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**HANDMADE MUGS REACH THE HEARTS OF BREWPUB CLUBS**

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A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE  
 "WHERE PEOPLE GO TO PLAY, STAY, DRINK AND DINE"

FEATURES:

## BREW PUB CLUBS

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**6**



### 'PEOPLE WHO ARE SO IN LOVE WITH THEIR MUGS'

#### EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Kate Curit

#### PUBLISHER DESIGNERS

Jodi Cornelio Garret Carver

#### SALES

George McGregor, Arthur Auger,  
 Brett Bannister and Patrick Heuveline

#### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Tom Ardia, Victor Block, Dan Davis,  
 Scott K. Fish, Liz Lane, Tom Major,  
 and Beverly Soucy

craftmaine@turnerpublishing.net

craftmainemagazine.com

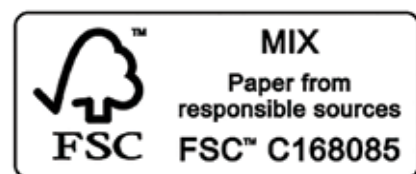
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# Handmade Mugs Reach the Hearts of Brewpub Clubs



Gritty's Facebook photo

By Scott K. Fish

Scott's communications career, across all media, has taken him from lawmakers to lawbreakers; Rock stars to Members of Congress. Scott has positive working relationships with leaders in education, government, the media, business, the arts, and the general public. scottkfish@gmail.com.

Brewpub owners initiate mug clubs for distinctly different reasons.

Gritty McDuff Brewing Company's co-founder Ed Stebbins has "the oldest mug club in the State," dating back to 1989. "To be honest," he said, "the reason we started it is because we needed to pay our taxes, and we weren't quite sure how we were going to get that money."

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Mary K. Spencer decorates pottery in the studio.

Allison McKeen photo



Chris Shaw, co-owner of John Sullivan's Pub in Augusta launched its mug club in 2016 for basic reasons. "We started John Sullivan's mug club just after we opened," he recalled. "We knew of a lot of different establishments with mug clubs. We thought it was a good idea."

Organized in a variety of ways, brew pub mug clubs may include annual or one-time fees, drink and meal discounts, and a heads-up for special events. Hands down, the spirit of brewpub friendship and community is always a mug club's main goal. That warm spirit is embodied by each club members' exclusive pub beer mug.

Yet, how many mug club members know, or even think about, the dedicated, talented potters who design and create these prized ceramic pub mugs?

Consider, for example, Mary K. Spencer owner of Pots in Maine located in Bowdoin. She has been throwing clay professionally onto a potter's wheel for more than 40 years.

"I started making mugs for The Liberal Cup (Hallowell) 10 to 12 years ago. I now have several pubs," Spencer noted, including Doolin's Pub in Litchfield and Bateau Brewing in Gardiner.

As for designing mug club mugs, some pub owners are hands-on working closely with potters on design, while others leave the design primarily to the potters.

"Most of the time it's a pretty standard-looking mug," said Spencer. "Most pubs have their logo on their mugs. I'll have made a stamp of a pub's logo, which I call a badge. It is embossed and then put on the mug."



Mary K. Spencer's hand-made mug.



Malley Weber, the owner of Hallowell Clay Works, was The Liberal Cup's initial mug maker. Before that, she owned Moonshine Pottery in Damariscotta where, in 1996, Webber was asked by King Eider's Pub, also in Damariscotta, to start creating mugs for them.

"The owners were interested in doing a mug club," Weber remembered. "I was still trying to figure out how to make mugs, and make them consistent." King Eider's Pub was Weber's chance to try it.

"It helped me become a better potter," she laughed. "The mugs were terrible in the beginning. Horrible." A pub mug is "a vessel to hold a certain amount of liquid," Weber explained. "The tricky thing is, it's all about getting the right volume for the beer."

Spencer's description of making "pretty-standard looking" mugs doesn't capture the true individuality of handmade pub mugs.

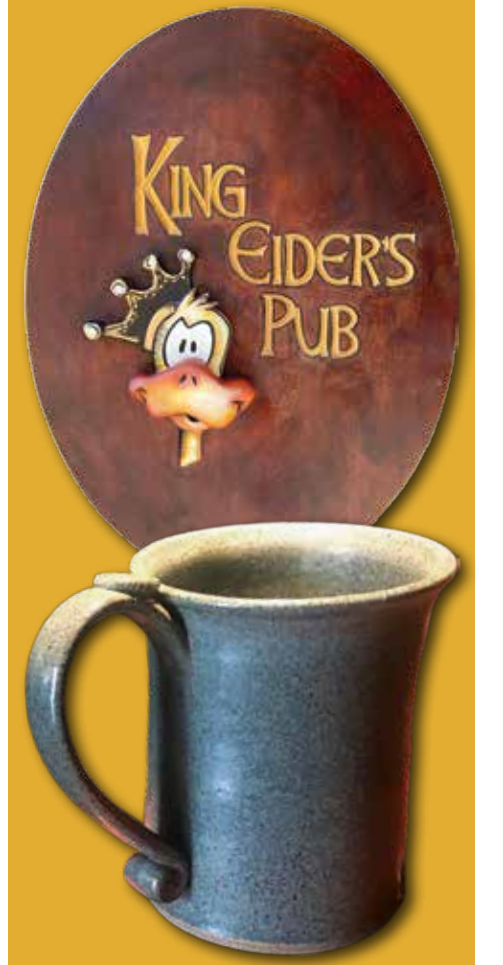
Weber's mugs for King Eider's Pub are a case in point. She had a "good amount" of clay working experience when she took on Eider's mugs, but "I was mostly a hand builder," she noted. "I hadn't done a lot of commercial work. Mostly, I'd make crazy creatures and sculptures. Nothing like tableware."

A casual glance at Weber's mugs suspended above the King Eider's Pub bar, might have you thinking you're seeing assembly line mugs.

You're not.

"Each of them is handmade, so there's a real, kind of, variation in size," she explained. "It takes a while to get into the rhythm and make enough of them to do it intuitively," As the clay dries, it shrinks.

"In the potter world you have to calculate shrinkage, to make a mug bigger than you think it's going to be," Weber explained, "and it takes a long time to learn how to use the potter's wheel. I'd probably been using it for two or three years at that point."



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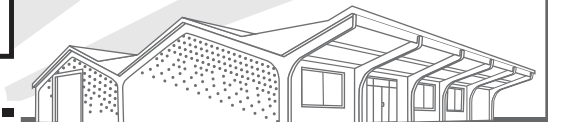
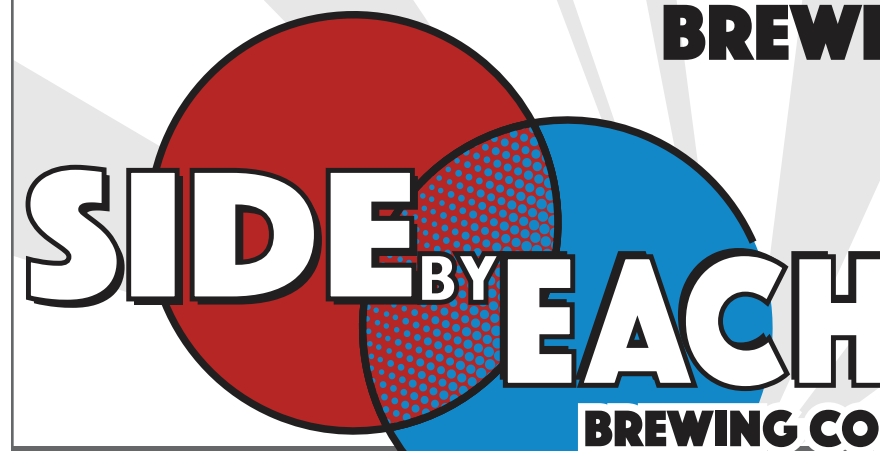
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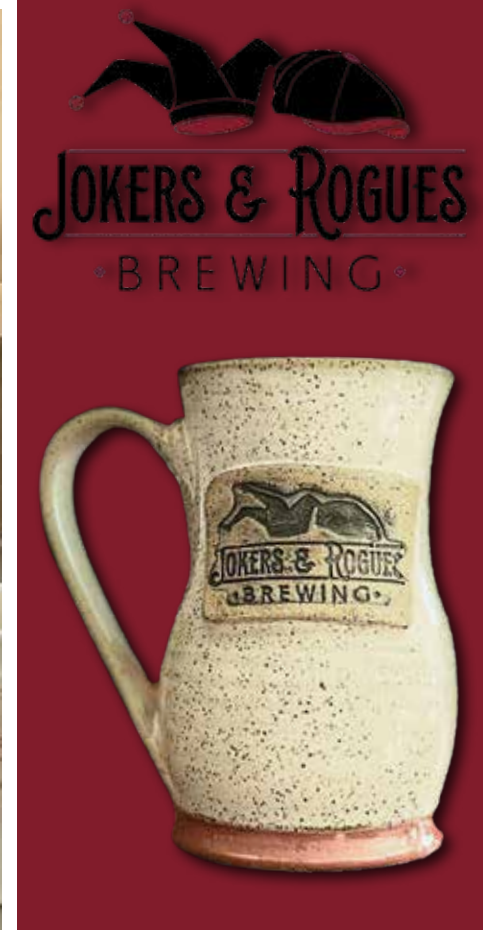
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Potter, Joshua David Rysted, in his pottery workshop.



Rysted demonstrating hand throwing clay on a potters wheel. This process is used to make brew pub mug club mugs.



Joshua David Rysted, a 20-year potter at The Pottery Studio in Bethel, first made mugs for a Massachusetts brew pubmug club.

"We started looking at designs, kind of a classic style — wider at the bottom, narrower at the top. The brewpub owners had ideas about colors. I went

through a bunch of iterations and came up with a design they liked," said Rysted, who also hand-threw each mug on a potters wheel.

"I had to take really specific measurements to get size and shape consistency," he continued. "State alcohol regulations demanded each mug size be

strictly within 20-22 ounces. Getting the size just right was a bit of a challenge." Rysted created more than 300 mugs "because some weren't the right size. The project, including design time, took about four months.

Eventually, "the pub owners wound up with a really nice handmade mug that went well with their handmade beer," he added.

Brewpub mug club mugs are a big part of what Spencer calls a mug club culture. "I don't know where it originated," she said, "but people really like to have their own mug when they go have a beer. Especially if they're partial to a certain pub."

"I know of three or four people with mugs at The Liberal Cup, one at Jokers & Rogues Brewing in Farmingdale, and one at Bateau Brewing in Gardiner," she said. "It just depends on where they want to go to have a beer or dinner."

What's more, the mug club culture includes members' loyalty to their mugs. "Some people at The Liberal Cup, with mugs whose handles have broken

A portion of Malley Weber's mugs inside King Eider's Pub in Damariscotta.

King Eider's Pub Facebook photo

off, still wanted that mug, even though it was broken,” Spencer related. “They retro-fitted another kind of handle on it or they used it without a handle. People become very attached to their mugs.”

“We have some people accidentally drop their mugs and break a handle. If the handle breaks in one piece, I Gorilla glue it back together,” said Shaw.

“People do get attached. The people at Gritty’s, at least, when they get their five-year mug, it’s kind of a status symbol, Stebbins said. “We have members of the mug club who have been members for 30 years.”

The potters still take great joy in hand-making ceramic mugs for brew pubs. “In this era of craft brews,” Rysted said, “it’s pretty slick that craft brewers are going that extra step and serving their beer in a mug that’s also handmade.”

Spencer said throwing clay pub mugs has “been kind of like my retirement dream job,” while Weber’s mug creation today remains focused on where she started.

“If you go into King Eider’s Pub now, there are-literally-500 of my mugs inside,” Webber added. “They pretty much span my entire career. They’re like timepieces. I look at them and I go, ‘Wow!’ I will take care of King Eider’s ‘til I die,” she said of her commitment to providing new Eider’s mugs as needed.

Mug club members’ often bond with their mugs, which can live on after members are gone.

“The only person who’s actually passed away, that we passed the mug on to somebody else, was my father,” Shaw said. “His mug has been passed on to my son, who is his namesake.”

Gritty’s in Portland actually has a “Hall of Fame,” in a glass case, where they have retired a few mugs “for revered customers, or customers who decide they’re no longer drinking,” Stebbins said.

Perhaps, Weber, best sums up the important relationship among Brew Pub owners, mug club members, and potters.

“People are so in love with these mugs,” she says. “It’s wonderful — such an intimate part of their lives.”

“We’re connected in that way,” Webber added. ●

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Hand thrown mugs drying. The darker gray mugs are wet clay. The white mugs are dry.



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# Beer Styles



## English-Style Brown Ale

A bona fide English beer classic, English-style brown ale is easily one of the most iconic beer styles. Toasty, robust, and with a bit of chocolate maltiness, the English brown ale is a meal in a glass but offers unlimited opportunities for memorable food pairings. Neither flashy nor boring, the English brown is a beer with enough variation to keep devotees ordering them time and time again.

### ENGLISH-STYLE BROWN ALE

English-style brown ales have two variations: a dry, roasted version that is said to have originated from northern England, and a sweeter, less attenuated brown ale variety that is believed to have gained favor in the southern portion of England. Both offer a toasted nut, chocolatey character indicative of brown ales. The English brown ale varieties will not be as hoppy or bitter as their American counterparts and favor English hops as well as characterful English ale yeast. Either style can be excellent with a variety of foods, particularly braised meats, but they are perfectly fine to be enjoyed on their own. The alcohol content of this beer is characteristically moderate and does not typically exceed 5.5 percent ABV.

### CATEGORY: BROWN ALES

While not the only top-fermenting beer with a brown hue, beers called brown ales are generally British in origin. Historically produced with a type of brown malt, today's brown ales are comprised of a pale malt base with the addition of darker specialty malts for their color and chocolate and nutty flavors. Despite the obvious color similarities, the comparison between styles that make up the brown ale family can vary with strength, hop character, mouthfeel, strength, and flavor intensity. Just because you've tried one brown ale, doesn't mean you've tried them all.



SRM refers to a beer's color. A very pale beer, such as American wheat, typically has an SRM of 5, while a dark colored stout is usually in the range of 25-40 SRM.



IBU is the measure of hops' contribution to a beer's bitterness. It can range from zero to over 100. Beer bitterness is subject to perception. What is aggressively bitter to some is mildly bitter to others. Also, bitterness can seem lower in the presence of residual sugar, carbonation, and cooler temperatures.



ABV varies by craft beer style from around 3% to more than 20%. Alcohol flavor may be perceived, and is sometimes desirable, in craft beers with higher ABV.

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### GLASSWARE & SERVING TEMPERATURE



The imperial pint was adopted as an official measure by British Parliament in 1824. Using this official system of measurement, the nonick version of the imperial pint glass was produced for use in pubs in the 1960s. The glass bulges out at the top which improves grip, adds strength and reduces chipping.

More information and other styles can be found at [www.CraftBeer.com](http://www.CraftBeer.com).



# Behind The Bar

Amber Dugan Breaks the 'Glass' Ceiling, Carries on, Builds a Career

By Liz Lane

Liz is a writer and podcaster located in Southern Maine

The sound of shattering wine glasses cut through the dinner rush hub-bub, eliciting gasps from nearby patrons hanging out in a cozy sporting camp bar. Although at the moment it seemed like hours, the cascade was over quickly, recalled bartender Amber Dugan.

When silence prevailed, Dugan was still standing, although covered in glass shards.

Ironically, just a week prior to the incident, a bartender Amanda Quintilian told Dugan that bartending was a sink-or-swim situation.

Drowning in glass, Dugan realized there was only one course of action open to her; she decided to swim back for her next shift — business as usual.

"It was incredible and horrible, and I thought I couldn't do it anymore, but I showed my face the next day," she said. "It's safe

to say people still remember the girl at Bald Mountain Camps who shattered all the glasses."

Dugan has been swimming at BMC in Oquossoc for more than two years, turning her mistakes into inspiration for future excellence. To expand her service repertoire, she's been studying flair bartending — in her own home, of course. That doesn't mean she isn't without an audience or competition.

"I'm taking some online classes about flair bartending now, and my kids say I'm horrible at it. They do it with me more at home than in the bar because I break every wine glass I come in contact with. Bartending isn't just about serving drinks and food; you're there for an experience," she explained. "Dinner and a show. I'm starting simple; being able to flip the bottle, catch it and pour. Some bartenders can throw them way up in the air, but our bar is set up with wine glasses over our well, so we definitely can't do that."

Before joining BMC, Dugan spent six years behind a desk as a school secretary but found more fulfillment and joy in slinging beers at friends' weddings. After a gaggle of weddings and a few snowmobile club gatherings, her name got around. Recognizing Dugan's aptitude for working with a crowd and her customer service, BMC offered her a position behind the bar. Before long, the managerial team offered her a position on staff.

Bald Mountain Camps have become home not only for Dugan but also for her family. Her older son Will, 17, works with an associated business — BMC Diving. Owen, at 14, spends most of his time outside handling odd jobs around the camp and tending to boat rentals.

"Owen never liked boats or water and was very introverted, especially after the pandemic with no (peer) interaction," Dugan revealed. "I spoke with owners Steve and Tyler, and we decided the best thing to do was have him work with the public. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made in my life."

BMC offers year-round activities for those seeking solace in Maine's most significant natural resources. As a hunting camp, stuffed trophies decorate the wooden walls of the dining area. However, those looking to enjoy their hard-fought labors for dinner surrounded by the heritage of game trophies will be somewhat disappointed.

"We can't cook what you catch in the kitchen because it's a health hazard, which is unfortunate; everyone who catches fish wants us to cook it for them," Dugan said.

Describing general manager Tyler Philbrick as "true to his craft," Dugan said he will prepare the catch for cooking. "We are a sporting camp; everyone loves it when you bring something back, and we embrace hunting as a way to feed our family; there is no shame here."

Dugan said guests are permitted to cook smaller game, like fish and partridge, in their cabin or outside. "The housekeeper may not love you, but you can do it," she quipped. "If you're taking down a thousand-pound moose or a five hundred pound bear, those must be weighed, tagged, and processed

at a station through Maine," she added. "A butcher half an hour from us can process it for you. You can have it mounted or divided and packaged."

While supping on your fresh kill in the restaurant might be off-limits, there are other attractions to draw one into the dining room — their brunch "Bloody Bar" on Sundays. While typical olives and celery are available, each bartender adds a twist to their weekly offerings.

"You can get a pint for \$13 or a vast Mason jar for \$15; you get your choice of liquor — generally Tito's — and we add Bloody Mary mix we make ourselves," Dugan continued.

Beyond that, the buffet features anything from onion rings, shrimp, bacon, eggs, cheese and chicken wings. "I put out prosciutto, the staples, lemons, and cucumbers. This thing is all you need for brunch; it's enormous," she said. "I've been here for three years, and it keeps getting bigger. There could be steak there or mini hamburgers. Seeing a glass full of these random, beautifully cooked foods is a visual experience for your gut."

Dugan's time behind the bar has been a learning experience, undoubtedly, and every drink she serves has a story behind it. The first mixed drink she learned to make by heart, a margarita, is no exception.

"It was my second week, and these young guys came in asking for margaritas. I generally knew what a margarita was, and I had watched the other bartender make them, so I did it, and I thought I did it well until one of them took a sip and said, 'This is so disgusting. What did you do? This is the worst thing I've ever had.' I went home, practiced, tried different recipes for the next seven days until I perfected my margarita," Dugan admitted. "I took it to heart; now I make some of the best margaritas around."

Her disposition for beverage craft has earned her both praise and fortune. While working a wedding, a self-proclaimed "martini snob" approached Dugan, claiming to know the best of the best.

"I was told if there was ever a martini judge out there, it was him, so I told him mine was the best, and he told me to put my money where my mouth was. I said fifty bucks," she recalled. "It's better than anything you've had, and I made him have one from another bartender. I don't usually bet because I can't follow up, but I walked out with fifty dollars in my pocket because of my espresso martini."

While Dugan may shine behind the bar, everything is a group effort. She's also responsible for serving drinks to a dining room that can seat 60 people comfortably; situations like that call for a team.

"When we work our bar, you don't just stand there. You serve the entire room, including busing tables. It isn't a huge area, but it's too much for one person. I asked the dishwasher to be my bar-back, and he hopped out of the pit and helped with tables, ice and whatever I needed," Dugan said. "At night's end, I gave him a good bit of cash to thank him because I got far behind



doing general maintenance without him. People need to pay more attention to how long that takes."

While Amber knows she has support when she needs it, she keeps an eye out for others to help prevent burnout.

"If I know someone on the line is having a rough day — because everyone does — I'll try to steer patrons away to give them a break. If someone's struggling as it is and you keep hammering them with steaks, they aren't going to come out well, and I would be serving food I don't stand behind," she said, adding, "It isn't fair to anyone."

Dugan's skyrocketing self-expectations have encouraged her growth as a bartender and as a person and part of the BMC team. Owner Steve Philbrick sets the standards for dining and staff quite high, but not without reason.

"He's very good at reading people, and if he thinks you can live up to his expectations, you're in. I love that about him; if he's hard on you, it's because he knows you're better than you're giving him, and he wants to see it," she reflected. "Yelling and screaming aren't how he operates, but if you're not doing your job up to what the customers need, they'll let you know. You aren't just going out to dinner; we think of this as an experience. You're going to BMC." ●



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## 2 Cocktails + 2 Slices of Pizza = ?

By Dan Davis

Dan's the Founder, Distiller, Yeast Wrangler  
Sebago Lake Distillery  
Maine Distillers Guide Member  
Maine Rum Made Right

I know the title isn't much help in figuring out what this column is about, but bear with me. I've participated in a lot of high-level sporting endeavors over the years — pool, darts, poker, croquet, foosball, horseshoes, shuffleboard and pretty much anything you can play in a bar.

I've learned the hard way, and sometimes the expensive way, that I'm at my best when I've had two cocktails and a light snack. After a brief poll — amongst a few friends and drinking buddies — it turns out this is somewhat universal.

After some exhaustive research, I've also found you can substitute beer or wine for the cocktails and pretty much any food with a respectable grease content for the pizza with a similar result. This is very good news for all of us.

What I'm hoping to see in the future is a pill that will get you to the 2 cocktails and 2 pizza (2C2P) level with little to no effort and at a reasonable cost. Don't get me wrong; I'm a big fan of getting there the old-fashioned way, but the pill would change the world.

Just think if NASA had the 2C2P pill and they were all working at their best all day; I'd be writing this column on Saturn. How about medical research? If they had the 2C2P pill, I'd have UV-resistant skin, the companies that make corrective lenses and toupees would be out of business, arteries would always be clean, and I'd never have to floss again. What about the atmosphere? If scientists had 2C2P we'd have solar powered CO2 scrubbers that spit out diamonds all day and a magnetic gizmo pushing hurricanes back out to sea.

Here's what I think is the perfect schedule: You get up at about 9 a.m., take your first 2C2P pill, and it kicks in about the time you get out of the shower. Then you spend the rest of the day solving the problems in the middle east or the rainforest or something that interests you, while taking your 2C2P every two hours to keep your levels correct. At about 3 p.m. — after you've played a pivotal role in improving the world — you stop taking the pills and head for the bar for happy hour.

Just think what could be possible. Maybe someone who is taking 2C2P all day will invent something that will make you perform better than you do after a couple of cocktails? I'm an optimist, obviously, but that sounds a little farfetched, even to me.

So, until we get the 2C2P pill, head on over to the local distillery tasting room and be your best the natural way. ●



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# The Home Bartender

Brought To You By Damon's Beverage

By Tom Ardia

Tom Ardia, a Maine native, has 20+ years in the hospitality industry. Developing bar programs for restaurants and bars in Los Angeles, Portland and Lewiston/Auburn. After coming back to Maine in 2010, he started a craft beer program at the retail location of the Vault in Lewiston. Tom has also contributed to the launch of several establishments, including Orchid, Marche and Sonder & Dram. Tom has a passion for educating drinkers on quality products, and flavor profiles, developing

their palates and cocktail creation. He aims to take the fussiness out of mixology with a down-to-earth approach to libations.

I hope this finds you well and ready to relax after the hectic weeks of the holiday season. For this edition, I'm sharing a cocktail I batched for my family during Thanksgiving. Calling it "No Regrets," it's a blend of flavors the majority of people should enjoy, and it's easy to assemble.

When batching a cocktail for any event, you need to calculate how many people will partake; in my case, it was 13 adults. I usually use the number of people and assume they will have 2 to 3 cocktails each.

Next is to determine the style. I know my family well; many are vodka people, and the others prefer bourbon. I decided to go for rum. It's one of those spirits almost everyone is fine with. I began to think of flavors that go with the holidays and rum. Since it was Thanksgiving, I thought a rum cocktail with apples and spices would work great. I love blending different spirits, so used both Captain Morgan Spiced Rum and Plantation Dark Rum. They are tasty, affordable, and will cover a nice flavor spectrum.

It's time to look at what we need for equipment and ingredients.

#### Equipment:

- Measuring cup
- Pan
- Tablespoon and teaspoon
- Juicer (either hand or electric), but skip if using bottled lemon juice (not preferred)
- Big bowl or pot for adding all ingredients
- Strainer for juice pulp and spice removal
- Knife and cutting board
- Beverage dispenser with a spout or large pitcher for serving

#### Ingredients:

- 2 750 ml Captain Morgan Spiced Rum
- 2 750 ml Plantation Dark Rum
- 14 - 24 lemons or a high-quality lemon juice in the bottle
- 1/2 gallon of fresh local Apple cider
- 2 bags dark brown sugar
- 1 bag dried orange peel
- 1 bag dried lemon peel
- 1 bag coriander seed
- 1 bag whole star anise
- 2 packs fresh turmeric
- 1 good-sized piece of fresh ginger
- 1 bottle Angostura bitters
- 3 - 4 fresh oranges

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First, let's create the spiced syrup. Combine 4 cups apple cider and 4 cups dark brown sugar and a pot. Bring to a simmer but do not let it boil.

Slice ginger and turmeric into small pieces. You can leave the skin on; if you don't want your hands to get discolored from the turmeric, wear gloves.

Add 2 tablespoons of dried orange and lemon peel, 4 teaspoons of coriander seed, 4 whole star anise and 4-5 dashes of Angostura bitters. Let all of this simmer for 20 to 30 minutes.

While the syrup is simmering you can squeeze the fresh lemon juice. Try to get enough for about 4 to 8 cups. Once the syrup is done, strain all of the spices out and let cool.

#### In a Large Pot or Bowl Combine:

- 4 cups Captain Morgan Spiced Rum
- 4 cups Plantation Dark Rum
- 3 cups spiced syrup
- 3 cups fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups cold water (for dilution, as occurs when shaking the cocktail individually.)
- 6 - 8 dashes of Angostura bitters

Taste it. Does it taste too strong of liquor, too acidic from the lemon juice, or maybe not enough dilution? Everyone is different, but the recipe has a total of 8 cups of liquor to 8 cups of sugar, acid and dilution. These are proportions to think about. The cider is sweet but also acidic from the apples.

If you use bottled lemon juice — no matter the quality — it will have a slight bitterness and will not be as bright as freshly squeezed. When tweaking, work with a half-cup at a time to figure it out. It's better to slowly get to the flavor you are looking for rather than go too far and have to figure it out in reverse. (Trust me.)

This is the recipe I came up with after tweaking, but you know your own palate. I want you to enjoy this cocktail. Ideally, the flavors should be balanced. You should be able to pick up the different spices that went into the syrup along with hints of vanilla and dark fruit.

You should notice the rum but not be overwhelmed by it. Once the blend is where you want it, grab some glasses,

add ice and pour. Take your knife and peel a fresh piece of orange and express the oil over the cocktail and drop into the glass. If you have extra whole star anise left over, you may add to make it fancy.

I hope this gives you an easy idea for a cocktail to share with friends and family. Cheers! 🍷



# Road Trippin' With Craft Maine

## Several Maine Distilleries Add Educational Components to Tours and Tastings

By Tom Major

Even if the cold, dark Maine winters are driving you indoors, several of Maine's distilleries are offering fun, educational tours and seminars. Wiggly Bridge Distilling in York offers a wide range of options for guests who want a little learning with their cocktails.

"Everything we do has an educational component attached — the tours, Distiller for a Day, the blending clinic," said David Woods, who founded Wiggly Bridge Distilling ten years ago.

Even getting a cocktail at the bar is an educational experience for the curious, who can learn how the shape of the glass and the sequence of the ingredients can influence the flavor. Does it really matter if a cocktail is shaken or stirred? It does, and the bartenders at Wiggly Bridge is happy to explain why.

The staff tour offered on weekdays, is a 90-minute scripted explanation of the distilling process and the various spirits made at Wiggly Bridge. A tasting flight is included in the price (\$29.95).

For those seeking to take it up a level, Woods offers the Founder's Tour on weekends. This unscripted tour (\$49.95) offers a much more detailed look at the business, the equipment, the process and the spirits, including tours of the production floor and the rick house, where more than \$7 million in whiskey is aging in oak barrels.

"The quickest I can do is three hours," Woods said. "The longest I've done was an eight-hour tour. The people were just wicked engaged. We ended up sampling a fair amount of barrels. That's where the batch-



Every ingredient, from herbs grown on site to the correct shape of ice, is carefully selected at Wiggly Bridge.



blending seminar came from, because I saw how turned on people were by it, and said, 'You know, we're missing something here.'"

The batch blending seminar (\$89) is a two-hour experience offered once a month or by special arrangement. During the seminar, guests work with spirits taken from several different barrels, learning the secrets of how to bring complexity and balance to liquor by blending several different batches.

"That's where the craft is," said Woods.

The most advanced tour experience at Wiggly Bridge is the Distiller for a Day program. For \$349, a guest will enjoy a full workday on the production floor, including individualized instruction. Lunch and product samples are included.

A relentless entrepreneur, Woods is eager to teach what he has learned about business as well as spirits. The range of distillery-related subjects he mentions seems limitless, but includes business management, biochemistry, fluid dynamics, engineering, manufacturing, government regulation, tourism and the hospitality industry.

Since Woods and his son built, installed and subsequently upgraded all their own equipment, they can describe the distilling systems and processes in detail. Having served on the York planning board, Woods can speak with near certainty about the chances of success for pending application for expansion. Yet, he is equally knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subtle flavor combinations in each of Wiggly Bridge's spirits.

With enough prodding, Woods might even be willing to open up about what makes true craft distilling superior to the processes used at the large scale distilleries, or perhaps the differences in processes and products among the other Maine craft distilleries.

Speaking of which... none of the other Maine distilleries offer a wide range of tour options, but many others host informative experiences of one kind

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The open barrel fermenters are among the sites and smells on some of the tour options at Wiggly Bridge.

Wiggly Bridge Distillery photo  
David and David Woods, the father and son who co-founded the Wiggly Bridge Distillery in York, did all their own engineering and installation.



David and David Woods designed and built the rickhouse where barrels of bourbon age to perfection.

Wiggly Bridge Distillery photo



The Wiggly Bridge tasting room is a good place to learn what makes a truly great cocktail.

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or another. Some, like Portland's Three of Strong Spirits, offer a free tour, though the purchase of a "walking cocktail" or a post-tour flight is pretty common.

Other distilleries, including Sweetgrass in Union and Liquid Riot in Portland will happily describe the distilling process and highlight the equipment a short distance from the actual production floor.

"Our production space is small, crowded and often loud so it does not lend itself well to tours," said Ian Michaud, head distiller at Liquid Riot. "Our facility is designed with lots of glass to showcase all aspects of our production process though. Our staff is also trained to be able to answer customer questions."

Maine Craft Distilling in Portland offers tours by appointment, at least until staffing challenges allow them to restore a regular schedule of guided tours.

New England Distilling, also in Portland, offers a tour for only \$5, tasting flight of four spirits included. With 20 stops on the Maine Distillery Trail, there are plenty of options for some mid-winter liquid lessons. ●

# Recipes



SMALL BATCH  
**SEBAGO LAKE**  
DISTILLERY

## Recipe from Sebago Lake Distillery

### Hot KOPI cocoa recipe for a cold day

You've been outside all afternoon; it's cold, it's windy, it's bleak. The sun did its best today to wiggle through the sky to keep you warm, but the breeze just whisked the warmth away like dry leaves blowing down the driveway.

The sun dipped below the trees, and the temperature plummeted. You are not ready for winter. You come inside and sit at the bar. The bartender brings you a steaming cup of rich, chocolaty goodness, with a hint of molasses rum and peppermint. You take off your gloves and wrap your cold hands around the warm mug.

### Hot KOPI cocoa Recipe:

In a heavy coffee mug mix

- 2 oz Sebago Lake Distillery KOPI coffee-flavored rum
- 1 oz heavy cream
- 2 T powdered hot cocoa mix
- 5 oz hot water

Add a little flare with a marshmallow or whipped cream topper if you're feeling sassy.

\*To make the candy cane simple syrup, dissolve three candy canes in a cup of hot water, add a cup of sugar and bring to a simmer. Cool and store excess in the refrigerator; it will keep for a few weeks.

**SEBAGO LAKE**  
DISTILLERY

## Recipe from Sebago Lake Distillery by Warren Murray of Vena's Fizz House

### Winters Welcome

- 1.5 oz Sebago Lake original rum
- 1/2 oz Bols Genever
- 3/4 oz cardamaro
- 1/2 oz cynar
- 4 dashes Venas bitter axel
- Orange twist and luxardo cherry

Combine all into a mixing glass, stir well and strain into a coupe.

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- Split Rock Distilling
- Stroudwater Distillery
- Sweetgrass Winery and Distillery (2 locations)
- Three of Strong Spirits
- Tree Spirits of Maine
- Wiggly Bridge Distillery Barn

# Maine Distillery Trail

Refer to our interactive map at [mainedistillersguild.org/distillers-map](http://mainedistillersguild.org/distillers-map) for precise locations and directions to each distillery. Please take note to contact each distillery or verify their hours online before visiting.

# WINE

## 'Maine Made' Wines Taking on a Life of Their Own

By Beverly Soucy

Tom's the Author, *Brewing in Maine* (2016)  
Columnist, *Mainer* and *Yankee Brew News*

Our great state of Maine hasn't been widely known or recognized for its wine-making or rolling vineyards.

Maine wines have always been a bit of a mystery to me, conjuring up the blueberry wine of our childhood, where many a dad experimented with their own winemaking skills in the basements of their homes.

This inevitably resulted in blowing the tops off those potions in the middle of the night, for lack of experience in creating wine at all left more than a few wives exasperated with the cleanup and the lingering aroma of fermented berries.

When envisioning a great bottle of wine, typically the grapes of France and Italy come to mind. Rarely, if ever, does the State of Maine conjure up visions of vineyards and grapes, instead most people see images of pine trees and lobsters. In today's climate, that effort has turned a very large corner.

Contrary to the wine industry's production on a global level, Maine wineries are slowly becoming more mainstream. They are currently highly coveted and somewhat of a specialty item at dinner tables and holiday parties around the country.

More and more connoisseurs are recognizing the benefit of a Maine-made wine as a way of capturing that Maine feeling they have come to expect and love. These wines are taking on a life of their own and giving a unique signature to the wine crafters of Maine.

Pear and maple picnic wines from Tree Spirits of Maine in Oakland is the perfect example of that signature and uniqueness in using ingredients surrounding their vineyard farm. They are not only growing their own fruit but also pressing and mashing that fruit — in partnership with other local farmers — to create wines that speak to anyone quite literally looking for a taste of Maine.

Their "Maple Storm" is a particularly lovely fortified wine when perfectly chilled and should be sipped on over a Sunday brunch with friends and a plate of French crepes.

If you are looking to try a more recognized Maine wine with a popular label, three come to mind that are known to most New Englanders as comfortable Maine wines.

Dragon Fly Farm & Winery (Stetson), Cellardoor Winery (Lincolntonville) and Catherine Hill Winery (Cherryfield) are all known for their small batch wines and for sourcing other, smaller independent Maine vineyards and farms for their grapes and berries as a way to stay connected to their community. Each winery unique in their own right. The three more recognized labels have blazed a trail that now leads to an ever-growing movement of small-batch winemakers hailing out of New England.

When it comes to Catherine Hill Winery, you cannot beat the ever-lovely "Cranberry Isle" and "First Light Riesling" for a holiday party. This winery is well known for

small batch cases with ingredients sourced throughout Washington County. They are vegan and gluten-free, needing no occasion to partake.

Dragon Fly Farm is well known for its personality and originality when it comes to the names of their wines and the combinations of their craft with the likes of "Blueberry Bliss" "Miss Behavin" and "Red Rocket," using berries and other ingredients sourced locally. Any one of their wines makes for a great gift or an addition to any meal or afternoon picnic. Bottles under this label are a lovely addition to any event or just to sip on a lazy Sunday afternoon.

Cellardoor Winery, located in Lincolntonville, boasts more than 5000 vines on their estate. They have led the way creatively when it comes to finding a path through unexpected and diverse weather conditions, as well as Maine's unique climate for growing the perfect greases and creating a consistent product that rivals any premier vineyard or winery.

This vineyard is known for its ability to "roll with the changes" in the grape growing industry and bringing recognition to the State

of Maine for their wine production. With a short growing season and maturation of grapes relying on the unpredictability of Mother Nature, this is no small feat for grape growers in Maine.

This entity continues to lead the way in diversity, ever-changing strategies and their ability to adapt. Whichever bottle you choose under this label will not disappoint.

Let's talk about mead, an old-world beverage dating back to Viking times, often kept in barrels of longship hulls and brought out for celebration and special occasions. It is made of wildflower honey, water, yeasts, and set to ferment. The addition of fruits and berries, herbs and barks lends to the mystery of complexity in each bottle of mead.

Maine Mead Works comes to mind for its small-batch meads if you are looking for a venue accommodating up to 100 people for a cocktail party or 50 friends for a sit down multi-course meal accompanied by their mead samples.



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What could be better than pulling up a seat in one of the tasting rooms, sampling the diverse array of hard ciders, choosing your favorite, and having the ability to purchase some for your friends and family? An apple a day is just good advice to this day.

Lastly, if you are looking to expand your knowledge of all Maine wineries have to offer, let me introduce you to Maine Winery Trail. This guild is run by fellow winemakers, growers, and owners throughout Maine with a mission "to advance the prosperity of the entire Maine wine industry."

They showcase wine events and tastings happening throughout the state as well as promote and foster programs to encourage growth in this ever-growing venture. They have created a map of wineries where you are able to map out your adventure touring our state's wineries. They continue to showcase events and update listings of all of the wineries currently in operation around the state.

Whether you are from Maine or perhaps looking for a lovely gift for family or friends from away, you will not go wrong with a bottle or two of Maine Made wine, mead or hard cider.

Just when you think you know about grapes and growing conditions in New England, I'm here to say you are going to be so surprised with your wine adventure.

Cheers to your health. In vino veritas — "In wine, truth." 🍷



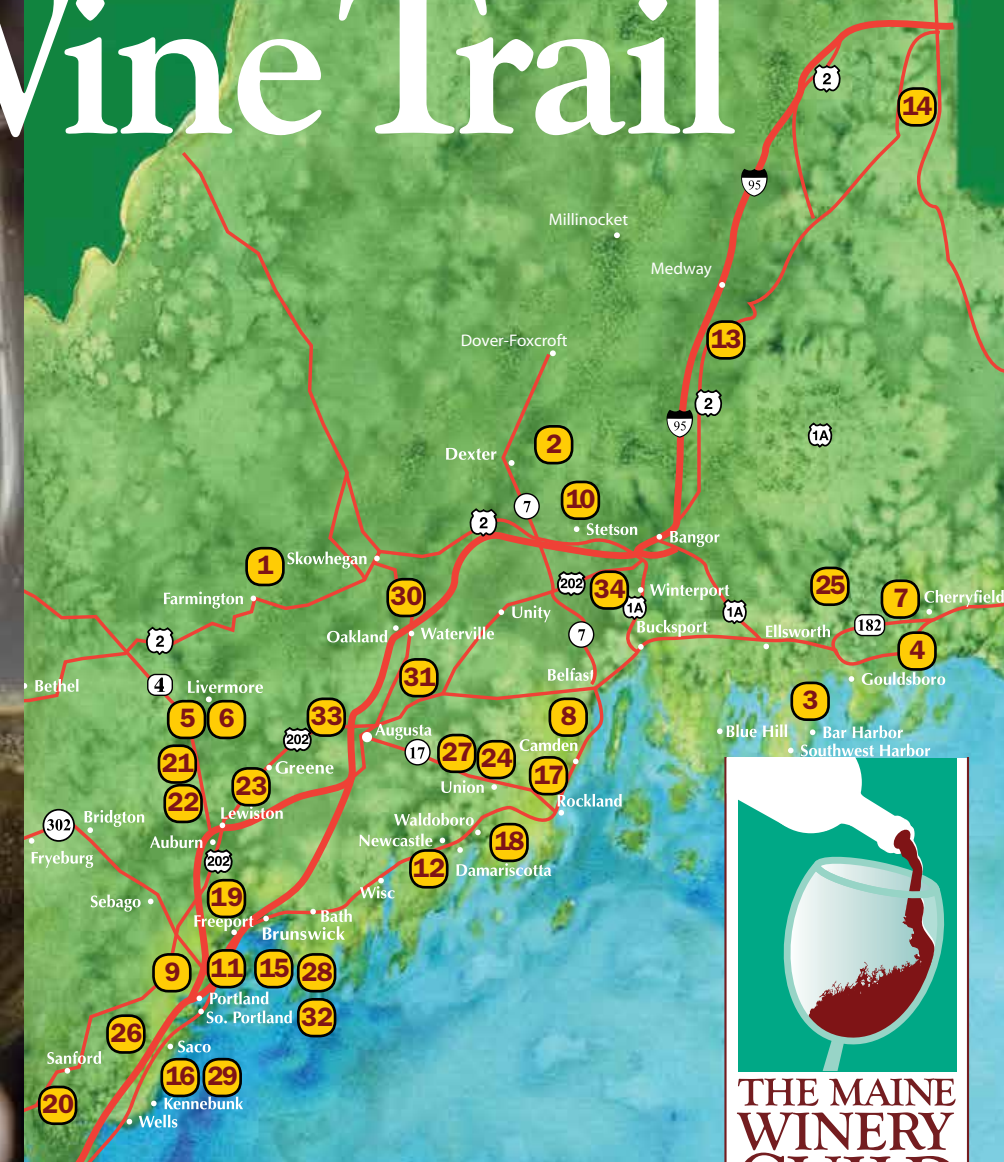
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| 2 - Anthony Lee's Winery   | 19 - Portersfield Cider                       |
| 3 - Bar Harbor Cellars   | 20 - Prospect Hill Winery and Vineyard        |
| 4 - Bartlett Maine Estate Winery/<br>Spirits of Maine Distillery | 21 - Ricker Hill Farms Cider/Winery           |
| 5 - Boothby's Orchard and Farm                                   | 22 - Wallingfords Fruit House                 |
| 6 - Boothby's Corner Market                                      | 23 - Vista of Maine Vineyard/Cidery           |
| 7 - Catherine Hill Winery  | 24 - Savage Oakes Vineyard and Winery         |
| 8 - Cellardoor Winery  | 25 - Shalom Organic Orchard Farm & Winery     |
| 9 - Cellardoor at the Point                                      | 26 - Solar Rock Winery                        |
| 10 - Dragonfly Farm & Winery                                     | 27 - Sweetgrass Farm Winery & Distillery,     |
| 11 - eighteen twenty wines                                       | 28 - Old Port Tasting Room and Shop           |
| 12 - Fat Friar's Meadery   | 29 - Kennebunk Tasting Room and Shop          |
| 13 - Heart of Maine Winery                                       | 30 - Tree Spirits Winery & Distillery         |
| 14 - Hidden Spring Winery  | 31 - Two Hogs Winery                          |
| 15 - Maine Mead Works  | 32 - Urban Farm Fermentory                    |
| 16 - The Mead Room   | 33 - WillowsAwake Winery                      |
| 17 - HoneyMaker Mead Room  | 34 - Winterport Winery/ Penobscot Bay Brewery |

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## Drink, Dine and Play

### Farmington Offers History, Year-Round Activities and a University

By Victor Block

When folks in Farmington navigate a canoe in the Sandy River — passing through town on the way to its confluence with the Kennebec — they're following in the paddle strokes of Abenaki indigenous people. A tribe of those Native Americans occupied two camps in the area where they fished, raised maize and potatoes, and constructed a defensive stockade.

It doesn't take long for visitors today to agree those early residents were in the know. The riverside location of Farmington, tucked into the foothills of Maine's western mountains, combines with other attractions to make the town an inviting place to spend time.

The story of its interesting past alone is worth reliving. The Kennebec and its tributaries were an

important Native American fishing location until dams interfered with the aquatic migration route.

A town was laid out by European pioneers in 1776, but the permanent settlement was delayed by the Revolutionary War until 1781 when a sawmill was established. When the town was incorporated in 1794, it was named Farmington because of the fertile soil in the area. Products related to agriculture became the community's major occupation, with a focus on hay, wool, apples and other fruit.

The available water power soon attracted industry, including lumber mills, gristmills, a foundry and canning factories. The next step in the town's development occurred when it became the southern terminus of the narrow-gauge Sandy River Railroad and a gateway to the Rangeley Lakes and Sugarloaf Mountain areas.

The vibe is very different today. Farmington presents the face of a lively college town combining historical tidbits with an inviting variety of outdoor activities. The main drag bisects buildings of the University of Maine at Farmington, which traces its ancestry back to 1863. That's when the community was chosen as the location of the state's first publicly funded "normal school," created to train educators and eventually merge into the University of Maine System.

Early graduates included the Stanley Brothers — famous for building the Stanley Steamer automobile — and John Frank Stevens, engineer of the Panama Canal. Today's students attend a nationally recognized public liberal arts college



Merrill Hall - University of Maine Farmington.

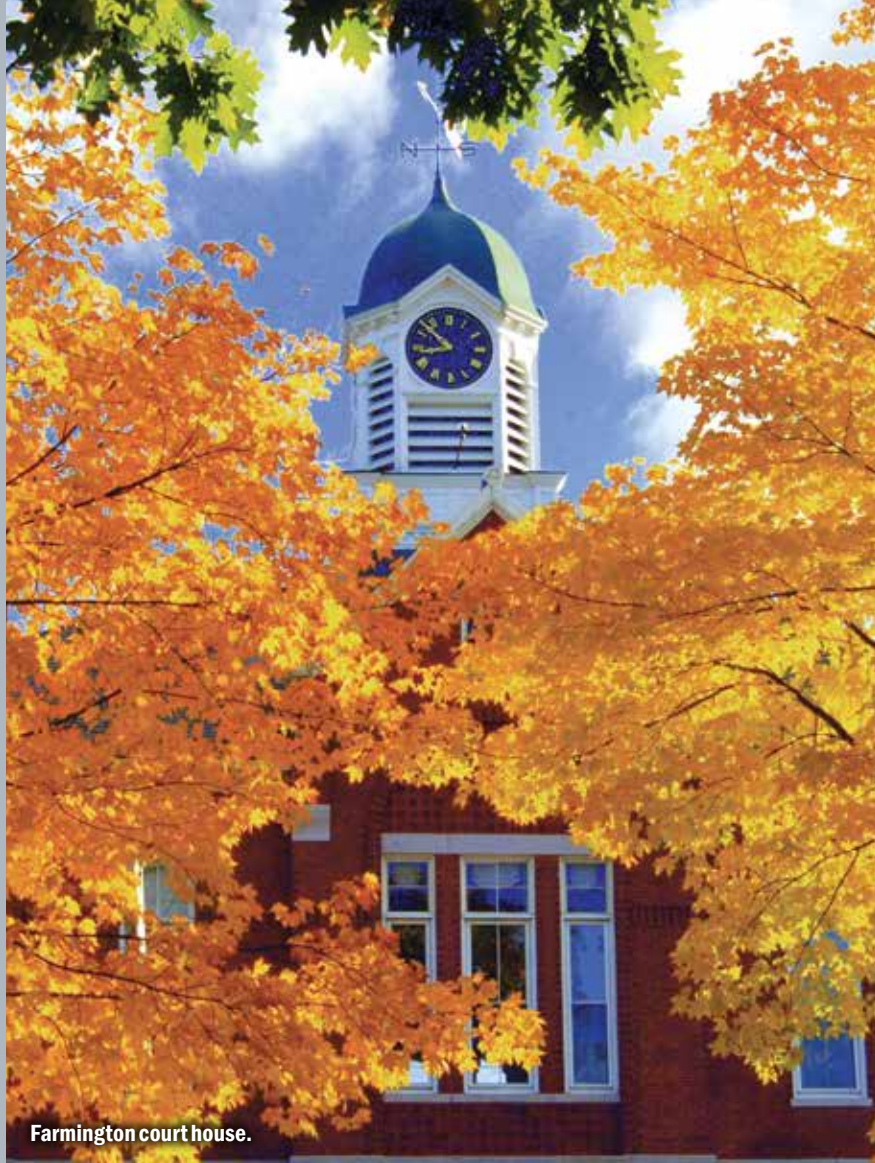
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Farmington court house.

offering programs in arts and sciences, human services and teacher education.

Adding to the appeal are the attractions of the small town (population of about 7,500) and its proximity to an array of outdoor activities. Sections of the Farmington Historic District continue to function much as they did in the early 20th century. Old churches, homes and other buildings relate chapters from Farmington's past.

One house museum celebrates the life and the career of Lillie Norton who was born there in 1857 and became an internationally known opera singer, under the last name Nordica. Exhibits include photos of the soprano in her operatic roles, Tiffany and other stage-jewelry she wore, and numerous artifacts from America's opulent "Gilded Age."

Eight signs posted around town delineate a walking tour and describe the historical significance of each area along the route. That abbreviated stroll provides but a hint of what awaits those who prefer to spend their time in the outdoors.

For starters, a network of green spaces has been interwoven among historic buildings gracing downtown Farmington. They range from a short gentle path through an old-growth hemlock grove to a system of forest trails that lead to aged wells, verdant pools and scenic overlooks.



Octagon house built in 1858.

Close by are opportunities to play golf on courses with dramatic views, road and mountain bike, ride horseback and drive an all-terrain vehicle over challenging terrain.

Winter means not only downhill and cross-country skiing, snowboarding and snow tubing but also snowmobiling, snowshoeing and even dog mushing.

Even with all of these added enticements, Farmington continues to be a center of agriculture, girded by highly productive farms. Therefore, it's no surprise a year-round schedule of farmers' markets provides shoppers with fresh-from-the-field produce and other edibles.

Food is a major attraction at the annual Farmington Fair, but



not the only one. Of course, that extravaganza — staged since 1840 — includes dairy, beef, sheep and poultry exhibits, an ox-pulling contest, and offerings of both canned and baked goods.

No less anticipated, alternatives include harness racing, live music and a midway alive with the sight and sounds of rides and games.

If these events come as a surprise, do some of what Farmington offers visitors. That includes interesting touches of history, a list of both indoor and outdoor things to see and do, and a university standing tall in the academic hierarchy of Maine.

For more information log onto [farmington-maine.org](http://farmington-maine.org)



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# Waterville Offers Talent, Style, Outdoor Activities and Taste-Testing

By Victor Block

At the turn of the 20th century, a number of people worked in two mills located on the opposite side of the Kennebec River

from where they lived. In 1901, a footbridge was built and a one-cent toll was charged.

Less than a year later, the span was destroyed and replaced by a sturdier

version, and a new charge of two cents was imposed. Ever since then, the “Two Cent Bridge” has served as a point of interest for people visiting Waterville.

The area now occupied by that small city (population of about 16,000) was inhabited first by a tribe of the Abenaki people, later by traders and then English settlers. Waterville was first incorporated in 1802 and became a center of fishing, lumbering, agriculture and shipbuilding. By the early 1900s five shipyards were operating and, because the Ticonic Falls blocked navigation further upriver, the town evolved into a center for trade.

Waterville became known as “Elm City” because of the number of those stately old trees that graced the setting. They continue to enhance examples of traditional architecture located

throughout the city, which relates chapters of its history.

The City Hall and Opera House, built in the Beaux-Arts style, was dedicated in 1902. The beautifully restored 810-seat Opera House continues to be a venue for theatre, dance, concerts and other programs.

The old Waterville Post Office, built in 1911, is an example of a Greek Revival architecture. The building, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has been converted to residences.

The former Waterville High School, known historically as Gilman Street School, welcomed its first students in 1912. It was enlarged during the 1930s as a Works Progress Administration project. The WPA was created to provide jobs during the Great Depression to unemployed people while constructing schools, roads and other parts of the country’s infrastructure.

The Redington House and Museum, constructed in 1814, is one of the best-preserved homes from that period in the city, but its attractions extend well



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beyond that claim to fame. The Museum is the headquarters of the Waterville Historical Society and provides a comprehensive view of life in New England and Waterville over the past two centuries.

Collections range from period furniture, household artifacts, tools and toys to weapons, historical documents and diaries. A replica pharmacy building stands near the site with where the original structure once occupied.

Waterville also is known as somewhat of an education center. Colby College, a private liberal arts learning institution, was founded in 1813 under another name. Later it took the name of Gardner Colby, a philanthropist who provided financial support. Exhibits in the Colby College Museum of Art emphasizes American and contemporary works that span time periods and cultures.

Thomas College is a small private institution. Despite its modest enrollment, it offers both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Two annual events are among activities that serve as magnets for both Maine residents and visitors to drop by Waterville. Since 1998, the Maine International Film Festival showcases independent and international motion pictures, with a focus on Maine- and New England-themed productions.

The one-day Taste of Waterville takes place on the first Wednesday of August on Waterville's Riverwalk along the Kennebec. It showcases the area's variety of foods available from "bite booths," trucks and restaurants. Music and other entertainment, brew sampling, and beer and wine gardens round out this adult-focused event.

Those who drop by Skowhegan to sample local food and brews may extend their stay, and enjoyment, checking out the city's other attractions. They include a variety of art, magnificent period architecture and that footbridge where people once paid two cents to cross the river.

For more information about visiting Waterville, visit [www.waterville-me.gov](http://www.waterville-me.gov).



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