

Newport's Winter Festival, Returning February 15-24, Takes A Bite Out of The Cold



[Julie Tremaine](#), *I'm exploring the world, one bite at a time.*

Contributor

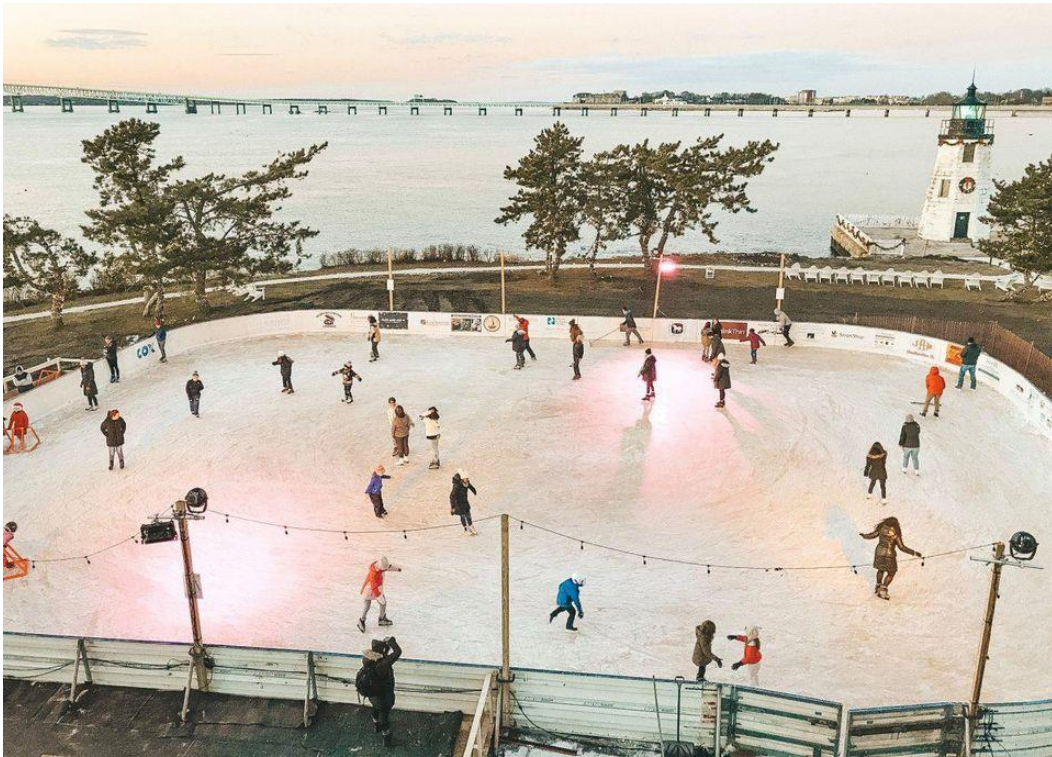
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The Chanler at Cliff Walk has a pop-up hot chocolate cocktail lounge this month

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHANLER

When winter starts, the frozen landscape has a certain magic to it. But in New England, that magic starts to wear off as the long stretches of gray days and below-freezing temperatures wear on. By February, our enthusiasm is flagging and we're collectively fighting the urge to hibernate under a blanket and order in takeout until April comes. That's why the [Newport Winter Festival](#) is so special. It reminds us of all of the good reasons we have to love winter, and invents some new ones, too.



Gurney's Newport has a seaside ice skating rink, and an apres-skate snack menu that includes cheese fondue
PHOTO COURTESY OF GURNEY'S

From February 15-24, the seaside summer playground becomes a winter wonderland, with 150 events ranging from concerts and kids performances to live ice sculpture demonstrations, ice skating and outdoor ice bars. This is the 31st year of the festival, which draws thousands of people to the City By The Sea, normally a popular warm weather destination that becomes much quieter in the winter months.



Newport Beach Polo, played in the sand on First Beach, happens February 23-24
PHOTO COURTESY OF DISCOVER NEWPORT

A festival bracelet gets you reduced admission to events throughout Newport and the rest of Aquidneck Island, like wine tasting (and froz  ice pops) at [Newport Vineyards](#), which is hosting a

Speakeasy Soirée on February 15. The [Newport Historical Society](#) hosts A Revolutionary Spinning Bee on February 16, where their "living historians" recreate the Daughters of Liberty's wool spinning protests, which were a Revolutionary War era act of political rebellion. While that's happening, sculptors will be carving massive bricks of ice into works of art at the Long Wharf Mall. For kids, there's a Winter Festival Children's Fair at [Gurney's Newport](#), a Princess Party at [OceanCliff](#), Jazz for Kids at [Greenvale Vineyards](#) and a Teddy Bear Tea at the [Newport Harbor Hotel](#).



The Burger Bender invites people to taste their way through Newport's most creative sandwiches and vote for their favorite, like this Fried Oyster Po'Boy from [Scales and Shells](#)

PHOTO COURTESY OF DISCOVER NEWPORT

During the festival, there's also a Newport Burger Bender. Thirty restaurants devise their most creative sandwiches, and diners vote on their favorites. [Diego's Bodega Cantina](#) is serving a Chili Relleno Burger with a stuffed, fried pepper and guascaca sauce. [Jo's American Bistro](#) is serving a Jamaican twist with Jo's Jerk Burger, with house-made jerk sauce. [22 Bowen's Wharf](#) has a Surf and Turf burger: butter-sauteed lobster atop Wagyu beef with truffle aioli. [The Cafe at the Chanler](#), in the most inventive use of a name, is offering the Chanler Bing burger, with bacon in the patty and a little flag with the *Friends* character on it. There are also a Macaroni and Cheese cook-off, and a Chili competition, happening at Gurney's.

And then, there are the winter bars. [Hotel Viking](#) is bringing back their Fire and Ice Bar for the duration of the festival. The outdoor ice bar has fire pits, and themed libations to keep you warm, like the Burning Rose Old Fashioned, which has bourbon, blood orange, bitters and a flaming sugar cube. Gurney's Newport will also have an outdoor ice bar, called Polar Pineapples, with cocktail-infused ice sculptures and heated igloos. [The Chanler's](#) pop-up hot

chocolate bar has white, dark and milk chocolate variations on hot chocolate, with spirits or not, topped with cookies and macarons made by the four-star restaurant's pastry chefs.



The Fire + Ice Bar at Hotel Viking is an outdoor bar made of ice, with fire pits and flaming cocktails
PHOTO COURTESY OF HOTEL VIKING

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