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Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival 2026

An insider's guide to two weekends of jazz and history in Eastport and downtown Annapolis: every event, what's free, and where to eat.

The big picture

The Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival takes over Eastport and nearby Annapolis neighborhoods for **two November weekends (Nov 6-8 and Nov 13-15)**. It pairs jazz concerts with talks on the history behind the music. 2026 is its 5th edition, and the lineup is complete: **9 events, 6 of them free**.

HEADLINER **Makaya McCraven** Progressive-jazz drummer and producer - Sun Nov 8, 7 PM, Maryland Hall ($48-$58)	**BEST VALUE** **Perkutao** Afro-Peruvian jazz in an intimate club - Sat Nov 7, 4 & 6:30 PM ($25 advance)
BEST FREE SHOW **Akua Allrich** Tribute to Miriam Makeba & Nina Simone - Sat Nov 14, 2 PM, Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum	**MOST ANNAPOLIS** **Naval Academy Band Combo** Miles Davis tribute + Hometown Hero Awards - Fri Nov 13, Eastport UMC (free)

Insider tip: Reservations are strongly advised for every event, including the free ones. The rooms are small - a library, a museum, churches - and free seats go first. Book through the festival's InstantSeats page; McCraven tickets are sold only by Maryland Hall.

Things locals know

- **Eastport is across the Spa Creek bridge from downtown.** The two are an easy walk apart, so park once and walk.
- **Parking in Eastport is mostly on the street** and tight on weekends. Arrive 20-30 minutes early.
- **The Peerless Rens Club** (406 Chester Ave) is a historic Eastport social club - the most atmospheric room of the festival.
- **Maryland Hall's online listing shows "November 8, 2025"** for McCraven, which looks like a typo. Confirm the date when you buy.
- **About 35 minutes from Howard County** - easy as a day trip, or make it a weekend in town.

Weekend 1 - November 6-8

When	Event	Where	Cost
Fri Nov 6, 7 PM	**Opening Concert: Muneer Nasser Band** - "Jazz Genius: Coltrane, Miles & Weston"	St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 1101 Bay Ridge Ave (Eastport)	Ticketed - see InstantSeats
Sat Nov 7, 11 AM	William Kelly, Ph.D. - "Slavery and Indenture in Colonial Times" (talk + Q&A)	Eastport-Annapolis Neck Library, 269 Hillsmere Dr	**FREE** - register with the library
Sat Nov 7, 4 PM & 6:30 PM	**Perkutao** - Afro-Peruvian jazz (two shows)	Peerless Rens Club, 406 Chester Ave (Eastport)	$25 advance / $35 door
Sun Nov 8, 3 PM	David & Ginger Hildebrand - "Music for Lafayette, 1770s-1820s" (family friendly)	Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, 333 Dubois Rd	**FREE**
Sun Nov 8, 7 PM	**Makaya McCraven** - progressive jazz (headliner)	Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, 801 Chase St	$48-$58 via marylandhall.org

Insider tip: The perfect Weekend 1 Saturday: the free 11 AM history talk at the library, lunch in Eastport, then Perkutao at 4 PM - which leaves time for dinner downtown. Sunday: the free Lafayette program at 3 and McCraven at 7.

Weekend 2 - November 13-15

When	Event	Where	Cost
Fri Nov 13, evening	**U.S. Naval Academy Band Superintendent's Combo** - "Birth of the Cool: A Miles Davis Tribute" + Hometown Hero Awards	Eastport United Methodist Church, 926 Bay Ridge Ave	**FREE** - reception 7-9 PM
Sat Nov 14, 11 AM	Vanessa Racci - "Italian Contributions to Jazz, 1917 to Today" (musical talk + Q&A)	Eastport-Annapolis Neck Library, 269 Hillsmere Dr	**FREE** - reservations strongly advised
Sat Nov 14, 2 PM	**Akua Allrich** - tribute to Miriam Makeba & Nina Simone, with art and poetry by Zsudayka Nzinga Terrell	Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum, 84 Franklin St (downtown)	**FREE** - reception 1:30 PM
Sun Nov 15, 2 PM	Uhwachi-Reh - Native American presentation (talk and performance)	Pip Moyer Recreation Center, 273 Hilltop Ln	**FREE**

Insider tip: Weekend 2 is all free. The Saturday double - Vanessa Racci at 11 AM in Eastport, then Akua Allrich at 2 PM downtown - is the best free day of jazz in Maryland this fall. The Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum is a short walk from Main Street restaurants.

Where to eat - best-rated moderate to high-end

Ratings from OpenTable (OT) where shown. $$ moderate - $$$$ fine dining. November weekends are quieter than summer, but book Saturday dinner and Sunday brunch.

In Eastport (walk to the festival venues)

Restaurant	Meals	$	Known for	Why go
Carrol's Creek	Lunch, dinner	$$$	Lobster bisque, lump crab cakes	Waterfront views of the boats and the Naval Academy; a well-known happy hour.
Chart House	Dinner, Sun brunch	$$$	Seafood, salad bar	On the old Trumpy boatyard - a pre-McCraven Sunday brunch spot.
Blackwall Hitch	Lunch, dinner, Sun brunch	$$-$$$	Oyster and wine bar, rooftop deck	Live music Wed-Sun - extend the jazz night.
O'Leary's Seafood	Dinner	$$$	Sustainable fish, local rockfish	Eastport's classic upscale seafood room - book ahead.
Lewnes' Steakhouse	Dinner	$$$$	Filets cut to order, lamb chops	Old-school Annapolis steakhouse.
Boatyard Bar & Grill	Breakfast, lunch, dinner	$$	Sailing-themed bar, house-made muffins	An easy breakfast before the 11 AM library talks.

Downtown (near Maryland Hall and the museum)

Restaurant	Area	$	Rating	Why go
Osteria 177	Main St	$$$	4.9 OT (3,900+)	Annapolis' top-rated Italian - ideal before Akua Allrich or McCraven.
Acqua al 2	Downtown	$$$	4.9 OT (1,100+)	Florentine favorite; book ahead.
The Choptank	City Dock	$$$	4.5 OT (2,100+)	Maryland seafood and crabs right on the dock.
Middleton Tavern	City Dock	$$	Historic	One of America's oldest taverns - oysters and a nightcap after the show.
Chick & Ruth's Delly	Main St	$	Institution	The classic Main Street breakfast and deli stop.

Insider tip: For a jazz date night, have a 5 PM dinner at Osteria 177 or Acqua al 2, then drive 5 minutes to Maryland Hall for McCraven at 7.

Sample insider weekends

When	Plan
Fri Nov 6, 7 PM	Opening concert: Muneer Nasser Band at St. Luke's, Eastport.
Sat Nov 7, 9:30 AM	Breakfast at Chick & Ruth's or Boatyard Bar & Grill.
Sat Nov 7, 11 AM	Free history talk with William Kelly at the Eastport library.
Sat Nov 7, 4 PM	**Perkutao** at the Peerless Rens Club ($25).
Sat Nov 7, 6:30 PM	Dinner at Carrol's Creek or O'Leary's.
Sun Nov 8, 3 PM	Free family program: Music for Lafayette.
Sun Nov 8, 5 PM	Dinner downtown at Osteria 177, then **Makaya McCraven** at Maryland Hall at 7.
Fri Nov 13, evening	Free Naval Academy Band Combo Miles Davis tribute + Hometown Hero reception.
Sat Nov 14, 11 AM-3 PM	Vanessa Racci (free), lunch on Main St, **Akua Allrich** (free) at 2.
Sun Nov 15, 2 PM	Uhwachi-Reh Native American presentation (free) to close the festival.

Key contacts

- Festival: annapolisjazzandrootsfestival.com - annapolisjazzandroots@gmail.com
- McCraven tickets: marylandhall.org
- Other tickets and reservations: the festival's InstantSeats page (linked from the festival site)

Sources

- Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival - schedule & venues - https://www.annapolisjazzandrootsfestival.com/schedule
- Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival - home - https://www.annapolisjazzandrootsfestival.com/
- Mann Publications - festival background (2025) - https://www.mannpublications.com/mannabouttown/2025/10/09/annapolis-jazz-roots-festival-returns-in-november/
- Visit Annapolis - Exploring Eastport's eateries - https://www.visitannapolis.org/blog/stories/post/exploring-eastports-eateries/
- OpenTable - Annapolis restaurant ratings - https://www.opentable.ca/landmark/218073