

FOOD & WINE

A State-by-State Guide to New England's Best Apple Cider Doughnuts

Enjoy a fresh apple cider doughnut amid breathtaking fall foliage from Connecticut to Maine.

By [Adam H. Callaghan](#)



PHOTO: COURTESY OF MCKENZIE'S FARM

Fall is a fantastic time to visit New England, when the number of travelers starts to shrink thanks to the start of school and the onset of cooler weather. Simultaneously, two of the Northeast's greatest autumnal treats emerge: fabulous fall foliage and apple cider doughnuts. Since most of the best apple cider doughnuts are hot and fresh at generational orchards, under big blue skies

in the countryside, the fried confections go hand in hand with prime leaf-peeping opportunities.

Apple cider doughnuts

Cider doughnuts are usually old-fashioned cake doughnut rings — and occasionally airy, yeasted varieties — made with fresh apple cider (not [hard cider](#), though that's a natural accompaniment) in the batter to give the crumb extra moisture, tenderness, and a subtle sweet-tart element. Cider doughnuts typically draw you in first with a heavenly aroma that often involves cinnamon and sometimes other warm spices like nutmeg that you'd expect from apple-pie spice or pumpkin spice mix. The exteriors may be plain or coated with crunchy crystals of sugar, a dusting of powdered sugar, or icing.

When is cider doughnut season?

Cider doughnut season coincides with the apple harvest, roughly September through November or December, often on weekends at farms. Any year-round cider doughnuts should be treated with a little skepticism, as the treat benefits from the use of fresh-pressed cider, not to mention a steamy mug of mulled cider on the side to offset the chill in the air.

Here's where to pair cider doughnuts with leaf peeping in New England.

Rhode Island



Rhode Island may be the country's smallest state, but it has plenty of superb cider doughnuts and showy canopies. Both Jennifer Curtin, general manager at Providence luxury hotel [The Beatrice](#), and Brock Anderson, executive chef at [Sea Crest Beach Resort](#) in North Falmouth, Massachusetts, recommend [Knead Doughnuts](#) in Providence. Anderson takes half a dozen up the hill to Prospect Terrace Park "to enjoy a very New England afternoon, with scenic panoramic views of autumn colors." Lisa Raiola, founder and president of [Hope & Main](#), a culinary incubator based in Warren, loves the gluten-free [Three Wishes Bakery](#), from a graduate of her program, in Johnston. It's "the most delicious fluffy, brioche-style cider doughnut, generously coated in cinnamon-sugar while it's still warm," she says, "and you would never guess it is gluten-free."

[The Hard-Pressed Cider Company](#) starts the season at [Windmist Farm](#) on the island of Jamestown, where cows striped like oreos and fluffy sheep graze against a backdrop of the Newport Bridge over Narragansett Bay. Then the mobile vendor moves to The Farmers' Daughter Christmas Tree Farm in South Kingstown. The fried-to-order doughnuts are "warm, sugar-dusted perfection straight off the truck," says Curtin. Anika Kimble Huntley, chief marketing officer of the [Rhode Island Commerce Corporation](#), and Stephanie Haigh, co-owner of [Village Hearth Bakery & Cafe](#) in Jamestown, concur. "Get a lot," Haigh insists. "You're not going to want just one."