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Epicurious Maine

Join us on a journey through Maine’s culinary jungle.

BY SARAH MOORE, MADISON ANDREWS, AND ERIK NEILSON

HUNGRY? There’s almost no reason to stay in and cook when Maine’s food scene refuses to show signs of plateauing in creativity. Media like The New York Times, Bon Appétit, and Thrillist continue to prick their ears in our direction, sniffing the air for fresh wonders from the little city that could. In the following pages, we invite you to consider delicious gossip, emerging trends, and a boggling list of new restaurant launches and exciting culinary events.

The Calendar

JANUARY
12-14 / 19-20 Annual Glacier Ice Bar & Lounge
Sip cocktails at what’s equally the “hottest and coolest” bar on the Maine coast this January at the Annual Glacier Ice Bar & Lounge at the Samoset Resort. It’s the perfect option for a staycation, with bites from Enoteca Wine Bar and live entertainment at La Bella Vita. samosetresort.com
HUNGRY EYE

HAVE YOU HEARD...
Last year, we waxed lyrical about the imminent arrival of Lio, Cara Stadler’s promised launch in the site of the former Styxx nightclub. But nothing happened—it’s been crickets for the last 12 months. “I talked too much about the project out of the gate last time and things didn’t work out on time,” says Stadler. “I had some family issues to deal with alongside running Bao Bao and Tao Yuan. But Lio will open in 2018, in mid-winter. The whole concept has changed. It will still be a wine-focused dining experience, and Chris Peterman [American Sommelier of Maine] is no longer a partner.”

In addition, Stadler will be creating an aquaponic greenhouse attached to Tao Yuan that will begin as “a kind of experiment. We’re going to see if you can have a financially viable model. Year-round produce is one of the challenges the local restaurant industry faces. Greenhouses demand a lot of heat during the winter, and kitchens produce an enormous amount of heat, so we’re working with Harpswell Coastal Academy and Canopy Farm to see if we can grow vegetables and keep fish in a sustainable and economical way. We’ll also open a bakery and pastry shop.”

Stadler isn’t letting her excitement draw her in this time around. “I’m not going to talk about Lio ahead of opening. I’m just going to open it quietly and see what happens.” You heard it here. Keep your eyes on the shopfront at 3 Spring Street. Lio is coming soon.

FLASH AND FLAMES
Familiar faces and new arrivals are popping up across the state with tempting new offerings from the creative minds of Maine’s chefs and restaurateurs.

➽ In 2018, Maine & Loire and Drifters Wife will move into a neighboring space in the Nissen Building that once housed Roustabout. “The new space has a much large bar and kitchen area,” says Orenda Hale. “Chef Ben Jackson will finally have a hood, a gas stove, space for support staff, things most people start out with. Operations will expand, but the ethos of a small local, seasonal menu won’t change.”

➽ Big Fin Poké, Westbrook’s stand-out star of 2016, introduced us to the Hawaiian trend sweeping the West Coast. Bowls of spicy raw tuna with crunchy vegetables and punchy dressing were an instant hit, fuelling lines out the door. Jimmy Liang is building on the poké craze with a brand new location at 29 Western Avenue in South Portland.

➽ Quill Books & Beverage will open in Westbrook under the direction of longtime Lolita bartender Matthew Irving and partner Allison Krczanowski. Situated on Westbrook Common, the cafe/bar will sell a curated selection of used books. “We’ll offer simple foods like sandwiches, salads, and cheese boards with wine and beer four nights a week until 10 p.m.” Krczanowski

B riant Dadaleares is restaurant shopping. The pastry chef, who earned his stripes at Fore Street, Hugo’s, and Central Provisions, plans to open a dessert bar named Gross Confection in downtown Portland in 2018 but has yet to sign a lease. For once, it’s not lack of funds holding a project back. Dadaleares has $35,273, thanks to a successful Kickstarter campaign. He’s one of a several Maine food and drink entrepreneurs who have turned to the online community for financial backing. In the cinema of the delicious, is crowdfunding the latest launching pad for a new generation of restaurateurs?

Dadaleares’s inspiration for his dessert

12-13 Whole Hog Culinary Workshop
This one-of-a-kind master class involves breaking down a whole pig, learning the craft of creating prosciutto, sausage, and other smoked and cured meats, and
bar began with a hail of keystrokes. “I was posting pictures of my desserts online with the caption #gross, a nod to the sarcasm that runs rampant in professional kitchens. I started to get a positive response online, and the idea to open a dessert bar grew.”

Gross Confection will serve a changing seasonal menu of sweet treats, “from large-format desserts for five to six people to individual bites, plus a full bar that will specialise in digestifs.”

Is it really as simple as creating a campaign page to bring your dreams to life? “It’s a full-time job. You need to spend around two months planning everything out before you even go live,” says Dadaleares, who hit his target in October, pledging everything from bon-bons to private parties as incentives to grassroots investors. “People are bombarded by information online. You need to be able to really captivate an audience. The campaign was a full-time job. I hadn’t expected that. You need to constantly work on your online presence, field questions. There were times I wanted to hurl my phone down the stairs.”

Other local businesses have used Kickstarter to take flight in recent years. David Levi launched Vinland in 2013 after raising over $45,000 on the platform, on which he shared a fervent 2,000-word manifesto on his locavore vision. Others include FORK Food Lab, Blake Orchard Juicery, Union Bagel, Bearded Lady’s Jewel Box, Strong Brewing, and the recent target-hitter Stars & Stripes Brewing.

For the tech-savvy, strategic entrepreneur willing to market themselves to the local scene, crowdfunding sites present a diplomatic entryway into the local food scene. No need to schmooze big investors or take out loans, but you will have to create the voice and vision to make your idea in a crowded, quickly diverted space. For those who don’t reach their target in the set time, none of the existing investment pledges will be honored.

“I was very humbled to reach my target,” Dadaleares says. “I remember looking up an investor whose name I didn’t know. It turned out to be a burlesque drag show team in Washington D.C. That was awesome.”
HUNGRY EYE

says. “It feels like there aren’t a lot of options for nights out in Westbrook right now, so we plan to host acoustic nights and poetry readings.”

Leavitt & Sons Deli opened a second location on Kennebec Street a block down from 2017’s unlikely hero, Bayside Bowl. “We built for a neighborhood that hasn’t been built yet!” says owner Peter Leavitt. The deli is popular for its simple, hearty offerings and a strong selection of wine.” You don’t always want a fancy, gourmet sandwich with avocado and such. That’s why my chicken pot pie is so popular.”

Harding Lee Smith is adding more rooms to his culinary mansion with a rumoured second Front Room in Falmouth and continued development to the Mountain Room at Sunday River Ski Resort.

The Marriott Hotel chain AC Hotel will open in April 2018 on 158 Fore Street. Its bar, called the AC Lounge, will function as the “centerpiece and focus of the hotel,” says manager Jeff Lidinsky. “The whole philosophy is fun, trendy, vibrant, and European-inspired. It’s geared toward everything Portland stands for.” Lidinsky just moved to Portland from Chicago.

TRENDING INTO MAINE

For months now, there’s been a great deal of talk about bringing back ‘the neighborhood,’ however local or global. A westward stroll down Congress Street will land you at the new incarnation of The Roma, delighting red-sauce pasta lovers and doubling down on a shot of nostalgia. Venture deeper into the West End, you’ll encounter Cha-val and Little Giant, the second child of Damian Sansonetti and Ilma Lopez of Piccolo, and Briana and Andrew Volk of Portland Hunt + Alpine Club respectively.

Looking eastward, impressively buttery croissants popped up seemingly overnight on the counter at Belleville at One North Street on Munjoy Hill. Baharat brought the Middle East to East Bayside, plating up succulent shawarma and smoky bowls of baba ghanoush. Meanwhile, Washington Avenue showed no sign of slowing its rapid development from industrial outlier to gastronomic destination. One of the area’s original occupants, The Portland Pottery Cafe, now has an alluring after-hours alter ego: Lena’s Italian. The menu is pure comfort food, with spaghetti and meatballs and chicken parm as headliners. Across the street, Boston’s Island Creek Oysters opened a Portland location in the former Creighton’s Flower Market, where they offer fresh, plump local oysters and Spanish-inspired tinned fish in a sleek setting.

There’s really no chance of going thirsty in this neck of the woods. Maine Craft Distilling relocated into the space adjoining Island Creek, allowing for bigger production volumes and the space to host a Sunday Roast dinner series. The Nissen Building, which once pumped out baked goods as the Nissen Baking Co. and now creates more adult concoctions with grain and yeast, hosts Maine & Loire wine shop, Maine Mead Works, Oxbow Brewing, and, most recently, Hardshore Distilling (whose craft gin was named best in 2017 by USA Today).

FOUND IN TRANSLATION

We spotted the emergence of a new breed of Asian restaurants back in October [“New Wave Asian”], and the momentum has yet to slow. Sichuan Kitchen kicked things off in style on New Year’s Day 2017 with fi-
ry broths and authentic dishes from a region of China often underrepresented in Maine. Then Izakaya Minato brought artful Japanese dishes and fusion plates like Udon Vongole, a salty and tasty hybrid of Japanese-Italian cooking, to Washington Avenue. Mami Food Truck, of Japanese comfort food fame, found a brick-and-mortar home on Fore Street, just a few feet away from a healthful Thai eatery, Cheevitdee. Speaking of food trucks, Hakka Me brought Cantonese to the streets of Portland, right alongside the Cambodian newcomer Nom Bai Street Kitchen. Even Boda got in on the mobile action, selling grilled quail eggs and lemongrass beef skewers from a tiny window that managed to end up wherever the crowds were. What else? Công Từ Bột made diners sit up and take notice with an authentic approach to Vietnamese cuisine in a thoroughly modern setting. The husband-and-wife team at Yo-bo brought us Korean charm with Bibimbap bowls and local ingredients, and Sun Bakery & Restaurant quietly opened doors just two days after Thanksgiving.

OK 2018, let’s see what you’ve got.
Consider the humble bagel. A grab-and-go staple of everyday life, it might seem an unlikely food hero. **Mister Bagel** set the bar locally in 1977 with Brooklyn native Rick Hartglass’s first shop on Forest Avenue. Over 40 years later, we’re experiencing the second coming of the old-school Jewish treat. Here’s hoping the trend doesn’t go the way of New York’s multi-colored, sugar-sprinkled ‘unicorn bagels’...

“I think what we’re seeing now is a modern interpretation. Bagels today are a lot lighter and less dense, because that’s the taste now,” says Audrey Farber as she serenely plait a **challah** in the sun-washed second floor of **Fork Food Labs** on a weekday morning. Farber launched **Bubbe & Bestemor** baking company last year to celebrate her Ashkenazi Jewish and Norwegian heritage. Hailing from New Jersey, she moved to Maine aged 12 with her family, including her father, a fervent bagel fan.

“He’s doing a taste test of every bagel in Maine. He says they’re all good but not quite right. We think of the New York bagel like the New York slice—as the benchmark—but I actually don’t like a lot of the recipes from the iconic bagel makers. I’m a nerd for the traditional recipes and methods. It’s a matter of taste.”

Looking like a slice of 1970s Lower East Side New York, **Rose Foods** on Forest Avenue (formerly home to BreaLu cafe) is certainly tapping into our faith in the New-York-style bagel experience. “I developed the recipe over the winter in my kitchen,” says Chad Conley, who also owns the popular **Palace Diner** in Biddeford. “I worked hard to develop the right texture: a crisp bite to the exterior and a light chewiness.”

Conley grew up down the street from Rose Foods and recalls when dining out in the area involved a trip to Olive Garden. He fell for the idea of a traditional-style bagel shop while traveling to New York and Vancouver. Creations like the Luxe Lox–Nova lox, salmon caviar, and lox cream cheese–eaten in the tiny, tiled deli-style shop–will almost transport you to downtown Manhattan. As will the price tag, $16.

Elsewhere, Lewiston bakery **Forage Market** will expand into the former Creighton’s Flower Market at 123 Washington Avenue. The bakery’s fire-blistered bagels have been ranked one of the best in the country by *Saveur* magazine. Nearby, **Union Bagel** announced it will open a second, larger location on Veranda Street to meet growing demand from wholesalers, though they’ll keep their cozy storefront on Cumberland Avenue. In Biddeford, **Rover Bagels** added to the city’s ever-expanding ros-
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Enter Highroller Lobster Company, which opened its cherry-red doors on 104 Exchange Street in December 2017. The jump from sidewalk cart to sit-down eatery was somewhat spontaneous. “Initially, a permanent space was not the dream at all,” co-owner Andy Gerry says. “We had a lot of tourists who’d seek us out, thinking we were a restaurant. And the local demand keeps getting higher and higher.” The new space, a cheerful red-and-white refuge complete with old-school booths and an industrial bar, enables Highroller to serve up fun and fresh fare featuring Maine’s favorite crustacean all year long. “We think of our food as the everyman’s lobster,” Gerry says. “A lot of places put lobster on a pedestal, but we have fun with it.” Dishes like the lobster cheese crisp taco and the lobby pop (a seafood version of a corndog) have an almost cult-like following among Portland residents. Of their decision to open a brick-and-mortar spot, Gerry declares, “Lobster rolls are no longer seasonal.”

The once gaudy exterior of 3 Buoys on Washington Avenue now stands whitewashed and empty, awaiting its reincarnation as Bob’s Clam Hut. It’s been all quiet on the eastern front since owner Michael Landgarten announced plans to expand beyond Kittery a year ago. “We’re definitely still coming to Portland,” says Landgarten. “We’ll open in April or May. It’s going to be an urban Bob’s. We’re going to sell classic favorites like lobster rolls and fried clams but there will be more of a late night feel.”

Migrate south for The Commissary in Scarborough, owned and operated by Bite into Maine, one of Portland’s original food truck success stories. “The Commissary was the working kitchen for our trucks,” says co-owner Sarah Sutton. “We wanted to have the capability to work year-round, so we opened it up to customers.” The venue is modest—a take-out counter and 12 dining seats—but their menu has grown. “Guests can enjoy our famous lobster rolls, plus grown-up grilled cheese and chowder.”

Keep your eyes peeled for the long-awaited arrival of Maine Lobster Shack, which has teased its arrival on 425 Fore Street since 2015. There’s no official opening date as yet, but CFO Michael Michalski is currently working with contractors to convert the 1,800-foot space that sits next to Gelato Fiasco. The delay may have to do with tax deposit issues in California by Old Port Lobster Shack owner Russell Deutsch, a Mainer who is California-based.

-By Madison Andrews
“Maine’s 2013 Woman-Owned Business of the Year”

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88 Main Street
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90 Maine Street
Brunswick, ME 04011

At the Vault
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Lewiston, ME 04240

At Tiller & Rye
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HUNGRY EYE

Company, the 17th Annual Portland Symphony Orchestra wine dinner will be held this year at the Harraseeket Inn in Freeport. Look for culinary creations from Paola Laboa (Solo Italiano), Sara Jenkins (Nina June), Ilma Lopez (Piccolo, Chaval), Sam Hayward (Fore Street, Scales) and Troy Mains (Harraseeket Inn). portlandsymphony.org

24 Annual Chili Chowder Challenge
Recognized as the biggest and longest lasting chili and chowder competition in Maine, the 17th Annual Chili Chowder Challenge is a fun- and food-filled family event with a charitable component. Proceeds from the event benefit the Children’s Center. Beyond the main event of tasting the state’s best chili and chowder from local restaurants and caterers, guests can enjoy crafts, a silent auction, and live music. childrensctr.org

25 Maine Maple Sunday
Get an up-close glimpse at how Maine maple syrup producers create liquid gold on Maine Maple Sunday—always the fourth Sunday in March. Bring your sweet tooth! mainemapleproducers.com

25 Eat the Heat Chili Cookoff
Be the judge at Sunday River’s annual chili cookoff, where local restaurants vie for the title of the Champion of Chili. This year’s twist? Individuals without a restaurant affiliation are invited to compete. The Firefighters’ Race, live music, and a Bloody Mary Bar from Shipyard Brew Haus tops it off to deliver you a perfect Sunday. sundayriver.com

APRIL

6 Maine Brewfest: Spring Session
After a day of skiing and snowboarding on the mountain, switch gears at night at Sunday River’s second annual brew festival, highlighting 100 different beers and ciders from 40 local brewers. The event, which kicks off the mountain’s Spring Festival Weekend, includes plenty to eat and live music to rock out to. sundayriver.com

8 Chocolate Lover’s Fling
Get your fill of chocolatey goodness at the 2018 Chocolate Lover’s Fling. With desserts from Standard Baking Company, the Holy Donut, Izzy’s Cheesecakes and more, there’s no heading home hungry from this annual event (now in its 33rd year!). chocolateloversfling.org

26 Gulf of Maine Seafood Celebration
Give a toast to the bounty of the ocean at the 5th annual Gulf of Maine Seafood Celebration. Mingle with marine scientists, local fishermen, and more while tasting an endless array of dishes highlighting the best our waters have to offer—it’s educational and delicious. gmri.org

MAY

11 Toast on the Coast
Spend an evening overlooking beautiful Casco Bay while enjoying gourmet fare at the 7th annual Toast on the Coast. Held each year at the Ocean Gateway terminal on Portland’s historic waterfront, guests can expect to sample fine wines and plenty of food pairings, and proceeds always go to a good cause. Tickets are limited, so secure yours today! toastonthecoast.com

19 8 Great Plates
Beer and bites for a good cause, 8 Great Plates brings together eight local restaurants for a night of beer and food pairing, with all proceeds going to charity. allagash.com

JUNE

4-9 Kennebunkport Festival
A week-long celebration of area chefs and craft beverage producers and distillers, it’s the perfect way to enjoy the spirit of Kennebunkport—one unforgettable bite and sip at a time. kennebunkportfestival.com

10 Old Port Festival
Kick off your summer with the 45th annual Old Port Festival. With over 250 vendor booths offering an eclectic mix of food, music and art, this rain-or-shine event draws thousands of attendees to Portland’s downtown from 11 a.m.—5 p.m. portlandmaine.com/old-port-festival

21-23 Greek Festival
A 3-day event that draws over 10,000 people each year, the annual Greek Food Festival is a family-friendly Portland tradition. Come for the spanakopita, lamb souvlaki, and loukoumades—stay for the live music and traditional dancing! holytrinityportland.org

23 Allagash Street Fair
Industrial Way becomes a veritable festival each year at the annual Allagash Street Fair. A collaboration between area restaurants and benchmark breweries from Maine and beyond, it’s one of the finest ways to soak up some sun and suds this summer. allagash.com

23 Maine Whoopie Pie Festival
Fans of Maine’s official state treat will be in seventh heaven at the 2018 Maine Whoopie Pie Festival. With samples of countless different interpretations of the classic Maine treat to choose from, it’s the ultimate education on all things “whoopie.” mainewhoopiepiefestival.com

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“ENJOY YOUR BEER—THAT’S AN ORDER!” SAYS BRAD NADEAU, FOUNDER OF STARS & STRIPES BREWING, A VETERAN-OWNED-AND-OPERATED COMPANY THAT PLANS TO OPEN A BREWERY AND TAPROOM IN PORTLAND IN EARLY 2018. THE MILITARY-THEMED BREWERY, WHICH HIT ITS $20,000 KICKSTARTER CAMPAIGN TARGET IN DECEMBER [SEE “CROWDSOURCING A DREAM”], WILL DONATE A PORTION OF ITS PROCEEDS TO VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS. “OUR NAME SAYS IT ALL. IT’S PATRIOTIC,” SAYS NADEAU, WHO SERVED IN THE U.S. MARINE CORPS.

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BEYOND PORTLAND, NEWCOMER NUTS AND BOLTS BREWING PLANS TO SET UP SHOP IN BIDDEFORD BY SPRING, WHILE BRICKYARD HOLLOW BREWING WILL OPEN A TAPROOM IN YARMOUTH. LONE PINE BREWING RECENTLY PURCHASED SPACE IN GORHAM TO INCREASE THEIR PRODUCTION.

BUT IT’S NOT ALL HOPS. BLUE LOBSTER WINE COMPANY, HAVING MASTERED THE CRAFT OF CANNED WINE, PLANS TO FORGE AHEAD WITH A TASTING ROOM IN PORTLAND. “OUR ROSÉ AND BAYSIDE BLEND HAVE BEEN REALLY WELL RECEIVED AROUND TOWN. WE’RE STOKED,” SAYS OWNER CHRIS GAMBLE. “WE’RE CURRENTLY SAMPLING WINES THAT WE PLAN TO BRING INTO OUR EAST BAYSIDE FACILITY TO HAVE AVAILABLE BY SPRING.” —BY MADISON ANDREWS

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**Sazerac North**

Mardi Gras staple Sazerac Rye may be a New Orleans classic, but the Louisiana whiskey still travels to your glass via Lewiston. Boston Brands, an affiliate of Sazerac Co., bottles the liquor, along with Fireball Cinnamon Whisky and Barton Vodka, at its Saratoga Street plant in “The Lew.” The company just announced a $1M expansion in 2018, according to Bangor Daily News. That’s a lot of extra Sazerac flowing through Maine.

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**Celebration**

A fitting host city for such a celebration, Belfast presents its 12th annual Maine Celtic Celebration. Music, dancing, and feats of strength mark the occasion, but none compare with the remarkable cheese-rolling championship. Show up and cheer on the cheese-chasers...or the wheel of Dubliner. mainecelticcelebration.com

20-22 Yarmouth Clam Festival

![COURTESY PHOTO](image-url)
A Maine summer tradition ever since 1965, the Yarmouth Clam Festival draws thousands of people each year for live music, arts & crafts and—of course—as many clams as you can put back. Don’t miss the Carnival on the Midway! clamfestival.com

22 Open Farm Day
Grow your sense of connection with Maine farmers on Open Farm Day, which gives families the chance to visit working farmers throughout all 16 Maine counties. It’s one of the most educational events of the year, with many farms offering plenty of tasty bites of locally grown meats and produce along the way. maine.gov

29 Festival of Nations
Perhaps the most culturally diverse event to take place in Maine all year, the Festival of Nations in Deering Oaks Park is not to be missed. Expect a wide variety of authentic, traditional cuisines from around the world, as well as plenty of live music, dancing and other festivities. visitportland.com

August

1-5 Maine Lobster Festival
Lobster lovers have been flocking to Rockland since 1947 for the Maine Lobster Festival, an ode to the crustacean complete with cooking contests, carnival rides, and plenty of culinary creations to try. All of the proceeds are donated back to communities in the Midcoast area each year, which makes the MLF one of the most guilt-free indulgence events of the year. mainelobsterfestival.com

4 Picnic Music and Arts Festival
Bringing together some of the finest artists Maine has to offer, the Picnic Music and Arts Festival is a must-attend event for anyone interested in supporting the local artist economy. With a heavy food truck presence, there’s no way you’re going home hungry.

10 Acadian Festival
Celebrate Acadian culture and history at the 41st annual Acadian Festival in Madawaska, ME. It might be a bit of a drive, but we promise the poutine and “baby crawling contest” will be worth it. acadianfestival.com

17 Maine Highland Games and Scottish Festival
Get your fill of haggis and Scotch whiskey at the 2018 Maine Highland Games and Scottish Festival. Hosted by the St. Andrews Society of Maine, it’s the event of the year for anyone with an interest in Scottish culture. Yes—there will be bagpipes. mainehighlandgames.org

18-19 St. Peter’s Church Annual Italian Bazaar
Classic Italian food, street games, and tons of family fun characterize the St. Peter’s Church Annual Italian Bazaar. Don’t leave without a sausage sandwich! italianheritagecenter.com

25 Wells Chili-Fest
Fully sanctioned by the International Chili Society, the Wells Chili-Fest is a serious competition. Contestants will compete in various categories, including chili, chili verde, and salsa. Don’t forget the antacids! wellschilifest.com
How can you entice diners off the street and into your restaurant? A slice of light might work. Portland bars and restaurants are bringing back the retro appeal of neon signs with the help of artist David Johansen, also known as Neon Dave. Rose Foods, Sister’s Gourmet Deli, Hot Suppa, BGR Bar, and Blake Orchard (left) have all recently commissioned glowing artworks. “Neon has always waxed and waned through our cultural aesthetic,” says Johansen. “There were waves, sometimes lasting well over 10 years, roughly in the 1920s, 1950s, 1980s and, I would say, now. Social media is one thing playing a role in the current resurgence of neon’s popularity in the commercial and fine art worlds. Neon makes an impact both ‘in real life’ and on screen and is something regularly shared, posted, liked, and remembered.” Keep an eye out for his futuristic designs as you eat and drink your way around town. Think of it as a game of neon bingo.
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OCTOBER
6 Chowdah Challenge
Freeport’s tastiest event of the year, the Chowdah Challenge brings together offerings from area restaurants, all clamoring for first plate. With all proceeds benefiting Freeport Community Services programs, it’s a win-win for everyone involved—and a tasty one, at that. fcsmaine.org
14 Maine Cheese Festival
Sample the finest fromage Maine has to offer from over 25 creameries at the Maine Cheese Festival. It’s an excellent opportunity to meet your local cheesemakers, learn more about the process, and taste some of the most complex cheeses in the state. mainecheeseguild.org
18-21 Harvest on the Harbor
Harvest on the Harbor—Portland’s working waterfront and celebrated food scene are the beating heart of the city, which is why perhaps why a proposal to create The Market at the Maine State Pier has put us in such a state of excitement. “The market is a proposed concept at this point,” says Jessica Grondin, Director of Communications for City of Portland. “It was just unveiled at the last Economic Development
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DIGITAL DETOX

If you’re vacationing to a remote location or simply steering clear of your inbox for a weekend, you might have thought about grabbing a magazine or three. Studies have shown that readers both retain information and recognize branding through printed material much more than through digital media. Plus, you never have to worry about forgetting a power cord.

Cummings Printing is a third-generation family-owned company specializing in printing high-quality, short-run publications. At each phase of the print process, we provide a human-touch that is unmatched by the competition. Let us help you create a publication your readers can escape with.

Thirsty? Drink Events Across the Year

Rising Tide Brewing Company, Brewing Up Weddings, 103 Fox St. Explore Rising Tide’s new venue while enjoying fresh local craft beer and meeting vendors, Jan. 17. 370-2337

Cross Insurance Arena, 1 Civic Center Sq. Portland on Tap, two sampling sessions of over 120 craft beers from more than 60 breweries, plus live music, food, and local vendors, Jan. 27. 775-3458

The Clown, 659 US Rte 1, York. Free tastings on the second Friday of each month, 5-8pm. 351-3068

Wine Tasting at LeRoux Kitchen, Join LeRoux Kitchen for nibbles, great conversation and a complimentary wine tasting, featuring a different theme each month.

Maine Brew Bus, Thirty Thursday, Beerunch! (Fridays and Saturdays), Breaking Brews (Saturdays), Friday Night Flights. Hop on the bus and visit three local breweries. 200-9111


Rosemont Markets, Portland and Yarmouth. Two to three free tastings and events each month on Fridays. 774-8129

Saturday Bubbles, TIOA, 327 Commercial St. Grab a glass of Prosecco for $5 and enjoy on the patio or in the lounge, every Saturday from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. 808-8840

Sweetgrass Winery & Distillery, 324 Fore St. Maine-made wine and spirit tastings daily. 761-8446

West End Deli, 545 Congress St. Monthly beer and wine tastings. 874-6426

The Wine Seller, 15 Tilson Ave., Rockland. Free tastings twice monthly. 594-2621

By Madison Andrews

28 Goods from the Woods
Oxbow Brewing Company’s annual celebration features a huge variety of rare beer, gourmet food from some of Portland’s finest chefs, live music, and art. Every attendee is sent home with a commemorative Oxbow glass and two very special bottles of Oxbow beer.

oxbowbeer.com

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NOVEMBER

17-18 Maine Harvest Festival
Experience the best of “farm fresh” at the Maine Harvest Festival at the Cross Insurance center in Bangor. A culmination of brewers, fiber artisans, chefs and farmers, it’s an ideal way to sample and learn more about the Maine growing season.

maineharvestfestival.com

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Dream Spots

What’s stirring beneath the surface of Portland’s notable empty spaces? The former Frame Shop on 184 State Street, The Schwartz Building at 600-606 Congress Street, and the former Sahara Club at 135 Washington Avenue are all begging to be transformed into the next it spot. Broker John Hatcher of The Hatcher Group keeps his ear to the ground: ‘The Frame Shop is up for rent right now. A short while ago, someone wanted to open a photography studio there, but it didn’t work out. It’s a shame,” The Schwartz Building, which, like The Frame Shop, is owned by landlord Geoffrey Rice, has long stood derelict despite its killer location facing Congress Square. “Again, there’s not much progress to report,” says Hatcher. Encouraged by the Friends of Congress Square Park Committee, Rice has contributed to Little Village art collective to install a charming “Arcs & Angles” light installation in the four-story building’s windows until February 1. “I’d love to relocate into that space,” says neighbor and Kurier owner Jasmine Clayton. “I’m looking to expand, and it’s an incredible spot. It would be great to see it occupied.”

In 2017, White Cap Coffee Co. announced plans to open a cold-brew coffee tasting room in the former Sahara Club on Washington Avenue, but a ‘For Lease’ sign has since reappeared in the window. Will 2018 be the year these three dream spots become destinations on our cultural map?

December

1-9 Kennebunkport Christmas Prelude
The Kennebunkport Christmas Prelude spans more than a full week to bring you near endless holiday cheer. Enjoy shopping, dining and plenty of merriness, including Santa on a lobster boat. christmasprelude.com

8 Champagne and Caviar Tasting at Browne Trading Company
Want to get a taste of the finer side of life without cashing-in a portion of your savings? Sample numerous different examples of caviar, fine sparkling wines and other luxury treats at the inimitable Browne Trading Company on Commercial St. from 1-3 p.m. brownetrading.com

Dream Spots

Cold Bodies Wanted,
Warm up with our Winter Sale

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