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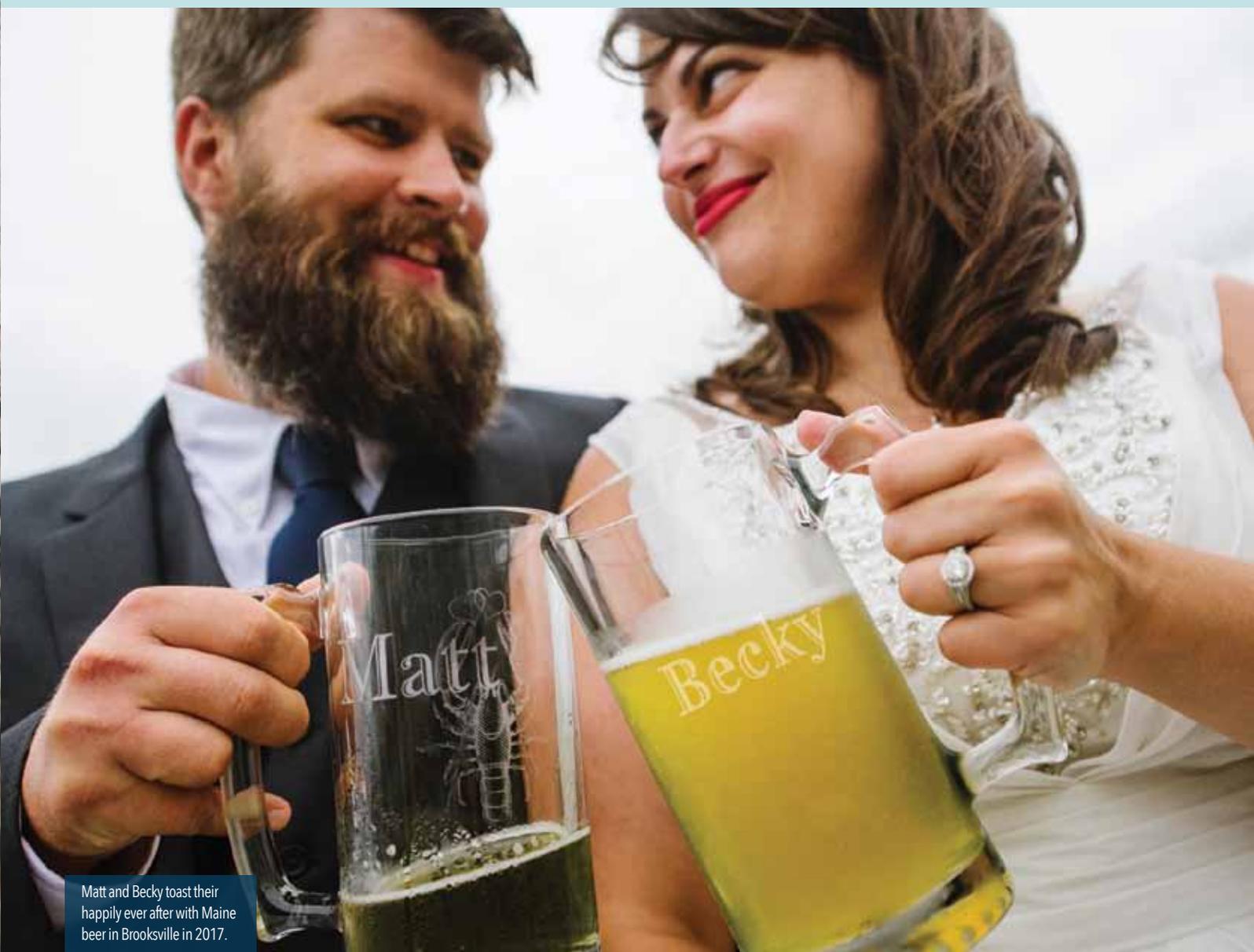


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Matt and Becky toast their happily ever after with Maine beer in Brooksville in 2017.

# WE DO, With Brew

Move over, champagne. At some weddings, **Maine craft beer** is becoming the toast of choice.

BY OLIVIA GUNN KOTSISHEVSKAYA



WITH NEARLY 90 licensed breweries in Maine, the local beer trend is impossible to avoid. From Portland to Lubec and all the way to The Forks, craft beers are pouring across the state into our pint glasses and, increasingly, our weddings.

Lyndsey and Ben held their wedding reception at Port City Music Hall, where they got to take command of the taps. **Below:** Ellen and Lydia eloped to Portland from Chicago in 2017. They even managed to toast their big day at Bissell Brothers before heading to the Mid-West.



“Maine has become very famous for its beers, so it’s a natural step to feature them at a wedding,” says **Oxbow Brewing** founder Tim Adams. “Craft beer is far more popular now in general, but Maine is particularly well known for brewing. Locals are proud of it. They want to showcase what’s produced in our home state.” With two locations—a tasting room and bottling facility on Washington Avenue in Portland and the original farmhouse brewery and tasting room in Newcastle—Oxbow not only provides beer to weddings, they often host them, too. “[The Newcastle brewery] is rustic. We’re not designed to be a wedding venue, we’re designed to be a brewery and a farm, but that’s what people like now,” Adams says. “For the right couple, it’s perfect. You might hear a couple of chickens squawking during your ceremony, maybe smell some beer brewing. It’s part of the experience.” Add some hops to the bouquet, and that’s just about as authentic as you can get, newlyweds.

**BEER TASTE WITH A CHAMPAGNE BUDGET**

Now that the image of a bride in a white



dress with pint glass in hand is as accepted as a flute of champagne, couples crave the opportunity to put a personal spin on the brew of the big day—out of joy, shared tastes, personal expression, and a desire to give their guests what they really want. How about this for inspiration: a special beer blend made just for you and your love! Down in Lyman, they’re doing just that.

In October, **Funky Bow Brewery** co-founder Abraham Lorraine married his

beloved Sylvia on the “The Farm,” Funky Bow’s brewery and tap room location, complete with stage, event barns, stables, and farm house. On the spur of the moment, as a gift to themselves and their wedding guests, Abraham brewed a special beer specifically for the occasion—a service Funky Bow now offers to the beer-mad betrothed.

Abraham and Sylvia’s wedding was the third hosted at The Farm. Paul Lorraine, Abraham’s father and Funky Bow co-founder, has seen The Farm’s popular-

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ity as a ceremonial venue grow steadily in the year since its launch. With 20 acres of natural beauty and beers on location, who needs a wedding planner? "We've got a yurt on the property and can set it up like

"I'm not sure people are trading champagne for beer yet." —Kailey Partin

the Ritz Carlton," Paul says. Weddings at Funky Bow start "at \$1,500," says Sylvia Lorraine, the brewery's event coordinator. "We like to work with both bride and groom to ensure their Maine craft beer wedding becomes a reality." And there you have it. The niche even has a name: a Maine Craft Beer Wedding.

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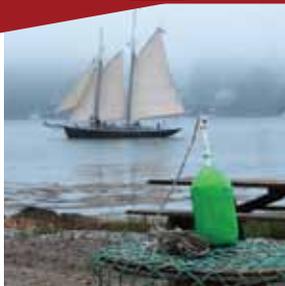
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LONGITUDE -69° 59' 32"



Hopping mad: The beer theme even influenced the boutonnieres at this Maine Craft Beer Wedding.

can add yet another potential venue to their Excel spreadsheets. Portland's **Rising Tide Brewing Company** opened the doors to its newly expanded space into the former **Maine Craft Distilling** tasting room this fall. Kailey Partin says her team is excited about the potential of the new venue, which can hold 100 guests, converging with the growing popularity of Maine's beers. "I'm not sure people are trading champagne for beer yet, but we get a lot of requests throughout the seasons for cans and kegs," she says. "Portland is consistently at the top of the list for beer cities. It makes sense to include this Maine experience in your wedding."

With the official wedding beer at stake, you can be sure the keg choice will be

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one decision in which the groom won't sit idly by. It's easy to imagine a couple going rounds after round over the perfect brew to offer. "I'd want to know what that person's style is, what he or she likes. If there is something one or both of them already enjoy, why not make that happen?" says Par-tin. "We had one couple who offered their two favorites: the groom liked the **Maine Island Trail Ale**, and the bride was a fan of the **Pisces**, our Gose." In much the same way that certain couples offer personalized cocktails at wedding receptions, the beer choice seems designed to tell us something about the happy pair themselves.

Where once oysters and champagne toasts over ocean views encapsulated the ultimate Vacationland wedding, it appears many Maine couples are now opting for kegs and cans. Today, craft beers seem a staple of the state—right up there with Bean boots and whoopie pies. At least, until the Royal Wedding triggers a volte-face toward all things traditional. ■



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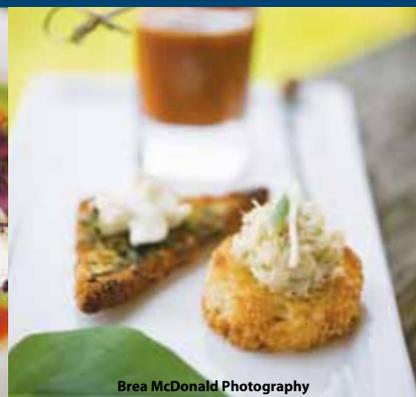
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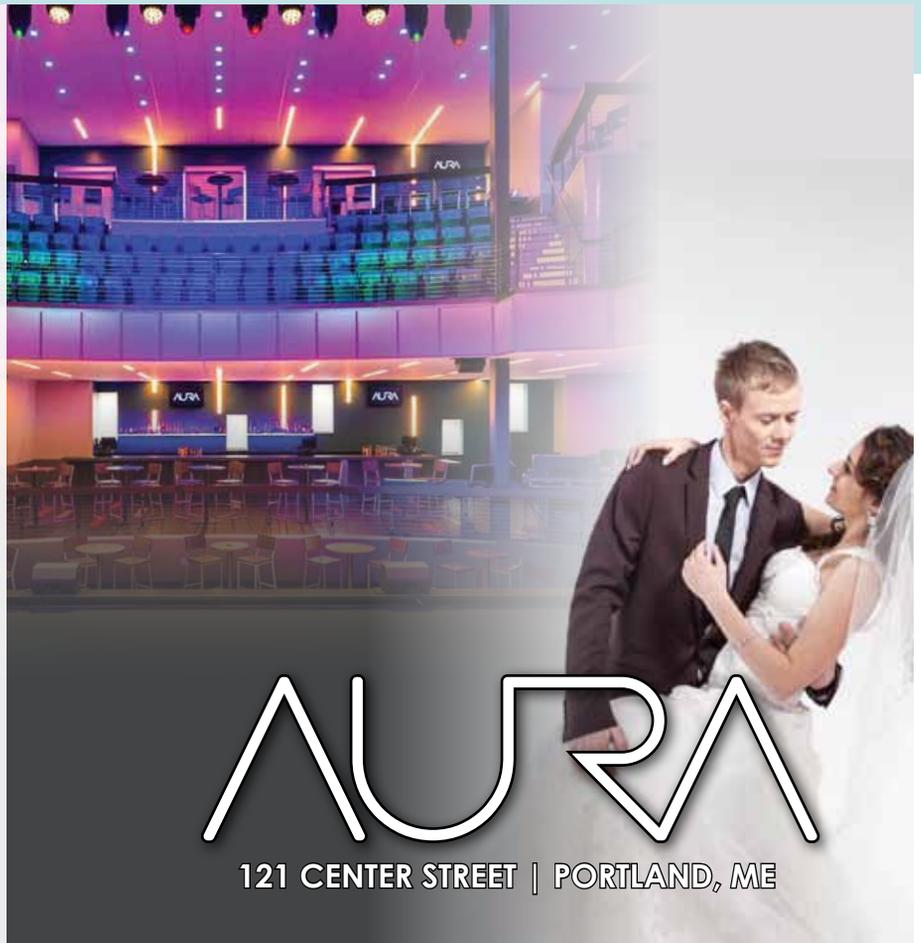
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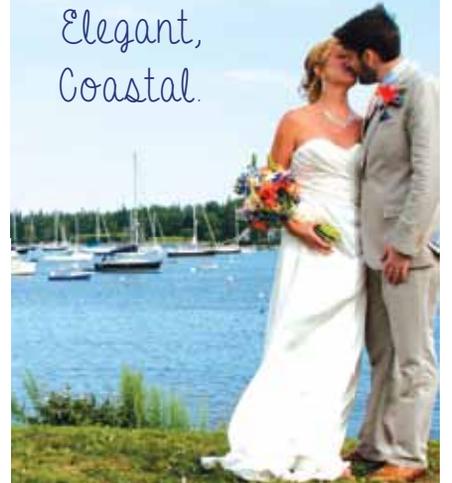
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