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Provincetown Film Festival Guide

A free field guide from the people who actually live here.



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Every June, something unusual happens in Provincetown. A town of about 3,000 permanent residents becomes home to one of the most respected film festivals in America. Directors mingle with audiences at after-parties. And cinephiles who have attended Sundance, Tribeca, and Toronto will tell you quietly that the Provincetown International Film Festival is, on a per-square-foot basis, simply better.

What Is the Provincetown International Film Festival?

The Provincetown International Film Festival — known locally as PIFF — was established in 1999. It takes place annually during the second week of June, running five to six days. The festival is centered on LGBTQ+ cinema and independent film, and over more than two decades it has become a genuine destination event for filmmakers, actors, and film lovers.

The festival is best known for two honors: the **Filmmaker on the Edge Award** and the **Audience Award**.

What makes PIFF genuinely different from larger festivals is the ratio of access to prestige. At Sundance, a filmmaker receiving a major award is separated from the public by layers of publicists. At Provincetown, that same filmmaker might be sitting two rows behind you at a screening.

Why June Is the Right Time to Come

June sits in a shoulder season sweet spot. **Restaurants are open and fully staffed**, often more relaxed than they will be in July. **Accommodations are available** at prices that may be 30 to 50 percent below peak summer rates. The town is alive but not overwhelmed.

The weather in June is genuinely beautiful. Days are long — sunset is not until after 8pm. Whale watching off Provincetown is excellent in June.

How to Attend: Tickets and Passes

Festival passes are the best value. They allow access to the full program without worrying about individual ticket availability. Passes go on sale months before the festival and sell out — if you are planning to attend, buy a pass early.

Check the official Provincetown International Film Festival website for the current year's pass structure and pricing.

Getting There

By ferry from Boston: The high-speed ferry takes roughly 90 minutes and arrives at MacMillan Pier in the center of Provincetown. Confirm the ferry's exact start date for the current year.

By car: Provincetown sits approximately 120 miles from Boston via Route 6. The drive takes two to three hours.

Parking: In June, parking is significantly more available than in peak summer.

The After-Parties

The after-parties are, by festival reputation, the social center of PIFF. The Crown & Anchor hosts the most prominent ones, but events happen at venues throughout town. The filmmakers come to these events, talk to people, and stay. **Go to the after-parties.** This is not optional advice.

Planning Checklist

- Buy your festival pass early — check the PIFF official site in January or February
- Book accommodation 2–3 months out
- Arrange ferry tickets in advance if arriving from Boston
- Build unstructured time into your schedule
- Go to the after-parties



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