

# THE TRUST FOR GOVERNORS ISLAND

## **Governors Island Announces 2017 Season To Open One Month Early, On May 1**

*Visitors to enjoy an additional month on the Island during its expanded public access season*

*'Island Oyster', a new interim food and beverage concession, to open near Soissons Landing during the 2017 season*

January 17, 2017. The Trust for Governors Island announced today that Governors Island will open to the public on May 1, extending its public access season by nearly one month. For the first time in history, New Yorkers will be able to experience the Spring season on the Island, and will have the opportunity to explore its beautiful public spaces and plantings, recreational activities and diverse cultural programming during the month of May. The Trust also announced today that *Island Oyster*, a new food and beverage concession featuring sustainably sourced seafood in a beer garden like atmosphere, will open during the 2017 season, providing visitors to the Island with new, expanded dining options in a distinct setting with unparalleled views of the Lower Manhattan skyline and New York Harbor.

“An expanded season in 2017 opens an exciting new chapter for Governors Island, and we invite every New Yorker to take in the Island’s surroundings for an additional month this spring,” said Michael Samuelian, president of the Trust for Governors Island. “Island Oyster will truly complement the spirit of Governors Island by expanding dining options for visitors and promoting the health and sustainability of New York Harbor. What better place than Governors Island to enjoy oysters along the waterfront.”

Governors Island will open its doors to the public on May 1, extending the 2017 public access season from 120 days to 154 days. Visitors will have the opportunity to experience a wide range of arts, cultural, educational and recreational programs, as well as the Hills, Governors Island’s new 10 acre park featuring play areas, public art, and expansive, breathtaking views of New York Harbor, the Statue of Liberty, Lower Manhattan, Brooklyn and New Jersey.

“Governors Island is a jewel of a destination in all seasons. This year, we are delighted to expand opportunities for more visitors to enjoy the Island,” said Ronay Menschel, Chair of Governors Island. “With the Hills and stunning harbor views, an ever-expanding rotation of arts and cultural programming, and now a longer public season, Governors Island continues to be a unique public resource for all New Yorkers.”

“The month of May on Governors Island is a feast for the senses. We are thrilled that the public will experience for the first time the Island’s flowering trees in full bloom, and enjoy favorite spring past-times like car-free biking, strolling, and picnicking,” said Merritt Birnbaum, Executive Director of the Friends of Governors Island. “There is nothing better than soaking up the gentle spring sunshine from one of the Island’s hammocks.”

Governors Island is open seasonally to the public from the beginning of May through the end of September. During that time, the Island hosts a wide range of arts, cultural, educational and recreational programs through OpenHouseGI. OpenHouseGI offers 150,000 square feet of indoor space in former officers' houses and over 20 acres of outdoor space free of charge to organizations that create programming that is free and open to the public during the Island's public season. Applications for OpenHouseGI programs will now be accepted for the month of May via an online permit process. The OpenHouseGI permit process, as well as information to apply for the 2017 season, is available at [govisland.com](http://govisland.com).

The Trust also announced today at a meeting of its Board of Directors the designation of Island Oyster, a picnic-style "Oyster Garden" set in a park-like landscape on a one-acre site adjacent to Soissons Landing. Conceived by the team behind Hudson River Park's Grand Banks, Island Oyster will offer fresh, sustainably produced seafood complemented by local summer fare, craft beer, wine, and a festive cocktail program. In partnership with the Billion Oyster Project and Earth Matters, Island Oyster will showcase oyster shell collection and recycling, furthering Governors Island as a focal point towards a sustainable future.

"We are truly honored that the Trust selected Island Oyster as a food and beverage partner. As a public agency, the Trust's vision for a culturally engaging and sustainable future is truly commendable", said Miles Pincus of Island Oyster. "Abundant with wildlife, and rich in oysters, the shores of Governors Island were once a prized hunting and fishing ground of both the Lenape tribe and New York's early settlers. We look forward to once again establishing the island as a pilgrimage-worthy food destination."

The permittee designated today responded to a Request for Proposals for Interim Use of the Manhattan Ferry Landing on Governors Island in November. The Trust received five complete responses to this RFP, representing a broad range of entertainment, food and beverage, and recreational uses. The Trust evaluated those proposals with respect to criteria outlined in the RFP, including respondents' qualifications and financial capacity, financial impact to the Trust, operational plan, and compatibility with the character and vision for Governors Island as an extraordinary public resource with a vibrant mix of uses and activities.

The Island typically welcomes 10,000 visitors each weekend day and last year welcomed nearly 600,000 visitors over the course of the season. More than 75% of visitors to the Island are from New York City and over 90% are from the Tri-State area.

In 2017, Governors Island will be open every day from May 1 through October 1. The Island is open from 10 AM to 6 PM on weekdays and from 10 AM to 7 PM on weekends, Memorial Day, July 4 and Labor Day.

During the 2017 season, ferries will run from Lower Manhattan all seven days and will also run from Brooklyn Bridge Park's Pier 6 on Saturdays, Sundays, Memorial Day and Labor Day. All weekday and weekend afternoon ferries from Brooklyn and Manhattan are \$2 round trip for adults. Children under 12 ride for free at all times and senior citizens' fares are half price. Morning ferries (10 AM and 11 AM) on Saturdays and Sundays are free for all. There is no surcharge for bicycles.

## **About The Trust for Governors Island**

The Trust for Governors Island is the not-for-profit corporation created by the City of New York that is responsible for the redevelopment and operation of 150 acres of Governors Island. The Trust's mission is to transform Governors Island into a vibrant resource for New York City, making this island at the center of New York Harbor a destination with extraordinary public open space, as well as educational, not-for-profit and commercial facilities. For more information, visit [www.govisland.com](http://www.govisland.com).

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