



**NEXTSTOP** magazine

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## 2011 Long Island Winterfest: Jazz on the Vine

Diane Roncone



**W**hile lots of New Yorkers scramble south to the warm-weather states when the first rush of cold air blows in, the die-hards stay here year-round and tough it out during the winter. To be honest though, the winters here are usually so mild that it really doesn't much matter if we go or if we stay. I will admit that this year *is* the exception. (Ironically, as I write this, I am stranded in an airport hotel in the Midwest, unable to get a flight home due to New York's unusually bad weather!) Regardless of the amount of snowfall we get, that old adage holds true: when life hands you lemons (or in this case, cold weather), take those lemons and make lemonade. That being said, let me introduce you to the 2011 Long Island Winterfest.

Winterfest, with its theme "Jazz on the Vine," is offered for six consecutive weekends, from February 12 to March 20, on the North Fork of Long Island. A variety of jazz musicians grace a long list of East End vineyards and other venues for performances open to the public—and you can't beat the price. The cost of each event is only \$10 per person and includes a glass of wine and a chance for a free weekend getaway. The 50 participating jazz bands offer a wide mix of jazz; from bebop, Motown, soul, progressive, swing, and contemporary fusion to flamenco-influenced, pop, straight ahead, world fusion, and smooth R&B.

Now in its fourth year, Winterfest is the brainchild of the Long Island Wine Council, Long Island Convention & Visitors Bureau, East End Arts Council, and Suffolk County Economic Development. The event was created to generate business during the slow season but it also serves the purpose of giving New Yorkers some fun event get-togethers at interesting venues—and offers a much-needed weekend mini-vacation for some.

“Winterfest is the ultimate model for a successful collaborative [venture] using public, private, and non-profit entities to drive cultural tourism. The project serves the mission of all partners: the East End Arts Council supports the arts community, the LI Wine Council works to advance the visibility of East End wineries, and the LI Convention and Visitors Bureau drives overnight visits,” says Patricia Snyder, executive director of the East End Arts Council. “We all have our own missions, but they blend nicely for the advancement of the Winterfest.”

The North Fork vineyards are part of what is now known as the Long Island Wine Region, which produces some of the country’s best and most exciting wines. A couple of decades ago, the East End potato farms began to disappear, and lovers of the North Fork worried that housing developments would take over the farms and ruin the beauty of the countryside. Lo and behold, vineyards began sprouting up across those fields, and the North Fork today not only retains its peaceful and pastoral setting but the vineyards produce award-winning wines that are sought after by restaurants and stores across the country. Wine connoisseurs, critics, and gourmet magazines give Long Island wines a huge thumbs-up. The Winterfest Jazz on the Vine event allows the vineyards to be enjoyed in the winter instead of just in the warmer months.

Kristen Matejka, director of marketing at the Long Island Convention & Visitors Bureau, says, “Winterfest is a great time to come out and enjoy the jazz concerts at area wineries, and to also consider staying overnight at one of the many hotels and B&Bs that offer great deals and getaways during the promotion. There are over 120 special offers going on in conjunction with Winterfest that encourage people to get out and enjoy all the east end of Long Island has to offer.”

## *It really demonstrates how the arts can be a valuable partner in fostering innovation and economic growth.*

A visit to [www.liwinterfest.com](http://www.liwinterfest.com) and [www.facebook.com/liwinterfest](http://www.facebook.com/liwinterfest) will give readers a comprehensive list of event details. For information about East End hotels, maps, car rental services, and more, visit the Long Island Convention & Visitor’s Bureau’s website at [www.discoverlongisland.com](http://www.discoverlongisland.com). If you’re coming from Manhattan, check out Hampton Jitney schedules at [www.jitneyjaunts.com](http://www.jitneyjaunts.com) and [www.hamptonjitney.com](http://www.hamptonjitney.com) to get you to a Jitney stop only a short cab ride away from the jazz venues.

“It is so gratifying to see a cultural tourism project succeed in these tough economic times. It really demonstrates how the arts can be a valuable partner in fostering innovation and economic growth. The musicians win, the wineries, hotels, and retailers win, and the public wins,” says Michelle Isabelle-Stark, director of the Suffolk County Office of Film & Cultural Affairs. “It doesn’t get much better than that.”



**HAMPTONS  
HOT YOGA**

2415 Montauk Highway, Bridgehampton Village, Plenty of parking around back  
631-537-YOGA (9642)  
**Hot Yoga Schedule**

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
5:30pm-B	9:30am-B	<div style="border: 2px solid red; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> <b>New Student SPECIAL \$35 first week</b> </div>	6:00pm-B	9:30am-B	9:30am-B 4:30pm-B	9:30am-B

B = Bikram Hot Yoga 90 minutes  
Bring/Rent/Buy a Mat, Lg Towel and Water  
Log on to [www.HamptonHotYoga.com](http://www.HamptonHotYoga.com) for schedule updates and information.  
Arrive early, well hydrated with an open mind and empty stomach.