



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / KRIS CRAIG

Cocktails & Canvas



Dina Cannelas, Tonya Carreiro and Jenny Carreiro, all of Fall River, get their paint at the start of a Paint Nite event at the Oxford Tavern in East Providence.

Elevate your next night out to a fine art with a painting party at a local bar

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Painting parties offer a chance to get some basic art instruction and enjoy a cocktail at the same time. Events are held at area bars or restaurants, or at specialized drink and paint businesses.

Cocktails & Canvas

Want something different for your next night out? Try sipping wine and swirling paint

By JENNA PELLETIER
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Rachel Araujo, co-owner of Paint and Vino in Pawtucket.

Here's a breakdown of some local options. But first, a warning: When you raise that glass, make sure it's the one filled with beer, not brush water.

For the bar hopper: Paint Nite

Two years ago, two friends started Paint Nite at a bar in Boston. It has since expanded to 77 cities, including Providence. Painters essentially take over the bar or part of a restaurant for the night, and a local host provides instruction and supplies. Previous sites have included Blue Grotto on Federal Hill and Coco Pazzo on the East Side.

Various locations.
Paintnite.com.

With paint-filled plates, mini easels and plastic tablecloths scattered everywhere, it looks like a 9-year-old's birthday party is about to go down at Johnston's Bishop Hill Tavern.

But the vibe quickly turns adult as Paint Nite artist-host Ward Parker begins sharing R-rated witticisms and young women toss back tequila shots between brushstrokes.

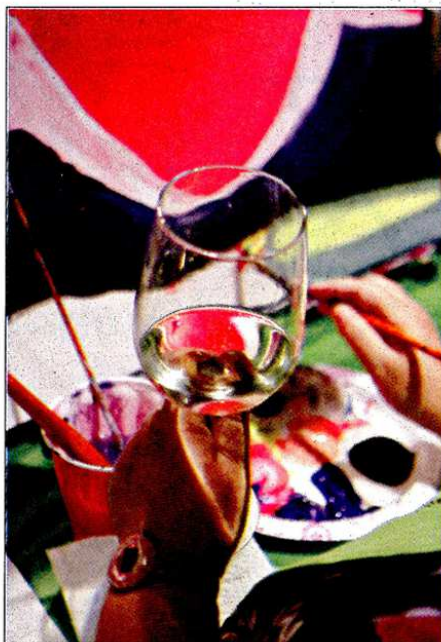
"This is a friggin' paint party," Ward says on a recent night. "We're here for one reason: To have fun."

The "social painting" concept has become something of a phenomenon. In the last year, multiple businesses dedicated to simultaneously sipping wine and swirling paint have debuted in Rhode Island.

Owners tout it as the new paint-your-own pottery, and some say its effects are similar to yoga. "With or without liquor, when people come here, they relax," says Anamaria Clarkin, owner of Paint Drops studio in Pawtucket. "You just see the stress dropping away."

Sessions, suitable for all skill levels, typically involve an artist providing step-by-step instructions on how to create the night's featured painting. It might be anything from a replica of van Gogh's "The Starry Night" to a Providence street scene.

"You're having a fun night out, and oh, by the way, you're going to leave with something beautiful that you can hang on your wall," says



"Social painting" has become a bit of a phenomenon, with businesses debuting throughout Rhode Island.

For the all-inclusive lover: Paint and Vino

Nearing one year in business, Rachel and Paul Araujo's studio sets itself apart by offering each painter two complimentary glasses of beer, wine or soda.

Other noteworthy features include a separate room for private parties, "paint and punch" sessions for kids and a patio with a spectacular view of the Blackstone River's Pawtucket Falls.

150 Main St., Pawtucket.
(401) 680-0856.
paintandvino.com.

For the BYOB fan: Paint Drops

You bring the drinks, and owner Clarkin will supply everything else. Her studio in Pawtucket artist haven Lorraine Mill has the fun-artsy vibe perfected. The floors are intentionally

paint-splattered and colorful crepe paper flowers hang from high ceilings. Another nice touch: She's up for creating custom paintings for private groups.

560 Mineral Spring Ave., Pawtucket. (401) 286-9788.
paintdropsri.com.

For some laughs: Drink and Dabble

After 20 years of poking fun at Rhode Island through his Ocean State Follies show, comedian Charlie Hall has shifted his attention to a new venture that combines one-liners with painting instruction.

Hall, a Rhode Island School of Design grad, takes his event on the road, traveling to various venues around the state including Redlefsen's in Bristol and B. Pinelli's in East Providence. Another regular stop is Coventry's ShelaLara Vineyards, where you can paint your favorite bottle.

Various locations. (401) 353-3330.
drinkanddabble.com.

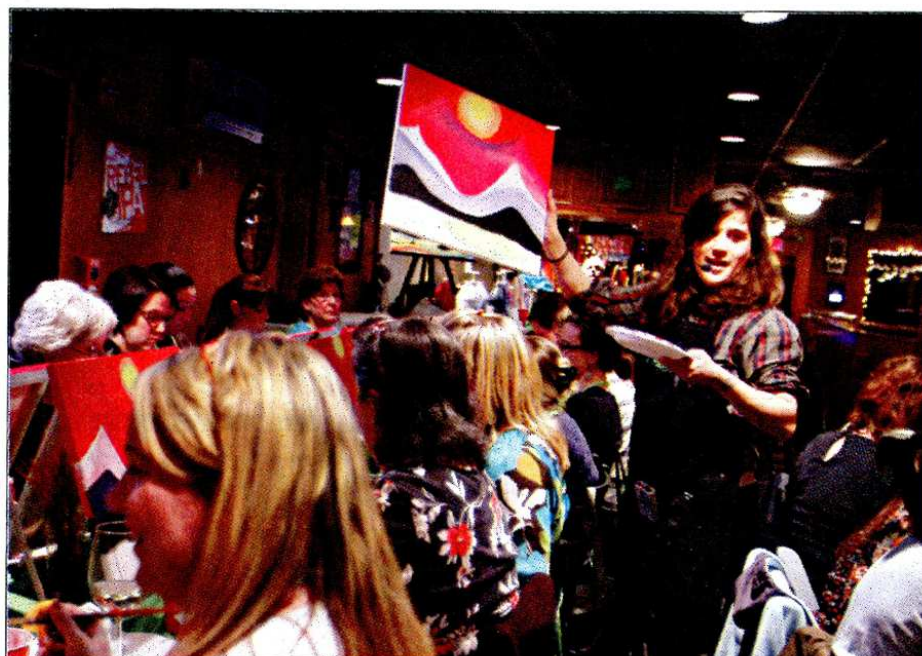
For dinner, too: Muse Paintbar

Co-owner Stan Finch plans to open a third location of his painting studio/bar/restaurant next month, on the East Side of Providence.

His spin on the concept adds food to the mix. Expect "tapas style" bites such as risotto balls, hummus plates and mozzarella sticks, plus about a dozen beer and wine options (no cocktails). Finch says he wants to work with local artists — including those from the nearby Rhode Island School of Design — to add Rhode Island-themed works to the list of offerings.

117 North Main St., Providence, 888-607-6873.
musepaintbar.com.

jpelletier@providencejournal.com
(401) 277-7281

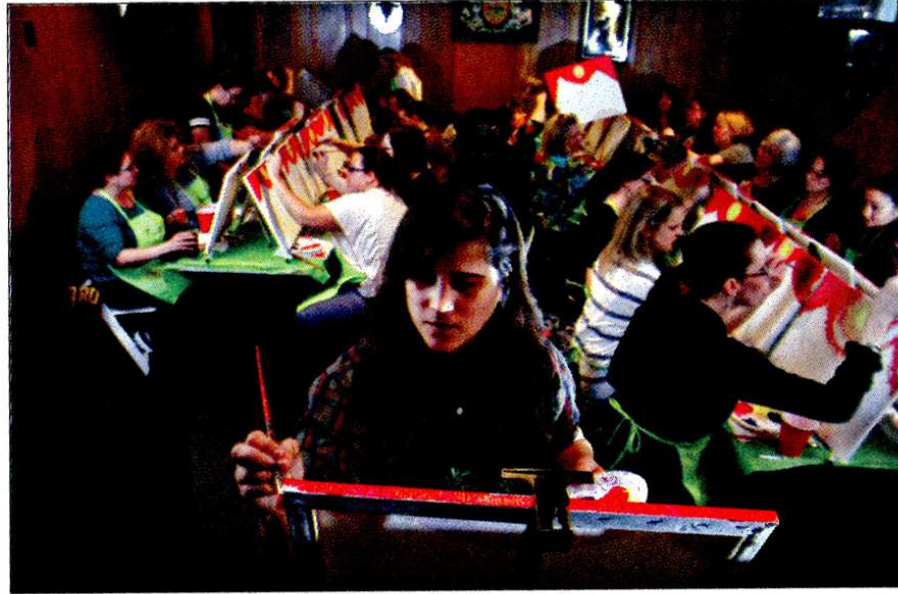


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Instructor Joy Fullmer holds up an in-progress painting for participants to follow step by step at a Paint Nite event last week at Oxford Tavern in East Providence.



Friends Melinda Hackenbruch of West Warwick, far left, Leslie Sobotka of North Smithfield and Kristine Freeman of Cranston create their works of art.



Fullmer works on her painting along with the participants, instructing them along the way.



Keri Aubin of Swansea (from left), Cathy Bearce of Berkley, Mass., Diana Gonsalves of Somerset and Steph Andrade of Fall River test out their art skills at Paint Nite.