

It's Beautiful... It's Bewitching... It's Salem



By Angela Ash

Photography By David Hatfield

Salem, Massachusetts HAS to be one of the most fantastic places on earth. There is something about just walking down Derby Street in the late afternoon, preferably in the autumn, with the leaves crunching beneath your feet...that makes you stop and think... “Is this place TRULY magic?”

I believe the answer is a loud “Yes”! If you have ever visited Salem, you will completely understand where I am coming from.

If you haven't, then add it to your bucket list, and let's take a look at the long list of Salem's “Must Do's”.

Located an easy half hour from Boston by train or less than an hour by the Salem Ferry, Salem appears to be a beautiful seaport village. And don't get me wrong, it is.

But there is a lot more to Salem than meets the eye.

Notorious as the home of the Salem witch trials in 1692, witch history is alive and well in Salem.

However, Salem boasts quite a bit more than her past.

All in one day, one could visit a witch dungeon, visit an acclaimed museum, ride a schooner, meet some pirates, and take a night time ghost walk.

Yup... we'd better get started.

Since Salem is known for her tie to the witch trials, a varied assortment of attractions will rely basely on this heritage. However, each attraction has a unique way to tell the story, and just because you might visit one, does not mean you have seen them all, nor have you heard the whole story.

Let's start with Cry Innocent, a wonderful production, starting in Derby Square, and moving through the streets until it reaches its final destination at the Old Town Hall, where it is suddenly 1692, and Bridget Bishop is on trial for witchcraft. This is no ordinary performance. The crowd is encouraged to interact, and even cross examine the witnesses. This is, in my humble opinion, one of the best portrayals of the witch trials I have ever seen.

The performers are amazing!

Cry Innocent
32 Derby Square
978-867-4767



The Salem Witch Museum is Salem's most visited museum, and understandably so. Visitors are given a dramatic performance using stage sets with life-size figures, lighting and a narration that will make you feel as if you are actually a part of history.

Salem Witch Museum
Washington Square North
978-744-1692
www.salemwitchmuseum.com



The Witch Dungeon Museum starts with a live performance of the trial of Sarah Goode, actually taken from real transcripts. And then, be ready to clutch your loved one tight as you enter a recreation of the witch dungeon from 1692, including a recreated village and gallows hill.

Witch Dungeon Museum
16 Lynde Street
978-741-3570
www.witchdungeon.com



Next is the Witch History Museum. Again, altogether unique with its interpretation, a live presentation is followed by a trip downstairs and into the forest to meet several characters from Salem's past.

Witch History Museum

197-201 Essex Street

978-741-7770

www.witchhistorymuseum.com



Think you've seen what Salem has to offer? Think again. The New England Pirate

Museum

is great for families.

Explore the

Salem

docks and an 60 foot cave, while hearing all about the pirates of yesterday.

Even see original artifacts!

New England Pirate Museum

274 Derby Street

978-741-2800

www.piratemuseum.com



While you are at the museum, you are just across from Pickering Wharf, home of the Schooner Fame, is a full size replica of the first American privateer to bring home a prize in 1812.

Sailing up to three times daily, visitors will learn about the fishermen, pirates, privateers, traders and men of war who shaped the North Shore.

Schooner Fame

Pickering Wharf Marina

978-729-7600

www.schoonerfame.com



And hrrmmmm... how many people have heard of Nathaniel Hawthorne? Well, Salem sure has.

The House of the Seven Gables was the inspiration for the book with the same name, written by the old Salem resident.

A tour of the house and grounds is amazing, especially with the new addition of Hawthorne's birthplace.

House of the Seven Gables

115 Derby Street

978-744-0991

www.7gables.org



And who knew that one of the nation's largest museums was right in Salem? The Peabody Essex Museum features art and culture from New England and around the world, including Yin Yu Tang, a 200-year-old Chinese House.

Peabody Essex Museum

161 Essex Street

866-745-1876

www.pem.org



The Witches Cottage is not a witch trial attraction. This is a live theatre, where you will more than likely jump uncountable times, grip the edge of your seat, and think “Did I just see that?” on more than one occasion. This is such a unique place that I hardly know where to start.

After being seated in the state-of-the-art theatre, mysterious stories will thrill you, while the special effects are so good that you will begin to question your own sanity.

The master of storytelling is a natural, and was even good natured enough to answer a few questions at the end of his superb performance.

This is good stuff.

The Witches Cottage at the Griffen Theatre

7 Lynde Street

978-825-0222

www.witchescottagesalem.com



OK... so now for my absolute favorite thing to visit in Salem – Count Orlok's Nightmare Gallery, Salem's only monster museum. This place is officially FANTABULOUS.

If you visit Salem, and have time for only one attraction, visit this one!

This museum is immaculately kept, filled to the brim with every imaginable monster from the movies.

As if that weren't good enough, it turns into a haunted house on the weekends, with MOVING monsters.

Yes, you heard correctly.

If you will, imagine walking through what appears to be a museum, gazing at what appears to be STILL monsters... still, that is, until one MOVES.

Yup... wide awake for days... wide awake for days.

Count Orlok's Monster Gallery

285 Derby Street

978-740-0500

www.nightmaregallery.com



Night begins to fall on Salem, so what does one do now? Night walking tours, of course!

Founded in 1997 by local educator, historian and author Leah Schmidt, Salem Historical Tours has a great array of tours, including a Cemetery 101, Haunted Footsteps, Witchcraft Walk, and some additional weekend tours. And don't worry.

They aren't all at night.

Salem Historical Tours

8 Central Street

978-745-0666

www.salemhistoricaltours.com



Another great tour is the Salem Night Tour, where the expert guides are trained paranormal investigators! How awesome is that?

Salem Night Tour

127 Essex Street

978-741-1170

www.salemghosttours.com



Do you want a special, one of a kind experience?

Salem Smugglers' Tour

This above ground tour of the history of the tunnels goes over their creation by a series of federal politicians who wanted to avoid paying duties on imports in 1800. Engineered by the son of America's first millionaire and built by the descendants of the first National Guard unit in the country. Take this hour and half [Salem history tour](http://www.salemhistorytour.com) through the city and see one of a kind photos of the tunnels on our tablet as we walk over them. Along the way you will also hear tales of pirates, murder, and ghosts!

<http://www.salemtunneltour.com> ☐ ☐

978-578-9238

With so many things to do and see in Beautiful Salem, one might ask how to get from one site to the next. You will be happy to know that Salem is a very “foot friendly” city. It is super easy to walk just about everywhere you would need to go. In fact, it is really amazing that so many great attractions can fit in such a compact area.

You know, it might just be magic.

However, if you do get tired of hoofing it, Salem offers two great alternatives, both on wheels with the cutest little bells. Both trolley services offer a fully narrated tour, and stop at all of Salem’s best attractions.

The Salem Trolley

8 Central Street

978-744-5469

www.salemtrolley.com



Salem Ferry

10 Blaney Street

978-741-0220

www.salemferry.com



Wait... are we forgetting something? Oh yeah, you might just need a really great place to rest after a long day of sightseeing.

And of course I know just the place.

The Salem Waterfront Hotel & Suites is located on Pickering Wharf, just a short walk from the Salem Ferry. Talk about convenience! The property has 86 luxuriously appointed rooms & suites, a fabulous indoor pool, a fitness center, a really tasty restaurant, a marina, and 4,800 square feet of meeting/banquet space for that special event.

Sound good?

That's because it is.

The rooms are huge, and sleeping on a bed that resembles a cloud doesn't hurt either.

I know I already touched on convenience, but you can literally get anywhere in downtown Salem in just a few minutes' walk.

How often can a hotel advertise that?



Salem Waterfront Hotel & Suites

225 Derby Street

978-740-8788

www.salemwaterfronthotel.com

Oh no, I almost forgot to tell you all about the shopping in Salem. Salem is filled with the most wonderful little boutiques in all of the universe.

It is the perfect place to find a gift for someone special, as well as tuck away a few nice finds for yourself.

The Museum Place Mall has a lot of great stores, including Witch Tee's, for those Salem souvenirs.

However, my favorite shop is Angelica of the Angels, just diagonal from the mall on Central Street.

I am burning lilac incense from there at this very moment!

And before you even think about leaving, visit the Hawthorne Hotel, and see the plaque dedicated to Bewitched, which they filmed in Salem, even more specifically, at the Hawthorne Hotel! While you're in the Bewitched mood, visit the statue of beloved Samantha Stevens, played by the late Elizabeth Montgomery, on her broomstick right in downtown Salem.



Now I could continue raving about Salem for another two hours, and I could write page upon page about everything that this magical city has to offer. However, the best way to comprehend what wonder awaits you is to just go visit.

Visit Destination Salem at www.salem.org to plan your trip, as well as to see the many other Salem attractions that were not described here.

You will fall in love with Salem, faster than you can twitch your nose.

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