



THE ROOMS RESTAURANTS

RESTAURANTS BY HARDING LEE SMITH // OWNER + CHEF

Boone's
FISH HOUSE &
OYSTER ROOM



86 COMMERCIAL ST.
(207) 774-5725

84 EXCHANGE ST.
(207) 774-2333



110 EXCHANGE ST.
(207) 879-4747



73 CONGRESS ST.
(207) 773-3366

FIND THE ROOMS RESTAURANTS ON:    

Bright Spirits

Tuck into a **local tavern**, curl up with a great **cocktail**, and **kiss 2016 goodbye.**

BY KAREN HOFREITER

Ben Hallowell uses cinnamon to garnish a seasonal cocktail at **Solo Italiano** on Commercial Street.

Orchard Press

Vida Mezcal Tequila
Bartlett Apple Brand
St. Elizabeth Allspice Dram
Honey Apple Simple
Lemon, Egg White

THE WINTER HOLIDAY SEASON would not be complete without eggnog and wassail, which cannot properly be imbibed without a **heartfelt toast**. The tradition of toasting began in 450 AD with glasses raised and the words “*waes hael*” (“good health”) uttered in honor of British King Vortigern. The popularity of the toast soared as it became the



ideal excuse to drink more and more. One sip for each toast to the king, the lords and ladies of the court, and perhaps even the royal wolfhounds. Although this “toasting the town” eventually went out of vogue, what remains today is the need for the perfect reason to partake in a bit of liquid pleasure. December is full of such reasons, one of which is the celebration of the ratification of the 21st Amendment (a.k.a. the death of Prohibition) on December 5th, 1933. Whatever your reason, we’ve compiled the top places in Portland to indulge and enjoy the holiday hedonism.

ELIXIR FIXER

Now that the summer crowds have waned, you’ll finally be able to grab a seat at **Eventide Oyster Co.** The bar teems with staff hand-shucking Maine oysters and whipping up classic cocktails with a twist. “As soon as it gets cold, people switch from clear to dark spirits. Our bourbon consumption goes through the roof,” says John Myers. As the beverage manager of the Middle Street foodie trifecta that includes Eventide, The Honey Paw, and Hugo’s, he should know. Myers recommends the “**Muddled Old Fashioned**” for a wintery evening. “The bitters we use are very aromatic. You can smell the notes of cinnamon and cloves in the glass. Then we bruise up the orange and Luxardo cherries to release the flavors of the fruit. It’s a very rich cocktail.”

His New Year’s Eve indulgence? “One of our ‘**Dirty Dirty Martinis**’ with fresh

“Penicillin”

Liquid Riot

- ¾ oz. Honey-Ginger Syrup
(1 large piece fresh ginger, 1.5 oz. honey, 2 tsp sugar, 1/2 oz. water)
- ½ oz. lemon juice
- ¼ oz. simple syrup
- 1.75 oz. single house malt

Finishing touch: Laphroaig 10 year float on top.
Served in a rocks glass with a candied ginger on a swivel.

local oysters. December is the sweet spot for East Coast oysters. It’s when they’re just fattening up for winter. The oyster brine in the Martini makes it a perfect pairing.”

WINTER WARMERS

Given predictions from the *Old Farmer’s Almanac* of a “colder than normal” Northeast winter, why not stabilize your body temperature at **Boone’s Fish House**. With a grand fireplace to warm you from the outside, festive and sparkling decorations to warm your spirit, and invigorating cocktails, Boone’s is the embodiment of *gemütlichkeit*, the German expression for a place of comfort and good cheer. “It’s a cozy atmosphere,” says general manager Abigail Moon. “And to pair with our wintry cocktails we’ll have a seasonal happy-hour menu with carb-comfort-



“Junglebird”

Rhum Food + Grog

- 1.5 oz. Black Strap rum
- ½ oz. Campari
- 1.5 oz. pineapple
- ½ oz. lime juice
- ½ oz. simple syrup

Served over ice

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MEAGHAN MAURICE (2); LEAH BROWN; BENJAMIN MOORE AKA ACTIVE BEER GEEK

“The Old Port Fashioned”

Boone's Fish House

3 oz. Maker's Mark bourbon

½ oz. honey

A dash of water

4-5 drops black walnut bitters

Over ice with muddled orange rind



Rhum

MONDAY: 30% INDUSTRY DISCOUNT 9PM-1AM

TACO TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY: PIANO NIGHT WITH JIMMY DORITY 9PM-12:30AM

DECEMBER SPECIAL: THURSDAY IS LADIES' NIGHT!

ALL LADIES ENJOY HALF OFF OUR "CLASSIC" AND "FEATURED" COCKTAILS

LARGE PARTIES WELCOME

BOOK NOW FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

207 536 1774

facebook.com/rhumportland

[@rhumportland](https://twitter.com/rhumportland)

OPEN 7 DAYS

4PM-1AM

HAPPY HOUR

MONDAY-FRIDAY

4-7PM

**4 FREE STREET
AROUND THE BACK**



MAINE CRAFT DISTILLING

ALL IN GOOD SPIRITS

Offering Small Batch Spirits in Beautiful Portland and Freeport, Maine

Our International Correspondent Checks In



Russell Davis continues to seize international attention as a bar/mixology/spirits consultant and bar industry entrepreneur. As one of the most well-known and influential nightlife professionals, Russell is paving the way for the new era of the celebrity mixologist. He was co-star of and expert on Spike TV's *Bar Rescue* and currently travels the world studying drinking culture to catalogue obscure ingredients, recipes, techniques, and drinks before they are lost. In addition to having been named **Nightclub & Bar's 2012 Bartender of the Year**, he is also president of **Unlimited Liabilities**, an elite bar/spirits industry company comprised of some of the world's best bar talent and recently took over as **Chief Cocktail Officer for the nation's fastest growing trunk club for cocktails, Shaker & Spoon**.

FROM LEFT: COURTESY PHOTO; HTTP://METALFLOWERSMEDIA.COM/

ing, cheesy foods like potato skins and nachos.” (Totally fine, since diets are scheduled for next year!) Moon says the cocktail menu changes, but a favorite we hope to see back on the menu—and a perfect example of Boone’s mixology magic—is the **Custom House Cider à la mode**. Made from Bulleit Rye, Crown Royal Regal Apple, Liquor 43, muddled apple, cinnamon, and brown sugar, served with fresh whipped cream in a graham-cracker-rimmed glass, the Custom House Cider is a for those of us with a sweet tooth. If you’re more of a classic cocktail drinker, Boone’s **Old Port Fashioned** puts a spin on the traditional recipe by substituting

sugar with honey, followed by a dash of black walnut bitters for a certain *je ne sais quoi*.

If the winter blues are stalking you, it’s time to get some liquid sunshine to lift the spirits, particularly on the winter solstice (December 21), when Portland will be bathed in daylight for a mere eight hours and 55 minutes. You will find your elixir at **Rhum**, where sun-drenched and carefree Polynesia is channeled. Forge a full-on winter rebellion and ditch the gray cable knit in favor of something bright and sleeveless and perhaps rub on some coconut-scented sunscreen for a whiff of summer nostalgia.

Anti-winter libations like the **Junglebird**, with Black Strap rum, Campari, simple syrup, pineapple and lime juices will fuel your spirits. “It’s nice and spicy with a maple finish, so it’s a great seasonal cocktail. We nicknamed it ‘The Millionaire’ because it’s rich and bitter,” says Sarah Whitmore, Rhum’s bar manager.

If the weather has you feeling a bit...well, under the weather, reach for **Liquid Riot’s “Penicillin”** cocktail. “We mix up honey, ginger, lemon, and simple syrup and shake the hell out of it. It’s important to aerate the cocktail,” says bar manager Brie Kenoyer. “We then drip Laphroaig whiskey over the

Try these when you're snowbound!

GIN & TONIC: Remixed

Ingredients

1½ oz. London Dry Gin
3-4 oz. Cold Tonic Water

Garnish:

Pickled Beet Slice
Rosemary Sprig

Glassware:

High Ball or Wine Glass
(Traditional Spanish Style)

Directions:

1. Pour gin into glass.
2. Delicately add ice to glass as not to splash the gin.
3. Fill with cold tonic water.
4. Place rosemary sprig into drink and place beet slice on top of ice (Optional: add bar spoon of sweetened beet vinegar).

Creator's Note:

In Spain, the Gin & Tonic is king, and they love doing plays on the cocktail with various garnishes paired against different types of gins and tonic waters. So here is my cold-weather version of a British summer drink done in the Spanish style.



A WHITER SHADE of Purple (tribute)

Ingredients:

1½ oz. Reserve Port
(Sandeman or Six Grapes)
½ oz. Spiced Rum (Sailor Jerry)
½ oz. Pure Sugar Cane Simple Syrup—see below for recipe
Pinch of Freshly Ground Allspice
1 Whole Egg

Garnish:

Freshly Grated Nutmeg

Glassware:

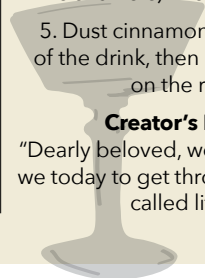
Chilled Coupe or Stemmed
Dessert Glass

Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients (including allspice) into a cocktail shaker, adding the egg last.
2. Shake vigorously for 3-5 seconds without ice (called a "dry shake").
3. Add ice and shake vigorously to proper temperature and dilution (5-10 seconds depending on the ice).
4. Double strain (Hawthorne and fine strainers) into coupe glass.
5. Dust cinnamon over center of the drink, then place apricot on the rim.

Creator's Note:

"Dearly beloved, we are gathered we today to get through this thing called life."



Go Fig OR GO HOME

Ingredients

2 oz. Slovenia Vodka
¾ oz. lemon juice
1 tablespoon fig preserves
¼ oz. maple syrup
1 egg white
3 drops Angostura bitters
Rosemary sprig for garnish

Directions:

Combine the vodka, juice, preserves, syrup, and egg white in a shaker without ice and immediately shake for 2-3 seconds. Next, add ice and vigorously shake for another 10-15 seconds or until chilled. Double strain into a chilled Nick and Nora or coupe glass. Drop bitters in the center of the cocktail and garnish with a rosemary sprig.

Cocktail Notes:

A few weeks back, I read an article about Bill Murray and the opening of his son's new restaurant in Brooklyn. Mr. Murray, whom I've always been a fan of, worked there the first night as a bartender, which isn't the first time he has jumped back behind the bar (anyone remember Austin, TX?). In honor of him and his love of my craft, I decided to revisit an old friend (recipe) and remix one of my signature cold-weather cocktails with the vodka I know he would choose: his own. Here's to you, Bill!



MINUTOS MAS Cinco

Ingredients:

1 oz. Reposado Tequila (Espolon or Fortaleza)
⅛ Tsp Coconut Oil
6 oz. Fresh Brewed Hot Coffee (Coffee on the Fly—Creede, CO)
1 oz. Shaker & Spoon's Mexican Spice Syrup
3 oz. Whipping Cream

Garnish:

Hand-cut Orange Peel

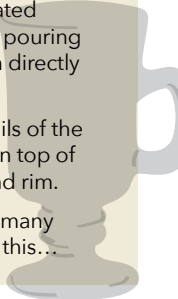
Glassware:

Warm Irish Coffee Mug

Directions:

1. Place cocktail shaker in freezer.
2. Combine tequila, coconut oil, and hot coffee into mug.
3. Stir lightly until oil is dissolved.
4. Take shaker out of freezer; place whipping cream and spice syrup into it.
5. Seal cold shaker and shake vigorously for 5-10 seconds (without ice).
6. Layer shaken/aerated cream mixture on top by pouring over the back of a spoon directly above the drink.
7. Express the essential oils of the orange zest and place on top of the whipped cream and rim.

Creator's Note: How many mornings I've needed this...



ice cubes so you can really smell the peaty smokiness of the scotch." The combination of the whiskey, honey, and lemon is sure to have a medicinal effect on your mood.

A TASTE OF THE SEASON

The holiday season means family, and family can mean trying to satisfy a myriad of different opinions and desires. A visit to **Vena's Fizz House** will keep everyone in joyful spirits. The effervescent menu gladdens with inventive cocktails, kid-friendly fizzes (similar to the Tootsie Soda Pop with house-made chocolate syrup and orange shrub), and alcohol-free mocktails sophis-

ticated enough to fool a connoisseur. Try the **Wilbur**, with its smoked tart cherry purée, blood orange, ginger purée, and bacon bitters for the younger (or just more virtuous) members of the group. Also deserving of mention is the space itself, which co-owner **Steve Corman** has heard patrons describe as having a "different feel from any other bar or store, a very welcoming feel." We attribute that to being in sort of a mixology world, a world apart from the one outside our door. We make over 200 kinds of bitters. Bitters give drinks their complexity and can completely transform them. [It's a metaphor] for our atmosphere." Tongue-tantalizing of-

fers this season include the bourbon-laced **Maple Pear Old Fashioned** and the **Spiced Rum** with cinnamon, star anise, orange, coconut sugar, and bitters (also available as an infusion kit).

"Our winter offerings include many warming spices, like nutmeg," says Corman. "A favorite addition is a **cardamom clove simple syrup from Royal Rose Syrups in Brunswick.**" Another perk of a visit to Vena's: the convenience of having a tipple while getting a bit of Christmas shopping done—their infusion kits and gift certificates for post-holiday mixology classes are always a hit. ■



Rich with History. JUST LIKE MAINE.

tours & tastings on the hour
M-F 12-5pm, SAT 10-6pm
Visit our new tasting room:
1 Industrial Way, Portland

26 Evergreen Drive, Unit B
Portland, ME * 207.878.9759
newenglanddistilling.com



GIVE THE GIFT OF SUMMER

Bimini Gin, inspired by the
sunshine and warm breezes
of summer, bottled so they
last all year.

Visit our tasting room in Biddeford
or find your local retailer at
roundturndistilling.com

ROUND TURN DISTILLING, BIDDEFORD, ME

47% ALC/VOL, 100% NEUTRAL SPIRITS DISTILLED FROM GRAIN



*Make Merry
with Sweetgrass*

*Wines and Spirits
for your holidays*

324 Fore Street, Portland
www.SweetgrassWinery.com



Experience the Legend

New England's only
distiller of Absinthe

*Maine's Best Spirit, 2016
—Down East Magazine*

152 Fairfield Street, Oakland, ME 04963
www.treespiritsofmaine.com



Get in the Spirit

Stroudwater Distillery *Damn good, down to earth and never fussy.*

4 Thompson's Point Rd
Tasting Room and Gift shop open Wednesday thru Sunday at Noon
StroudwaterDistillery.com