

[A Tisket, a Tasket, Pack Your Picnic Basket: Check out our top picnic spot picks for a dinner outdoors](#)

I grew up in Texas and experienced more scorchingly hot summer days than I care to count. But when the sun finally went down on those blistering days, we were rewarded with still more humid, hot, thick air. So my first RI summer was a surprise when I learned that evening air provided sweet relief from my un-air-conditioned house. That's when I became a picnic enthusiast, and a bit of an expert. My picnic tote is always packed by the door, full of stainless steel cups and reusable straws, a selection of bamboo utensils and cloth napkins dedicated to dinner picnics (my favorite set is from The Violet Orange!), and the only thing that can drive me indoors for a meal is a torrential downpour. Here are a few of my favorite picnic spots to help you up your picnic game this year.

Beavertail State Park, Jamestown

This picnic spot is a Mother's Day tradition in my family, and we have eaten during a torrential downpour. The views of the ocean crashing into the rocky shore are stunning and there are plenty of tidepools for exploration and rock skipping.

Swan Point Cemetery, PVD

Now, hear me out. This might not seem like the cheeriest place to have a picnic, but the gardens around the cemetery provide nice spots to stop for a bite after a walk through the grounds. My husband and I named our second son in this cemetery when we ditched our baby name book and started stealing name ideas from headstones. Don't tell the baby he was named after a stranger who died 200 years ago.

Colt State Park, Bristol

This park is a picnic lover's dream. Care to dine by the water? Sure! Prefer the shade of a forest? You got it! In the mood for a post-picnic swim at the beach? No problem! This huge park has it all.

Pawtuxet Cove Marina, Cranston

This perfect picnic spot juts out into the water and provides a beautiful view without too much of a drive. Bonus for families with little ones: There's a sweet playground within walking distance.

Blithewold Mansion, Bristol

My family eats here once a week in the summer. The cool breeze off the ocean provides a welcome relief from the heat and there are plenty of little out-of-the-way spots to spread a blanket under a tree. There's a fee to tour the mansion, but you can tour the grounds for free.

Lippitt Park, Providence

This huge park at the top of Blackstone Boulevard offers lots of shady spots to open your picnic basket.

It's a nice place to settle after a walk down the boulevard and there's a pretty fun playground there, too. Expert picnicker tip: Hit the park on a farmers market day and create a meal from the treasures you find.