

Where to eat in the dead of winter in R.I.

It's January in New England and we are officially in the midst of the sluggish, post-holiday drag.

Outdoor dining is almost completely out of the question. The weather is terrible. Frostbite is not out of the realm of possibility. Plus, everyone seems to have some sort of resolution that requires them to eat like a rabbit or stay home more.

The next two months can be miserable for many, including those in the hospitality industry. Some business owners are giving their staff a well-earned break for the next few weeks. Others, however, are trying to find ways to overcome the annual sales slump by attracting guests with major deals on tasting menus, half-priced wine bottles, and unique experiences that don't come with annoyingly large crowds.

To me, January and February have the chance to be the best months to go out to eat or drink (which doesn't always have to include alcohol). Here are a few places in Rhode Island to check out this winter— especially while everyone else is hibernating.



Pork belly a la Placha at Otra in Providence. GLENN OSMUNDSON FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

WHERE EATING IS THE MAIN EVENT

Providence Restaurant Weeks: For two weeks starting Sunday, Jan. 8, [dozens of restaurants](#) will feature deals and specials for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Some initial highlights: A [\\$25 brunch or lunch](#) at Nick's on Broadway. A [three-course lunch](#) from Bellini for \$30. For dinner, tasting menus less than \$40 from [Otra](#) and [Il Massimo](#) and a multi-course dinner from The Capital Grille for [\\$46](#). But you'll definitely catch me at Ten Prime Steak & Sushi for the [buy-one-get-one free filet mignon](#) on Mondays.

Good wine, for cheap: Throughout the month of January, [show this Instagram post](#) to a server at Los Andes in Providence and get 50 percent off a bottle of wine.

Not just for vegans: The RI VegFest returns Saturday, Feb. 4 and Sunday, Feb. 5. There will be more than 85 entirely vegan restaurants, chefs, and food producers. [Buy tickets and find more details.](#)

Foodie tour: Throughout the months of February and March, Newport Foodie Stroll will be hosting 1-mile guided food tours through Newport's historic neighborhoods. You'll get a solid history lesson while tasting a multi-course meal with wine pairings from spots like Bar and Board Bistro, Midtown Oyster Bar, Vieste, and more. [More details on their winter tours here.](#)



The bar at Bellini in Hotel Beatrice. JONATHAN WIGGS/GLOBE STAFF

WHERE WINE + BEER ARE CENTRAL

Beer for a cause: Foolproof Brewing Company has a new lager — [Woman Life Liberty](#) — which is inspired by the protests taking place in Iran. The Pawtucket brewery will donate 10 percent of gross sales to the National Union for Democracy in Iran. Cans are available for pickup at their brewery.

Eat and sip: [Chair 5](#) at The Break Hotel in Narragansett is hosting weekly wine tastings for \$30 where three new varietals are paired with three chef-inspired appetizers. Call 401-363-9800 to book a reservation.

Daily tasting: It might be where you also got your Christmas tree last month, but [Leyden Farm Vineyard and Winery](#) in West Greenwich is hosting daily wine tastings from noon to 4 p.m. Can't get there? [They'll deliver](#) to any Rhode Islanders on the mainland for orders with at least eight bottles.

Annual Brewfest: The 2023 Rhode Island BrewFest will be held Saturday, Jan. 28 from 1 to 8 p.m. at the WaterFire Arts Center. [More details here.](#)

SOMETHING HARDER

Limited-edition whiskey: O'Brien & Brough in Bristol has a [special cherrystone rye batch](#) available by the bottle for \$45 each. Crafted with cocktails in mind, this whisky blend tastes of classic American oak-aged flavors like caramel and vanilla with tart apple. Labels are printed with hot-stamped foil by the [DWRI Letterpress](#) printshop in Providence.

EXPERIENCES

Half-priced hotel packages: January is Rhode Island's dedicated hotel month where overnight stays and packages (some of which include dining options) are discounted by up to 50 percent. Participating hotels are all over the map — from downtown Providence, to oceanfront properties in Westerly, and a ferry ride away on Block Island. [See more details here.](#)

A Winter Festival: Starting Feb. 17, the 35th annual Newport Winter Festival will host a number of food competitions (like a chili cook-off at Newport Harbor Island Resort) and special dinners (like a four-course menu with beer pairings at The Mooring Seafood Kitchen & Bar) over eight full days. [Mark your calendars and find more details here.](#)

Visit [Food & Dining in Rhode Island](#) for more. *Because everyone's gotta eat!*