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6 New England towns to visit in February

Discover winter festivals overflowing with fun.



A horse-drawn carriage ride during a previous Maine Lakes Winter Carnival in Bridgton, Maine.

—Greater Bridgton Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce

By **Kristi Palma** 5:00 AM

Obvious alert: It's freezing outside. However, you shouldn't let that stop you from taking advantage of the ice sculpture-, snowshoe-, and s'mores-filled festivals taking place across the region this month.

Attend a parade of lights in Greenfield

During the 97th Annual Greenfield Winter Carnival from Feb. 1-3, you can watch vehicles illuminated with hundreds of lights snake through town during the festival's Parade of Lights. The parade is among the kickoff events on Friday night, and it will culminate with a fireworks display over Beacon Field. Other activities throughout the weekend will include an Instagram scavenger hunt, a keg pull competition for dogs, cardboard sled races, and face painting and a

paper snowflake contest for kids. Make sure you take an [ice sculpture walk](#) through the town, after which you can vote for your favorite in a ballot box on the Town Common.

Join a sports tournament in Newport, N.H.

Love to compete? During the 103rd Newport Winter Carnival from Feb. 7-10, you can play dodgeball, volleyball, pickleball, horse shoe, table tennis, and corn hole. There even will be a "softball tournament on snow." If tournaments aren't your thing, there also will be horse-drawn wagon rides, ice skating (including a midnight skate the evening of Feb. 8), a parade, a sledding party with hot cocoa, free family art projects, and fireworks.

Snowshoe by moonlight in Milton, Vt.

You can glide under the night sky (or in the daylight hours, if you prefer) during the the 11th Annual Milton Winter Festival from Feb. 8-10. The festival's other events will include a bonfire with hot cocoa and s'mores, ice skating, live music, a community breakfast with "Survivor" contestant Kathy O'Brien and Miss Vermont Julia Crane, a Snow Ball dance, horse-drawn wagon rides, a chili cook-off, and fireworks.



Fire performers during a previous Fire and Ice Festival in Putnam, Conn. —*Courtesy Connecticut Office of Tourism*

Watch fire dancers in Putnam, Conn.

You can admire ice sculptures by firelight during the [9th Annual Fire and Ice Festival](#), billed as the largest single ice-block competition in the U.S. On Feb. 9, more than five dozen sculptures will dot downtown streets lit by torches. After watching ice carving demonstrations and engaging in interactive ice sculpture fun (ice frame selfie, anyone?), you can watch fire performances and warm up beside fire pits with free hot chocolate. Another warming up option: Duck into a 30-foot inflatable igloo.

View fireworks over the lake in Bridgton, Maine

Who says it has to be summer to experience a day of fun on the lake? The Maine Lakes Winter Carnival on Feb. 16 at Highland Lake will offer a full day of winter activities like an ice fishing derby, a 5K snowshoe race, horse-drawn carriage rides, a polar dip to benefit Harvest Hills Animal Shelter, and an “ice bar” for adults 21 and older. Food trucks will sell everything from lobster rolls to chili. Once you get chilly, you can warm up at the Old Bridgton Town Hall, where games

and activities will include floor hockey, basketball, and a juggling show. At 6 p.m., look up: Fireworks will light up the sky.

Enter a homebrew competition in North Adams

Do you brew your own beer? At this year's North Adams Winterfest, taking place Feb. 16, home brewers will face off during the festival's first annual [Homebrew Competition](#), judged by Bright Ideas Brewing. The brewer of the winning beer will win the opportunity to create a limited edition brew with the company. Other events throughout the weekend will include ice sculpting, ice skating, horse-drawn wagon rides, a winter farmer and artisan market, and a chowder competition.

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