

WHAT DOES A REINVIGORATED
DOWNTOWN MEAN FOR WATERVILLE?

THE NICEST LUNCH YOU
CAN HAVE ON A PIG FARM

Plus!
8 SUPER
SCENIC BACK
ROADS

THE MAGAZINE OF MAINE | SEPTEMBER 2023

Down East

BEST of Maine

Cod serenata, from Papi. See page 59.

60 SAVVY
READER
FAVES!

BEST OF MAINE

OUR ANNUAL
ROUNDUP OF MAINE'S
BEST EVERYTHING: FOOD
TRUCKS TO FLORISTS, DINERS
TO DENTISTS, LODGING TO
LOBSTER ROLLS. MORE READERS
THAN EVER CAST VOTES FOR
THEIR FAVORITES — HOW
DID YOURS DO?

16th
DOWN EAST
ANNUAL

DOWN EAST READERS FIRST VOTED IN A WRITE-IN ROUND, FROM WHICH THE TOP-FIVE VOTE GETTERS IN EACH CATEGORY BECAME FINALISTS (GIVE OR TAKE, IN THE EVENT OF TIES). THEN, SOME 10,000 VOTERS PICKED THE WINNERS IN A MULTIPLE-CHOICE FINAL ROUND THIS SUMMER. HERE AND THERE, WE'VE SPOTLIGHTED SOME NOTABLE READER PICKS — A FEW FROM THIS YEAR'S BUMPER CROP OF FIRST-TIME FINALISTS, PLUS A HANDFUL OF BEST OF MAINE STALWARTS THAT MAKE THE LIST YEAR AFTER YEAR.

TARA RICE



Say hi to hydrangeas at Thomaston's Laura Flowers & Wine, one of this year's Best Florist nominees.

FOOD & DRINK

LOBSTER ROLL

Red's Eats
Wiscasset

FINALISTS

Bite into Maine
Cape Elizabeth,
Portland,
Scarborough

Claws

Rockland

The Highroller Lobster Co.

Portland

The Lobster Haul

Damariscotta

McLoons Lobster Shack

South Thomaston

DISTILLERY

Maine Craft Distilling
Portland

FINALISTS

**Barren's Distillery +
Restaurant**
Camden

Batson River Brewing & Distilling

Kennebunk,
Portland, Wells

Cold River

Freeport

Split Rock Distilling

Newcastle

Wild Bevy Distilling

Wells

SPOTLIGHT: FREQUENT FLIER

Dragonfly Farm & Winery

1069 Mullen Rd., Stetson. 207-296-2226.
mainewinegrower.com

A few reader picks in the winery category have, shall we say, been aging for several years: Cellardoor, Maine's largest winery, has won for eight years running. Sweetgrass, with its Union farm HQ and hopping Old Port tasting room (the pandemic, sadly, nixed a Kennebunk location) is a perennial finalist. Perhaps the more surprising stalwart, though, is Dragonfly, in tiny Stetson, 20 miles west of Bangor. Opened in 2004, the vineyard and winery changed hands in 2020 (a potato-farming family from nearby Exeter branched out) and is in its fourth consecutive year as a BOM pick. Its fans love the firepit tables on the outdoor tasting deck (a pandemic adaptation that stuck). On hot summer days, they seem also to love that some fruit wines come in slushy form (including in to-go pouches). And admirers of German-style wines will love grabbing a bottle of Edelweiss, a sweet, crisp white made with estate grapes. *Zum wohl!*

WINERY

Cellardoor Winery
Lincolnton, Portland

FINALISTS

Dragonfly Farm & Winery
Stetson

Oyster River
Winegrowers
Warren

Sweetgrass Winery
and Distillery
Union, Portland

WillowsAwake Winery
Leeds

FOOD TRUCK

The Zack Shack
Rockland

FINALISTS

Mow's Munchies
Raymond

Mr. Tuna

Brunswick, Portland

The Muthah Truckah

Portland

Taco the Town

Brunswick

ICE CREAM

Gifford's
Various locations

FINALISTS

Dorman's Dairy Dream
Thomaston

Fielder's Choice Ice
Cream
Various locations

Freya's
Rockport

Round Top
Damariscotta

LOBSTER SHACK

McLoons Lobster Shack
South Thomaston

FINALISTS

Five Islands Lobster Co.
Georgetown

The Lobster Shack at Two Lights

Cape Elizabeth

Red's Eats

Wiscasset

Young's Lobster Pound

Belfast

BREAKFAST/ BRUNCH SPOT

Moody's Diner
Waldoboro

FINALISTS

Home Kitchen Café
Rockland

The Hoot

Northport

Peace Love & Waffles

Dover-Foxcroft

Terry & Maxine's

Turner

BAKERY

Wild Oats Bakery & Cafe
Brunswick

FINALISTS

Atlantic Baking Co.
Rockland

Barn Door Baking
Company
Damariscotta

The Italian Bakery
Lewiston

Laugh Loud Smile Big
Camden



SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER

Freya's

7 Main St., Rockport. freyasicecream.com

It's been open just over a year, but already little Freya's feels like a must-stop for dessert devotees traveling up the coast. After moving from Colorado to the midcoast a couple of summers back, married proprietors Therese Inman and Garrett Reppenhagen renovated an out-of-the-way corner of the mansard-roofed 1856 Union Hall (it was a darkroom back when Maine Media Workshops occupied the building). Among other things, they put a deck out back with a nice view of the lobsterboats bobbing in Rockport Harbor. It's a scenic spot to attack a dish (or house-made waffle cone) of Inman's luscious gelatos or sorbettos, of which a dozen or so options stock the cooler. On a recent visit, the strawberry sage balsamic and lemon mascarpone, with blueberry swirls, were the MVPs. Freya's also has a small menu of sweet and savory crepes and (rejoice!) is the all-too-rare sweet shop that also pours beer and wine.



SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER

Papi

18 Exchange St., Portland. 207-808-8008.
papiportland.com

Not a bummer in the bunch among the year's best new restaurant nominees, from category winner Salt Wharf, with its wozza harborside site (see page 64), to Rodney's, an ambitious hotel-restaurant makeover in Presque Isle. But the spot we've told the most friends about this year is Papi, the Old Port's stylish Puerto Rican gastro cantina. We'd love to say we were won over after the first sip of the Bad Bunny cocktail — rum, amaretto, coconut ice cream, and pineapple syrup, with Mexican pepperleaf foam — that beverage director LyAnna Sanabria (left) handed over. Or upon the first bite of piquant pork sliders with plantains, crispy yuca fries, or perfectly pliant little empanadas from the kitchen, run by executive chef Ronnie Medlock (right). But in truth, we were sold on first glimpse of the dining room (run by manager Gene Valentin, center), a dead ringer for a low-key elegant *taberna* on some San Juan side street.

DAVE WADDELL

BEST OF MAINE 16th ANNUAL DOWNEAST

RYAN DAVID BROWN

NEW RESTAURANT

Salt Wharf
Camden

FINALISTS

Foda Restaurant
Appleton

Obscura Cafe &
Drinkery
Lewiston

Papi
Portland

Rodney's at 436 Main
Presque Isle

BAR

King Eider's Pub
Damariscotta

FINALISTS

The Annex by Side
Street Cafe
Bar Harbor

Blyth & Burrows
Portland

Corner Bar
Rangeley

Lucky Betty's
Camden

MARKET FOR SEAFOOD

Harbor Fish Market
Portland

FINALISTS
Cantrell Seafood
Topsham

Delano Seafood Market
Waldoboro

Graffam Bros.
Seafood Market
Rockport

Jess's Market
Rockland

MAINE-MADE
CHOCOLATE
Wilbur's of Maine
Freeport, Brunswick

FINALISTS

Bixby Chocolate
Rockland

Haven's Candies
Westbrook, Portland

Len Libby Candies
Scarborough

Ragged Coast
Chocolates
Westbrook

COFFEE ROASTER

Coffee By Design
Portland

FINALISTS
Carrabassett Coffee
Company
Kingfield

Coffee On The Porch
Rockport

Rock City Coffee
Roasters
Rockland

Wicked Joe Organic
Coffees
Topsham

BURGER
Owls Head General
Store
Owls Head

FINALISTS

Ancho Honey
Tenants Harbor

Coals
Portland

Mow's Munchies
Raymond

Newcastle Publick
House
Newcastle

HARD CIDER
Ricker Hill Hard Cider
Turner

FINALISTS
Absolom Cider
Company
Winthrop

SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER

Ruckus Donuts

377 Main St., Rockland. 207-975-4388. ruckusdonuts.com
It's a sign of a good shop when you have to get up early on a weekend to score a donut, and so it is at Ruckus, which opened in downtown Rockland in 2021 after an infancy as a pandemic pop-up. Baker Todd Bross turns out yeasted brioche donuts — airier than cake donuts, but Ruckus's are hefty, four inches across — in a bonkers array of adventurous flavors and kaleidoscopic designs. Summer faves include strawberry shortcake, with a pile of local strawberries and vanilla Italian buttercream sandwiched inside, and lemondrop, with lemon-shortbread cookie crumbles, lemon buttercream, and a drippy vanilla glaze. Whim flavors can seem like Instagram bait — donuts coated in breakfast cereal! stuffed with marshmallow fluff and encrusted with graham crackers! — but we have yet to try one that hasn't left us ooing, aahing, and sticky fingered.

HOME & GARDEN



Down East ran its first "Best of Maine" feature in 2008, although the mag didn't conduct its first reader poll until two years later. It's been an annual tradition since.

BEST OF MAINE
16th ANNUAL
DOWNEAST

DÉCOR SHOP

Nest
Brunswick

FINALISTS

COVE by Knickerbocker Group
Boothbay, Portland

Freckle Salvage Company
Winthrop

GoeyGump Designs
Portland

Home Remedies
Portland

The Rusticators Emporium
Hallowell

BUILDER
Knickerbocker Group
Boothbay, Portland

FINALISTS
Harbor Builders Associates
St. George

Houses and Barns by John Libby
Freeport

Phi Builders + Architects
Rockport

Taylor-Made Builders
Northport

GARDEN CENTER/NURSERY
Moose Crossing Garden Center
Waldoboro

FINALISTS
Broadway Gardens Greenhouses
South Portland, Westbrook

Longfellow's Greenhouses
Manchester

Plants Unlimited
Rockport

Skillins Greenhouses
Brunswick, Cumberland, Falmouth

SPOTLIGHT: FREQUENT FLIER

GoeyGump Designs

1026 Forest Ave, Portland. 207-536-1002. goeygumpdesigns.com

A motley, surprisingly chic little shop with a memorable name, GoeyGump is a repeat nominee in the gift-store category and, at the same time, one of readers' half-dozen faves for décor. Reformed pharma rep Allison Oldham opened her first store in Deering Center in 2019, then upgraded two years later to her two-story, 8,500-square-foot digs on Forest Avenue. It's a welcoming space with a modern farmhouse vibe, and it's full of treasures, from kitchenware to gorgeous ceramics to paper goods to cute pillows and throws. Lots of pastels and Maine-y patterns, lots of beachy and nautical designs. Oldham's first love is restoring old furniture, and she's into embellishing ("goey gumping," as her family called it when she was a kid, glamming out her art projects). You'll find some great vintage-detailed pieces in the shop, which also hosts workshops for DIYers.

TARA RICE

ARCHITECT
Knickerbocker Group
Boothbay, Portland

FINALISTS
44 North Architects
Newcastle

Barrett Made
Portland

Maple Street Design Studio
Camden

Opal
Belfast

FURNITURE STORE
Dow Furniture
Waldoboro

FINALISTS
Chilton Furniture
Freeport

COVE by Knickerbocker Group
Boothbay, Portland

FX Marcotte Furniture
Lewiston

Thos. Moser
Freeport

Youngs Furniture
Portland

HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE

Hammond Lumber Company
Various locations

FINALISTS
Ames True Value Hardware & Supply
Wiscasset

Damariscotta Hardware
Damariscotta

Kittery Ace Hardware
Kittery

Rankin's Hardware & Building
Camden, Hope

FLORIST
Shelley's Flowers & Gifts
Waldoboro

FINALISTS
Blais Flowers & Garden Center
Lewiston

Flaura Flowers & Wine
Thomaston

Flowers by Hoboken
Rockland

Seasons Downeast Designs
Rockport

SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER

Flaura Flowers & Wine

185 Main St., Thomaston. 207-354-5006. flauradesigns.com
The midcoast comes up big in the florist category, not least with category winner Shelley's Flowers & Gifts, in Waldoboro, currently celebrating its 40th (!) year in business. On the other end of the spectrum is Thomaston's Flaura, opened just last year by Aura Ellis (below) and more of a floral lifestyle boutique than a traditional florist. No Teleflora orders or deliveries here, but plenty of dazzling bouquets, alongside topiaries and potted plants, a few cute gardening goods, local chocolates and treats, and a smartly curated selection of wines (with a surprising number of non-alcoholic options). Ellis sources her blooms from her own family farm, in Cushing, along with other local growers, like Warren's On the Mountain Farm. When the sun's shining through the big front windows of Main Street's historic Union Block, it's impossible not to step in here and feel cheery.



SHOPPING & STYLE

TOY STORE

Island Treasure Toys
Bath, Freeport,
Kennebunk,
Yarmouth

WOMEN'S BOUTIQUE

The Grasshopper Shop
Rockland

FINALISTS

Cosmic
Presque Isle

Eastcraft

Lisbon Falls

House of Logan

Bath, Boothbay
Harbor, Camden

Women Of Substance

Damariscotta

FINALISTS

Daytrip Jr.
Kennebunkport

Out on a Whimsey Toys

Belfast

Planet Toys

Camden

Treehouse Toys

Portland

SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER

Cosmic

445 Main St., Presque Isle. [facebook.com/cosmic207](https://www.facebook.com/cosmic207)

Readers in the County (or just passing through) fell for owner Matt Nadeau's bohemian mash-up of a clothing boutique and metaphysical dry-goods shop. A finalist in the women's boutique category, Cosmic opened in downtown Presque Isle last August, offering lounge-y basics, flowy patterned separates, summer dresses, and more — alongside crystals, candles, incense, and other New Age-y art and gifts. For the racks, Nadeau looks for pieces "unique enough that you can layer them and mix-and-match them, definitely boho-hippie vibes." And if shoppers come for apparel and stay for some chakra stones, he's into it. "People come in for clothes, then they're pulled towards the jewelry or novelty socks or a tarot deck," Nadeau says, "to something you don't see every day."

BARGAIN STORE

Renys
Various locations

FINALISTS

Freeport Community Services Thrift Shop
Freeport

Heavenly Threads Thrift Shop

Camden

Marden's

Various locations

Miles in Motion Thrift Shop

Damariscotta

GIFT SHOP

The Grasshopper Shop
Rockland

FINALISTS

Daytrip Society
Kennebunkport

GoeyGump Designs

Portland

Home Ingredients

Kennebunkport

Maine Micro Artisans

Gorham

Merkaba Sol

Augusta

Sonny's Museum & Rock Shop

Augusta

SHOE STORE

Lamey Wellehan Shoes
Various locations

FINALISTS

Colburn Shoe Store
Belfast

Renys

Various locations

Selby Shoes Etc

South Portland

Super Shoes

Various locations

CAR DEALER (USED)

Charlie's Motor Mall
Augusta

FINALISTS

Lee Auto Malls
Various locations

Mid-Knight Auto Body

Rockland

Norm's Used Cars

Wiscasset

The Hight Family of Dealerships

Skowhegan,
Madison, Farmington

CAR DEALER (NEW)

Charlie's Motor Mall
Augusta

FINALISTS

Goodwin's Volvo
Topsham

SPOTLIGHT: FREQUENT FLIER

Daytrip Society & Daytrip Jr.

4 Dock Sq., Kennebunkport. 207-967-8345. [daytripsociety.com](https://www.daytripsociety.com)

We have stepped inside Daytrip Jr. with our kids and watched their eyes widen. Maine has a bunch of great toy stores, and this category sees some usual suspects year after year, including category-winning micro-chain Island Treasure Toys. But Daytrip Jr. is extra fun, in part because it successfully ports over the high-design, soft-adventure concept that owners Jessica Jenkins and Andy West (pictured) first established at Jr.'s adjacent parent shop, Daytrip Society, in 2007. That one's a consistent reader fave too, in the gift-shop category (both are past winners), for the way it blends the appeals of a boutique and an outfitter and a souvenir stand — Phileas Fogg goes to Patagonia goes to... well, Kennebunkport. When the same sense of play and exploration infuses both your kid store and your grown-up store, you're onto something.



BEST OF MAINE
16th ANNUAL
DOWNEAST

HEIDI KIRN



TARA RICE

SPOTLIGHT: FREQUENT FLIER

Colburn Shoe Store

79 Main St., Belfast. 207-338-1934. [colburnshoe.com](https://www.colburnshoe.com)

"I can't imagine Belfast without having Colburn Shoe," the store's owner, Colby Horne, told us recently, "and that motivates me to grow and continue to be a cornerstone of the community." The Main Street shop is within a decade of its bicentennial, and it's been in Horne's family since 1922. (His dad, Brian Horne, who sold him the store in 2017, retired last winter after 51 years). But Colburn isn't some dusty relic. You can count on the place to have a deep inventory of the brands Mainers dig — Chacos, Danskos, Keens, Carhartts — and always a nice selection of running shoes. The bargain basement is, well, full of the subterranean steals you'd expect. And the service is, refreshingly, never pushy. No wonder readers call the place a fave, year after year. Among the reasons Horne loves seeing the shop stay busy? "Knowing how proud my grandfather would be."

Lee Auto Malls
Various locations

Patriot Subaru
Saco

Shepard Auto Group
Thomaston

**ANTIQUE/
VINTAGE SHOP**
The Rusticators
Emporium
Hallowell

FINALISTS
Antiques at 10
Mechanic
Camden

**Freckle Salvage
Company**
Winthrop

**Miles in Motion
Thrift Shop**
Damariscotta

Portland Flea-for-All
Portland

BOOKSTORE
Sherman's Maine Coast
Book Shops
Various locations

FINALISTS
Arctic Tern Books
Rockland

Left Bank Books
Belfast

Quiet City Books
Lewiston

**Skidompha Secondhand
Book Shop**
Damariscotta

**PET SUPPLY
STORE**
Loyal Biscuit Co.
Various locations

FINALISTS
Ames True Value
Hardware & Supply
Wiscasset

Pet Pantry
Freeport

The Animal House
Damariscotta

**Two Salty Dogs Pet
Outfitters**
Boothbay Harbor

TRAVEL & PLAY

MARINA
Lyman-Morse Camden
Camden

FINALISTS
Boothbay Harbor
Marina
Boothbay Harbor

**Boothbay Harbor
Oceanside Golf Resort**
Boothbay Harbor

Carousel Marina
Boothbay Harbor

Dolphin Marina
Harpwell

SKI MOUNTAIN
Saddleback
Mountain
Rangeley

FINALISTS
Black Mountain
of Maine
Rumford

Sugarloaf
Carrabassett Valley

Sunday River Resort
Newry

The Camden Snow Bowl
Camden

GOLF COURSE
Samoset Resort
Rockport

FINALISTS
Boothbay Harbor
Country Club
Boothbay

DAVE WADDELL

SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER Lyman-Morse Camden

59 Sea St., Camden. 207-236-4378. lymanmorse.com

After a kitchen fire broke out in June of 2020 at a restaurant that was part of the campus of Camden's Lyman-Morse boatyard and marina, smoke damage left much of the complex unusable. The silver lining: Lyman-Morse set out to envision and rebuild, and last fall, the legacy boatbuilder completed construction on a 44,000-square-foot mixed-use marina complex. Perks for the cruising crowd include handsome suites for crew accommodations, a state-of-the-art rig shop and full-service chandlery, a customer lounge with showers and laundry, and new capacity for dockage and storage. Fringe benefits for the rest of us include a nice wide harbor walk and two new eateries: Barren's Distillery + Restaurant, with a bar full of small-batch spirits and a menu of New England pub food, and Salt Wharf, this year's reader pick for best new restaurant, with clubby classics on the entrée menu (seafood, steaks, pasta) and what has to be Maine's best rooftop bar (with a small-plates menu that's more fun than downstairs — try the street corn or tinned-fish conservas).



SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER Quiet City Books

124 Lisbon St., Lewiston. 207-809-7139. quietcitybooks.square.site

With nine locations across Maine, it's maybe no surprise that venerable Sherman's often takes top honors in the bookstore category. But not a year passes without a couple of newcomers popping up — a testament to Maine's vibrant lit culture and abundance of indie bookshops. Quiet City ain't new, exactly, but when proprietor Courtney Schlachter opened the predominantly secondhand shop, in 2016, it was tiny. Last year, Quiet City moved into a whopping 1,700-square-foot basement on Lisbon Street, with room to delight browsers and host readings, kids' story hours, intimate concerts, and more. With its low ceilings, exposed brick arches, and thrifted-furniture nooks for reading and writing, the place feels like your favorite teenage rec room or scrappy small-town library — which bookworms will recognize as high praise.



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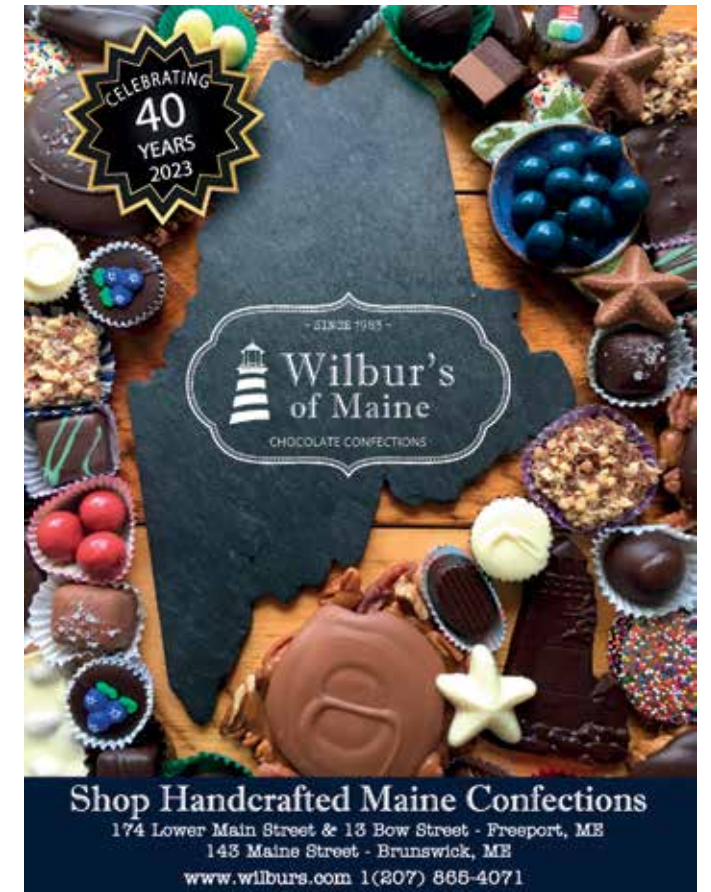
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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Goose River Golf Course
Rockport

Mingo Springs Golf Course
Rangeley

Rockland Golf Club
Rockland

HOTEL/RESORT
Samoset Resort
Rockport

FINALISTS
250 Main Hotel
Rockland

Boothbay Harbor
Oceanside Golf Resort
Boothbay Harbor

Cliff House Maine
Cape Neddick

Linekin Bay Resort
Boothbay Harbor

**BOAT CRUISE/
EXCURSION**
Monhegan Boat Line
Port Clyde

FINALISTS
A Morning in Maine
Rockland

Cap'n Fish's Cruises
Boothbay Harbor

DoryWoman Rowing
Belfast

Hardy Boat Cruises
New Harbor

**Schooner Olad &
Cutter Owl**
Camden

B&B/INN
The Craignair Inn by
the Sea
Spruce Head

FINALISTS
Blue Harbor House Inn
Camden

Grey Havens Inn
Georgetown

Harraseeket Inn
Freeport

The Trellis House
Ogunquit

NAIL SALON
Mainly Nails
Damariscotta

FINALISTS
Glossy Claws Nails
by Nancy
Hallowell

H&E Paint Bar
Portland

**Lucinda's Day Spa &
Hair Studio**
Cumberland

**Mountain Miracles
Med Spa**
Rangeley

Tropical Salon & Spa
Rockport

**MASSAGE STUDIO
/PRACTITIONER**
Mountain Miracles
Med Spa
Rangeley

FINALISTS
Athlete's Touch
Portland

**Camden Maine Massage
Therapy**
Camden

**Deeply Rooted Massage
& Wellness**
Kennebunk

Nine Stones Spa
Portland

Serendipity Studios
Portland

**Wicked Good Massage
Therapy**
Lewiston

**GYM/FITNESS
CENTER**
Rangeley Region Health
& Wellness
Rangeley

CONTINUED ON PAGE 90

JAMIE MERCURIO

SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER
H&E Paint Bar

6 City Center, Portland. 207-536-4395. 15 Middle St., Portland. 207-536-0698. hepaintbar.com
When Eunjee Park (left) and Emily Fitzgibbon (right) opened H&E Nail Bar in Portland's 6 City Center, in spring of 2018, they didn't expect business to pick up so briskly. But before the year was out, they added a second location on the East End, and today, the two shops keep a fleet of 19 technicians busy offering mani-pedis, nail care, gel polish, wax treatments, and more — oh, and super-cute nail art that jibes with the bright, playful aesthetic of the salons. In case you're wondering, yep, H&E (Fitzgibbon's Korean name, Hyejung, is the H to her partner's E) does indeed put the "bar" in "paint bar," with a complimentary glass of wine or bubbly (or coffee or tea) as patrons settle into the comfy chairs.



SPOTLIGHT: FREQUENT FLIER
Cliff House

591 Shore Rd., Cape Neddick. 207-361-1000. cliffhousemaine.com

It's just shy of 10 years since Cape Neddick's venerable Cliff House, overlooking the Atlantic on Bald Head Cliff, changed hands for the first time. The same family had owned the place since 1872, and for much of that time, it'd been a favored retreat of East Coast blue bloods (and a beloved splurge for others). When an out-of-state investment firm (with Maine partners) took over in 2014, some longtime guests worried the place's character might get watered down. A decade later, those fears are quelled. Cliff House remains plenty luxe, with nautical-mod décor, impeccable service, and a top-tier spa and infinity pool that both allow guests to soak up some of the East Coast's most gobsmacking coastal views. It also showcases tons of work by Maine artists, offers a reasonable simulacrum of a lobster shack in its bar, and hosts guided nature hikes along its trail network, oceanside yoga sessions, woodcarving demonstrations, and other activities that feel genuinely rooted here — or, anyway, a version of here.

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Coffee Cherry Sorting
Busiga, Burundi - May 2017



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BEST OF MAINE GYM/FITNESS CENTER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 66

FINALISTS
Central Lincoln
County YMCA
Damariscotta

Eye Candy Dance
Studio
Bangor

Fortitude Fitness
Warren

Ocean Blue Fitness
Damariscotta

DAY SPA
Senator Inn & Spa
Augusta

FINALISTS
Alexandra
Esthetics
Sanford

Cedar Grove Sauna
Montville

Field of Aesthetics
Scarborough

Lucinda's Day Spa &
Hair Studio
Cumberland

Mountain Miracles
Med Spa
Rangeley

Nine Stones Spa
Portland

YOGA STUDIO
Ebb and Flow Yoga
Bath

FINALISTS
Big White Barn
Readfield

Chill Yoga
Lewiston

DownTown Yoga &
Healing Arts
Augusta

Eye Candy Dance Studio
Bangor

Maine Outdoor Yoga
Damariscotta

DENTIST
Midcoast Family
Dentistry
Brunswick

FINALISTS
Glen Cove Dental
Associates
Rockport

SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER Mountain Miracles Med Spa

2485 Main St., Rangeley, 207-864-5700. mountainmiraclesmedspa.com

A first-time finalist in not one but four (!) categories: nail salon, hair salon, day spa, and massage studio — a winner in that latter — Rangeley's Mountain Miracles clearly has its fans. Registered nurse Allissa Gurney opened the spa, on the mountain-town's main drag, in 2019, with a focus on medical aesthetics like fillers, chemical peels, and IV vitamin treatments. A full-service salon soon followed, and the treatment menu kept expanding as Gurney gathered a crew of "extremely talented women," realizing how many beauty and health services required a (sometimes long) trip out of Rangeley. These days, she and a much-expanded team offer everything from laser treatments to massage and bodywork to lash lifts to body waxing to LED tooth whitening to . . . well, call and ask.

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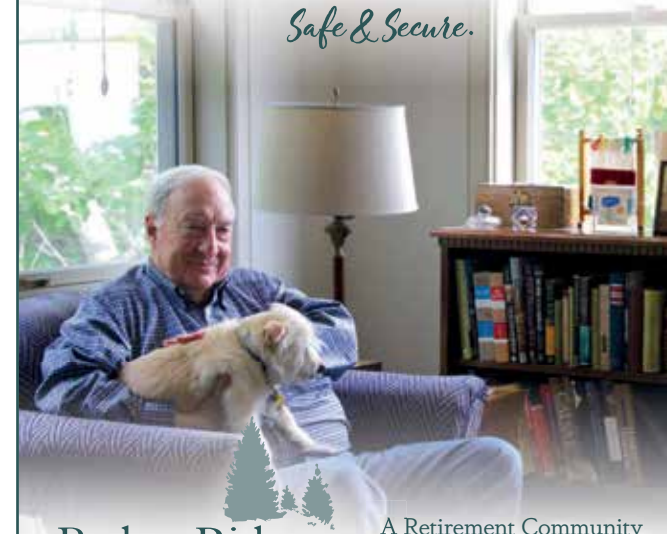


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Scott Baltz, *Passage to a Distant Past*, oil on canvas, 40" x 40"

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Rockland

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Portland

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Farnsworth Art Museum
Rockland

FINALISTS
Center for Maine Contemporary Art
Rockland

Children's Museum & Theatre of Maine
Portland

Colby College Museum
Waterville

Maine Maritime Museum
Bath

Portland Museum of Art
Portland

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Unity

FINALISTS
Great Falls Balloon Festival
Lewiston-Auburn

Maine Lobster Festival
Rockland

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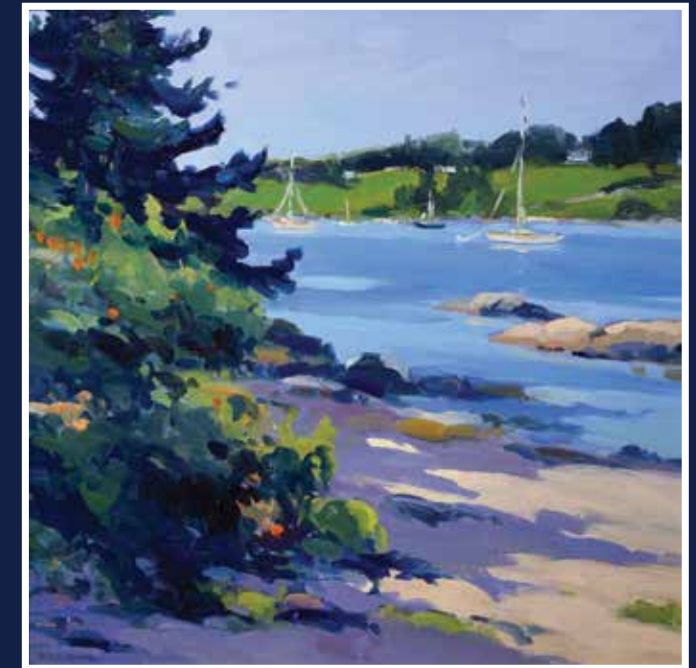


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Keith Oehmig, Center Harbor, Brooklin, Oil on Panel, 24" x 24"

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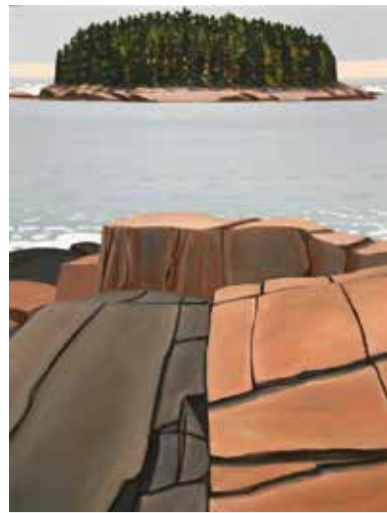
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SPOTLIGHT: FREQUENT FLIER
Littlefield Gallery

145 Main St., Winter Harbor. 207-963-6005. littlefieldgallery.com
Jane and Kelly Littlefield, who for 15 years have run an unassuming, captivating home gallery in Winter Harbor, learned all they know about exhibitions and sales as schoolteachers nursing a serious art-collecting habit. The truest lesson, Jane says: make everyone feel welcome. These days, the Littlefields represent 38 painters and sculptors, all with Maine connections, and enough readers have been wowed by their sculpture garden and white-walled gallery annex and the two public-friendly floors of their art-filled home to earn Littlefield Gallery a half-dozen wins and nominations in the gallery category since 2017. Closing out the season, mid-September through mid-October, is a three-artist show that includes the moody, stylized landscapes of Sarah Faragher (above).

North Atlantic Blues Festival
Rockland

Yarmouth Clam Festival
Yarmouth

ART GALLERY
Saltwater Artists Gallery
New Harbor

FINALISTS
Dowling Walsh Gallery
Rockland

Gleason Fine Art
Boothbay Harbor

Littlefield Gallery
Winter Harbor

Page Gallery
Camden

PRIVATE SCHOOL, SECONDARY
Lincoln Academy
Newcastle

FINALISTS
Cheverus High School
Portland

GRANITE AND BASALT, VIEW TO NED ISLAND FROM GRINDSTONE NECK, WINTER HARBOR, MAINE - OIL/CANVAS, 24 X 18", BY SARAH FARAGHER, IMAGE COURTESY OF LITTLEFIELD GALLERY

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SPOTLIGHT: FIRST TIMER ISLE Theater Company

isletheater.org
Marvin Merritt IV read Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" in high school English, growing up on Deer Isle. He didn't love it, but it's crept up on him since. "It was definitely a hard piece to navigate," says Merritt, a cofounder of ISLE Theater Company, "but a lot of people here connected with it because it's a seafaring story." Helping audiences forge connections through storytelling is at the heart of the mission of the Deer Isle-based company that Merritt and Harvard pal Anna Fitzgerald founded just after graduation, three years ago. ISLE has since produced an eclectic mix of site-specific shows, using professional actors and crew, at spots that include a Deer Isle quarry and a Penobscot farm. This summer's *Water, Water Everywhere*, August 10-20, is a contemporary retelling of "Ancient Mariner," staged at Brooklin's WoodenBoat School. During a month of rehearsals, visiting artists stayed with local volunteer hosts. "It's immensely fulfilling," Merritt says, "to see a small island community pull together and make this theater company possible."

North Yarmouth Academy
Yarmouth

Saint Dominic Academy
Auburn

Thornton Academy
Saco

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The Bay School
Blue Hill

Cornerspring Montessori School
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