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Fall travel: Destination-worthy festivals deliver immersive cultural experiences

Celebrate the food, art, traditions and natural beauty of regions near and far.



Credit: Cabot Cape Breton

The haunting sound of bagpipes will fill the air at the Celtic Colours International Festival on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia in October. Courtesy of Cabot Cape Breton

By Blake Guthrie – For the AJC

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Festival season is upon us, providing the perfect reason for a getaway this fall or winter. Whether it's seafood in Rhode Island, peanuts in Lower Alabama or Celtic culture in Nova Scotia, there's always something worth celebrating at a destination worth exploring. Here are nine we recommend.



Credit: Bowen's Wharf

Historic Bowen's Wharf in Newport, Rhode Island, is home to a large seafood festival each fall. Courtesy of Bowen's Wharf

Bowen's Wharf Seafood Festival

Bowen's Wharf in the deep-water harbor town of Newport, Rhode Island, has played a part in the maritime history of the nation since the Colonial era, first as a thriving international seaport, and today as a sailing capital. Get a glimpse of this history — and many period waterfront buildings — at the 33rd annual Bowen's Wharf Seafood Festival. Colorful big-top tents are set up directly on the wharf where seafood vendors will serve the freshest catches, and local bands will perform folk, surf, rock, blues and Caribbean music. Expect lobster rolls, chowder, calamari, oysters and local specialties such as stuffies, large stuffed quahog clams. The wharf is also home to numerous seafood restaurants, which will be open during the festival serving special dishes for the occasion.

Oct. 19-20. Free admission. 1 Bowen's Landing, Newport, Rhode Island. 401-849-2243, bowenswharf.com.