

Decor Maine

ISSUE NO. 3

LIVING BEAUTIFULLY IN MAINE

THE

Stylish Getaways

ISSUE

*Traveling in
STYLE!*

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LIVING IN BOOTHBAY
HARBOR**

**CHARMING
COTTAGES ON THE
EDGE OF ACADIA**

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WITH WORLD CLASS
DINING NEAR
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**VIBRANT
WALLPAPER SHINES
AT GOOSE ROCKS
BEACH HOME**



Castine's Dyce Head Lighthouse was established in 1829 and deactivated when it was replaced by a nearby tower. When the tower was destroyed by a storm, the lighthouse was reactivated in 2008.

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

DON'T LET THE DEEP MARITIME HISTORY, INTELLECTUAL COTERIES, AND SERIOUS ART SCENE FOOL YOU. AS **CASTINE AND BLUE HILL PENINSULA** OPEN FOR A NEW SEASON, THEY'RE RARING FOR A GOOD TIME

by Alexandra Hall photos by Lauryn Hottinger



IT'S 8 P.M. ON THE SATURDAY OF MAINE Maritime Academy's spirited reunion weekend, and George Trinovitch and Matt Powell are directly in the eye of Castine's storm. The couple, who bought and renovated the **Pentagöet Inn** together in 2022, have since turned the Queen Anne Victorian manse into the nexus of the town's social scene. And tonight, *tout* Castine is in the house—along with a slew of salty sea captains back for homecoming—all tucking into plates of seared duck breast and bluefish pâté on charred toast, among the dining room's crystal chandeliers and palm fronds.

"You've brought light and life to Castine," says one regular to Matt, taking his leave for the evening. But the night's far from over: Stories are still being swapped beside the piano about how the town, which takes its long history as seriously as it does its art, is also fast becoming a place to party. "Our Bastille Day celebration outdoes any other in America," proclaims one *grande dame* seated near the bar. That only makes sense, given that the town began as a French outpost—Fort Pentagöet—in 1635. "Everyone wears white. It's an all-town celebration."

It's this very blend of history and new traditions, driven by eccentric personalities—from artists and intellectuals to sailors and food fiends—that defines the rapidly evolving communities of Castine and Blue Hill. And as they begin to open their doors to spring, this issue's *Drive* story explores the unique flavor of both areas.

A few blocks down Perkins Street from Pentagöet Inn and its woodland-style gardens, past the residence of the first European settlers (It isn't just the French who arrived in the 1600s; Castine has also been occupied as the site of trading posts, forts, missions, and permanent settlements of Holland, England, and colonial America.), you'll happen upon **The Wilson Museum**. Founded by Dr. John Howard Wilson in 1921, a Castine summer resident, geologist, and global explorer, the place brims with his personal collections—everything from 460-million-year-old trilobites to Neanderthal stone axes—in a volunteer-run building overlooking Penobscot Bay.

Wilson's legacy of curiosity was mirrored by other twentieth-century residents like Eleanor Roosevelt and poets Robert Lowell and Philip Booth. And it's still echoed today on Main Street at places like **Compass Rose Books**, where owner and Tufts alum Johanna Barrett has amassed the kind of stock you could spend an entire afternoon pouring over. She organizes regular readings and discussions with authors and thinkers of all stripes in spaces across town and here at the in-store cafe, doling out flaky mushroom gouda croissants and iced lavender tea—all of which conspire to keep you there all day long.

And they might succeed if **Gallery B.** weren't next door, calling your name with its exceptional mix of paintings and sculptures—including regional artists such as Louise Bourne, Nancy Gruskin, and Christina Thwaites—and some of the most jovial staff you've likely encoun-

Castine's downtown area leads to the town's pristine harbor on Penobscot Bay. *opposite:* Blue Hill Wine Shop (middle, left) is an oenophile's Valhalla; a view of the water's edge (middle, right); expect an exceptionally knowledgeable staff at Blue Hill Books (bottom, right); artisan candles at Handworks Gallery (bottom, left).



Photo: travelview/Shutterstock



Photo courtesy of Hillary Mills



Photo courtesy of Blue Hill Wine Shop



The Pentagöet Inn, housed in a Queen Anne Victorian manse, is the center of the town's social scene.

Photo by Claire Esparros



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CAN'T MISS



BARNCASTLE HOTEL & RESTAURANT

125 South Street, Blue Hill, ME, USA
barncastle.me · @barncastle_bluehill

Barncastle Hotel is a Victorian-style inn built in 1884, featuring five guest rooms, an intimate dining room, cozy pub, and newly renovated barn for concerts and events. Their reimagined restaurant features shared plates inspired by the owners' time living in the Alsace region of France.



GALLERY B.

5 Main Street, Castine, ME, USA
gallerybgallery.com · @gallerybgallery

Gallery B. is a small, carefully curated, contemporary art gallery located in the village of Castine on the coast of Maine. The space features exhibit work by over 30 artists, from established international names to emerging local artists, in rotating exhibitions from May through mid-December.



HANDWORKS GALLERY

48 Main Street, Blue Hill, ME, USA
handworksgallery.org · @handworksgallerymaine

This year, Handworks Gallery celebrates its 50th season of providing contemporary craft, fine art, and gifts to the coastal community of Blue Hill. The gallery represents 100 local and Maine artists, whose mediums range from pottery, glass, wood, jewelry, fibers, and more.

Photo by Jumping Rocks Photography



tered. Get them talking and they may just regale you with tales of warm-weather soirées that spill onto the street outside.

Next door, **The Breeze & Castine Variety** peddles Maine blueberry and strawberry pies to-go from its window; pick one up on your way down the hill toward the harbor for a memorable meal at **Dennett's Wharf**. The seaside institution serves a time-honored, seafood-centric menu with renewed pizzazz, thanks to renowned chef Taylor Hester's subtle approach to fine-dining-meets-casual fare. "People don't want to feel like you're changing things too much," says Taylor. "So we take amazing local seafood and use special techniques to build sauces and layer flavors that are next level."

Meanwhile, yet another level entirely awaits on Blue Hill Peninsula. Experience it by taking Castine Road and driving 30 minutes to Blue Hill, in a place that thrives year-round with artists and craftspeople. Proof is found in its many excellent galleries. On Parker Point Road, step into **Cynthia Winings Gallery**. Housed in a former barn, the gallery houses a collection of thought-provoking and beautiful works—from abstract sculpture and expressive collages to soothing landscapes—by established and emerging Maine artists.

Then it's back into downtown, taking a right onto Main Street toward **Handworks Gallery**. There, owner Diane Allen stocks an enchanting assemblage of fine

arts and crafts: hand-strung freshwater pearl necklaces, feather-soft pillows covered in botanical-printed linens by Scarborough's Elizabeth Petersen, and darling childrenswear by Blue Hill's Sue Fenders. "There are so many different kinds of incredible artists and artisans in the area," says Diane. "We want to be a place to give them their due." That's a sentiment echoed (albeit expanded geographically) by Wendy Hays, who owns **MAE** across the street. She meticulously curates a selection of exquisite-meets-funky clothing and home accessories from across the globe, and then arranges them into imaginative vignette displays. Etched glass goblets sit atop embroidered table linens from Germany; deep-scented luxury SOH candles from Australia flank silk scarves from France and sweaters from Japan. "Some of what I sell can be a little daring," says Wendy with a smile. "So you might think it wouldn't sell. But those are the items that go first!"

Your next left will be Pleasant Street, where **Blue Hill Books** awaits, and where owner Samatha Haskell has amassed a deep selection of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, travel books, and mysteries. There are also smartly chosen titles from independent publishers and local authors. Expect an unusually knowledgeable and friendly staff, ready to make some whip-smart reading recommendations. "Our customers are dynamic readers," says bookseller Matt Shaw. "They read to learn but also for fun. So

opposite, top: The town's art-focused and intellectually curious character is reflected in stores like Compass Rose Books.

opposite: Castine attracts visiting families all summer long (bottom, left); serene coastline is ubiquitous (middle). Photo by Jason Langley; funky design at The Pentagöet Inn (bottom, right).



Photo: travelview/Shutterstock

our recommendation process is always interactive—you never know exactly where it's going to end up.”

Back on Main Street, turn left and revive with a high-octane boost at **Bucklyn Coffee**, the wee-sized cafe (it's more of a shed, honestly) serving delicious joe roasted in Brooklin. On sunny days, the outdoor chairs and tables fill up with folks schmoozing and sipping maple lattes. But we have one last vital stop to make, so push on down Main Street until you find **Blue Hill Wine Shop**. Set in an unassuming Cape-style home, it's a hub and hangout for local oenophiles and food nerds alike. Co-owners and husband-wife team Max Treitler and Mary Alice Hurvitt line the shelves with a selection of 3,000-plus bottles and a bevy of scrumptious foods—the likes of Calabrian nduja sauces, local garlic braids, lavender honey, and spectacular cured meats and cheeses

from its compact deli counter, where customers wind up doing as much chatting as ordering.

“People are used to interacting here,” says Mary Alice. “We have concerts and political gatherings and events.” She credits the mix of personalities and tastes for the milieu of the foods they run into. “This is a pretty sophisticated area,” she says, “and I think they like coming in and seeing the international foods we have that remind them of trips they've taken.”

That said, much like the rest of this region, she isn't about to rest on her laurels. “That's the best part,” she says. “We're always pushing the boundaries of new things.” ■

SPREAD: Thanks to the presence of Maine Maritime Academy and the dedication of its visitors, the harbor is always active during the on-season.

Photo by Jason Langley

