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# The Hungry Cove

The opening of Ogunquit's **Barnacle Billy's** marks the start of summer.

BY COLIN W. SARGENT

“EVERYONE’S EXCITED because here in Perkins Cove, the season begins the first day **Barnacle Billy’s** opens,” says realtor Chris Erikson. [No coincidence here. This is a companion story to our House of the Month feature just steps away, page 81. Same cove, different angles.]

Barnacle Billy’s is the straw that stirs the drink in Perkins Cove. If you are, say, a movie technician assigned to capture the musical sounds of happy people in Maine, Barnacle Billy’s is where you’ll find it. What a cacophony!

Fine dining is one thing, but this is Finestkind dining. What’s the value of the first lobster, the first steamed clams, and the first blueberry pie *à la mode* of the summer? This eternal attraction, and this resolutely informal experience, is at the center of the real Vacationland.

We enter at twilight and through the dining room see astonishing views of the Perkins Cove fishing fleet and the white span of the bridge over the harbor. There’s still a chill in the air, but stalwart diners huddle on the deck. Both of the massive stone fireplaces crackle with welcome blue



and orange flames.

With native nonchalance we enter, select our seafood immediately on arrival (vegetarian options are limited to salads and dessert because it’s too early for corn), pay at the register, and earn a precious number (ours is “10”) that will somehow sound dreamy a few minutes later when it’s barked on a loudspeaker amid the raucous shucking of lobsters and steamed clams.

Barnacle Billy’s was founded in 1961, the year John Glenn went into outer space. Looking for celebrities? Presidents George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady have eaten here. “But not at the same time,” the joke goes. Correction—it *was* at the same time. How about Cybill Shepherd, Chris-

tian Bale, Art Garfunkel, Mikhail Gorbachev, Elizabeth Montgomery, Rex Harrison, Patty Duke. The Kinks. *You’ve really got me going, Barnacle Billy’s!* Anthony Perkins (*Psycho*). Sir David Frost. “Robert Goulet sang on the deck once,” according to co-owner Tim Tower, son of founder Bill Tower (1927-2013). Ask for Table 30, where the founders always held court.

Tonight, a pound-and-a-quarter lobster, expertly pre-cracked and perfectly cooked, is \$24. A generous order of sweet, succulent steamers with hot, melted butter is \$21.95. Pie (with ice-cream, naturally) is \$8.75. “We’ll have our own corn in August.” Because you fetch your meal, there isn’t even a space for a tip on the food receipt. Beverages, in contrast, come to your table.

Barnacle Billy’s, founded during the Sputnik years, is still a blast. Located in the heart of the Ogunquit art colony and tourism mecca, this is high on our list of places that must never change.

So what’s the added value? This is where summer lives. See the live webcam: [www.barnbilly.com/newwebcam.cfm](http://www.barnbilly.com/newwebcam.cfm). ■

## DINING GUIDE

**Anthony's Italian Kitchen**, offers home-made Italian cooking using the freshest ingredients, featuring favorites such as pizza, pasta, and sandwiches. Voted "Best in Portland" for three years. Dine-in and catering services on offer. Beer and wine available. Open 11-8 Mon. through Sat. 151 Middle St #5, Portland; and new location Cumberland County Courthouse, 205 Newbury St. [anthonyssitaliankitchen.com](http://anthonyssitaliankitchen.com), 774-8668.

**Barnacle Billy's**, known for luxury lobster, steamed clams, large lusty drinks, barbecued chicken, homemade clam chowder & of course, the lobster roll & lobster stew. Features extensive indoor & sundeck seating where guests can enjoy both the beauty of the harbor & the ocean beyond. Perkins Cove, Ogunquit, 646-5575, [barnbilly.com](http://barnbilly.com)

**Portland Lobster Company** Picture yourself choosing from our full menu including "Maine's Best Lobster Roll," lobster dinners, steamers, fried claims, chowder, and more before stopping by our outdoor bar for an ice-cold locally brewed beer or a glass of fine wine. Then take a seat on our deck overlooking the gorgeous Portland Harbor and relax while listening to daily live music. 180 Commercial Street, 775-2112 [portlandlobstercompany.com](http://portlandlobstercompany.com)

**Bruno's** Voted Portland's Best Italian Restaurant by Market Surveys of America, Bruno's offers a delicious variety of classic Italian, American, and seafood dishes—and they make all of their pasta in-house. Great sandwiches, pizza, calzones, soups, chowders, and salads. Enjoy lunch or dinner in the dining room or the Tavern. Casual dining at its best. 33 Allen Ave., 878-9511.

**Bull Feeney's** Authentic Irish pub & restaurant, serving delicious from-scratch sandwiches, steaks, seafood & hearty Irish fare, pouring local craft & premium imported brews, as well as Maine's most extensive selection of single malt Scotch & Irish whiskeys. Live music five nights. Open 7 days, 11:30 a.m.-1 a.m. Kitchen closes at 10 p.m. 375 Fore St., Old Port, 773-7210, [bullfeeneys.com](http://bullfeeneys.com).

**DiMillo's** Now through December, relax and enjoy Head Chef Melissa Bouchard's masterful creations. Every day, she offers something new and delicious. Try our Early



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Dinner Specials, Monday-Friday or our wonderful Port Side Lounge, Portland's getaway for grown-ups. Happy Hour includes special menu Monday-Friday, 4-7 p.m. Open daily at 11 a.m., Commercial St., Old Port. Always FREE PARKING while aboard. 772-2216.

**Eve's at the Garden**, an oasis of calm and great food in the Old Port. Perfect for meetings and special occasions. Ingredients from Maine's waters and farms. The seasonal Ice Bar is ideal for outdoor dining. Happy Hour Mon. - Fri.; free valet parking. Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m., Dinner 5-9:30 p.m. 468 Fore St., Portland, 775-9090, [evesatthegarden.com](http://evesatthegarden.com)

**J's Oyster** is a premier seafood destination and locals' favorite with indoor and outdoor waterfront seating on one of Portland's scenic piers. Established in 1977, J's offers classic favorites and friendly service. Coastal Living claimed J's one of "America's Best Seafood Dives 2016." Find us on Facebook. 772-4828

**Kon Asian Bistro** Steakhouse & Sushi Bar serves Asian cuisine with modern flair. Japanese, Sushi, Thai, Chinese, or hibachi tables. Private party rooms accommodates groups from business meetings to birthday parties. Choose fresh, delicious items prepared before your table. Family friendly; open Mon.-Thurs. 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Fri. to 11 p.m., Sat. 1 p.m.-11 p.m., Sun. 11:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m. 874-0000, [konasianbistrome.com](http://konasianbistrome.com).

**Hurricane Restaurant** is open for the season! Enjoy New England cuisine with

an international twist. With local produce, seafood, a full bar, an award-winning wine list, and in-house dessert chef, Hurricane Restaurant has been nurturing the seacoast palate for over 25 years. Good restaurants come and go; great restaurants get better and better. Reservations suggested. 29 Dock Square, Kennebunkport. 967-9111, [hurricanerestaurant.com](http://hurricanerestaurant.com)

**Maria's Ristorante** is Portland's original classic Italian Restaurant. Greg and Tony Napolitano are always in house preparing classics like Zuppa de Pesce, Eggplant Parmigian, Grilled Veal Sausages, Veal Chop Milanese, homemade cavatelli pastas, Pistachio Gelato, Limoncello Cake, and Maine's Best Meatballs. Prices \$11.95 - \$22.95. Tue.-Sat. starting at 5 p.m. Catering always available. 337 Cumberland Ave. 772-9232, [mariasrestaurant.com](http://mariasrestaurant.com).

**O.Dans Restaurant**, Sebago's newest friendly farm-to-table restaurant in the heart of Sebago. Great local beer & food selection. Open 6 days a week, Tues.-Fri 4 p.m. to close; Sat.-Sun. 12 p.m. to close; closed on Mon. Happy Hour specials, Tues.-Sat. Live music from local talent, every Fri.-Sat. 46 Sebago Road, Sebago 787-5124 [ODansSebago.com](http://ODansSebago.com)

**Pedro's** focuses on simple yet full-flavored Mexican and Latino food. Offering tacos, burritos and an impressive array of margaritas, sangria, beer, and wine. *Especiales de la semana* (specials of the week) keep

the menu varied and fresh and showcase different Latino cultures. Seasonal outdoor dining available. Open daily, 12 p.m. - 10 p.m. 181 Port Rd., Kennebunk, 967-5544, [pedrosmaine.com](http://pedrosmaine.com).

**Rivalries Sports Pub & Grill** Now with two fun and comfortable upscale sports bar locations. Known for great casual pub food, Rivalries' menu has something for everyone. And, with 30+ HD TVs and every major pro and college sports package, you won't miss a game! Located at 11 Cotton Street in Portland's Old Port (774-6044) and 2 Hat Trick Drive, Falmouth (747-4020), [rivalriesmaine.com](http://rivalriesmaine.com)

**Solo Italiano** Traditional northern Italian cuisine mixes Maine freshness with Genovese flavor from international chef Paolo Laboa. Enjoy the crudo bar or the daily changing menu. Included in *Food & Wine Magazine's* 2016 "What to Do in Portland, ME." Open daily 5 p.m.-10 p.m. 100 Commercial Street Portland, 780-0227, [soloitalianorestaurant.com](http://soloitalianorestaurant.com)

**TIQA's** pan-Mediterranean menu features dishes inspired by the cultures and cuisines of North Africa, Southern Europe, and the Middle East. Executive chef/co-owner Bo Byrne partners with purveyors to procure hand-selected, sustainably-raised and sourced meats, seafood, cheeses, and produce. TIQA is open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner with brunch on Sunday. 327 Commercial Street, 808-8840 . \*reservations recommended



## Ogunquit Trolley Company

Let the OGUNQUIT TROLLEY COMPANY help plan your wedding... Your wedding day will be one of the most memorable and exciting days of your life and we at OGUNQUIT TROLLEY COMPANY want to be a part of it. Our wedding parties appreciate the festive air that the Trolley brings to a wedding and the personalities of our drivers who are there to assist the bridal party and guests.

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