

# Water and fire in Providence!



**PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND |** Sometimes it just takes a simple idea, pushed to its limits to create an event that not only brings people together, but attracts visitors from all over. That's what happened with *WaterFire Providence* celebrating its 25th anniversary this year!

Created by local artist Barnaby Evans, *WaterFire* is a festive, family-run art installation that is a must-see if you're visiting the capital of the smallest state in the United States.



PHOTO COURTESY, RHODE ISLAND COMMERCE CORPORATION

Capital of the smallest state in the USA, Providence is a welcoming, energetic and creative city with parks where you can relax.

Every weekend, from May to November, this welcoming city, which is defined as the "Capital of Creativity", transforms and illuminates the waterfront of its downtown.

Indeed, shortly after sunset, nearly a hundred bonfires are lit in Waterplace Park Basin, on the surface of the three rivers that pass through downtown Providence.



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Under the light of day, the Waterfire site is calm and very relaxing.

As they are set on black boats and the people who maintain the flames are also dressed in black, we only really see these fire sculptures sliding on the river.



PHOTO COURTESY, RHODE ISLAND COMMERCE CORPORATION

The crowd rushes around the Waterplace Basin.

A musical background, sometimes Celtic, sometimes opera or new age creates a strange and mysterious atmosphere that engages all the senses. We let ourselves be seduced by the strange shapes created by the flames that are reflected in the water, we smell the scents of cedar and pine that burn, we shudder when by chance small particles of hot embers fly to land on the skin as the crackling of these fires is heard, which only goes out at midnight.



PHOTO COURTESY, RHODE ISLAND COMMERCE CORPORATION

It is impressive to see these fire sculptures sliding down the river.

This art installation also includes food, art or craft kiosks, shows and boat rides, and even a gondola (with a gondolier wearing a hat and a striped shirt), allowing you to experience more near.

► **If the event takes place each year, the dates change, because the river is subject to the tides, and it is necessary to wait until the depth of the waters is sufficient for the boats.**

#### **To not miss anything**

- As the crowd is sometimes very dense, it is better to go earlier to the Waterplace Basin. We take this opportunity to spot one of *WaterFire*'s volunteer ambassadors and ask for a handy guide containing a map and a calendar of activities for the evening. It only remains to spot all the places and wait for the start of activities.
- For people with reduced mobility, *WaterFire* has a resource called Access that allows you to settle in a boat so you can enjoy the show in peace. Reservation required.

#### **Or sleep ?**

- Hotel Providence (19th century), located in the very heart of the historic district.
- Info: [hotelprovidence.com](http://hotelprovidence.com)

#### **Where to eat ?**

- Café Nuovo ( [cafenuovo.com](http://cafenuovo.com) ), Capital Grille ( [thecapitalgrille.com](http://thecapitalgrille.com) ), Hemenway ( [hemenwaysrestaurant.com](http://hemenwaysrestaurant.com) ) and Jacky's Waterplace ( [jackysgalaxie.com](http://jackysgalaxie.com) ) all offer views of the pool. However, you must book at least one week in advance.
- The last bonfire will take place on November 2nd.
- Info: [WaterFire.org](http://WaterFire.org) and [visitrhodeisland.com](http://visitrhodeisland.com)