In 1637, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts proclaimed that no person should be in a tavern “longer than necessary occasions.” There was no clarity on length or what “necessary occasions” were, and the region has since gone through various bans and prohibitions.

Some bans were self-imposed. Rockport until the year 2005 was a “dry” town. The fishing village was suddenly disrupted when a group of hatchet-wielding women, led by local spinster Hannah Jumper, took it upon themselves to rid the town of its “demon rum.” On July 8, 1856, the Hatchet Gang destroyed every bottle, jug, keg, and cask they could find, to the upset of local tavern and restaurant owners.

Today, local brewers, cider houses, distilleries, meaderies, and wineries are resurrecting and reinventing old recipes into new ones, making their mark in the world of craft-style drinks. These businesses will be happy to share ideas to pair with your meal! Visit our website to learn more about local tours and tastings.

The area located between the city of Boston and New Hampshire is known as Essex County or the North of Boston region. Well-known cities such as Salem, home of the infamous Witch Trials and Gloucester, America’s oldest seaport, are located here. Within our 34 cities and towns, visit farms, museums, cultural and historic sites, state parks, and performing arts venues. Enjoy boutique shopping, plenty of fresh seafood and local artisan breweries, cider houses, distilleries, meaderies and wineries. Explore 200 miles of coastline, 12 lighthouses and go on a whale watch, harbor cruise or schooner sail. Visit NorthofBoston.org for a free travel guide & map.

Where to Start & How to Get There
North of Boston begins less than 12 miles and 30 minutes from downtown Boston and extends to the New Hampshire border. Area airports include Logan International Airport and Manchester–Boston Regional Airport. Visitors can travel around via Car, train (mbta.com) or seasonally ferry between Boston and Salem (bostonharborcruises.com).

Start at NorthofBoston.org!
There you can find itineraries for one day, two days or a whole week of activities that you can do when visiting an area venue.

From Boston: Take I-93 North, I-95 or Route 1 to travel the length of the North of Boston region. Route 1A North follows the coast from Logan Airport to Salisbury.

From the West: Take the Massachusetts Turnpike to Interstate 95 North and Route 128 North towards Gloucester.

From the North: Interstate 495 South will bring you along the Merrimack River through Haverhill, Amesbury, Newburyport and Salisbury.

Enjoy your visit to North of Boston, and please drink responsibly.