

Fall Fun for Everyone: A guide to fall festivals around RI

The Ocean State knows exactly how to spice up the fall season. While the leaves brown and fall to the ground, RI gets busy. The summer is great for leisure, taking that extra day off to go to the beach or sipping Del's lemonade, but as it comes to an end you might find yourself antsy to see old friends.

Autumn is the perfect time for a get-together, and why not make it a blast? Fall festivals are a great way to step out of your work life and inhale a breath of fresh air with friends and family. Here are a few of RI's reputable festivals you can look forward to.

Woonsocket's Autumnfest

In its 44th annual festival, Woonsocket's Autumnfest is ready to live up to its glory on Columbus Day weekend. Acclaimed as the largest family festival in RI, Autumnfest has prepped its best for this year's festival. Every year the Autumnfest brings a variety of activities to the table for attendees. The festival prides itself on the community it brings together, as many people attend as part of a reunion with family or friends.

This year they have an assortment of arts and crafts, a food court, amusement rides, kids play area, and an entertainment stage. The food court is one of the festival's most attractive traits. The vendors, profit and non-profit, are often brought back year to year, and their return doesn't go unnoticed. Many people comment that they treat themselves to certain delectables once a year and only at this festival. This stems from the hosts allowing only one vendor per product, producing plenty of varied options for everyone.

To top off the attraction, Autumnfest has recently expanded their food court with more delicious options. All-new hosts of this year's 21+ drink area are vendors Savani's Pomodoro and Ciro's Tavern.

Hitting the main stage will be headliners James Montgomery and the Zac Brown Tribute Band. James Montgomery will perform on Saturday, October 7 and the Zac Brown Tribute Band will perform on Sunday, October 8, followed by fireworks that evening.

As every year since it began, Autumnfest will be held at World War II Memorial Park located in Woonsocket, RI. Admission is free. Food and amusement rides are not included. *For more info, visit festivalnet.com.*

Norman Bird Sanctuary Harvest Fair

The Norman Bird Sanctuary Harvest Fair is a chance to celebrate this harvest season. The festival has run for 45 years and is located in Middletown, RI.

With a variety of activities and challenges, some of the classic activities include tug-of-war, the Home & Garden Competition and hayrides.

The Home & Garden Competition is a chance to showcase your best products in the categories of:

Flower and/or Tree, Home Grown Edible (not that kind of edible!), From the Kitchen, and Outdoor Décor. Apply ahead of the festival on their website, normanbirdsanctuary.org.

Keeping up the variety, the event will also host many local food trucks and restaurants. The food options will vary, providing everyone with a tasty choice. Alcoholic drinks and other beverages will also be available for purchase.

Tickets will be available starting early September; they are also purchasable at the door. *For more info visit normanbirdsanctuary.org.*

Johnston Apple Festival

This fall the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce hosts the 34th annual Johnston Apple Festival at the beginning of September. Over the two days, the festival will celebrate apples with the public, providing many engaging activities for the whole family.

The festival has become a traditional event for the community, as it is free and open to anyone. Its Artisan Row will include many area businesses and there will be food and item vendors galore over the course of the weekend.

The Johnston Apple Festival runs Saturday, September 10 and Sunday, September 11, 10am - 5pm in Johnston, RI. *For more visit members.nrichamber.com.*

Misquamicut Fall Fest

The Misquamicut Fall Fest will be held mid-September for an eventful three-day weekend, Friday, September 16 - Sunday, September 18 at Misquamicut State Beach in Westerly, RI.

The festival will be filled with many attractions each day, such as Rockwell Amusements which will supply carnival rides for adults and young kids. The carnival rides will be paired with musical talents performing throughout the weekend in the music tent.

The festival doesn't stop at the entertainment; a beer and wine garden will be settled near the music tent throughout the event. There will also be many crafters and vendors at the festival offering commercial items from henna tattoos to housewares.

On Sunday, the fest features the annual Classic Car Show from 11am - 3pm with no entry fee. All classic and specialty cars will be accepted at this event with trophies, prizes and other giveaways to win. Classic and specialty car drivers are allotted free tickets to the festival for them and their passengers.

Tickets are purchasable online or at the gate, but it is cheaper to purchase your ticket ahead of time online at eventbrite.com. Tickets for the rides are separate from the admission fee and can be purchased at the event. *To learn more visit misquamicutfestival.org.*