Daily noon-5 p.m. except closed Tue. Guided tours at 3 p.m. Beer tours and tastings \$7, plus tax. Rum tours and tastings \$9, plus tax.

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THOMAS TEW RUMS ON DISPLAY.

## See science, history, nature, art — just off 28

►ROAD TRIP  
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### 11:15 a.m. THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Just 6 miles north of Boston, the vast rocky woodlands of the Middlesex Fells Reservation (617-727-5380, [www.fells.org](http://www.fells.org)) sprawl over more than 2,500 acres. At Medford's Roosevelt Circle, take a quick detour onto South Border Road and park at Bellevue Pond, where the soundtrack of chirping birds and bubbling brooks quickly muffles the roars of nearby traffic. Hike to Wright's Tower, the stone lookout that beckons like an enchanting fortress of solitude to stewing drivers creeping north in bumper-to-bumper traffic on Interstate 93. The tower itself is often locked, but the vista of the Boston skyline from the rocky precipice at its base is still spectacular. For a lookout open to hikers, try Bear Hill Tower, a 20-minute trek from the Sheepfold parking lot. The view from the four-story tower may not be the most scenic — thanks in large measure to an ugly, adjacent MWRA water storage tank — but it is panoramic, stretching from Boston to New Hampshire.

### 1 p.m. GET GRUMPY

Don't let the name fool you. Grumpy Doyle's (530 Main St., Reading, 781-942-2822, [grumpysreading.com](http://grumpysreading.com), lunch entrees from \$8.99) is actually a pretty friendly neighborhood eatery. For lunch, the Irish pub serves up plenty of Gaelic standards — shepherd's pie, fish and chips, Guinness beef stew — as well as dishes with a more international flair, such as shrimp and curry risotto and Brazil-



CHRISTOPHER KLEIN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

From the base of Wright's Tower in Middlesex Fells in Medford, a view of Boston's skyline — and sometimes of a clogged Interstate 93.

ian steak frites. For a quick nosh, try the oven-baked pretzels served with cheddar beer fondue and Guinness honey mustard.

### 2:30 p.m. THE MASTER CLASS

It's not an ivory tower, but a brick one that appears on the horizon of Route 28 as drivers approach one of the country's elite prep schools, Andover's Phillips Academy. Stroll the elm-shaded campus and visit the Addison Gallery of American Art (180 Main St., Andover, 978-749-4015, [www.addisongallery.org](http://www.addisongallery.org)), which features one of the country's premier collections of paintings, photographs, and sculptures by domestic artists.

The museum, which recently completed a three-year renovation and expansion, regularly hosts rotating exhibits in addition to a permanent collection that includes works of such notables as Winslow Homer, James Whistler, John Singer Sargent, Jackson Pollock, and Georgia O'Keeffe. Don't miss the fleet of model ships, including miniature versions of the Mayflower and the Santa Maria, on the ground floor.

### 4:30 p.m. CITY OF THE DAM

In the shadows of the brick smokestacks that pierce the Lawrence sky, Route 28 crosses the Merrimack River, which once powered this old mill

city. Almost directly below the bridge is a 19th-century engineering marvel: the Great Stone Dam. The 900-foot-long granite colossus was the Hoover Dam of its day, the longest structure of its kind in the world when it was completed in 1848. To get an up-close view of the dam and the falls that often cascade over its top, stop at the riverside Pemberton State Park (978-794-1655), part of Lawrence Heritage State Park. Surrounded by shuttered textile mills, the park is a popular, and perhaps surprising, hot spot for fishermen. Watch as anglers on the banks and waist-deep in the rushing waters of the Merrimack cast lines and reel in herring, stripers, shad, and even salmon.

### 5:30 p.m. THE LAST STOP

The stone arches, turrets, and medieval-looking towers of the Searles Bridge spanning the Spicket River provide a fairy-tale welcome to downtown Methuen. As long as you're just south of the border, albeit the New Hampshire border, dine at Mi Mexico Lindo (5 Pleasant St., Methuen, 978-682-2271, [www.mimexlindo.com](http://www.mimexlindo.com), entrees \$10.99-\$19.99). With Spanish-language channels on the televisions and piñatas hanging from the ceiling, Mi Mexico Lindo has a perpetual Cinco de Mayo vibe, and the menu is voluminous. Walk off the meal — and the homemade sangria — along the pathways flanking the Spicket River and its historic waterfall as the sun sets over the Merrimack Valley.

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