



Sail Portsmouth FAQ's

Sail Portsmouth

Sail Portsmouth is an all-volunteer 501 (c) (3) non-profit which organizes and manages Sail Portsmouth maritime festival featuring tall ships. The organization also organizes and manages the Sea Challenge experiential education program for area high school students aboard tall ships. Net proceeds from the Sail Portsmouth maritime event go to the Sea Challenge Scholarship Fund.

Our mission is to connect people to the Seacoast's rich maritime legacy through inclusive events, education, and immersive youth sail-training scholarships. Our vision is of a thriving waterfront community where everyone can learn, lead, and discover their potential on the water.

Sail Portsmouth Maritime Festival - 2026

Schedule Summary

Thursday, July 23	7:30 PM – 8:30 PM	Parade of Sail Up the Piscataqua	Mouth of River to Memorial Bridge
	6:45 PM to 9:00 PM	Ride-in on <i>Liberty Clipper</i>	Depart & Return to UNH Pier, New Castle, NH
	6:45 PM to 8:00 PM	Ride-in on <i>Oosterschelde</i>	Departs PYC, New Castle, NH Arrives Fish Pier
	6:45 PM to 8:30 PM	Spectator Boat <i>Shining Star</i>	Departs & Returns to Town Dock, Pepperrell Cove Kittery, Maine
Friday, July 24	8:00 AM to 5PM	Sail to Boston <i>Denis Sullivan</i> (One-way trip)	Departs UNH Pier, New Castle, NH Arrives Moakley Courthouse dock Boston, Massachusetts
	10 AM to 5 PM Timed Entry	Ship Tours <i>Oosterschelde</i>	Peirce Island, Portsmouth
	12:30 PM to 8:30 PM	Tall Ship Sails (2-Hour) <i>Liberty Clipper</i>	Departs and Returns to UNH Pier, New Castle, NH
	6:00 PM to 8:00 PM	Captains Reception	Commercial Fish Pier Peirce Island Portsmouth
Saturday, July 25	8:00 AM	Sail to Boston	PYC, New Castle



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(One-way)

	10 AM to 5 PM Timed Entry	Ship Tours <i>Oosterschelde</i>	Commercial Fish Pier Peirce Island, Portsmouth
Saturday, July 25 (Cont'd.)	12:30 PM to 8:30 PM	Tall Ship Sails (2-Hour) <i>Liberty Clipper</i>	Departs and Returns to UNH Pier, New Castle, NH
Sunday, July 26	10 AM to 5 PM Timed Entry	Ship Tours <i>Oosterschelde</i>	Commercial Fish Pier Peirce Island, Portsmouth
	12:30 PM to 8:30 PM	Tall Ship Sails (2-Hour) <i>Liberty Clipper</i>	Departs and Returns to UNH Pier, New Castle, NH
	5:30 PM to 7:00 PM	Crew & Volunteer BBQ	Commercial Fish Pier Peirce Island, Portsmouth
Monday, July 27	Approx. 11:00 AM	Ship departs	Commercial Fish Pier Peirce Island, Portsmouth

DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS

Parade of Sail

What is the day and time for the Parade of Sail?

Thursday, July 23, starting at mouth of Piscataqua River at 7:30 PM. First ship approaching Memorial Bridge at 8:15 PM.

What is the Parade of Sail Route?

The Parade of Sail starts at the mouth of the Piscataqua River (Navigation Buoy '2KR') and proceeds up the river to the Memorial Bridge, Portsmouth Harbor (between Portsmouth and Kittery). Three visiting tall ships plus the Gundalow are in this year's Parade plus the Naval Shipyard Tug, City Fire Boat, and lots of recreational vessels.

What are the best vantage points to watch the parade (or departing ships on Tuesday)?

New Hampshire:

1. New Castle Common
2. Portsmouth Yacht Club (members only)
3. Kittery Point Yacht Club (members only)
4. Four Tree Island, Portsmouth. Park on nearby Peirce Island.



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5. Memorial Bridge Sidewalk, Portsmouth side

Maine:

1. Fort McClary
2. Memorial Bridge Sidewalk, Kittery side

Where is the best vantage point for a disabled person in a wheelchair to view the parade?

We suggest the sidewalk of the Memorial Bridge between Portsmouth and Kittery.

Which ships are in the parade this year?

1. *Oosterschelde*, an original, 3-masted schooner from The Netherlands built shortly after WWI to carry freight in and around Europe.
2. *Denis Sullivan*, a 3-masted schooner replica of a Great Lakes cargo vessel.
3. *Liberty Clipper*, a 2-masted ship modelled after 19th Century Baltimore Clipper-style schooners.
4. *Piscataqua*, Portsmouth's own tall ship, a lateen sailing replica of a 19th century gundalow

How can I book a sail on a tall ship to ride-in in the Parade of Sail?

1. Tickets are SOLD OUT for all the Parade of Sail vessels.

Will the ships have their sails up during the Parade?

The ships will try to have some sails up. The captains decide based on wind conditions in the river at the time of the parade.

Ship Tours/Sail Portsmouth Event Tent

Where can I see the ships? (take ship tours, see Sail Portsmouth exhibits, buy food)?

Commercial Fish Pier, 1 Peirce Island Road, Portsmouth.

Can I buy tickets to tour the ships ahead of time?

Tickets are sold online at sailportsmouth.org or at the gate. This year, we are introducing timed entry to reduce the length of time people had to wait in line to tour the ship. One must purchase a ticket for a specific day and time.

When are the touring ships and Sail Portsmouth Event Tent open to the public?

The ships are open to the public as follows:

- Friday, July 24, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The last entry is at 4:30 PM.
- Saturday, July 25 from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The last entry is at 4:30 PM.
- Sunday, July 26, from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The last entry is at 4:30 PM.

How long is the wait to tour the ships?

We expect very short lines as we have initiated timed-entry.



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Are any other tall ships open for tours?

1. No.
2. The other tall ships are available for day sails. [See below for Day Sails/Schooner Rides.]
3. You may buy tickets for day sails at SailPortsmouth.org.

When do the ships depart? Where can I watch them depart?

1. The *Oosterschelde* departs from the Fish Pier at approximately 11:00 AM, on Monday, July 27. There is no access to the pier at that time.
2. A recommended viewpoint is Prescott Park or Four Tree Island and on a boat.

Are food and drinks available?

Yes, on Friday and Sunday, there will be a food truck and a desert truck on the Peirce Island site.

On Saturday, there will be seafood vendors as part of the first **Fishtival** selling Lobster Rolls, Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Tinned Fish, Fresh Oysters and Sushi.

Is there entertainment?

Yes, there will be music, roaming Pirates, and people in period costumes.

Where can I park?

3. The City of Portsmouth is providing parking at Little Harbor School, Hanover Garage and Foundry Garage. A free shuttle runs from each of these lots to Sail Portsmouth, Peirce Island, from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM on Friday through Monday.
4. For more parking information, go to www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks/parkportsmouth. Parking is provided at the city garages and the Little Harbor School parking lot. Shuttles run all day during the festival from the parking to the Peirce Island venue. For detailed information and a shuttle route map, please, click [Here](#).
5. **Shuttle Route on next page.**



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Shuttle Route Map





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Is there Handicap parking?

There is handicap parking at the Sail Portsmouth main venue, 1 Peirce Island Rd., Portsmouth.

One of our family is in a wheelchair/on crutches/has poor balance. Can they board the ship for a tour?

1. Passengers must be ambulatory to board the ships. Wheelchairs are not permitted.
2. Disabled visitors may view the ships from the pier. They may enter the Sail Portsmouth tent.
3. The Gundalow does accommodate persons with mobility disabilities. More information at www.gundalow.com.

Tall Ship Sails (Day Sails)

Tickets

What is the schedule?

There are three two-hour trips on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday departing at 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM, and the Sunset Sail at 6:30 PM.

Where can I buy tickets for schooner sails?

Tickets for schooner sails are available online at **SailPortsmouth.org**. Go to the website, click the 'Events' or 'Buy Tickets' buttons, select the date, and follow the prompts.

One of our family is in a wheelchair/on crutches/has poor balance. Can they board the ship for a day sail?

1. All day sail passengers must be ambulatory, agile and have good balance. It is unsafe for those in wheelchairs, with walkers on crutches or with a cane to board and ride on the schooners.
2. The Gundalow does take disabled passengers. For more information, go to their website, www.gundalow.org.

Can I buy tickets at the gate?

The best way to guarantee getting on board is to buy online from our website, SailPortsmouth.org.

How much do day sail tickets cost?

1. Parade of Sail, August 1 - \$105
2. All Two-Hour Sails - \$80
3. Two-Hour Sunset Sails - \$89
4. Sail to Boston, July 24 - \$155

Are the discounts for military (children, elderly, first responders, PMC members, anyone)?

There is a 10% discount to the Ship Tours.

Can I bring a two-year old on the sail?



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For safety reasons, no one under age eight is permitted to board the Sail to Boston trip. All ages are well on the 2-Hour sails.

Where can I park for a day sail?

There is free parking adjacent to the pier. Volunteers will direct you to the correct spots. No overnight parking is permitted.

I would like to buy tickets for a sail. How do I buy tickets?

Tickets for schooner sails are available online at **SailPortsmouth.org**. Go to the website, click the 'Events' or 'Buy Online' buttons, select the day, and follow the prompts.

I tried to order tickets online but could not. Can someone help me?

Call our general phone number, 603-688-7437 and ask for help. Direct to John Considine or Ken Walsh.

I bought tickets for a specific day sail but need to change the time. How can I do that?

Call our general phone number, 603-688-7437. Direct to John Considine or Ken Walsh.

What should I bring for the 2-hour sails?

Bring water. You may want to bring a wind breaker, especially for the evening sail.
You are welcome to bring beer, wine and other refreshments on the Sunset Sails.

What do I need to bring for the Sail to Boston?

Bring sandwiches and beverages and consider bringing rain gear, windbreakers, sweaters, jackets, and long pants.

May I bring alcohol on the sails?

You are welcome to bring beer, wine and other refreshments on the Sunset Sails.

From where do the day sails depart?

All sails on *Liberty Clipper* and on *Denis Sullivan* depart from the UNH Pier, Sullivan Lane, New Castle, NH.

Where is the UNH Pier?

Sullivan Lane, New Castle, NH.

Is there a waiting list for tickets?

Yes. Take their name, phone and email and send request to pvonhemert@sailportsmouth.org.

Is transportation back from Boston included with the Sail to Boston trip?

1. On the Boston trip, most passengers arrange to meet friends or family for dinner at the end of the trip and drive together back to Portsmouth.
2. C&J buses depart from South Station, a 10-minute walk from the Moakley Courthouse dock where *Denis Sullivan* moors.

What should I bring for the 2-hour sails?



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Bring water. Please wear sensible, soft-soled shoes. You may want to bring a wind breaker, especially for the evening sail.

What should I bring for the Sunset Sails?

Bring water. Please wear sensible, soft-soled shoes. You may want to bring a wind breaker. You may bring wine and beer to drink as well as light apps.

What do I need to bring for the Sail to Boston trip?

Bring sandwiches and beverages and consider bringing rain gear, windbreakers, sweaters, jackets, and long pants. Please wear sensible, soft-soled shoes.

May I bring alcohol on the sails?

Yes, on the Sunset Sails. No, on all other trips.

From where do the day sails depart?

All sails depart from the UNH Pier, Sullivan Lane, New Castle, NH.

Where is the UNH Pier?

Sullivan Lane, New Castle, NH.

Is there a shuttle (public transportation) between the Sail Portsmouth site (Eagle, tall ship event) and the day sail site (UNH Pier, New Castle site)?

No, there is no shuttle between the two sites. It is a 10 to 15-minute drive by car and taxi.

Refunds/Cancellations

I made a mistake when I booked online. How do I get a refund (correct the mistake, change the names, change the number of passengers, etc.)?

Send their name, phone, and email to jconsidine@sailportsmouth.org.

If there is bad weather, will there be a refund?

See can cancellation policy, below.

Does the ship sail in bad weather?

The ship will sail in mist and light rain. Thunderstorms and rough seas may cancel a trip. See cancellation policy below.

What is the cancellation policy?

The Captain of the ship has right and responsibility to cancel any trip due to hazardous weather, rough seas, or any other factor affecting passenger safety. The ships will sail in mist and light rain. Thunderstorms and rough seas may cancel a trip. Although cancellations are very rare, they can occur. We will make every effort to place ticket holders on another scheduled sailing. If no other mutually acceptable times are available, refunds may be requested, or you may choose to donate your payment to the Sea Challenge Scholarship Fund.



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I cannot buy a ticket online. Is that trip sold out?

1. If the trip shows no availability, it is sold out.
2. Would you like to try to book a different time? Send caller's name, phone number and email to jconsidine@sailportsmouth.org.

I am stuck in traffic and will be late for my scheduled day sail. What can I do?

1. Try to make it on time as the ships must keep to their schedule. No refunds are given for missing scheduled departures.
2. If they want to try to reschedule, Send caller's name, phone number and email to jconsidine@sailportsmouth.org.

Fishtival

The Fishtival will be held at the Sail Portsmouth event site on Saturday, July 25. Vendors will be on sit selling freshly shucked oysters, lobster rolls, tinned fin fish, and sushi. This is the first of what is hoped will become an annual part of the 3-day Sail Portsmouth Maritime Festival.

All Other Questions/Issues

Captain's Reception

It is a by-invitation-only event.

Welcome Ceremony

There is no Welcome Ceremony this year.

Lost Articles/Medical Emergencies/Other Urgent Issue

1. Send caller's name, phone number and email to ncassidy@sailportsmouth.org.
2. If truly urgent, do not give out phone number, but call Phil von Hemert at 603-833-0844.

Vendors, Do you allow?

1. Occasionally vendors are accepted to sell under the event tent.
2. A limited number of food vendors are allowed.
3. It is too late for the 2026 event, but please email info@sailportsmouthnh.org if you are interested in 2027.

Volunteers

If you would like to volunteer, please call our Volunteer Coordinator, Mary Ann Allsop, at (603) 568-8135 or come to the Volunteer table at the Peirce Island venue and tell them you want to volunteer.

Photographers

1. The ship will display on-board lighting until 10 PM each evening.



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2. The ship departs downtown on the high tide at approximately 11 AM on Monday August 1. There is no access to the pier at that time.
3. A recommended viewpoint is Prescott Park and the New Castle Commons.

Private Receptions

All evenings are booked for on-board receptions this year. If the caller would like to speak to someone about a private reception for 2027, send caller's name, phone, and email address to pvonhemert@sailportsmouth.org.

Press/Advertising

Please send the name, phone, and email to pvonhemert@sailportsmouth.org.

Complaints

Get the caller's name, phone, and email address. Get summary of the complaint. Tell the caller that you are the answering the phone, that everyone is tied up running Sail Portsmouth but that someone will contact them shortly. Send the information to pvonhemert@sailportsmouth.org.