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2012 NEVER TASTED SO GOOD

A Foodie's Guide To Planet Maine

BY JUDITH GAINES



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: CYNTHIA FAIR-WEINFELD; MIRAMAX FILMS (2); DISNEY; COLUMBIA PICTURES; PICTUREHOUSE ENTERTAINMENT

January

FRENCH MOVIE NIGHT

Join fellow food and movie buffs for a night of the senses. Along with Petite Jacqueline's regular dinner service, they will project a French-themed movie in the dining room. 553-7044, bistropj.com

January 8 *Amélie*

January 15 *Chocolat*

January 22 *Beauty and the Beast*

January 29 *Julie & Julia*

February 5 *La Vie en Rose*

January 22 PIES ON PARADE

January 22 just happens to be National Pie Day and Rockland, dubbed "Pie Town USA," celebrates with a "pie tour." Walk or ride the trolley to more than 20 restaurants, inns, and other businesses to sample

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a wide range of sweet and savory pies: Shepherd's pie, Italian galettes, seafood pies, whoopie pies, Key LimeRock Pie, crab quiche, cranberry apple pie, and even "healthy" pies such as "Not Too Sweet Sweet Potato Pie" and "Refined, Sugar-Free Lavender, Honey & Yogurt Pie." All proceeds go to a local food bank. historiccinnsofrockland.com

January 26-28 ICE BAR

In one of the season's coolest events, Portland Harbor Hotel invites everyone to embrace the season with an ice bar carved in the hotel's

rice, plus radar runs (when radar clocks sledding speed), drag racing in sleds, and other winter sports. norway-trackers.com

February 2 EASTER SEALS TOAST ON THE COAST

This new entry in

MEALS FOR THE SAINTS

VALENTINE'S DAY GOURMET

February 14 presents plenty of dining opportunities for grubnik couples: a special five-course meal at Five Fifty-five, Portland, 761-0555, fivefifty-five.com; a special four-course meal at Blue Sky, York Beach, 363-0050, blueskyonyorkbeach.com

CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

Choose a dozen samples from 30 decadent chocolate desserts at this family festival, sponsored by Moosehead Lake's Chamber of Commerce. February 19. 695-2702, moosehead-lake.org

CHOCOLATE-LOVERS' FLING

An afternoon of chocolate delights created by chefs and chocolatiers in York and Cumberland Counties. Proceeds support Sexual Assault Response Services of Southern Maine. April 1, Holiday Inn by the Bay, Portland. 828-1035, chocolateloversfling.org

radio station WMPG

starts the party-

ing early with a live

broadcast and cook-off on the USM campus. Star chefs from throughout Southern Maine bring their favorite Cajun dishes—such as jambalaya, crawfish pie, and file gumbo—and invite you to vote for your favorites. wmpg.org or 781-4151

February 10-12 NAPLES WINTER CARNIVAL

This lively winter fest includes an ice fishing derby—what a way to get a trout dinner!—helicopter rides, hay rides, snow coach rides and several snowmobile events. 318-6965, muddyriversnoseekers.org

February 11 MAINE CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

One of many decadent chocolate festivals to brighten Maine's gray, chilly winter. What better time to consume a lot of calories? With entertainment, arts and crafts, chocolate, chocolate and more chocolate. At the Fairfield community center. 872-2172,

February 17-19 FLAVORS OF FREEPORT

Local chefs make some of their favorite dishes using local ingredients. A new contest invites anyone to create the best Freeport cocktail. If weather allows, the festival will include a carved ice bar at the Hilton Garden Inn and ice skating. 865-1212, flavorsoffreeport.com

February 17-18 SNOFEST

A week of snowmobile events and other winter sports, plus a chili/chowder cookoff. On Moosehead Lake. 695-4543, mooseheadriders.org

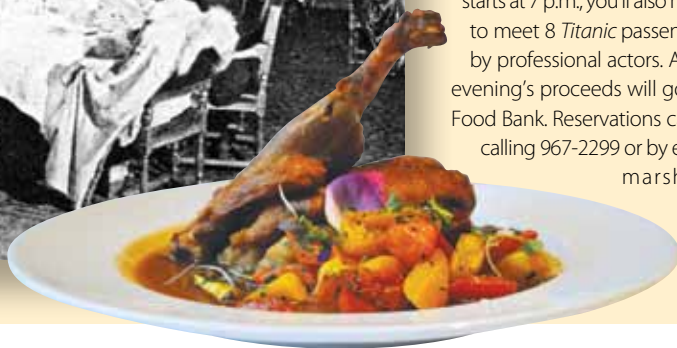
February 18 ANNUAL MARDI GRAS BALL

Black Tie Bistro will bring New Orleans' Garden District to the West End with a culi-

Dinner with Jack & Rose

January 21 THE TITANIC

Experience the glamour, exquisite atmosphere, and spectacular dining experience "The way it should have happened!" At the On the Marsh Bistro in Kennebunk, in a reminiscent setting, guests are requested to dress according to the time period of 1912 to dine in a fashion similar to how passengers dined on RMS *Titanic*. As the dinner starts at 7 p.m., you'll also have the chance to meet 8 *Titanic* passengers portrayed by professional actors. A portion of the evening's proceeds will go to The Maine Food Bank. Reservations can be made by calling 967-2299 or by emailing onthemarshdining@aol.com. onthemarsh.com



courtyard, plus a full bar indoors, a DJ and food. Tickets benefit Big Brother, Big Sister of Southern Maine; Share our Strength of Southern Maine; and Mercy Health Systems' Health and Hospice programs. 775-9090, evesatthegarden.com

January 27-February 5 PORTLAND ON ICE

Skating, ice sculpting, music, and special events at local restaurants highlight this winter festival. portlandmaine.com

January 27 EAT MAINE FOODS!

This statewide farmers' market convention provides business workshops and networking opportunities for producers, growers, and marketers designed to increase availability of local foods. eatmainefoods.org/events

January 28-29 SNOWFEST AT LAKE PENNESSEEWASSEE, A.K.A. NORWAY LAKE

Hamburgers, hotdogs, and chowder out on the

the festivals' calendar aims to cure the winter blues with tastes of more than 70 wines and samples of the best fare from several local restaurants. Proceeds benefit people with disabilities. On Pine Point Road in Scarborough. 828-0754, maine.easterseals.com

February 3 COFFEE CUPPING

Two, one-hour seatings at Coffee by Design's Washington Avenue Micro-Roastery in Portland will explore how to taste, smell, roast, grind, blend and brew different coffee beans from around the world, and how different preparations affect coffee flavor. Plus a tour of the roastery and coffee bean samples to take home. coffeebydesign.com

February 7 FAT TUESDAY PARTY & CAJUN COOKOFF

Fat Tuesday is Feb. 21 this year, but



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TAKE A BITE OUT OF TRAVEL



FOODIE CULINARY ADVENTURE TOURS

Adventure Chef Michael Salmon of Camden's Hartstone Inn invites interested food-lovers "to come cook and play" in an Italian villa or a French chateau: Tuscan tour will be May 5-12, October 20-27 or October 27-November 3; the tour of France's Loire Valley will be May 12-19, May 19-26, or October 12-19.

For menus and lodging details, go to chefmichaelsalmon.com; orhartsoneinn.com/cooking-school/european-culinary-tours

ARGENTINEAN WINE DINNER

Featuring cuisine from Chef Mitchell Kaldrovich's native Argentina during its harvest time. February 23, Sea Glass Restaurant, Inn by the Sea, Cape Elizabeth. 799-3134, innbythesea.com

GOURMET GALA FOR GARY'S HOUSE

Over 25 Greater Portland restaurants and caterers offer samples of international hors d'oeuvres, entrées, and desserts. Proceeds benefit Gary's House. March 23. 879-3605, mercyhospital.com

LATIN NIGHT

South American and Spanish tapas and wines. March 16, Blue Sky on York Beach. 363-0050, for reservations, blueskyonyorkbeach.com

nary creole and Cajun feast at The Portland Club. "It's a great way to celebrate the French heritage of Maine and our connection to Louisiana," says Tiffany Engelhardt, Mardi Gras Portland co-chair. Live music by The Cajun Aces and crowning King and Queen of Mardi Gras. Tickets benefit Holy Cross School. 831-4239, mardigrasportland.com

February 18-19 MAINE HOME, REMODELING AND GARDEN SHOW

Inspirational ideas and interesting products for your home and garden and cooking tips from some of Maine's best chefs at the popular "Meet the Chefs" workshops. homegardenflow-ershow.com

February 19 MOOSEHEAD LAKE CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

An afternoon of chocolate fun for the whole family. For \$10, you pick a dozen chocolate goodies from a wide selection created by area chefs. "Most people need our take-home tray," says Bob Hamer, executive director of the Moosehead Lake Chamber. In Greenville. 888-876-2778 mooseheadlake.org

March 1-10 MAINE RESTAURANT WEEK

There's no better time to check out a restaurant you've been wanting to try. Eateries around the state offer special three-course, pre-fixe meals at low rates to lure spring customers. Proceeds

benefit hungry and homeless Mainers. Among the participating restaurants: In Portland, Back Bay Grill, David's, Eve's at the Garden, Farmers' Table, Gritty McDuff's, Havana South, Local 188, Porthole, Sea Dog Brewing Company, the Great Lost Bear, Old Port Sea Grill and Twenty Milk Street; in Cape Elizabeth, The Good Table, Sea Glass; in the Kennebunks, Academe Brasserie, Federal Jacks; in Falmouth, Falmouth Sea Grill; in Lewiston, DaVinci's, Fish Bones; in Auburn, Mac's Grill; in Freeport, Linda Beans; in Brunswick, the Tavern at Brunswick Station; in Bath, Solo Bistro; in Wiscasset, Le Garage; in Rockland, Lily Bistro; in Camden, Natalie's and 40 Paper; in Topsham and Bangor, Sea Dog Brewing Co. restaurantweekme.com



March 16 FREE ICE CREAM

Gifford's Maine-made ice cream ("for people who dream in premium flavors") offers free small ice cream cones to banish what's left of winter and welcome the spring.

Visit their ice cream stands in Auburn, Bangor, Farmington,

Skowhegan, or Waterville from 6 to 8 p.m. for the treat. giffordsiccream.com

March 25 EAT THE HEAT CHILI COOK-OFF

Professional and amateur cooks vie for the title "Best Chili Cook." White Cap Base Lodge. 824-3000, sundayriver.com

March 25 MAINE MAPLE SUNDAY

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Maine maple farms invite the public to join in this traditional rite of spring: turning maple sap into syrup. Many farms offer tastings and fun events. Find a participating sugarhouse near you at mainemapleproducers.com.

April 6-8 PARROT HEAD FESTIVAL

Featuring a margarita mix-off and Key Lime pie-eating contest. Sunday River. 824-3000, sundayriver.com

April 27-29 FISHERMEN'S FESTIVAL

Sensational Spring



PORTLAND SYMPHONY WINE DINNER

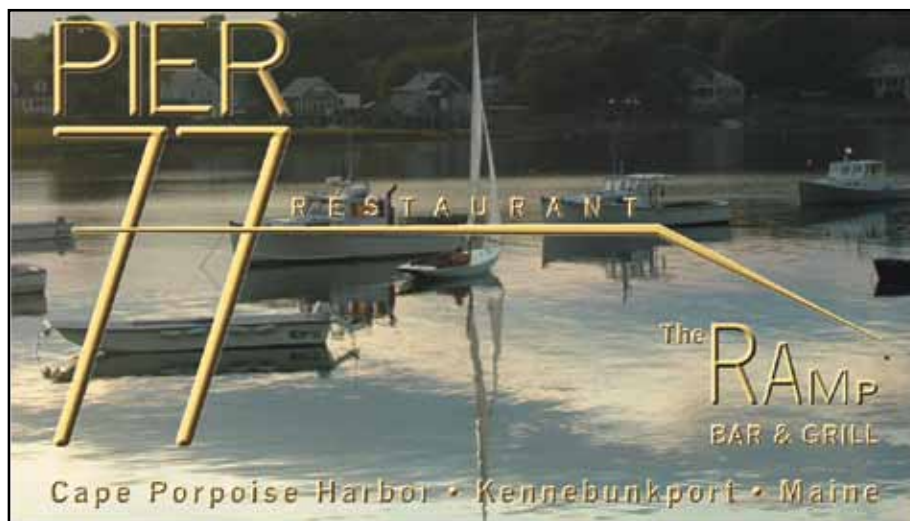
Savor hand-picked wines paired with creations by some of Maine's most distinguished chefs and support Portland's Symphony Orchestra. Past culinary stars have included Sam Hayward of Fore Street, Rob Evans of Hugo's, Jonathan Cartwright of the White Barn Inn, Lee Skawinski of Cinque Terre and Theda Lyden of the Harraseeket Inn. portlandsymphony.org March 14, 5:30 p.m. Harraseeket Inn, Freeport. portlandsymphony.org

FIDDLEFEST

Celebrate spring with its tasty harbingers: fiddleheads, peas, ramps, and asparagus, fixed imaginatively. March 11, University of Southern Maine. maineasta.org

MAINE FOODIE TOURS

Organizers of Portland's popular Foodie Tours are expanding to include tours in Bar Harbor and Kennebunkport. Visit purveyors of Maine cheese, smoked seafood, jams, whoopie pie, handcrafted ales, bread, pastries, chocolates and more. In Portland, walking tours are available year-round; the trolley tour will happen in July and August. In Bar Harbor, a new walking tour will be available from June to October. In Kennebunkport, June to October is the time for the trolley tour. Specially tailored tours can also be arranged on demand. mainfoodietours.com



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A fish fry, lobster trap hauling, and dory bailing. Boothbay Harbor. 633-2353, boothbayharbor.com

April 28 AN EVENING WITH FRIENDS

Fine dining with paired wines to support scholarships for Southern Maine Community College and other rotary-club charities. SMCC. 799-2314, break-water-rotary.org

May 1 TASTE OF OOB

Participating Old Orchard Beach businesses offer samples of their wares—edible or otherwise. 281-2114, oob365.com

May 18-June 17 MOOSE MAINEA

A month of food and festivities honoring the area's favorite resident: the moose. mooseheadlake.org or 1-888/876-2778

June 2 FESTIVAL FRANCO FUN

Experience traditional Franco-American food—including a medieval feast—at this annual homage to Maine's Franco-American heritage. In Lewiston. francoamericanheritage.org

June 2 FAMILY FISHING FESTIVAL

This is a great opportunity to learn how to fish in waters stocked with brown and

ter, clam cakes, clam chowder, steamed clams and other clammy delights, with proceeds to benefit the town's many nonprofit organizations. This popular summer soirée also features a clam-shucking contest, canoe and kayak races, a juried arts and crafts show, and foot races for all age groups—even a diaper derby. clamfestival.com

June 22-24 MAINE'S SWEDISH COLONY MIDSOMMAR CELEBRATION

"God could have made a better berry," said Samuel Clemens, "but He didn't." The sweet red strawberry is honored with shortcakes, berries and cream, chocolate-covered strawberries, pies, jams and activities around the state. One of the largest is held in South Berwick. But many other communities hold festivals in late June or early July, including Wells, Oquossoc, Sangerville, Lincolnville, New Gloucester, Washington, Bangor, Boothbay Harbor, Wiscasset, Rangeley and Locke Mills. southberwickstrawberryfestival.com or the vari-

FEAST YOUR EYES

and feed your belly during First Friday Art Walks!

9 HANDS GALLERY

Appetizers and sparkling water. 615a Congress St., Portland. 865-1300, ninehandsgallery.com

FRASER ART STUDIO

Appetizers, vegan options. 81 Congress St., Portland. 650-3437, paintssquared.com

THE GALLERY AT HARMON'S AND BARTON'S

Wine and appetizers. 584 Congress St., Portland. 775-2303, harmonsbartons.com

MIKE'S ROCK AND ROLL SANDWICH SHOP

Food platters. 437 Congress St., Portland. 809-5113, mikesrockdeli.com

MAINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Appetizers and drinks. 489 Congress St., Portland. 774-1822, mainehistory.org

SPACE

Appetizers. 538 Congress St., Portland. 828-5600, space538.org

rainbow trout—and anything you catch can be taken home and cooked for dinner! Complimentary rods and reels, or bring your own. Free casting instruction and a free mini-tackle box for kids. No fishing license required. At Angevine Park on North Road in Bethel. upperandro.com or 824-3694.

June 10 OLD PORT FESTIVAL

Portland's biggest one-day party offers free entertainment on more than a half dozen stages—comedy, jazz, country music, rock, even a children's stage—and food from numerous cuisines around the world prepared by local chefs. portlandmaine.com

June 17 DAIRY DAY AT MORRIS FARM

Sample cheese, milk, and yogurt from several Maine dairies. Butter churning and milking demonstrations. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Wiscasset. 882-4080, morrisfarm.org

June 20-22 YARMOUTH CLAM FESTIVAL

Try fried clams in crumbs, fried clams in bat-



The state's Swedish Colony, founded in 1870, invites the public to join in a celebration of Maine's Swedish heritage with traditional food, music and dance. In New Sweden. maineswedishcolony.info

June 24-26 SPIRIT IN AMERICA

Featuring a "night glow," tethered balloon rides, lobster bake, and BBQ contest. Old Orchard Beach. 590-4201, oob365.com

June 28-30 GREEK FESTIVAL

Souvlaki, dolmades, shish kabob, moussaka, spanakopita, kourabiedes, loukomades, and baklava. This annual Greek food festival at Portland's Holy Trinity Orthodox Church has them all, and more. Bring your own handiwraps. Yassou! holytrinityportland.org

June 30 SOUTH BERWICK STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

Summer Selections

LA KERMESSE

FRANCO-AMERICAINE FESTIVAL

This celebration of Maine's French Canadian heritage in downtown Biddeford has been happening annually since 1982. Initially it focused on Franco-American foods, crafts and entertainment, but now it has widened to include other cultures. June 21-23. lakermessefestival.com

STRAWBERRY FESTIVALS

Maine's succulent strawberry is honored with shortcakes, berries and cream, chocolate-covered berries, pies, and assorted activities in communities around the state, including South Berwick (June 30, southberwickstrawberryfestival.com), Wells, Lincolnville, New Gloucester, Washington, Bangor, Wiscasset, and Locke Mills. Contact local chambers of commerce for additional information.

TWILIGHT DINNERS

On alternating Thursdays Turkey Hill Farm in Cape Elizabeth offers evening dinners in its orchard, starring food grown on the farm. July-September. 761-4769, cultivatingcommunity.org

» FRIEND ME

MAINE WHOOPIE PIE FESTIVAL

Bakers "from around the country" share their versions of whoopie pie. June 30, Center Theatre, Dover-Foxcroft. 564-8943, mainewhoopiepiefestival.com

MOXIE FESTIVAL

Those who love Maine's official (and somewhat oddball) soft drink, former nostrum and "nerve food" gather in Lisbon Falls for this annual tribute. Includes a pow-wow, car wash, parade, BBQs, fireworks and a famous contest for the best entree, dessert or beverage incorporating "the magic ingredient: Moxie!" July 13-15. moxiefestival.com

ous chambers of commerce for details.

July 4 FOOD INDEPENDENCE DAY

Savor your independence with locally sourced ingredients or food you've raised yourself. foodindependenceday.org

July 13-15 GREEK HERITAGE FESTIVAL

A three-day homage to Greek culture, with traditional food and entertainment. St. Demetrios Orthodox Greek Church, Saco. 284-5651, stdemetriosmaine.org

July 14 CRAFT BEER COMES TO BOOTHBAY

Every Maine brewer will attend this craft beer fest sponsored by the Maine Brewer's Guild. Rare, special and single batch beers are the main attraction, plus a traditional BBQ. mainebrewersguild.org

July 14-22

MAINE POTATO BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

Drive through miles of white, pink and purple potato blossoms to Fort Fairfield for this nine-day celebration of one of Maine's most important crops. Includes a potato-picking contest, the Miss Potato Blossom Pageant, a bean hole bean supper, a pet show, fireworks over the Aroostook River, and one of the food world's most eccentric events: mashed potato wrestling! potatoblossom.org

July 20-22 YARMOUTH CLAM FESTIVAL

Three days of fried whole clams in batter, fried whole clams in crumbs, clam cakes, steamed clams, clam chowder, clam pizza, fried clam strips, and clam-shucking. 846-3984, clamfestival.com

July 20-22 MAINE'S CELTIC CELEBRATION

Racing downhill to grab a rolling wheel of cheddar cheese might not be everyone's idea of an appealing sport. But it's the star attraction during this unusual event on the Belfast waterfront—and the winner gets to keep the whole, 3-pound wheel, made by the State of Maine Cheese Company. With bagpipes, Celtic food and Scottish Highland Heavy Games—such as the caber toss, the open stone put, and the Scottish hammer throw. mainecelticcelebration.com

(Continued on page 78)

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A Foodie's Guide (continued from page 57)

July 20-22 WATERFORD WORLD'S FAIR

I've never understood why this is called a world's fair, but it's a great example of a traditional, award-winning rural fair in a small town that claims to have "a big heart." Perhaps it also has a big ego, or a big sense of humor. In any case, the fair, which has been held for more than 150 years, has had a recent face-lift with a new

Cooking

Michael Jubinsky, named one of the top ten bakers in the US by *Dessert Professional Magazine*, offers the following classes at the **Stone Turtle Baking and Cooking School** in Lyman: Jan. 14—Artisanal French Breads; Jan. 21 and March 31—Making your own pizza, foccacia, calzones, stromboli and homemade mozzarella cheese; Jan. 28—Artisanal Italian breads; Feb. 4—Artisanal Sourdough Bread; Feb. 11—**Desserts for Valentine's Day**, with **Melissa Hodroff**, former asst. pastry chef at **Uffa** and **Five Fifty Five** restaurants; Feb. 24-25 Cheese Making, with Appleton Creamery's Caitlin Hunter; March 10 Artisanal Italian Breads; March 24-25 **Bread Intensive Workshop**, with baker **Richard Miscovich**. info@stoneturtlebaking.com or 324-7558

Chef **Michael Salmon**, of the **Hartstone Inn** in Camden, offers these cooking classes: January 28 and 29 **Preparing Maine Seafood** dishes, such as Maine shrimp tartlet and Haddock Oscar; Feb. 25 and 26—**Cooking with Lobster**, such as lobster with vanilla beurre blanc and a lobster souffle; March 10 and 11—**Making Homemade Pasta**; April 28 and 29—**Tuscan Dishes**, like Tuscan onion soup and picci pasta with pork ragu; June 2 and 3—**Making Asian Dishes**, such as sweet and sour pork and lobster pot stickers. hartstoneinn.com/cooking-school/scheduled-cooking-classes

Lindsay Sterling, of the **Immigrant Kitchens Project**, teaches how to make favorite dishes **from around the world** as taught to her by her neighborhood immigrants. Learn how to use **exotic spices** and eat what you make with about 10 others who love exploring cultures and cooking—and help raise money for the food pantry. Held the second Friday of every month at the **Freeport Community Center**: Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9 and Dec. 14. immigrant-kitchens.com or lindsay@lindsaysterling.com for reservations.

Two-day workshops at **Appleton Creamery** for **cheeses** you can make at home, including **jack, mozzarella, and ricotta**, as well as **butter**, using grocery store cow's milk. Appleton. appletoncreamery.com

Cooking classes held at **Bay Leaf Bistro** June through September on Wednesdays featuring different **international cuisines**. Lincolnville. 505-0458, bayleafcottages.com

livestock barn, a new stage and a new ice cream building. waterfordworldsfair.org

July 22 OPEN FARM DAY

Many Maine farms invite the public to check out their operations, with a wide range of activities decided by each farmer. Find participants at getrealmaine.com. This is the only time all year when some farms are open to visitors.

July 24-28 CENTRAL MAINE EGG FESTIVAL

Check out a frying pan 10 feet in diameter that weighs 300 pounds! The brown egg industry

sponsors this annual "mother and child reunion" (for chicken and eggs) in Pittsfield with an early bird breakfast, chicken BBQ, "egglympic" contests, and a competition to make the best egg pie, cheesecake, or quiche. eggfest.craftah.com

Late July FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

This gathering showcases Maine's growing cultural diversity with food, dance, music, and exhibits representing more than

Classes

Take on a whole new perspective from classes at **Black Tie Bistro** throughout the year. Topics include **truffles** and **brITTLE**, **tempeh**, **risotto**, **Cajun** and **Creole**, and **mixology**. 761-6665, blacktiecto.com

Visit **Chef Kerry Altiero** at Café Miranda. Classes will be held on Saturday throughout the year. 594-2034, cafemiranda.com

At the Cellar Door Winery cooking classes held throughout the year will include subjects like **Lobster Lovers** and **Cooking with a Maine Farmer**. Lincolnville. 763-4478, mainewine.com

Join chef and cookbook author **Anne Mahle** aboard the windjammer **J. & E. Riggis** windjammer on a several-day **cruise** during August, with cooking demonstrations on the ship's **wood-burning stove**. 800-869-0604, mainewindjammer.com

Join **On the Marsh Bistro's** Executive Chef **Jeffrey Savage**, a Wine Spectator Award of Excellence winner and James Beard presenter, for **An Insider's Culinary Class**. May-June, Kennebunk. 967-2299, onthemarsh.com

At **Saltwater Farm**, enjoy year-round topics on home **brewing**, **cassoulet**, **Catalan cuisine**, and **cheese-making**. Lincolnville. saltwaterfarm.com

Sign up for classes throughout the year at **Stone Turtle Baking and Cooking School**. Pick courses from your favorites, like **breads**, **pies**, **tarts**, and **cake decorating**. 324-7558, stoneturtlebaking.com

Give **homesteading** a try at **Ten Apple Farm**. With workshops offered throughout the year at Ten Apple farm, students will learn about **cheesemaking**, **bread-baking**, and **cleaning and cooking your own duck**. Gray. tenapplefarm.com

This is one barn door that's open: At **The White Barn Inn**, a **variety** of subjects will be covered in classes held the **first** and **third Thursday** of every month from November to April. Kennebunkport. 967-2211, restaurantgrissini.com

60 countries. wini.us/festival.htm


August 1 MERRYSRING'S ANNUAL KITCHEN TOUR

Merryspring, a nonprofit park and education center in Camden and Rockport, sponsors this tour of noteworthy kitchens in its area, with refreshments. merryspring.org


August 1 A TASTE OF GREATER WATERVILLE

Dine under the stars in historic downtown Waterville. Features a beer garden. 873-3315, midmainechamber.com

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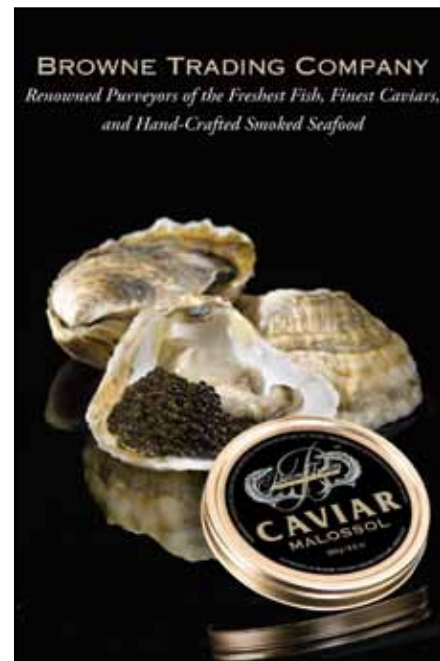


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WINEPAEDIA

DOUBLE DIAMOND WINE DINNER

Prestigious French wines expertly paired with a five-course gourmet dinner. February 10, Double Diamond Steakhouse, Sugarloaf. 237-4220

A TASTE OF ITALY

Enjoy the best of Italy at this premier event. Four-course dinner with wines pairings, along with expert wine commentary to benefit Cathedral School. February 11, 7 p.m. Maria's Restaurant, Portland. 773-7746

CELLARDOOR WINERY

Learn to identify and evaluate wine flavors and aromas at a "Demystifying the Wine Experience" class, April 11. Also a wine-making class on January 21. Lincolnville. 763-4478, mainewine.com

VINFEST

Grape-stomping, homemade wine competition, wine tastings, cellar tours, dinner, and dancing in the vineyard fields. September 30-October 1. Cellardoor Winery, Lincolnville. 763-4478, mainewine.com

ARGENTINIAN WINE DINNER

Four-course meal paired with whites, reds, and late harvest wines. February 23. \$62. Sea Glass Restaurant, Inn by the Sea, Cape Elizabeth. 799-3134, innbythesea.com

Sips to Savor Wine Tastings

BLACK CHERRY PROVISIONS

Every second Saturday, 2-5 p.m. Falmouth. 781-5656, blackcherrymaine.com

BROWNE TRADING COMPANY

Every first and third Thursday, 5-7 p.m. Portland. 775-7560, brownetrading.com

HAVANA SOUTH

"\$10 for 10" wine tastings every third Thursday, 6-8 p.m. Portland. 772-9988, havanamaine.com

OLD PORT WINE MERCHANTS

Every third Wednesday, 4-7:30 p.m. Portland. 772-9463, oldportwine.com

RSVP

Every second Wednesday, 4-7 p.m. Portland. 773-8808

WEST END DELI & CATERING

Every first Friday, 6-8 p.m. Portland. 874-6426, thewestenddeli.com

WINE WISE TASTINGS

Organized tastings at different venues throughout the year. 619-4630, winewiseevents.com

August 1-5 MAINE LOBSTER FESTIVAL

Savor some of summer's finest treats at this annual lobster fest in Rockland's Harbor Park. Each year more than 20,000 pounds of lobster are prepared here in what organizers claim is the world's largest lobster cooker. Plus a seafood cooking contest open to any amateur cook at least 18 years old, a big parade, top notch entertainment, a lobster crate race and coronation of Miss Sea Goddess 2012. It's all capped by a communal lobster dinner in a big tent overlooking lovely Penobscot Bay. 596-0376

August 3 A GRAPE AFFAIR

Al fresco dining in the Cellardoor Winery's vineyard with local ingredients prepared by Chef Lani Temple of Megunticook Market, plus live music and dancing. In Lincolnville. mainewine.com

August 9-12

MADAWASKA ACADIAN FESTIVAL

See how a family with deep Maine roots organizes a family reunion. Every year, one of the founding Acadian families that first settled in the St. John Valley hosts this gathering, but the public is welcome. With traditional food, crafts and music. greatermadawaskachamber.com or 895-5262.

August 11-13 PLOYE FESTIVAL & MUSKIE FISHING DERBY

Sample this Franco-American favorite, see "the world's largest ploye," and try muskie fishing on the St. John River. Fort Kent. 834-5354

August 11-12 RAITT FARM SUMMER FEST

BBQ contest, woodsmen competition, and live music. Raitt Homestead Farm Museum, Eliot. 748-3303, raittfarmmuseum.org

August 10-12 MAINELY GRILLIN' AND CHILLIN' BBQ FESTIVAL

The starring attraction is a state BBQ competition complimented by a range of Maine-made specialties, including Bill's Famous



Bean-hole Baked Beans, Shain's of Maine Ice Cream, strawberry and blueberry shortcake with Bakewell Cream, Cabot cheese and a Shipyard brew garden. At the Riatt Farm in Eliot. meadowmere.com

August 15-18 CULINARY CRUISES

Experience a culinary vacation at sea aboard the *J&E Riffin*, a historic windjammer leaving from Rockland Harbor. Chef and author Annie Mahl shares secrets and tips for preparing seasonal, organic ingredients on a ship's wood-burning stove. The four-day cruise repeats August 25-28 and September 14-17. mainewindjammer.com or 1-800-869-0604.

August 17-19

MACHIAS WILD BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL

Maine's largest wild blueberry festival offers "wild" fun with a blueberry musical comedy, a black fly ball, a pie-eating contest, cooking contests for blueberry creations in 18 different categories, including best blueberry pickles, best blueberry donuts and best





As You Like It

MOON MEALS

Once a month all year round, on the eve of the full moon, Salt Water Farm in Lincolnville offers a special four-course meal for \$65, BYOB. 230-0966, saltwaterfarm.com

FARMERS' MARKETS

Locals sell freshly harvested produce, meat, cheese, bread, flowers, and assorted specialty products directly to their neighbors. Maine has nearly 100 of these markets throughout the state, including during the winter months. 287-3491, getrealmaine.com

MEAL DEAL

Solo Bistro in Bath offers a special three-course dinner for \$17.99 every Wednesday. 443-3373, solobistro.com

CHEF ENCOUNTERS

Watch Executive Chef Adam White prepare your feast right in front of you at the Chef's Table. Reservations required. The Salt Exchange, Portland. 347-5687, thesaltexchange.net

BUDGET GOURMET

Chefs-in-training from Southern Maine Community College's Culinary Arts program prepare a buffet lunch on Fridays. \$12. SMCC Dining Room, South Portland. 741-5612, smccme.edu

CROSTINI BAR

Grotta Week Night Winterfest." Each weeknight we will paring a food and drink at a special price. Grotta at Grissini Italian Bistro, Kennebunkport. 967-2211, restaurantgrissini.com

MEAL IN THE FIELDS

Four-to-six local chefs prepare a different course for an al fresco meal on the grounds of a farm in the Mt. Washington Valley, with music and a talk about farm life. Weston's Farm, Fryeburg, 935-2567.

Annual Mardi Gras Ball

Live Music by The Cajun Aces
New Orleans-Style Cuisine by Black Tie Company
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6 p.m. Saturday February 18
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blueberry wine. Festival meals include a fish fry, blueberry pancake breakfast, baked bean supper and a blueberry dessert bar. machias-blueberry.com Other festivals honoring the state's indigenous blue orb are held in Wilton (Aug. 3-4), Winslow, Rangeley (Aug. 16), Union and Marshfield. Contact their chambers of commerce for details.

August 19 TOUR DE FARMS XIV

Bicycle 20, 50, or 100 miles through scenic mid-coastal Maine and visit small farms along the way. A BBQ is provided to all cyclists with meats and produce from local farms. Proceeds benefit Wiscasset's Morris Farm Trust, which aims to promote sustainable agriculture. info@morrisfarm.org

August 25 WELLS CHILI-FEST

Annual chili and salsa cookoff, sanctioned by the International Chili Society. Winners advance to the World Chili Championship. 646-2451, wellschilifest.com

August 28 KITCHEN GARDEN DAY

An international time for celebrating home harvests. Participants recognize the day in different ways—from organizing garden tours to hosting home-grown potluck dinners. 956-0606, kitchengardeners.org

September 9 SEED TO SOIL

Enjoy a vegetarian feast. Rippling Waters Farm, Steep Falls. 642-5161, ripplingwaters.org

September 6-8

LEWISTON-AUBURN GREEK FESTIVAL

Greek pastries, a taverna, and Greek lunch and dinner. 155 Hogan Rd., Lewiston. 783-6795, holytrinitymaine.org

September 15 CHOWDER FESTIVAL AND HARVEST FEST

Sample competing chowders and vote for your favorite at this popular contest held in conjunction with Bethel's Harvest Fest. On the Bethel village common. bethelharvestfest.com

September 15

MT. DESERT ISLAND GARLIC FESTIVAL

In 1998, some garlic farmers gathered for a garlic-



HARVEST ON THE HARBOR
Ocean Gateway, Portland
772-4994, harvestontheharbor.com

centered meal to celebrate their harvest. They wore "garlic festival" T-shirts, and a tradition was born. Now garlic growers are joined by chefs, musicians, brewers and more at the Smugglers' Den Campground. nostrano.com/garlic.html

September 16 SOIL TO SUPPER

Held at Rippling Waters, a CSA in Standish, the event brings food-lovers right to the source for a late-summer potluck that includes music and agricultural education 2-6:30 p.m. slowfoodportland.org

September 21-23

COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

One of the year's best and most important fairs, sponsored by the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. Lots of organic food vendors, cooking demonstrations, and talks by celebrated chefs, farmers and fishermen about growing, preserving, storing and

preparing local produce, livestock and seafood. In Unity. mofga.org

September 28-29 VINFEST

An elegant dinner-dance on Friday under a tent in the Cellardoor Winery's Lincolnville vineyard is followed on Saturday with a harvest festival complete with grape stomping, BBQ, and food and wine pairings. mainewine.com

Late September PEMAQUID OYSTER FESTIVAL

Slurp great Maine oysters on a landing overlooking an oyster farm and support Damariscotta's working waterfront, plus live entertainment. A well-known oyster expert says that the Damariscotta region is to oysters as Burgundy is to wine. Enjoy them at their peak. schoonerlandingmaine.com/festivals.php

October 5-8 DAMARISCOTTA PUMPKINFEST AND REGATTA

When they call this a celebration "of all things pumpkin," they really mean it. In addition to the state-sanctioned weigh-off for the largest pumpkin (and these babies are huge), you'll find underwater pumpkin carving, a race in pumpkin boats and even a workshop on how to make a pumpkin boat, pumpkin hurling, pumpkin painting, pumpkin pie-eating of course, a pumpkin pancake breakfast, and a contest for the best pumpkin dessert. damariscottapumpkinfest.com

October 6 CHOWDAH CHALLENGE

Local chefs compete to make the best clam and seafood chowders, as well as lobster bisque. Taste all the entries and vote for your favorites! Proceeds benefit Freeport Community Services. At L.L. Bean Discovery

And All That Buzz!

PORTLAND HARBOR HOTEL ICE BAR

It's cool to be cool at this ice bar sculpted by artist Jeff Day. Drinks and appetizers. January 26-28. 775-9090, portlandharborhotel.com

LAKES BREWFEST

Down beers from more than 20 different brewers from throughout Maine and beyond. September 29, Point Sebago Resort, Casco. 647-3472, mainelakesbrewfest.com

ACADIA'S OKTOBERFEST

Cheese and wine pairings and a brewfest.

October 5-6. 244-9264, acadiaoktoberfest.com

BREWERS' FESTIVAL

Meet Maine's award-winning brewmasters and sample their creations. Includes the popular "Evening with the Brewers," a multi-course meal with beer pairings. November 2-3, Portland Expo Center. learnyourbeer.com

BOURBON TASTINGS

Bourbon tastings beginning January 6 and continuing quarterly. The Salt Exchange, Portland. 347-5687, thesaltexchange.net

Park in Freeport. For updated information, call 865-3985. freeportusa.com

October 9 OPEN CREAMERY DAY

Cheese makers around the state invite you to tour their operations and sample their wares. Mainers today produce more than 150 artisanal cheeses and are increasing winning awards for them. This is a great opportunity to get to know your local cheesemakers and their creations. Go to mainecheeseguild.org for a list of participating creameries.

October 10 SIGNATURE CHEFS' AUCTION

Sample popular dishes prepared by Portland chefs, with live music and an auction to benefit the March of Dimes. At DiMillo's on Portland's Long Wharf. marchofdimes.com/portland or 878-1199

October 13-14 YORK HARVESTFEST

Hosted at Short Sands Ball Field by pumpkinlight, feast on roasted ox and bean hole beans at this annual two-day gathering. Featuring live music and crafts. 10-4 p.m. 363-4422, maineoktoberfest.org

October 21 GREAT MAINE APPLE DAY

Explore the history and variety of Maine apples through apple cooking, cider-making, apple art, tree care workshops and tastings of some of Maine's rare and heirloom apples at the Common Ground Educational Center in Unity. Farms around the state invite you to pick your own. mofga.org or 568-4142.

October 27

TASTE OF BETHEL AND BEYOND

Every Bethel-area restaurant is invited to bring some of its specialties to this gathering, where samples are sold for \$1 each. Proceeds support a culinary scholarship for a budding chef or restaurateur. info@bethelmaine.com

October 25-27

HARVEST ON THE HARBOR

More than 5,000 people come from around the world to experience the best of Maine cuisine at this major, three-day event. Seminars, tastings and meals created by local chefs. At the Greater Portland Convention and Visitors Bureau. harvestontheharbor.com

November HUGO'S POTATO DINNER

It's not too early to reserve a seat at the birthday party that award-winning chef Rob Evans throws for himself every November. It's an elaborate, multi-course meal with potatoes in every course. At Hugo's, his restaurant in Portland. hugos.net or 774-8538

November MAINE BEER WEEK

Special tastings, beer and food pairings,

and beer dinners at restaurants around the state. mainebeerweek.com

November 24 GREEK HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Greek food is the main attraction at this gathering, where you can get a hot meal or holiday gifts for food-loving friends. St. Demetrios, Saco. stdemetriosmaine.org

December 1

MAKE YOUR OWN CANDY CANE

The Len Libby Co. invites children to learn how to make their own holiday candy canes. In Scarborough at the home of Lenny, the huge chocolate moose. 883-4897

November 30-December 9

CHRISTMAS PRELUDE

No one does Christmas and all the foreplay better than Kennebunkport. You'll find candlelight carolling, holiday shopping with refreshments, a fair with Maine-made products, lighting of a tree adorned with lobster traps, special restaurant meals, arty champagne receptions, and the arrival of Santa himself—by lobster boat. christmasprelude.com

December 1 EARMUFF DAY

Also known as Chester Greenwood Day, this makes the national list of "Bizarre,

Fall Fantasies

MAINE FARE

Chefs, food writers, and producers and growers of Maine-made food gather for a weekend of eating, drinking and discussion, with a marketplace featuring local artisanal products. Camden. maine-fare.com

EASTPORT SALMON FESTIVAL

This September event features a salmon dinner and boat cruises to the pens where salmon are raised here. Usually paired with a pirate festival, with many locals in costume. eastportsalmonfestival.com or 853-4644

ANNUAL GRAND VIEW FARM DINNER

Staffs of Cinque Terre and Vignola jointly create this meal in early September. Grand View Farm, Greene. 772-1330, cinqueterremaine.com

TWENTY-MILE MEAL

Local culinary superstars craft tastings from ingredients grown, raised, or landed at the Turkey Hill Farm in Cape Elizabeth or within a 20-mile radius. September 29. 761-4769, cultivatingcommunity.org

FOLIAGE, FOOD, AND WINE FESTIVAL

Chefs and food producers invite you to sample their best treats on scenic Blue Hill peninsula in mid-October. 374-3242, bluehillpeninsula.org

EPICUREAN AUCTION BENEFIT

Fine wines and foods with auctions, with coffee and desserts—all served on-stage at the Merrill Auditorium. 773-3150, portlandovations.org

Crazy, Silly, Unknown Holidays and Observances." Greenwood, who invented the earmuff, is honored with contests for the best chili and gingerbread houses, a parade, foot races and more. In his hometown, Farmington. franklincountymaine.org

December 1 SHAKER CHRISTMAS FAIR

This is a fine time to visit Maine's Shaker community, where this traditional fair is held in the 1816 office and the "Merry Christmas" garage. You can buy Shaker baked goods and crafts, including Brother Arnold's famous biscuits (which he makes specially for the fair,) pickles, cheese, wreaths, and other Shaker-related gifts, including the celebrated oval boxes. In New Gloucester. 926-4597

Early to Mid-December

EAST END HOLIDAY STROLL

An array of restaurants in Portland's East End will be aglow with lights and music for this annual stroll—or trolley ride, if you prefer. Shoppers get delicious little treats, special deals, and a festive atmosphere to kick off the holiday season. eastendshops.com



EPICUREAN AUCTION BENEFIT
Merrill Auditorium, Portland
773-3150, portlandovations.org



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ART AT THE GRILL

Monthly receptions for local artists, featuring different works each month. Includes free appetizers, wines, and cocktails by Chef Rick Hirsch. Year round, Damariscotta River Grill. 563-2992, damariscottarivergrill.com

SLOW FOOD PORTLAND WRITERS' NIGHT

Authors who write about food read from their works, with tasty food offerings from Maine's most talented Slow Food cooks. Past participants have included Ed Behr, Anne Mendelson, Max Watman, Sandy Oliver, Nancy Harmon Jenkins, and Kathy Gunst. March 10. slowfoodportland.org

POP THE CORK

Toasts the arts with food, wine, music, and dance and proceeds to benefit a local arts NPO Also featuring Grammy-winning group Boyz II Men. Kennebunk, June 7; Rockport, June 28. 763-4478, mainewine.com

WRITERS' NIGHT

Regional join local culinary talents to present a January evening of readings and a taste of Maine's winter bounty. Past readers have included Ed Behr, Nancy Harmon Jenkins, Sandy Oliver, James Peterson, Anne Mendelson, and Margaret Hathaway. slowfoodportland.org

KENNEBUNKPORT FESTIVAL

This event explores the art of imaginative dining. Chefs design meals inspired by art on display around town—made by artists in residence at local inns during the festival. Includes public and private dinners, cocktail parties, wine tastings and other arty happenings. June 28. kennebunkportfestival.com

December 24 FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES

Traditional holiday Italian feast with four courses and seven fishes. Cinque Terre, Portland. 347-6154 for reservations.

Hungry Holidays

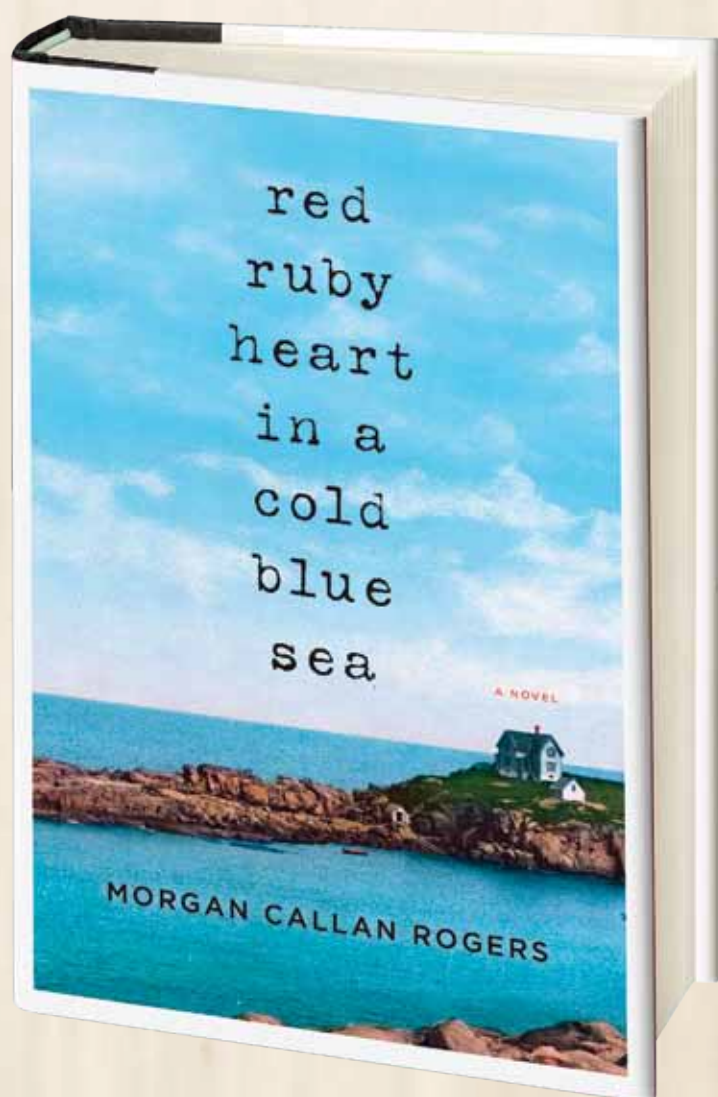
CHRISTMAS BY THE SEA

Ogunquit's holiday merriment features chowder and chocolate fests. 649-2939, ogunquit.org

 To submit entries and for event updates, visit portland-monthly.com/portmag/2011/12/a-foodies-guide-extras. ■

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When her mother disappears during a weekend trip, Florine Gilham’s idyllic childhood in small-town Maine during the early 1960s is turned upside down. With Fannie Flagg’s humor and Elizabeth Strout’s evocative splendor, this debut is an extraordinary snapshot of a bygone America through the eyes of an inspiring girl blazing her own path to womanhood.



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