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- Try fabulous new dishes by our Head Chef, Melissa Bouchard, last year's Chef of the Year.
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365 Big Nights

Careful, **it's hot**: Your **2015 Foodie Calendar** is served.

BY CLAIRE Z. CRAMER

Tracking local food trends is getting tougher all the time—so many new restaurants, craft breweries, distilleries, tasting rooms. Will that fleet of exotic food trucks return with spring?

The new year promises Honey Paw (noodles where once stood the great Pepperclub), an expansion of the Hugo's/Eventide hegemony on Middle Street. Tiqa is due in the brand-new Marriott on Commercial Street; new owners of the Danforth Hotel are to debut a deluxe Southeast Asian restaurant; and the Public Market House will add a Dominican cafe.

There doesn't seem to be any excuse left to stay home, ever.

But, what's this? A seasoned chef from the Hudson Valley, Natalie diBenedetto, is installing a take-out food shop/catering concern called Figgy's on Walker Street in the West End, behind Yordprom Coffee. She'll turn out hearty family meals and sides like fried chicken and potatoes and slaw. Likewise, the former Miyake Diner on nearby Spring Street has been leased by Home Catering Company to sell prepared food to go with beer and wine. Rosemont Market, already a force in take-home food, opens a shop this spring in the new multi-use high-rise under construction at the corner of Pine and Brackett streets. Factor in the two prepared-food shops already established in this neighborhood—Aurora Provisions and Fresh Approach—and you have to wonder if anyone on the peninsula will ever make dinner from scratch at home again.

Even if Maine is the greatest place on the planet for home cooks to find fresh local produce, meat, poultry, seafood, and artisanal everything.

OK, 2015, let's see how this goes...



| Chef Justin Walker's seared scallops and
 | roasted carrots at Earth at Hidden Pond
 | are presented with carrot/brown-butter
 | puree, dabs of yogurt and sour lemon
 | curd, chipotle puree, and a sunflower
 | seed 'streusel.'

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JANUARY

22 - 24 ICE BAR

The 10th annual bacchanal of ice cold fun at the Portland Harbor Hotel has ice sculptures, an ice luge, fancy cocktails, and tasty bites created by local restaurants—and outdoor fire pits to warm you up. portlandharborhotel.com

24 ROBERT BURNS LUNCHEON

The Brunswick Hotel & Tavern is the place for the St. Andrew's Society of Maine's annual birthday bash for Scotland's bard. Buffet lunch, poetry, and haggis come with a piper concert by Ursa Beckford, and a raffle. Tartan attire encouraged! mainehighlandgames.org



25 NATIONAL PIE DAY

Rockland hosts its 11th annual pie-crazy Sunday. The town's inns, restaurants, and provisioners serve up shepherd's pie, pizza pie, pot pie, pastys, seafood pie, glorious galettes, and wine and pie pairings. Tickets to the pie parade benefit the local Outreach Food Pantry. 596-6611, historicinnsofrockland.com

24 FLANAGAN'S TABLE

Chef Justin Walker of Earth in Kennebunkport takes his turn creating a dinner in this popular monthly dinner party series at Flanagan Farm in Buxton to benefit Maine Farmland Trust. flanaganstable.com

FEBRUARY

HARRASEEKET INN: WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE...ON THE MENU

It's a tradition—Chef Eric Flynn at Freepport's Harraseeket Inn goes wild for game all month long in the Maine Harvest dining room. "We always have pheasant, and quail," says Flynn. "It's a full game menu in the main dining room, and a nightly game special in the Broad Arrow. We try to do unusual things, like braised wild rabbit shanks, venison flank steak, wild boar short ribs." 865-9377, harraseeketinn.com



10 CAJUN COOKIN' CHALLENGE

"Bayside Bowl is the reigning champ," says Dale Robin Goodman at USM's radio station WMPG. The station's 20th annual delicious Mardi Gras party hosts local restaurants competing for a people's-choice vote on their Cajun dishes. The *bon temps rouler* with the lunch feast and live music at noon at USM's Woodbury Campus Center. wmpg.org

17 MARDI GRAS

"We always have a good time," says Peter Zinn at Portland's Po' Boys and Pickles. His Forest Avenue eatery has the New Orleans vibe all year, but on Fat Tuesdays "We run specials and



Relish board with cauliflower, fiddleheads, kimchi, ramps, and asparagus at Earth.

Salt of the Earth

Justin Walker, executive chef at **Earth at Hidden Pond** in Kennebunkport—and the featured chef at Flanagan's Table January 24—may just be living the farm-to-fork dream.

"I went to New England Culinary Institute in Montpelier. After graduation in 1998, I got an internship for a year at Arrows in Ogunquit. From

there I moved up to cook, sous-chef, chef-de-cuisine, and executive chef. I was there until 2012. I met my wife, Danielle, at Arrows; she was front-of-the-house. Now she's general manager at Earth, and I've been chef there for two seasons."

The January 24 dinner will be Walker's and Earth's second appearance at the popular and elegant Flanagan dinner series in Buxton. "We'll start with wood-fired broccoli"—with surrounding flavor and texture from avocado puree, white asparagus kimchee, and microplaned beef jerky dusted on top. "I like to build flavor profiles," he says.

Walker's animation and enthusiasm infuses his discussion of food. And life. "My wife always does these food events with me. She can do just about anything. We have a four-year-old, and we live on a farm in York with six horses and 18 dairy goats. I'm using the off-season to make cheese at the restaurant with our goat milk. I'm aging a cheddar and trying a pecorino. I'm curing some hams, and making ice cream. Goat milk ice cream is amazing; you'd never guess it's goat."



there's music; \$2.50 beers; promotions." 518-9735, poboyandspickles.com

13-21 SNOFEST

The Moosehead Lake region's week-long celebration in Greenville includes chili and chowder cook-offs with prizes, a pancake breakfast, a chocolate festival with treats and games, and an auction. Delicious events to chase away your winter blues. 695-2702, mooseheadlake.org

20 FLAVORS OF FREEPORT

Food and drink, including pairings and demonstrations, showcase the talents of local chefs at Freeport's inns and restaurants—ice bar, ice luge, and a barbecue. The bonus is all the shopping you can fit in between bites. freeportusa.com

14 FLANAGAN'S TABLE

Chef Amanda Hallowell of Nebo Lodge on North Haven cooks up a dinner at Flanagan Farm to benefit Maine Farmland Trust. flanaganstable.com

MARCH

1-14 MAINE RESTAURANT WEEK

Banish your winter blues for good when this annual happening returns—and this year, the "week" is actually two. Chefs all over the state aim to dazzle you with clever fixed-price menus. It all starts with a lavish breakfast cook-off, and this year includes chef-am bowling and a pancake race. The finale is a flashy cocktail party. In between, you design your own festival by dining out at any of the dozens of participating restaurants. Check out the list and the particulars at mainerestaurantweek.com

18 PORTLAND SYMPHONY WINE DINNER & AUCTION

Fine wine and beautiful music are highlights of the 14th edition of this glamorous annual extravaganza, which is headlined by a multi-course feast at Freeport's Harraseeket Inn. Star chefs from Hugo's, Central Provisions, Lolita, Fore Street, and of course the Harraseeket will preside. Maine artists and businesses donate art, event tickets, fine jewelry, getaways, and unusual items to the live and silent auctions to benefit the symphony and it's always quite a night. 773-6128, ext. 318, portlandsymphony.org

20 FREE ICE CREAM CONE DAY

"Oh, it's definitely an annual tradition," laughs Lindsay Gifford. And a stampee—when Gifford's ice cream marks the opening of ice cream season with a free cone from 6 to 8 p.m. at all five of their family-owned shops in Skowhegan, Farmington, Bangor, Waterville, and



Dana Bialek heaps the basket with fresh, warm "everything" bagels at Union Bagel Co. on Cumberland Avenue. The shop's a powerhouse where as many as 70 dozen bagels may be sold in a day. Have yours toasted and topped with a selection of spreads and a cup of coffee if you like. By 2 p.m., Union's closed up and, often, sold out.

Near-East End

BREAKFAST & LUNCH TO GO: WHERE THE HILL MEETS EAST BAYSIDE

Storefront shops offering hand-wrought breakfast and lunch pastries, prepared sandwiches, and baked goods-to-go have flocked and nested around the eastern edges of East Bayside and lower latitudes of the Hill.

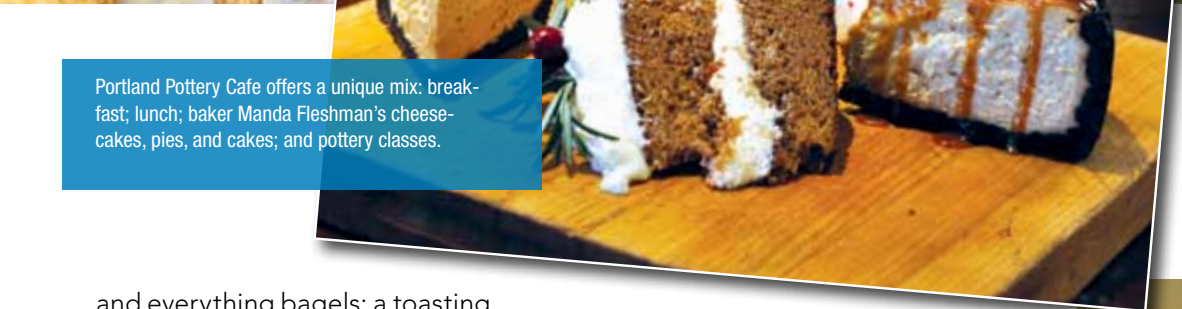
"Atsuko's the star here," says Markos Miller of his co-owner/partner Atsuko Fujimoto at **Ten Ten Pié** on Cumberland Avenue just east of Franklin Arterial. "She's worked at Fore Street and Standard Baking." From behind the glass front along a counter of pastries, Miller points to reveal how Fujimoto's skill at pastry shows—and tells. A fluted, flaky crust surrounds sauteed greens, winter squash, and feta—a perfect, individu-

al lunch tart of bold, balanced flavors for \$4.95. A buttery two-bite financier-like almond confection serves nicely as dessert. Ten Ten Pié—"it's Spanish slang meaning, roughly, keep on your toes," explains Spanish teacher Miller—also prepares salads and bento boxes; there are a few eat-in stools for perching, shelves of ethnic pantry staples, sakes, and a drinks cooler.

A few doors east along Cumberland, the bagels are nearly sold out at 1 p.m. on a weekday at **Union Bagel Co.**, where they bake them daily. "We roll in around 4 a.m. seven days a week," says Paul Farrell, who owns Union with Toby Alves. The whole operation takes place in a tiny, free-standing structure that somehow contains a few stools and counters in the front windows; a case full of plain, salt, sesame, cinnamon-raisin, garlic,



An array of Atsuko Fujimoto's baked goodness at Ten Ten Pié, including individual winter squash and greens tarts with feta that are a perfect lunch-for-one.



Portland Pottery Cafe offers a unique mix: breakfast; lunch; baker Manda Fleshman's cheesecakes, pies, and cakes; and pottery classes.

Sisters Katie (above) and Jennifer Capron are the force behind Katie Made, the popular Munjoy Hill bakery. As do their fellow neighborhood bakers, the sisters have gluten-free options.

and everything bagels; a toasting station; and a kitchen with a boiling water vat and oven. The bestseller? "The everything, hands-down, by about two-to-one over plain or sesame," says Farrell.

Head a bit up the Hill and cut over to Congress Street and find savory lunch pastries alongside scones, cookies, and a must-have \$2 flourless cake square at **Katie Made Bakery**. Katie Capron ran her shop for 10 years in the spot now occupied by Union Bagel. "We've been here for two years now," she says of her now larger spot. "My sister Jennifer [Capron] is my business partner." They run the show with a single employee. In addition to a busy retail trade, "We do a lot pies, cakes, and cheesecakes to order, cookie platters,

and corporate gifts."

Portland Food Coop, in the strip mall that marks the gateway to the East End, is big and bright; the aisles bring Whole Foods to mind, and the produce section resembles the Rosemont's and farmers' markets' brimming bins. The Coop has prepared, wrapped, bounteous, healthy-looking sandwiches-to-go in a fridge case.

Portland Pottery Cafe on Washington Avenue serves breakfast and lunch; many hearty sandwiches—such as a wrap of homemade corned beef hash, egg, and cheddar are perfect to take out. Freshly baked cakes and baked goods are a specialty—and so are the pottery classes.





Sample Sicilian street food at Slab's bar; play a little pinball across the street at Arcadia National Bar (inset).



Auburn. "Even if there's a snowstorm. Especially if it's a snowstorm, because it still means it's officially spring." giffordsicecream.com

21 CHILI CHOWDER CHALLENGE

Vote for your favorite chili and chowder from over a dozen Augusta restaurants at Augusta Armory. All proceeds benefit the Augusta Children's Center. chilichowderchallenge.com

22 MAINE MAPLE SUNDAY

Another sure sign that spring really is here comes on the Sunday when the state's maple farms open their sugar-house doors to the public and demonstrate the art of turning sap into syrup.

There are always tastings and treats. Find your friendly neighborhood sugar house at mainemapleproducers.com



28 FLANAGAN'S TABLE

Chef David Turin of David's, Opus Ten, David's 388, and David's KPT presides over the feast at Flanagan Farm to benefit Maine Farmland Trust. flanaganstable.com

22 ANNUAL CHILI COOKOFF

Sunday River's 25th annual fundraiser weekend, this year for Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation, after the Firefighter's Race, area restaurants face off with a Beat-the-Heat chili competition, serving up batches to hungry crowds, with judging and a People's Choice award. sundayriver.com

Preble Street Treats

After the Portland Public Market closed in 2006, Preble Street fell off the food map. Today, the first block down from Monument Square is alive with sinfully delicious dining opportunities, a golden triangle of comfort food that's perfect for the dead of winter. Shiny new **Dutch's** is open for breakfast and lunch at 28 Preble. "I worked at Bar Tartine in San Francisco, running the dessert program," says Windham, New Hampshire, native Lucy Dutch. "Ian's from Belfast—he cooked for Todd English in Boston for four years at Bonfire." Nowadays, the Dutches start baking their loaves and pastries at 5 a.m. before serving hearty egg sandwiches, bagels, muffins, "cheesy grits," and oatmeal. They follow with lunches of specialty sandwiches, salads, and sides including house-made potato chips, plus crazy-delicious baked goods—don't miss Lucy's malted brownie—until 4 p.m.

Directly across the street at **Slab**, the compelling Sicilian pizza, sandwiches, grilled meats, and boldly spiced salads and sides (see our review, September 2014) can be savored in a chic, earth-toned, rustic/minimalist atmosphere until 1 a.m. The utterly transformed space within the old Public Market is ideal for lingering with a glass of Italian wine or local brew, zillions of which are on tap.

For the competitive, there's pinball and Pac Man at **Arcadia National Bar** next door to Dutch's, and the simple joy of drinking craft beer while blowing all your parking-meter quarters on the games. The eats are basic and delicious. "We've got grilled cheese sandwiches," says co-owner David Aceto. "Pineland Farms cheddar on Sorella's Bakery bread; regular or spicy with Sriracha—\$3." Pure wizardry.



FROM TOP: JOAQUIN MALLMANN; SHANNON WILLIAMSON; FILE PHOTO: KNACK FACTORY/ZACH BOWEN; COURTESY DUTCH'S

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HUNGRY EYE



3-5 PARROTHEAD FESTIVAL

Sunday River's food, music, and Margarita Mix-Off among local bartenders, plus a key lime pie eating contest—think Key West in Newry, with snow. This hugely popular Jimmy Buffett-themed event is an annual tradition, with a Spam-carving competition and costumes. sundayriver.com

APRIL

9 TOAST ON THE COAST

Easter Seals of Maine's annual gala at Portland's waterfront Ocean Gateway is a wine tasting with food from many Portland restaurants that features dancing and a silent auction—all to benefit area charities that support the disabled. maine.easterseals.com

12 CHOCOLATE LOVERS FLING

The highly competitive, meticulously judged by local celebrities, and divinely delicious fund-raiser event for SARSSM returns to Portland's Holiday Inn by the Bay for the 29th year, featuring 15 to 18 local chocolatiers. Vote for your favorites in the categories of chocolate cake, cheesecake, mousse, fudge, and truffles. 828-1035 - ext. 100, chocolateloversfling.org

Steve Gets Around

"Tom [Manning] brought me in," says Steve Quattrucci, speaking from the kitchen of Manning's Miss Portland Diner on Marginal Way where he operates as a "working chef/consultant." Manning bought and brought Miss Portland back to life in 2009, and the former *Newsweek* business exec has been hands-on ever since. "Steve's very smart and talented. He reminded me of the writers I knew at the magazine," he says. "Plus he's a nice guy."

"I was the original owner of Back Bay Grill, back in 1987," says Quattrucci, 53. "It was a kind of run-down bar called Norm's when I bought it. I sold it to Joel Freund three years later; he'd started out as my bartender. I cooked out in California for a few years. When I returned, I had West End Grocery for a while [which subsequently became the West End Deli and is now Bao Bao on Spring Street], and then I went back to school for social work. I wound up running a food program for Preble Street for four years and a job-training program with Portland High School. One of my trainee students is sous-chef now at the Grill Room. After that, I bounced around, set up the kitchen at the Hilton Garden Inn on Commercial Street, worked for Sysco selling wholesale for a while. I realized I'm kind of a 'project guy'—I like to go in and solve things. I signed on as a consultant with the City of Portland and set up the restaurant at the Riverside Golf Course." Then Tom Man-

ning came calling.

"Tom's committed to making the diner the best it can be. We've tried to use more local products and more care. We've got Sorella's bread and Pineland meat and cheese. Pineland's not strictly local anymore, but it's small-farm and humane. We've just switched out the turkey dinner to a turkey pot pie."

"I think my favorite new item is the butternut squash and spinach gratin," says manager Susie Kiehn-Geary. "On a cold winter day, with the homemade cheese sauce and little fried onions on top, there's nothing like it."

"This is a really busy place," says Quattrucci. "We'll have 400 people come through for weekend brunches. We're shooting for consistency and excellent service. Tom's committed."



Wine Divine

Tastings are everywhere; they're free, fun, and a great opportunity to learn. Check the Events page on portlandfoodmap.com for news of upcoming wine, beer, and spirits tastings.

Aurora Provisions, Portland Usually two per month, Thursday evenings 871-9060, auroraprovisions.com

Black Sheep Wine Shop, Harpswell One or two per month, Saturdays 725-9284, black-sheepwine.com

Bow Street Market, Freeport Up to three per month, Saturdays 865-6631, bowstreet-market.com

Browne Trading, Portland Two per month, Saturdays 775-7560, brownetrading.com

The Clown, York Monthly, 2nd Friday 351-3063, the-clown.com

Leroux Kitchen, Portland, 2nd Saturdays each month 553-7665, lerouxkitchen.com

Old Port Wine & Cigar, Portland Monthly, 3rd Wednesday of the month 772-9463, old-portwine.com

Perkins & Perkins, Ogunquit One or two per month, Saturday 646-0288, perkinsand-perkins.com

Rosemont Markets, Portland & Yarmouth At least two per month, days vary 774-8129, (Continued on page 67)



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JUNE

A NEW STREET/HAYWARD COLLABORATION

“Lickety split,” restaurateur extraordinaire Dana Street told the *Press Herald*, when asked how construction is proceeding on his forthcoming “classic...brasserie-style” restaurant on Portland’s Maine Wharf. He and chef Sam Hayward are shooting for “the beginning of summer.” Fans of their Street & Company and Fore Street restaurants are legion—and we can’t wait.

7-15 KENNEBUNKPORT FESTIVAL

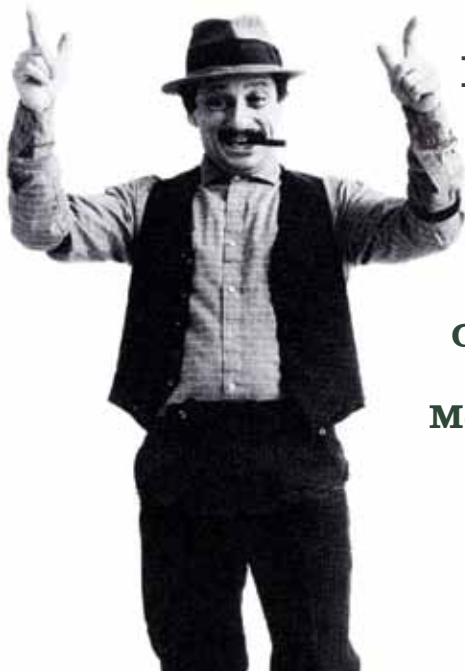
Food, wine, and fine art come together in this event. Special meals are prepared by many Maine restaurant chefs, and there are wine and art receptions around the village. 772-3373, kennebunkportfestival.com

7 OLD PORT FESTIVAL

Portland’s sprawling, melodic, delicious all-day party offers multiple sound stages for jazz, country, folk, and rock music; all sorts of children’s activities; and many jewelry, crafts, clothing, and tchotchke vendors. And there’s a food-stand festival within the festival. Emphasis is on authentic ethnic food from many lands—empanadas, curries, noodles—plus the usual french-fried

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Moxie and whoopies have their own festivals.

snack suspects. portlandmaine.com

19-21 MIDSOMMER CELEBRATION

Maine's Swedish immigrants established the northern Maine colony of New Sweden in 1870. The public is invited every year to join the annual midsummer celebration of Swedish food, music, and dance.

maineswedishcolony.info

25-27 GREEK FESTIVAL

The annual tented party on the corner of Park and Pleasant streets at Portland's Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church draws throngs for souvlaki, gyros, moussaka, spanakopita, Greek wine, strong Greek coffee—and heavenly Greek pastries made by charming Greek church ladies. Dance off the Dionysian feast to live Greek music. 774-0281, holytrinityportland.com

27 MAINE WHOOPIE PIE FESTIVAL

Bakers from far and wide bring thousands of these much-loved, cream-filled little pucks—in flavors from strawberry to pumpkin to chocolate chip—to Dover Foxcroft to be sampled and judged. Al's Pizza is the baker to beat from last year—his Blueberry with Cream Cheese took the prize. Maine Street is blocked off and turned over to a day of music, kids' stuff, rides, games, vendors, and makin' whoopie. 564-8943, mainewhoopiefestival.com

JULY

10-12 MOXIE FESTIVAL

Carbonated fun—plus Moxie ice cream, a Moxie recipe contest, Friday night fireworks, Saturday's Moxie parade, a 5K race, music, entertainment—it's a weekend-long celebration of the soda they call "Maine in a bottle" in Lisbon Falls. moxiefestival.com

(Cont. from p. 64)

rosemontmarket.com

Treats, Wiscasset
Once a month, Fridays;
Thursdays in summer
882-6192, treatsof-
maine.com

West End Deli, Port-
land Monthly, first Fri-
days 874-6426, thewes-
tenddeli.com

The Wine Seller,
Rockland At least one
per month 594-2621,
thewineseller.biz

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HUNGRY EYE

2-5 ACADIAN FESTIVAL

The founding Acadian families who first settled the St. John Valley hold a family reunion every summer for one of the families, and the public is invited to the concurrent festival of events that celebrate traditional food, crafts, and music, a parade and "Party *du* Main Street." 728-7000, greatermadawaskachamber.com

11-13 GREEK HERITAGE FESTIVAL

A 3-day homage to Greek culture, traditional food, and folk arts including live music and dancing in Saco takes place on the grounds of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox church. The Byzantine architecture of church and stunning iconography inside are well worth touring. 284-5651

11-19 MAINE POTATO BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

The 68th annual homage to Maine's famous tuber takes place in Fort Fairfield when the potato blossoms are in bloom. Races, farmer competitions, mashed potato wrestling, potatoes cooked up many ways, a lobster and clam bake, contests, pageants, and the crowning of a Potato Blossom Queen. fortfairfield.org

13-18 CENTRAL MAINE EGG FESTIVAL

Pittsfield's annual egg-stravaganza celebrates chickens and eggs in a big way. The brown egg industry sponsors, with a parade, street dance, window-painting contest, kids' events, early bird breakfast, chicken barbecue, egg-lympics, fireworks, and contests for best quiche, cheese-cake, and pie. pittsfield.org

17-19 YARMOUTH CLAM FESTIVAL

Behold the beloved bivalves for three whole days—clams are fried, steamed, chopped into chowders and clam cakes, plus there's a shucking contest, live music, crafts, and a road race. The food stalls are run by volunteers and your clam-roll lunch supports an array of nonprofit organizations. 846-3984, clamfestival.com

17-19 MAINE CELTIC CELEBRATION

On the waterfront in Belfast, there is music, food, Highland Games, a Kilted Canter race and a unique cheese-rolling championship involving entire wheels of the State of Maine Cheese Company's cheeses. mainecelticcelebration.com

26 OPEN FARM DAY

Farms all over the state open their gates to the public for tours on this summer Sunday. Animals for petting, fresh farm produce to sample and shop for—this is an annual chance to experience where Maine food comes from, right at the source. getrealgetmaine.com; maine.gov

25 FESTIVAL OF NATIONS

Portland's Deering Oaks Park is the place for this colorful showcase of Maine's ever-ex-

panding cultural diversity. This year, look for a capella *Sing-Off* winner, *Pitch Perfect II* co-star, and Waynelete alumnus Michael Odokara-Okigbo—he's chairman of the event. A day of food, dance, music, crafts, and exhibits representing more than 60 countries and a great time to venture out of your culinary comfort zone and take a taste of the wider world. themugadifoundation.wordpress.com

29-AUGUST 2

MAINE LOBSTER FESTIVAL

Every year, 20,000 pounds of Maine's superstar crustaceans are devoured at Rockland's annual bash. There's a big parade, a seafood cooking contest for amateur chefs, kids' events, a road race, arts and crafts, and the coronation of the festival Sea Goddess. The harbor setting on Penobscot Bay is hard to beat. 596-0376, mainelobsterfestival.com



AUGUST

7-9 PLOYE FESTIVAL AND MUSKIE DERBY

Ployes are the traditional buckwheat pancakes of the exiled Acadian French who settled northern Maine, and muskies are the local game fish. They intersect in a combination food/cultural/fishing event every summer in Fort Kent. 834-5354, fortkentchamber.com

15 HIGHLAND GAMES

The Topsham Fairgrounds is the place for the annual celebration of Scots culture. Highland dancers, pipe bands, sporting events, dog trials, and a chance to feast on Maine-made haggis. Plan to wear plaid and come hungry. mainehighlandgames.org

17-20 CULINARY SCHOONER CRUISE


Take a cooking vacation at sea aboard the *J&E Rigg* with schooner chef and author Annie Mahle, cooking with vegetables from her own garden and seafood fresh from Penobscot Bay. The cruise repeats September 7-10 and Sept. 28-Oct. 3. 800-869-0604, mainewindjammer.com

22 WELLS CHILIFEST

International Chili Society-sanctioned, juried competitions in the red, verde, and salsa categories for serious competitors. At the same event, you'll find the Chilifest's own People's Choice amateur contest—anyone can enter and there are no rules about ingredients—with a people's choice vote determining the winner. Cash prizes, lots of spice. 646-2451, wellschilifest.com

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HUNGRY EYE



SEPTEMBER

12 MT. DESERT ISLAND GARLIC FESTIVAL

The Smuggler's Den Campground turns into something of a garlic Woodstock, with area restaurants serving gourmet garlic creations including garlic bread, garlic burritos, garlic brownies, and garlic cotton candy. Festival co-founder and party-guy Frank Pendola sells his "artisanal barbecue." Many farms participate in the farmers' market; arts and crafts vendors set up their wares; and musicians and brewers add to the fun. nostrano.com

19 HARVEST FEST & CHOWDER COOK-OFF

This autumn celebration of the start of fall foliage season includes two cookoffs—chowder and apple pie—along with vendors, farmers, crafts, and music—is a much awaited annual event on the Bethel village common and has been drawing crowds for 17 years on the third Saturday in September. 824-2282, bethelmaine.com

25-27 COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

It's the Earth Mother of Maine's agricultural fairs, sponsored by the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association. Organic food vendors, cooking demonstrations, folk arts, and talks by chefs, farmers, and fishermen about growing, preserving, storing, and preparing local organic produce, livestock, and seafood. 568-4142, mofga.org

OCTOBER

1 SIGNATURE CHEF AUCTION

The annual elegant event for the March of Dimes "takes place upstairs at DiMillo's on Portland's Long Wharf," says event coordinator Rebecca Spear. "It's a great sampling from local chefs. We expect Shannon Bard of Zapoteca again this year, and, among other restaurants, Bruno's, Elsemere BBQ, RiRa, and

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KITCHEN BAR



nosh

Pronunciation: \nāsh\

Yiddish, To snack or eat on the sly

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HUNGRY EYE

DiMillo's chef Melissa Bouchard." Wine and dine and then bid on silent and live auction goods. "A lot of the chefs offer chef's tasting dinners as auction items, which are really popular." 289-2080, marchofdimes.com/maine

3-12 DAMARISCOTTA PUMPKINFEST & REGATTA

This is the ultimate pumpkin celebration—there's a pumpkin boat regatta, a pumpkin derby, pumpkin hurl and catapult, kids' events, pumpkin pie eating contest, pumpkin pancake breakfast, pumpkin carving, a pumpkin parade. "The professional growers' competition has \$10,000 in prize money, so it draws growers from much of New England and attracts a good crowd," says festival chairman Robin Mayer. the official weigh-in for the largest pumpkin in the state. damariscottapumpkinfest.com

3 CHOWDAH CHALLENGE

Area chefs compete for bragging rights to the best seafood chowders. Taste all the entries and vote for your favorites as you benefit Freeport Community Services. At L.L. Bean's Discovery Park in Freeport. 865-3985, freeportusa.com

11 OPEN CREAMERY DAY

Cheese makers around the state invite you to tour and taste their wares. Maine has more than 70 licensed cheese makers (second only to New York state)—and many have won awards. Here's your chance to check out the cheese scene. See mainecheeseguild.org for the list of participating creameries.

17 YORK HARVESTFEST

Two days of traditional fall harvest food, activities, crafts, pony rides, and live music at York Beach. maineoktoberfest.org

18 GREAT MAINE APPLE DAY

Explore the history and variety of Maine apples through apple cooking, cider-making, 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. 568-4142, mofga.org



21-24 HARVEST ON THE HARBOR

Thousands flock to Portland to experience Maine cuisine at this busy, delicious and well-run extravaganza. Spectacular celebrity-chef feast events, tastings of Maine grown and produced food and drink, and a "big eat" opportunity to sample offerings from dozens of local eateries and beverage purveyors in one large venue. Most events are held on the waterfront. Plan ahead because quite a few events sell out. harvestontheharbor.com



**NOVEMBER
SAUERKRAUT
FROM MORSE'S**

Every autumn, the late, great cabbage king Virgil Morse would run a concise classified ad in the Lincoln County News: "Kraut's ready." Nowadays, the fresh sauerkraut at Morse's in Waldoboro is produced all-most year 'round,

but owners David Swetnam and Jacque Sawyer still run the little November ad—they're happy to perpetuate the perception that autumn is kraut season, as it was when Virgil first started fermenting his fall cabbage crop into legend in 1918. Nowadays the kraut can be found in many Hannafords and neighborhood groceries; it's on the menu at Moody's and at Fore Street. And Morse's on Route 220 is a lot more than a kraut shop—it's a destination, with a European market, an extensive deli, and a German deli/restaurant. To this day, Morse's sauerkraut is only sold fresh, never canned or bottled. 832-5569, morsessauerkraut.com

**19 LE BEAUJOLAIS NOUVEAU
EST ARRIVÉ**

An annual event that begins with a pressing of the gamay grape in a few designated French villages every autumn turns into a *Beaujolais nouveau* event at a zillion restaurants around the world on the third Thursday in November. Celebrate in Portland at the Little Tap House and MJ's Wine Bar. At Petite Jacqueline, it's not just about the new wine; it's also about the three-course bistro dinner and celebration of the season. 553-7044, bistropj.com

**DECEMBER
5 EARMUFF DAY**

Better known as Chester Greenwood Day in Farmington, hometown of the native son who invented earmuffs there in 1873 at the age of 15 when his ears got cold while ice skating. He's celebrated every December on the first Saturday, with a parade and day of festivities that include gingerbread house and chili competitions and an earmuff fashion show. franklin-countymaine.org

4-6 & 11-13 **CHRISTMAS PRELUDE**
Kennebunkport's wonder-filled holiday celebration lasts two weekends in December, with candlelight carolling, holiday shopping with refreshments, special restaurant meals, Christmas decorations, hot chocolate, crafts, a tree lighting and the arrival of Santa via lobster boat. christmasprelude.com ■

FROM TOP: COURTESY MORSE'S SAUERKRAUT; FILE PHOTO



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