

Why We're Obsessed with Halloween Haunted Houses, According to a Psychologist

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Many Halloween fans love that the holiday is an excuse to dress up and eat orange-ified versions of their favorite candy. I'm obsessed with [Halloween](#) for a different reason. Every year, I make a list of the best, [most frightening haunted house attractions](#) in Southern California and try to hit as many as my calendar allows. I'm kind of a scaredy-cat in most other areas of my life (like, you're never going to catch me lingering on top of a tall building), yet when it comes to paying people to scare me by wearing clown masks and wielding fake chainsaws, I'm like, *yes, please take my money*.

While I may be *extra* enthusiastic about haunted houses, obviously, I'm not alone in my enjoyment. Halloween attractions like [Universal Studios' Halloween Horror Nights](#) attract thousands of thrill seekers each year. The real question is — *well, why?*

Frank McAndrew, a professor of psychology at Knox College who has written extensively about creepiness and horror, says these experiences provide an ideal emotional cocktail.

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