



Best of Maine

2012 Edition

Suppose you were having a dinner party and went searching for the “best cheese spread in Maine.” Where would you begin? You might try Google, but no series of computer algorithms can convey the creamy goodness of Trempherbe Cheeses of Ogunquit, with its sublime chutney and spice blends. What if you were looking for the “best dining adventure”? You might spend hours on Yelp! before learning that Nebo Lodge, arguably the fanciest island restaurant in Maine, offers a romantic round-trip boat launch to North Haven – by moonlight, no less. We tend to think we are living in the Age of Search (as Yahoo might put it), but we are still very much creatures of the Age of Recommend. When it comes to putting our money where our mouth is, we all want advice from someone we know and trust. That’s how DOWN EAST approaches our annual “Best of Maine” issue each year. After fifty-eight years, we understand how much faith you put in us. That’s why we’ve vetted every item on this list, and even asked many of the DOWN EAST staffers who work in other parts of our building to sign their names to their favorites. These are our choices – and being proud Mainers, we are ready to stand by them. You might not always agree. But at least you know who to argue with. You can’t do that with Google.





Shopping

OUR GUIDE TO MEN'S CLOTHING, SILK-SCREENED PILLOWS, DOG TREATS, STONE CABINET KNOBS, AND A STYLE CONSULTANT.

Men's Clothing Store PORTLAND DRY GOODS CO.

237 Commercial St., Portland
207-699-5575; portlanddrygoods.com

With a new name and revamped selection, Portland Dry Goods (formerly McKenzie Tribe) is the hippest supplier of designer menswear in Maine. Admittedly there isn't much competition, but who needs it when GQ says it's one of America's top twenty-five men's clothing stores. Owner David Hodgkins' three-headed beast in a wool cardigan (Portland Dry Goods, David Wood, and Barbour) have helped define Portland men's fashion. Each store has a unique collection to offer men of any age, but Portland Dry Goods, with its well-curated selection of youthful, slim-fitting, casual yet sophisticated labels, such as GANT by Michael Bastian, Naked & Famous Jeans, and SLVDR, stands out in a city that takes pride in its trendiness.

Side Tables

FINE ARTIST MADE

9 Lupine Way, Perry
207-853-9504; fineartistmade.com

Patrick Mealey and Joyce Jackson bring to furniture design the same blend of traditional aesthetics and



clean, contemporary lines that they employ in the historic kitchen renovations they've completed in and around Eastport. A generous round surface makes the Mill Cove Table their most practical side table. It gets its sophisticated whimsy from the legs. Another of our favorites, Roque Bluffs, a pedestal table, has tapered legs hugged by curved supports. Made of poplar, the tables are named for two of Down East Maine's most beguiling landmarks.

Float-rope Baskets

CUSTOM CORDAGE

P.O. Box 1387, Waldoboro
207-354-0013; customcordage.biz

You've probably noticed the colorful rope doormats that have cropped up on porches all over

Maine. They are made from floating ground line, which lobstermen were ordered to stop using for setting their traps a few years ago as part of an effort to reduce whale entanglements. The Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation has taken more than a million pounds of the stuff off lobstermen's hands, and Custom Cordage, a rope maker, was among the first businesses to acquire some and transform it into something new. Just as durable and weatherproof as the doormats, these cheery and very practical totes are great for organizing and lugging almost anything, indoors or out.

Silkscreened Pillows

STUDIO E FLETT DESIGN

Gorham
207-839-7187; erinflett.com

Happy designs and playful colors are the hallmark of Erin Flett's style. A graphic designer, Flett makes her pillow covers with the soft, slightly textured cotton fabric known as reproduction barkcloth, a contemporary version of the Asian material once made from tree bark. Many of her hand-drawn patterns are inspired by her surroundings, managing to be rustic and hip at once. Among them: Ashley Pine,