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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. anthonyitaliankitchen.com, 774-8668.

BlueFin North Atlantic Seafood restaurant in the Old Port harnesses all that Maine is, and positions it into a delicious dish. Executive Chef Tim Labonte creates new and unexpected meals using fresh, locally-caught seafood and seasonal ingredients at their peak. From breakfast through dinner and anything in-between, your next adventure may just be your next dish. 468 Fore Street Portland's Old Port 775-9090 portlandharborhotel.com/portland-harbor-hotel-dining.php

Bolster, Snow & Co., is located on the first-floor of the spectacularly reincarnated brick mansion, The Francis (formerly the Mellen E. Bolster House). With executive Chef Nicolas Verdisco at the helm, Bolster Snow provides guests with warm and genuine hospitality, gracious service, and fiercely seasonal food and drink that are representative of the Northeast Region. 747 Congress St. Portland, 772-7485, thefrancismaine.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.

The Corner Room features bright, wide-open space with towering ceilings complemented by handcrafted woodwork. Patrons can expect a warm, comfortable atmosphere, marked by the rich aromas of house-made pastas, pizzas, antipasti and artisanal breads. Come and enjoy the taste of Venice in the heart of Portland, ME! 879-4747, 110 Exchange Street. Visit thecornerroomkitchenandbar.com for more information.

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 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.

Fish Bones American Grill is a casual restaurant offering creatively prepared American cuisine along the canal in the historic Bates Mill complex in the heart of downtown



Hellenic Heart & Soul

Taverna Khione has its Greek flag flying in Brunswick.

BY CLAIRE Z. CRAMER

IMAGINE DINNER TONIGHT in sunny Greece—but actually in the dead of winter, in Brunswick. It's not a dream. **Taverna Khione**, a new, spotless downtown storefront café, named for the goddess of snow and daughter of the god of the North Wind, makes it happen.

We step under the Greek flag waving above the front door and inside to the soft sound of Greek folk music. Chef/owner Marc Provencher has furnished the airy dining room with simple but handsome wooden tables and chairs. There's a cozy bar on one wall, backed with built-in wine racks.

From the extensive all-Greek wine list we select a glass each of Lyrarakis Thrasasiri (\$10) and Gai'a Wild Fermented Assyrtiko (\$12). Both have that unmistakably austere yet fruity quality of good Greek white wine. Beer selections are mostly pedigreed local craft brews. All

drinks are served in delicate, attractive stemware, a nice departure from strictly rustic taverna style.

Our terrific server, who knows the menus well, brings us slices of the tender house-made bread and a dab of *Fava* (\$4), a traditional Santorini *meze* spread made from beans like yellow split peas cooked into a mellow purée and seasoned with onion, garlic, and lemon. The menu also offers classic *Taramosalata*, *Tzatziki*, *Skordalia* (whipped potato and garlic), and *Htipiti* (whipped feta and grilled red pepper) spreads (\$4 each).

Khione's menu is rich in *mezethes* and *orektika*—taverna cuisine's beloved snacks and small dishes intended for sharing. We

can't resist a *barbounia* special (\$8) on the chalkboard. Dainty fillets of the prized Mediterranean red mullet are sautéed, dressed in a tangy sauce that balances vinegar against golden raisins, and served at room temperature.

Grilled octopus (\$14) is meaty and sweet—charred tentacle pieces are served on lemon-dressed fava with briny caper berries. *Trahana* (\$8) is a dish so deeply peasantish that it's a rare treat to find on a restaurant menu. Dried pebbles of ancient-grain *trahana* pasta are simmered into an oatmeal-thick soup laced with roasted local pumpkin and garnished with toasted pumpkin seeds. It's pure Greek winter comfort food in a bowl.



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DINING GUIDE

Lewiston. Open seven days, offering dinner Monday through Sunday, lunch Monday through Friday, and brunch on Sundays. Come get hooked at 70 Lincoln Street, Bates Mill No. 6! fishbonesmaine.com, 333-3663.

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

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 Parmigiana, 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.

Pearl Kennebunk & Spat Oyster Cellar is Chef Rebecca Charles's (of Pearl Oyster Bar in Greenwich Village New York fame) newest restaurant. Enjoy an elevated beach food menu, including Charles's famous reinvention of Maine's classic lobster roll. Join us for Happy Hour Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday from 5 p.m. - 6 p.m. for \$1 oysters, \$5 wines, and well cocktails! 27 Western Ave. Kennebunk 04043. 204-0860 pearloysterbar.com/pearl-maine/

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.

Restaurante El Corazon Mexican food from the heart. Authentic family recipes passed down through generations. We serve large and small plates and an "oversized tequila selection." Try Portland's own "Marisco" - a Mexican seafood cocktail of shrimp, bay scallops, clams, octopus, and, of course, Maine lobster. Open lunch and dinner, Tues.-Sat. 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., 190 State St. Portland. elcorazonportland.com, 536-1354

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

Sea Salt Lobster Restaurant delivers an authentic Maine dining experience using fresh, locally harvested seafood to create delicious dishes that will leave you wanting more. Visit us on Route 1 in Saco and try our fresh Maine lobster rolls, renowned Angus beefburgers, clams, haddock, or fish tacos. Open from 11 a.m.-10 p.m., 365 days a year. 660 Main St, Saco, seasaltlobsterrestaurant.com, 494-1178.



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RESTAURANT REVIEW

Khione strikes all the right notes with classic entrees like beef *Stifado* (beef stew, \$24) and divine-looking *Arni Paithakia*—lamb chops that we spot at the next table served with lemony roast potatoes (\$28). Among seafood choices is steamed monkfish with braised leeks (\$22). The *Lahana Gemiste* (\$20)—cabbage rolls stuffed with beef and rice dressed in *avgolemono* sauce—evokes instant *yiayia* nostalgia. So does the taverna's assortment of charming, flowered, retro dishware of the sort found in the kitchen cupboards of *yiayias* and other immigrant grandmothers 50 or more years ago.

A plump wedge of pita called *Skopelitiki* (in the style of the island of *Skopelos*, \$8) is made with meltingly tender braised kale, fennel, leeks, and currants tossed with feta and rolled into phyllo pastry leaves. The rolled pastry is coiled and baked in a buttered *tapsi*—the traditional round Greek baking pan harkening from the days when home cooks carried their Sunday roast lambs and pitas to the village bakery's wood oven. As delicious as dinner has been thus far, this crisp-crust ed savory pie is the star of the show—an expert rendition of Greek country cooking. With it, we sip glasses of Alpha Estate Hedgehog Xinomavro (\$12 per glass), a mellow, slightly tannic red with notes of raisin and licorice.

For dessert, there is of course *baklava*, but we choose the house-made *mastiha* ice cream (\$4). A mild, pleasant pine resin used in baked goods throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, *mastiha* is one of those mythically medicinal Eastern ingredients like ginger, turmeric, or ginseng that are taken on faith. The ice cream is as delicately flavored and mildly sweet as gelato, and we are enchanted.

Chef Provencher is a former partner in Brunswick's Trattoria and Enoteca Athena cafés, now found under one roof on Maine Street. He first opened Taverna Khione in Shelburne, Vermont, before moving it back to Brunswick this past fall. The New Hampshire native—and grandson of an immigrant *yiayia*—proves with the food, wine, and unmistakably hospitable vibe of his tavern that he's inherited a Greek soul. ■

Taverna Khione, serving dinner Tu.–Sat. 5–9 p.m. 25 Mill St., Brunswick; 406-2847; tavernakhione.com.

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