

YEAR IN EATER

Food Writers Name Maine's Top Restaurant Standbys of 2015

The places that won them back again and again.

by Adam H. Callaghan | @AHCAllaghan | Dec 28, 2015, 12:17pm EST

Via All Coverage of Year in Eater [EME]

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Palace Diner, Biddeford. | Bill Addison/Eater

As is tradition at Eater, we close the year with a survey of food writers, bloggers, and industry experts. We posed eight questions, from meal of the year to top restaurant newcomers. All will be answered by the time we turn off the lights at the end of 2015. Responses have been cut, pasted, and largely unedited. Readers, please add your survey answers in the comments.

Q: What were your top restaurant standbys of 2015?

Kathy Gunst, *cookbook author*:

Primo continues to be world class. The whole scene—the farm-raised vegetables and fruit, the animals, the house-made charcuterie, the amazing pasta. Try and have a bad meal there. I dare you. Anju in Kittery continues to get better and better. The ramen is so terrific and the broth homemade and superb. Fore Street is just always good and always there. The food is never disappointing; it feels like home at this point. Nebo Lodge is terrific. Farm-fresh food cooked simply and elegantly. Just the right amount of Maine down home and island elegance.

Rachel Forrest, *Seacoast Online*:

I concentrate on Kittery and York so The Black Birch, The Wallingford Dram, Anju, Anneke Jans — all in Kittery. Gigi's in York Beach and Thistle Pig in S. Berwick.

Joe Ricchio, *Dispatch magazine*:

Palace Diner and Mi Sen.

Karen Watterson, *Maine magazine*:

Walter's; Eventide; Empire; Paciarino.

Kate McCarty, *The Blueberry Files* blog, Eater Maine contributor:

Terlingua, Eventide.

Peggy Grodinsky, *Portland Press Herald*:

If we're talking about restaurants that make me happy when I'm not working: Ramen Suzukiya (the noodles have such perfect chew + remind me of two years I lived in Tokyo), P'o Boy + Pickles (which has terrific salads! Even though I suspect few people go there for the salads), Schulte + Herr (why does German food



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have a bad rap?), Bresca and the Honey Bee at Sabbathday Lake — the spot, the food, the ice cream, summer in Maine! Real joy! If we're talking places where I ate superlative meals in the past year: Miyake, Meanwhile in Belfast, Chase's Daily (also Belfast). This list is VERY much for starters. I am shamefully neglecting many wonderful restaurants and meals. How nice to have so much good food in Portland and Maine! Also, I didn't get out enough because we have too many deadlines!

Claire Jeffers, *MaineToday*:

Andy's Old Port Pub, Isa, Veranda Noodle Bar, Lolita.

Emily Burnham, *Bangor Daily News*:

As always, Long Grain in Camden remains a true year-round treat, The Fiddlehead in Bangor continues to produce top notch, creative food, Boda is my go-to place for pre-concert snacks and cocktails, the Bagaduce Lunch is the Platonic ideal of Maine seafood, and in the opposite way, Eventide Oyster Company makes the best non-traditional lobster roll I've ever had.

Rob Schatz, *Eating Portland Alive* blog:

Walter's, Dutch's, Paciarino, Blue Rooster Food Co.

Kathleen Pierce, *Bangor Daily News*:

The Corner Room, 3Crow in Rockland, Frontier in Brunswick.

Don Lindgren, *Rabelais Books*:

Palace Diner, Eventide, Hugo's, Piccolo, Blue Spoon.

Susan Axelrod, *Portland Press Herald*:

Year 'round: Empire Chinese for everything on the menu, but especially the soup dumplings. Sur Lie for small plates and terrific cocktails. Bistro 233 in Yarmouth for comfort food close to home. Summertime: Mine Oyster in Boothbay Harbor for wood-grilled seafood. Lobster Dock in Boothbay Harbor for traditional seafood and the view.

Paul Koenig, *Old Port magazine*:

Novare Res for an easy, post-work meal and a beer. A1 Diner for anything on the specials board. Slab for not sacrificing quantity for quality. Pai Men because I've never been disappointed. Blue Rooster for some of the best sober and less-than-sober food around.

John Golden, *The Golden Dish* blog:

Empire Chinese, Caiola's, Back Bay Grill, Terlingua, Roustabout, Sur-Lie, Fore St., Tempo Dulu, Piccolo, Union, Central Provisions, Lolita, Francine's, Natalie's, Petite Jacqueline.



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