

BUILD YOUR NEXT HOME OUT OF WEED — FOR REAL | P. 26

ISSUE 030

# beer&weed.

A MAGAZINE WITH REFINED TASTE / MAINE

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## ONE MAN TASTING MACHINE

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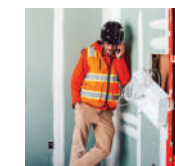
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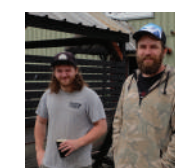
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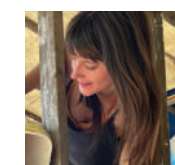
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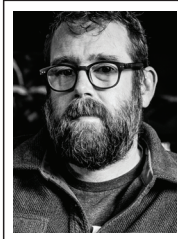
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# WHY WOULD I GO TO CAMDEN AGAIN?



**BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, THE JUNE ELECTION WILL DECIDEDLY BE OLD NEWS. BOARDS WILL BE SEATED, ORDINANCES WILL BE IN FORCE, AND BUDGET MONEY WILL BE 10 PERCENT SPENT.**

And I'll still be angry at a big group of people in Camden. This one's going to take a little while to wear off.

See, the way Maine's cannabis laws are written, it's up to each town to decide how and where cannabis retail storefronts can operate. In June, Camden — like Wells, and Old Orchard, and Wiscasset, among others — had a pair of questions on the ballot asking whether voters would like to change their zoning ordinance to accommodate as many as two recreational cannabis shops, but not closer than either 500 or, alternately, 1000 feet of a school.

Those ballot questions were soundly defeated. Which, in the abstract, is fine. The law says towns can choose and Camden chose not to have weed shops. Big deal. Drive 20 minutes down to Rockland and you're good. Whatever.

But the way in which Camden went about campaigning against cannabis was, frankly, unacceptable. For example, in an ad that appeared in their local Camden Herald, a group calling themselves "Camden Cares" led with this question: "Did I ever think Camden residents would be voting on whether we want drug dealers in our town?"

Yes. "Drug dealers." Whether 500 feet or 1000 feet from a school, the political ad argued, "there is no safe distance when it comes to selling drugs." Really. Won't someone think of the children?

Of course, these Camden Cares folks don't care about children at all. Or the health and well-being of the people of their town. If they did, they'd be up in arms about all the booze that flows through their quaint little village of 5000 people. Two breweries — Blaze and Sea Dog — are right there in the town center. And booze is decidedly bad for you.

In November, U.S. News and World Report ran a piece saying "a new government report shows alcohol abuse caused nearly 13% of deaths in American adults under 65 between 2015 and 2019. The statistics were even more grim among younger U.S. adults: In people aged 20 to 49, alcohol abuse was the cause of 20% of deaths." In total, 140,000 deaths in the United States each year.

Look, we love booze, but no one here is going to argue it's good for you.

Weed? Depending on how broadly you look at things, you can make the argument as some researchers do that cannabis leads to a couple hundred deaths a year in the U.S. via accidents, like car crashes and maybe four drownings a year. It's not harmless. But it's not even in the same category of dangerousness that alcohol is.

These people in Camden don't really care, though. What they don't want are the kinds of people whom they perceive as enjoying cannabis to even be in their towns. Just look at the way they took a victory lap in the aftermath of the election:

"For anyone who wondered if there is a place left in America where people can leave their doors unlocked and their bikes unchained," these same Camden Cares people wrote, "where the air is clean, the land is green, and the water is as blue as the sky; where people smile and wave to their neighbors, and where kids can play in the streets until being summoned home for supper — last night was our answer."

”

Somehow, these people are convinced, a couple of downtown cannabis shops would have caused ruination.

I can hardly believe it's true. Somehow, these people are convinced, a couple of downtown cannabis shops would have caused ruination. Of course, they can't really believe that. No one actually thinks a couple of weed shops are going to cause the ocean to turn color and the air to fill with smog. Instead, they want to keep "those people" out. The gauche. The unwashed. The lowbrow. "Drug users."

The people of Camden, you see, don't smoke weed. They gobble down a fine selection of pharmacologically designed pills prescribed to them by their doctors and given to them by white-coated pharmacists in their local Walgreens so as to enrich other people like themselves who went to the right colleges and knew the right people and had the right ancestors.

We'll leave them to it. If they want to be nasty, I can be nasty right back. That attitude of theirs is rooted in white supremacy and fascism and they've provided me with an awful good excuse never again to find myself in Camden. I now know the kinds of people I'll find there.

**bw** WORDS / **SAM PFEIFLE**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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## MIXED BAG OF CANNABIS ELECTIONS RESULTS

As you'll recall, Maine's cannabis laws provide a great deal of power to local municipalities, especially in the adult-use space. Specifically, towns need to opt-in to adult-use stores. Further, they have a great deal of leeway in areas like zoning to establish not just whether they have stores at all, but where those stores might be.

In June's municipal elections, we saw a mixed back of support for the adult use program.

The most contentious election, and perhaps biggest failure for adult-use retail, was held in Camden, which decided by a 2-1 margin not to allow any cannabis retail operations in their town. The less written about that the better.

Similarly, the small town of Surry, right between Blue Hill and Ellsworth, voted 141-55 against allowing cannabis retail in their oceanside community. Why? Compelling arguments apparently included, "The bulk of additional tax revenue benefits from Cannabis establishments flow directly to the State." Why did they capitalize "cannabis"? Unclear. Why they would rather pay state taxes than have cannabis users pay state taxes is also unclear.

Waterboro shot down medical weed entirely, as well, with a vote of 244-171. With zero coverage of the race online, it's hard to know why.

In somewhat similar fashion, both Wells and Old Orchard Beach decided to limit the number of cannabis shops — and they only allow medical. It seems some of the bloom is off of the cannabis rose among Maine's June voters.



THIS JUST IN / WORDS / SAM PFEIFLE

The town of Eliot, which has had many weed spots for some time now, voted 531-151 to amend the town ordinance surrounding cannabis establishments, creating specific regulations for curbside pickup and home delivery options (only two parking spaces allowed for curbside!), and tweaking the maximum number of retail storefronts in a minimal way that's not important. It's sort of neutral and more in line with a maturing cannabis marketplace in town.

However, the town of Wiscasset, also on the coast, approved both medical and adult-use cannabis retail operations, with adult-use just squeaking by with a 41-vote margin. The shops will be allowed on routes 1 and 27 only. It's also interesting to note that the select board opted to add a \$500 application fee and \$5000 town licensing fee, which makes up somewhat for the lack of local revenue.

"Any extra revenue that comes into the town is a good thing," Select Board Chair Sarah Whitfield told the Portland Press Herald.



## DOUBLE THE FUN

In June, the Maine legislature passed "An Act to Increase the Number of Mature Plants Allowed for the Home Cultivation of Cannabis," sponsored by, among others, Republican David Boyer. When the governor declined to either sign or veto it, it became law. What it means is that, by harvest season or so, it will be legal to have six (instead of just three) mature plants and possess all of the consumable cannabis they produce.

Why? Isn't three full-grown plants plenty for any one human? Well, if you've grown outdoors, especially, you know that things can go sideways. Sometimes, you can have three mature plants going, get some powdery mildew or bud rot on one or two of them, and lose just about your entire grow for the year. Having a six-plant limit increases the margin for error by a lot, making it more than practical to grow in your backyard (or on your back deck) and have plenty of weed for the year. Even if you smoke a lot of weed.



## BELFAST BAY BREWING CHANGES HANDS

After 27 years, Pat Mullen was ready to get out of the brewing business. The founder of Belfast Bay Brewing had already contracted with DL Geary to brew their beers — the Lobster Ale and McGovern's Stout — and in June decided to sell the brand outright to Alan and Robin Lapoint, who own the Strainright Companies, a manufacturer of liquid filtration systems, and bought DL Geary five years ago.

The DL Geary logo also has a lobster on it, so it's clearly a great fit.

The Lapoints will continue marketing and selling the Belfast Bay beers, they say, and also told the Lewiston Sun Journal that the Geary plant is only running at 55% capacity or so if anyone else would like to contract them to brew some beer under a different brand.

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

The readers of Beer & Weed are savvy, tasteful consumers of Maine's finest craft offerings. You are thoughtful, engaged, and have your fingers squarely on the pulse. That's why, when when we need answers, we look to you.

**EACH MONTH, WE ASK YOU A SIMPLE QUESTION AND YOU PROVIDE A SIMPLE ANSWER VIA THE HANDY-DANDY QR CODE BELOW. IF YOU FEEL LIKE GIVING US AN EMAIL ADDRESS WHEN YOU DO IT, YOU'LL BE ENTERED TO WIN A B&W SWAG BOX, FULL OF FUN STICKERS, KNICK-KNACKS, AND GIMCRACKS WE'VE COLLECTED FROM THE BEER AND WEED COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE STATE.**

THE TOP ANSWER WILL BE IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE!

### AUGUST'S QUESTION:

# What's the best Red Solo Cup band in Maine?

SUBMIT YOUR ANSWER HERE!

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### JULY'S TOP ANSWER:

**Q:** WHAT'S THE WORST PLACE TO SUDDENLY FIND OUT YOU'RE WAY TOO STONED?

**A:** A PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE.

Congrats to Mark S. Look for your swag box in the mail!



THIS JUST IN

# DEFINITIVE OUT, LONE PINE IN

Last year, we told you how Definitive Brewing took the old Landmark space in Old Orchard Beach and turned into a hot new beer garden for the summer. Well, that didn't work out.

But guess what: Lone Pine Brewing has now done the exact same thing, reopening the space this summer and putting in some A-frames to make the place more fun in worse weather. Similar to Definitive, they've kept the restaurant license as well, so you can get red hot dogs, lobster rolls, and sandwiches with your Oh-J.

Will the space continue to rotate from brewery to brewery next summer? That might be fun!



## FOGTOWN CIDER WINS

Fogtown Brewery: It's not just beer. In June, the Ellsworth brewery announced one of its ciders, The Narrows, took home a silver medal from the Great American International Cider Competition in the Heritage Cider category.

The cider is made from "feral apples," which the brewery forages from trees along the edges of Frenchman, Taunton, and Flanders Bay. They then press the apples in the beer garden and let the cider spontaneously ferment with native coastal yeasts. Then it ages in oak barrels and — voila! — award-winning cider.

The 2022 vintage is mostly gone, but they've got more cider where that came from.



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# LIFE WITH THE NEW BEER BABE



**NOTHING PAIRS BETTER WITH LIFE'S ADVENTURES THAN JUST THE RIGHT BEER.**

I knew this even before I moved to Maine. During my college years in New York City, mingling with hipsters in brownstone basements, the tinny citrus and wheaty wispieness of Pabst Blue Ribbon (for better or worse) became the flavor of my life.

When I moved to Lima, Peru, after college (what can I say, I was 22 and filled with wanderlust), the light, sweet taste of Cusqueña gold lager accompanied seaside meals of fresh ceviche, hikes in the Andes, and long nights dancing at the club. As an intern in Washington, D.C., I discovered craft beer, and drank DC Brau's honeyed, hoppy Corruption like it was my job. In California, I subsisted on Sierra Nevada's classic pale ale, its warm pineness perfect for the background of mountains, forest, and desert.

And once I found my way to Bangor five years ago, my love of beer only grew around the local culture. I've lived in a lot of places, but I can say with certainty that there's something special about Maine — and Maine beer. Maine brewers are skilled and creative, to be sure, but they're also scrappy and community-minded in a way that feels unique. The ingredients in Maine craft beers have a certain sense of terroir that I haven't quite experienced anywhere else.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. I haven't even told you who I am.

” And once I found my way to Bangor five years ago, my love of beer only grew around the local culture.

My name is Sam Schipani. You may recognize my name from the Bangor Daily News, where I wrote the column “Sam Tries Things” about my first attempts at a variety of farm-and-homestead tasks, from milking cows (pair with: Oxbow Brewing Company's Farmhouse Pale Ale) to tapping maple trees (pair with: Rising Tide's maple golden ale, Nature's Gold). For the next year or so, I will be Beer & Weed's interim “Beer Babe,” though that title doesn't quite suit me — how about “Sam Samples” as a column name?

Needless to say, I like to try new things. I am so excited to share insights and experiences of Maine beer with you through this column. I'm far from an expert on zythology (google it; I certainly did), but I am, like many of you, an eager, open-minded, and honest-to-a-fault Maine beer enthusiast. I am a curious explorer of all things beer and beyond.

Perhaps the best way to get to know me is through my favorite activities, and the beers I pair with them. Here's a tasting guide to my life:

**Fly fishing on a warm weekend:** Pair with Maine Beer Company's Lunch, with subtle balanced flavors that keep me fueled up for fishing (and, true to its name, could stand in for a midday meal).

**Kayaking on the Stillwater River:** Pair with Mast Landing's Neon Sails, with a punchy, stone-fruity flavor that keeps me paddling even when my arms are aching.

**Backyard barbecuing red hot dogs, the only ones my Brewer-born husband will eat:** Pair with Bissell Brothers' Baby Genius for a crisp, summery sweetness to wash down the existential fear of red dye-40.

**Sharing stories around the campfire deep in the North Maine Woods:** Pair with Allagash Brewing Company's Sixteen Counties, featuring a panoply of Maine-made flavors (a little herbal, a little floral, with a refreshing wheatyness) that reminds me that this is the way life should be.

**Pulling weeds in the garden on a summer evening:** Pair with Orono Brewing Company's Everlasting Farm, with fruity flavors that change with the season (my favorites so far have been lavender and beach) and enough tartness to keep my mind off of pesky bug bites.

**Grabbing a drink after yoga in downtown Bangor:** Pair with Two Feet Brewing's Bee Whisperer, an enlightened, sparkling golden ale with a touch of honey that reminds me how sweet friendship is.

**Cozying up on a cold October evening to watch horror movies (Stephen King writing credit not required):** Pair with Fogtown's Night Nurse, with dark chocolate and vanilla flavors that make me feel as safe and warm as a cup of cocoa.

**Post-pumpkin patch perusing, apple picking, or participating in other Instagrammable fall tomfoolery:** Pair with Geaghan's Smiling Irish Bastard, with its coppery smoothness and a lilting bitterness that lets me laugh at myself a little bit.

**Warming up after a day of ice fishing:** Pair with First Mile Brewing Company's Harry Porter, with enough creamy caramel flavors to warm my soul with a kick of coffee undertones to put some hair on my chest.

I'm always looking for new experiences, and new beers to enjoy with them. I hope my adventures (and the brews that I pair them with) will resonate with you.



WORDS / **BEER BABE**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



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# SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

ORANGE BIKE, PORTLAND'S FIRST GLUTEN-FREE BREWERY,  
READIES ITSELF FOR A NON-TOXIC OPENING DAY

WORDS / BECCA ABRAMSON | IMAGES / CHRIS CARY

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TOM RUFF WAS 56 YEARS OLD WHEN HIS BODY DECIDED IT WOULD NO LONGER TOLERATE GLUTEN. "I WAS HAVING SERIOUS HEALTH ISSUES, STOMACH PROBLEMS, INFLAMMATION, ARTHRITIS — EVEN MY EYELIDS WERE SWOLLEN," HE REMEMBERS. THOUGH DOCTORS BEGAN TESTING HIM FOR ALL SORTS OF AILMENTS, IT WAS RUFF'S LONGTIME FRIEND (A NUTRITIONIST BY TRADE) WHO SPECULATED THAT GLUTEN MAY HAVE BEEN THE CULPRIT. "I HAD TRIED A GLUTEN-FREE DIET BEFORE BUT IT DIDN'T SEEM TO WORK," RUFF EXPLAINS. "I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW MUCH CROSS-CONTAMINATION WAS HAPPENING. WHEN I ELIMINATED GLUTEN COMPLETELY, 98% OF MY SYMPTOMS WERE GONE WITHIN TWO MONTHS. A FEW MORE MONTHS AND I WAS 100% SYMPTOM-FREE."

A craft beer fanatic who dislikes hard alcohol, mixed drinks, and wine ("Too much alcohol and too much sugar," he explains), Ruff found himself missing high quality brews — and he wasn't alone. Nearly 44 million Americans suffer from gluten issues, yet top-notch gluten-free options on the East Coast are few and far between (see "Take Flight," November 2021, for a story on Lucky

Pigeon, Maine's first gluten-free brewery based in Biddeford; Geary's has a gluten-free option called Ixnay).

Ruff initially tried beer made from sorghum grains, which naturally lack gluten, but wasn't fond of the taste. It wasn't until he tried a gluten-free beer from the West Coast that he realized his love for craft brews and his gluten intolerance could exist in harmony. "That's when the lightbulb went off — someone out there is making a really good gluten-free beer that isn't sorghum-based," he remembers.

At the time, Ruff felt unfulfilled and was lacking stimulation at work. More than 30 years had passed since he started a medical company, an executive search firm right out of college; Ruff had a wife, a young daughter, and a mortgage, and was ready for something new. "I thought, 'Why not start a gluten-free brewery? No one else is doing it, and it is possible to make great beer,'" he says. "I thought it was going to be a small lifestyle project, initially. I didn't realize it was going to turn into what it is today." Now, just two years since Ruff first considered the project, Orange Bike Brewing — Portland's first dedicated gluten-free

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brewery — is only one month from opening at 31 Diamond Street in East Bayside.

"When I first started the company, I didn't realize how difficult it is to name something. Most of the original names I had were shot down due to trademark infringement," Ruff laughs. "I was having a really hard time with it until one of our investors called me and said, 'Dude. I've got it. Aren't you known in Portland as the guy on the orange bike? That's it — Orange Bike Brewing.'" Ruff explains that he took time off during COVID to be a stay-at-home dad to his young daughter, and during that time he purchased an orange e-bike. "The two of us spent the year cruising around Maine on this RadWagon cargo Ebike, and it was the most magical year of my life," he recalls. "Having the privilege and opportunity to do that was really wonderful. So [the name] is in honor of her, of her future, and of a more sustainable future as well. Hopefully, her father did just a little something to make the world a better place when she grows up."

## Getting Down to Business

One of Ruff's first priorities at Orange Bike Brewing was to develop a great product. The process of making gluten-free beer, he explains, is nearly identical to that of regular beer. "There's gluten-reduced beer, which you've probably seen on the shelves, but those actually use barley and wheat," he says. "They add an enzyme to the beer that removes the gluten, but there are still traces of it, so Celiacs can get really sick drinking it." Orange Bike Brewing, on the other hand, will be certified gluten-free.

Ruff hired brewing legend Alan Pugsley (often referred to as the “Johnny Appleseed of craft brewing”) to develop a line of gluten-free craft beer that’s accessible for both the gluten tolerant and intolerant, made from organic grains including millet and buckwheat in a 10-barrel restored Peter Austin brick kettle brewing system. Pugsley, originally a biochemist from England, co-founded Shipyard and helped open 99 breweries worldwide, including Magic Hat, The Shed, Long Trail, and most recently the Rupee Beer guys from our August 2021 issue. Orange Bike is his 100th.

Of course, it wasn't all sunshine and rainbows when Ruff began his gluten-free brewery project. "Five days after I had the idea to start this brewery, Brienne Allan, [then] the head brewer at Notch Brewing in Massachusetts, posted on Instagram how many women in the craft beer space have had sexist comments made about or towards them," explains Ruff. "Her Instagram exploded with stories of sexism, misogyny, toxic work cultures, racism and discrimination. It was the beginning of the #MeToo movement within craft beer." Ruff, excited about entering the craft brew space himself, spent two weeks sitting on Portland's Eastern Promenade, scrolling through the internet and reading every post shared by Allan (now the owner-operator of Sacred Profane Brewing in Biddeford; see July 2022 and May 2023).



"All I could think about at the time was my four-year-old daughter, and how this is the world she's growing up in," Ruff says. "And I'm going to contribute to this by being a part of this beer industry that's so toxic and racist and discriminatory?"

Ruff began publicly sharing his concerns about the dark side of craft beer but was initially challenged by women and Black community members. They didn't need him to share their stories — they could do that on their own, they said — but he could help by amplifying what was going on behind the scenes in the industry. “It just really resonated with me, and that was the moment that I decided we were going to be a purpose-driven brewery. We could use our brewery and beer as our platform to try to drive change within the craft beer industry,” he explains.

Ruff immediately contacted Ren Navarro, founder of Beer.Diversity, and asked her to come onboard as Orange Bike Brewing's Diversity Consultant. Navarro provides guidance and direction on hiring practices, the employee handbook, and the brewery's purpose, vision, and mission, among other things. "We don't spend a lot of time together, but I've learned more from watching Ren than I have from anyone else in my two years working on this project," Ruff says. "She is our north star, and she doesn't quite realize the profound effect that she's had on both me and the business."

In addition to crafting world-class gluten-free beer in a non-toxic work environment, Orange Bike Brewing is dedicated to the triple

bottom line: creating social, environmental, and financial good. For starters, they're working with Efficiency Maine and installing high-efficiency fixtures, LED bulbs, light controls, and motion sensors to shut off lighting in parts of the brewery when inactive. Luke Truman, formerly of Allagash Brewing and now the sustainability coordinator for the New England Environmental Finance Center, has been guiding Orange Bike's sustainability program along with Jeremy Pare from Duke University, who focuses on environmentally friendly business operations.

The brewery also intends to become a certified B Corp by the end of next year. They've already got a head start: In the spring, Orange Bike Brewing was one of five companies selected by the University of New Hampshire to participate in the B Impact Clinic, a 10-week program funded by the Henry David Thoreau Foundation aimed to assist with the rigorous B Corp certification process. Ruff and his partners were paired with students from the UNH Sustainability Institute who helped them review each part of the business — from supplier relationships to their code of ethics — in an effort to increase the brewery's score on the B Corp certification online assessment. "We started out with 26 points in the certification process, and through the B Impact Clinic we're able to get 54 recommended points," he notes. That gives Orange Bike Brewing enough points to become B Corps certified, as long as they execute on the proposed strategies.

It's clear that Ruff and his team are passionate about mobilizing their resources at Orange Bike Brewing to be a force for good in Maine. "The business community here is unlike any I've seen in my 34 years of business," he says, referencing the warmth, encouragement, support, and resources readily available to entrepreneurs. "I cannot tell you how many people — owners of breweries here in Maine, head brewers, employees — have offered repeatedly, 'How can I help?' and expected nothing in return," Ruff continues. "I've met with them, our team has met with them, we've gone to their facilities. They've shared insider information with us regarding the brewing process, canning machines — things that most businesses outside of craft beer don't typically share with other people."

"I'm rarely the smartest person in the room, but I'm really good at finding smart people," Ruff laughs. "I've reached out to over one hundred brewery owners or employees over the last two years, and I've met with probably fifty of them in person. Not one person has said, 'I'm too busy.' I've just never experienced the kind of warmth and camaraderie that exists within this space. So I feel very lucky to be a part of that here in Maine."



WORDS / **BECCA ABRAMSON**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

[illegible]





HOW OUT-OF-THE-WAY THRESHERS BREWING CO.  
BECAME A HOT MUSICAL BREWERY

# PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

WORDS / SAM PFEIFLE

MAYBE YOU SAW AN AD FOR THE SECOND ANNUAL ARME BOOT CAMP FESTIVAL, HEADLINED BY RUSTIC OVERTONES ON AUGUST 4 AND 5, IN THEIR FIRST LIVE PERFORMANCE IN MORE THAN A YEAR. LET'S SEE: SCISSORFIGHT, SEEPEOPLES, MURCIELAGO, THEWORST, RIGOMETRICS, BAIT BAG, ANGE-LIKAH FAHRAY, MYLES BULLEN ... THE LIST OF BANDS IS AS LONG AS YOUR ARM. SOUNDS FUN!

Wait. Where's Threshers Brewing Co.?



**T**urns out the biggest music festival (by number of bands, anyway) to be held in Maine this summer is happening in the little town of Searsmont, which holds the distinction of being right between Liberty and Hope. And containing Quantabacook Lake. With a grand total of 1,400 people.

How'd that happen?

"Early on, when we first started," says Scott Bendtson, one of the co-founders seven years ago, "we didn't really have a plan. And music wasn't really part of it." Like a lot of things at Threshers, the brewery space organically grew into an in-demand live-music venue, even in such a small town.

"Me coming up with a recipe for beer that hasn't been done before is impossible," says Bendtson, who has a bit of a zen about him. "We just make fairly simple beer, really well. But we wanted to be fun, and community based. We wanted to get people here, get them out and with their neighbors, and music was a great addition to that. We started small, with just open mics and one-person gigs, and then through word of mouth, people would say, 'My son plays in this band,' or a band member comes into the place and just loves it. So it transitioned into having music — every Saturday, basically."

It just got to the point says Threshers brewer Blue (he's a one-name kind of guy; slept in the brewery for a while after he got the job), where people started being upset when they show



up on a Saturday and there wasn't any music. "So we leaned into that," he says. "Once we started noticing that, we got into the bigger bands and the festivals."

It helped that people like Jon Fishman — of, well, Phish — started showing up to sit in every once in a while for an open mic. That sort of thing gets around.

It also helps that Searsmont has embraced Threshers as a community, making it the hang-out the town didn't know it needed. Some people who don't even drink have become regulars just because they like the pool table. "I honestly don't know what people did all the time before we were open," Blue says.

"It's not our business," says Bendtson. "It's the community's business, and they want and what they like, that's what's going to happen."

"I didn't even plan on working here," says Blue. "I just fell in love with everyone here. And I wasn't even a big drinker. I'm more of a pothead, myself. But drinking beer, everyone just flourishes when they're having a good time, and I fell in love with that. I wanted to learn how to make beer. So I just quit my job and moved back here."

Such is Threshers. When Bendtson and then-partner Ethan Evangelos launched the brewery in this repurposed lumber-



◀ FROM PAGE 17

yard in 2016, doing 120 gallons at a time, it was with repurposed parts and junkyard finds, like a bulk milk tank and yogurt fermentors. Evangelos was the homebrewer and Bendtson was the man who figured out how to build whatever it was they needed to make and sell the beer. A carpenter and a carpenter's son, Bendtson picked up a knack for electronics while in the Air Force (weapons expert, fighter aircraft).

But a thrifty streak seems to run to his core. The furniture at Threshers? Basically all mismatched and donated, just like the taxidermy that lines the walls, from a bear rug to a marlin to a snarling coyote to a bull shark. There are dump pulls and inventions all over the place. The musicians' green room features a couch that is in fact the back half of a Cadillac. They cut it in half. The front grill and bumper is hanging on the wall in the taproom.

Perhaps most impressive is their self-built canning line, which can do 25-to-30 cases a day and was constructed by watching videos of canning lines, frame by frame. They didn't have enough volume to use someone like Iron Heart Mobile Canning, but they knew they needed to sell cans to survive the Maine winters, and the actual manufacturers of canning lines weren't about to hand out mechanical drawings.

"No one tells you this stuff," Bendtson exclaims. "It took a long time. Like the volume of the beer and when it's full. Well, you can use weight, but it's counter-pressure based, so then we settled on capacitance, which measures through an electrical field the amount of liquid in the can."

You can tell that Bendtson is the kind of guy who's able to look at a situation and somehow just see what it needs. Which is why it's not surprising they've brought in the folks from Sun Tiki, down in Portland, like Will Bradford and Ian Smith, to help them professionalize their music operations and expand their horizons.

In 2022, Bradford helped them organize the first ARME Boot Camp, a two-day festival with more than a dozen bands, which they pulled off mostly by the seat of their pants.

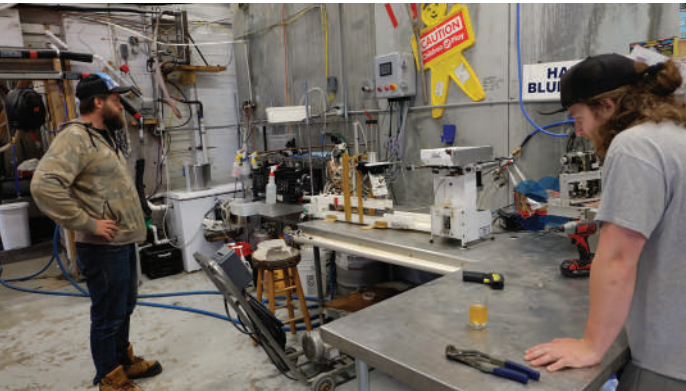
"We didn't get that stage built until that morning," Blue remembers. "We had our friends out there parking people. It was as bootstrapped as bootstrap can get." And it was a hell of a lot of fun.

That led to more investment in the music side of things, with on-site sound and lights. "When you come here," says Bendtson, "the sound is great, the lights are awesome. It's a place where you go and years down the road you say, 'I saw them when they were at Threshers.' It takes all of these pieces to really give it what it's worth and do justice to the bands."

And that includes Jeff Matthews, resident sound guy — who'll just as soon throw on a smoke machine and syncopated lights on whomever happened to show up for open mic.

"Someone will just play an E chord and the lights will flash and everyone and he just has a shit-eating grin on his face," Blue laughs.

So, even if you don't make it up for the ARME Boot Camp, show up on a Saturday if you like to see a show. You never know who else might be there.



THRESHERS BREWING CO.

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So, How's the Beer?

Sure, it's nice that Threshers is becoming a great spot to catch a hot band, but is the beer any good? I enjoyed my tasting flight.

The flagship is the Ponderosa, what they call an amber ale and a bit of a mistake. It was their first beer and, in learning their own handmade system, they overestimated the grain they needed and came out with a 7% ABV. Oops. The thing is, the pilsner-based ale is light and refreshing and finishes very cleanly. It's not surprising to hear the beer has made a convert out of folks who liked their Miller Lite just fine.

"And the town just loves to party," says Blue, so they like the ABV.

Second most popular, and in distribution in the Midcoast, is the Sea Smoke, a porter that's dark and also pretty heavy, at 7.7%. It's chocolatey, like you'd expect, and goes down smooth, without an alcohol taste in the back of the throat.

The same cannot be said for the 12-Gauge Litigator, but



that's on purpose. Among the newer additions to the lineup, it's an imperial milk stout that comes in at 12.5%, with a syrupy sheen to it, thick and brandy-like. There's a reason they serve it in 8-ounce pours, but I can see why it would appeal on a cold winter night.

Finally, there is their Citra IPA, a classic west coast they've named the Electric Nectar. It tastes like you'd think, which is what they're going for. Simple, straightforward beers that are enjoyable to drink and don't get in the way of a good time.

 WORDS / **SAM PFEIFLE**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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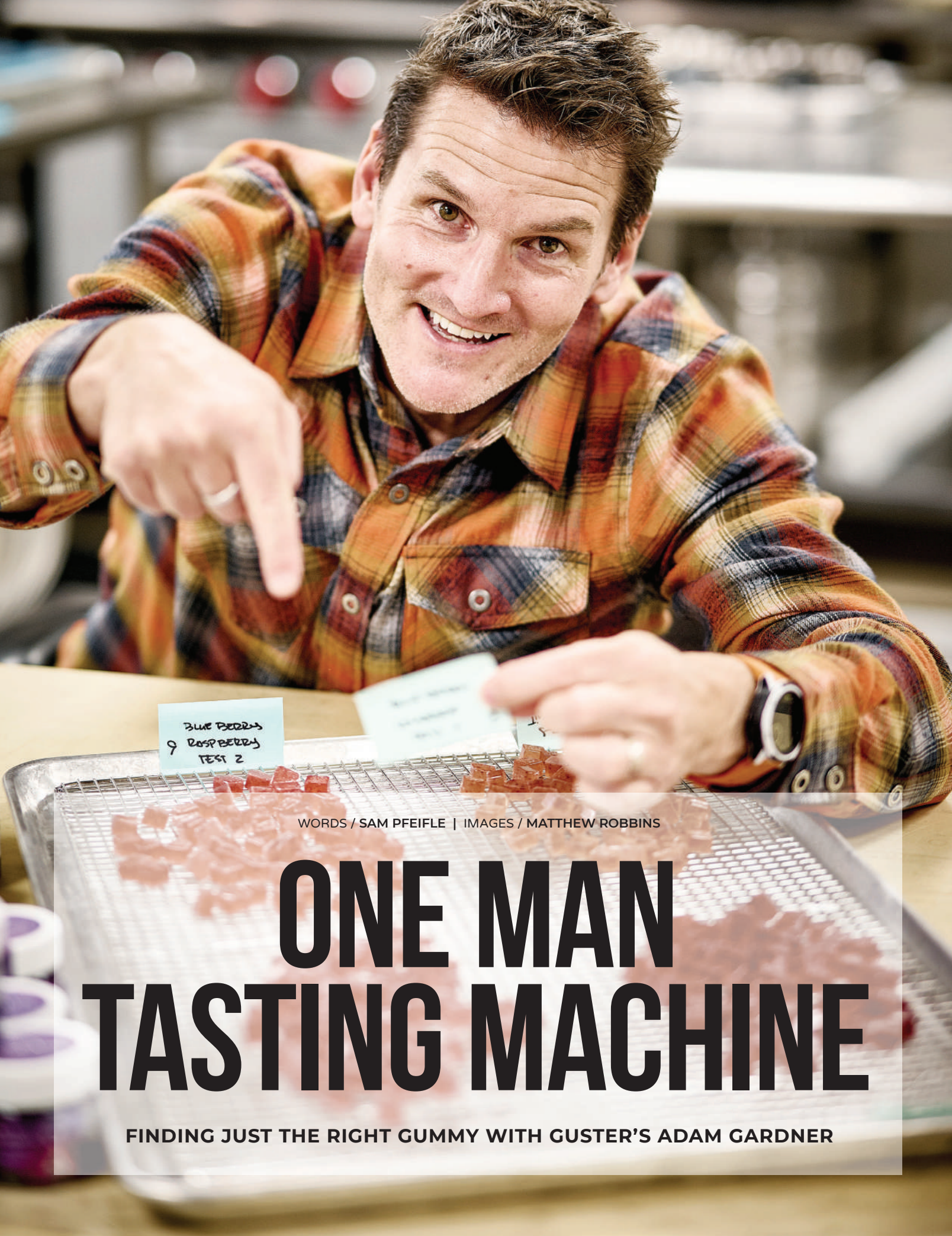
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# ONE MAN TASTING MACHINE

FINDING JUST THE RIGHT GUMMY WITH GUSTER'S ADAM GARDNER

## FEATURE : COVER STORY

**IT IS ADMITTEDLY A BIT OF A SURREAL SITUATION: ADAM GARDNER, GUITARIST AND VOCALIST FOR THE POP-ROCK TRIO GUSTER, HAS JUST WALKED INTO AN INDUSTRIAL KITCHEN WHERE A SEAT HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR HIM BEHIND FOUR PILES OF COLORFUL GUMMY CUBES.**

"Don't worry," says Scott Jones, co-founder with Kate Limbos of Zenia Cannabis. "These aren't dosed."

It is Zenia's Portland kitchen we're in, after all, and Gardner is here to decide just what flavor it is that will serve as the calling card for the Guster Gummies that Zenia will release in coordination with Guster's fifth annual (with a break for COVID) On the Ocean Weekend, which involves three days of shows at the State Theatre and Thompson's Point in Portland, along with a variety of side events and general frivolity.

Before he gets started, though, Jones' comment inspires a bunch of stories about getting stoned by mistake. Gardner's got a good one:

"Guster was opening for the Dave Matthews Band," he says, "and they have a tour caterer with amazing food and everyone knows how great they are. It's the first day of our tour, and we get on the bus and go to the venue and I didn't eat anything because I'm about to have this Dave Matthews food. Don't want to spoil it. So I come in hungry and they say, 'Oh, we don't have enough room. You can't come in yet, you have to wait till four.'"

This is bad. He hadn't eaten breakfast or lunch. So he starts scrounging around the tour bus, hoping whoever had rented it last had left a little something behind.

They had! A chocolate bar! He gobbled it down.

"I could taste it right away," he says, "and I'm like, 'uh oh,' and I realize it's just wrapped in aluminum foil, with no real wrapper or anything. And it turns out it was left behind by [Led Zeppelin and Them Crooked Vultures bassist] John Paul Jones and it was the highest I had ever been in my life.

"And we had to go play for 35,000 Dave Matthews fans. I finally get to the awesome catering high as could be, and there's a picture of me just crying, I'm so happy about it. Then [Guster lead singer] Ryan [Miller] tells the whole story right before we play and the 35,000 people are just totally ready for it and everyone is cheering like crazy and I loved it. I had the memory of a goldfish. What happens after the chorus? Is the song done? Oh, hey, Ryan is close to the mic now, maybe he's ready to launch into the bridge!

"It was actually really fun," he laughs, "but I haven't been very interested in replicating that."

In fact, Gardner — now 50 and with decades of music-biz experience behind him — isn't much of a stoner. He says edibles are the only way he takes THC and Guster is collaborating with Zenia because he's a fan, often handing them out to the other members of the band, and it makes sense to have an On the Ocean gummy since there's an On the Ocean beer (Mast Landing did the first four years; Bissell is on tap for this year).

"I'll put one in my pocket," Gardner says, "and I know at this point in the setlist, I can ride it from there. It'll hit me right as we're toward the end. I usually take the fives and bite them in half. I told the band, 'You know those gummies I hand you in the middle of the set? That's these.'"

That's why the Guster Gummies packs will come with 20 2.5mg pieces, in 1:1 formula with CBD, using hash rosin from Jar Cannabis Co. to provide the active ingredients. They're toying with using the tagline: "A good time every time."

But Gardner's not here to chat and tell stories. He's here to taste gummies. Four choices have been prepared for him, and while Limbos, Jones, and Zenia executive chef Emil Rivera (TIQA, Sur Lie) all have their favorites, they do their best to remain neutral as Gardner works through his options.

First up is blueberry-raspberry — "It's got a great stoner name," Limbos says, "Blue Razz" — and Gardner likes the aftertaste: "That was delicious."

Then comes blueberry-passionfruit. "I love the blueberry flecks in the middle," Gardner muses. "Like little gems. I'm not sure I would have known it was passionfruit. ... When you combine them, they sort of form a new flavor."

Third is blueberry-black cherry. "Oh, that one you can really taste both," Gardner says. "Kind of like a Luden's cough drop. ... I normally don't like cherry as a flavor, like in Jolly Ranchers, but I do like this."

Finally, there comes blueberry-lemonade: "I like the ring to it," Gardner says as he chews, "especially as a summer flavor. There's a lemon zest in there as well. Oh, man, that's good."

"You're welcome," Rivera chimes in.

As Gardner goes back for seconds, it's impossible for the rest of us to resist popping the options into our own mouths, including intrepid photographer Matt Robbins. Unlike many gummies on the market, they are not covered in a dusting of sugar and the consistency is more like a Haribo gummy, with a bit of chewiness to them and less of the melt-in-your-mouth vibe. We offer opinions, as Gardner narrows it down to the raspberry and the lemonade.



◀ FROM PAGE 21

Jones offers that the lemonade is his favorite, with the raspberry as number two. There is general agreement that Maine isn't known for its cherries or passionfruit.

Limbos suggests that blueberry-lemonade is a classic Maine combination in the summer, a mix that will last well beyond the On the Ocean Weekend.

"They're all good," Rivera says, admiring his own work. "It's a good problem to have."

Ultimately, Gardner settles on the lemonade. "Ryan was like, 'I don't even think about the flavor,'" he says, "but I was like, 'Try a good gummy and you would.' These gummies never taste weed-y. Blueberry lemonade sounds good and then it tastes even better than you think it's going to."

Was there a consideration about the PR effect of associating Guster with cannabis? The three members and many of their fans are older now, with families. The On the Ocean Weekend is billed as a family-friendly event. "There was no discussion whatsoever," Gardner says. "This is in line with who we are. And that's why I was excited about a lower dose. It's entry level. We're not stoner music, but we're a progressive band and everyone was open to it."

"And we do literally say," Gardner continues, "when we're writing a song, 'Does it pass the stoner test?' Does it feel good? Because if you're stoned and you're like, 'ugh, change to the next track,' I don't want that."



As for the kids, he says their family has already been openly talking about cannabis and drinking with their 15- and 12-year-old kids, so they're not some kind of verboten topics or things he and his wife do in hiding. The older child was even helping brainstorm weed puns to go with Guster song titles (like the headline of this article: "One Man Wrecking Machine" is a fan favorite).

Ultimately, the Guster Gummies are on brand for the band and for the event: "A lot of the reason I wanted to do the festival," Gardner says, "is because I just love Portland. A lot of our fans hadn't ever been here. So we literally did it like a destination wedding. Here's our favorite coffee, beach, breakfast spot. And now here's my favorite gummy. And our fans know that it's coming from an authentic place. We're totally psyched."

 WORDS / **SAM PFEIFLE**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

## ON THE OCEAN WEEKEND

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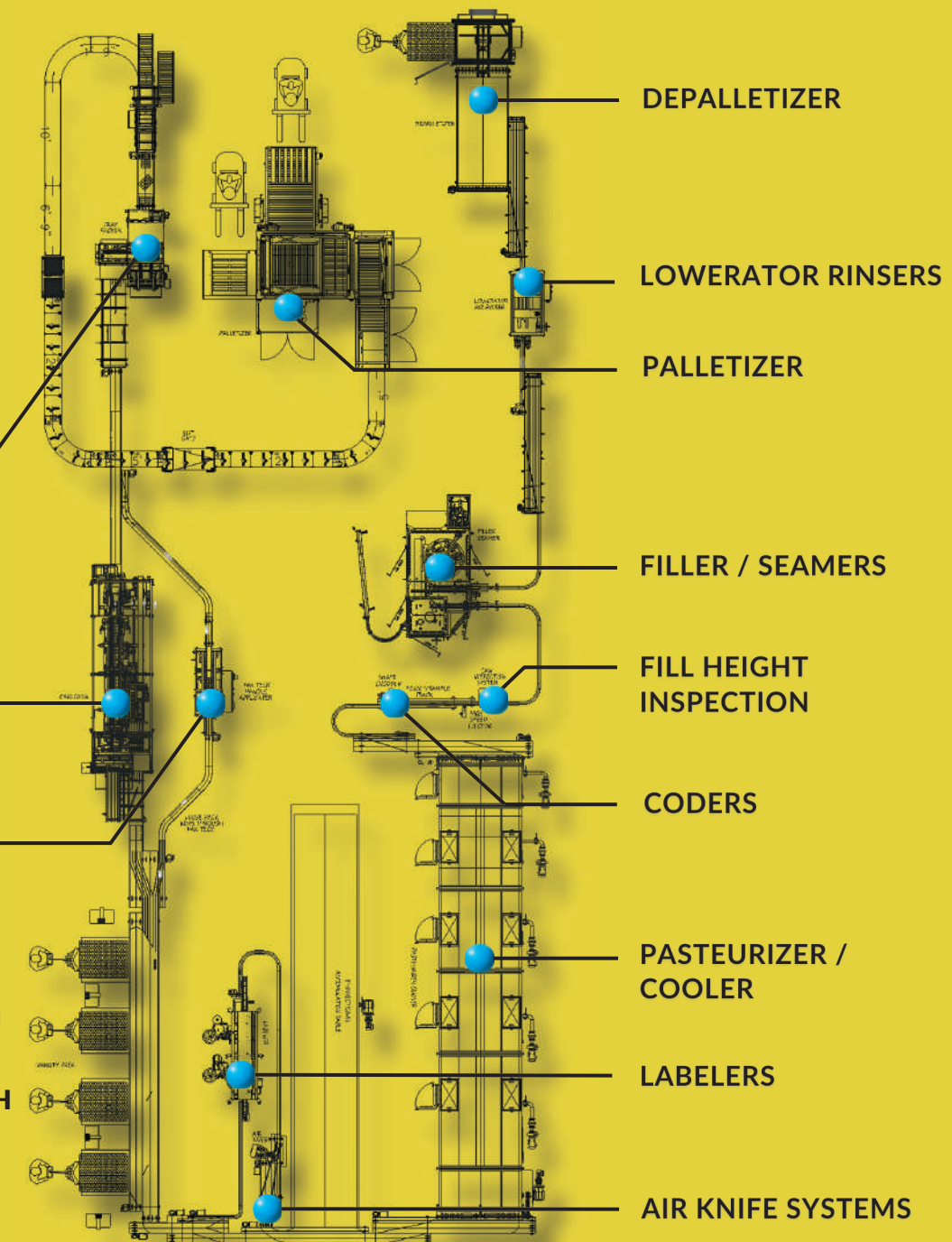
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# BEATING BACK CORN BORERS AND POWDERY MILDEW

WORDS / DIRT DIVA

**AUGUST MAY BE THE LAST MONTH OF SUMMER HEAT. THE REWARDS OF BEING A DILIGENT GROWER WHO NEVER HAS THE MINDSET OF "I'LL WATER HER LATER" WILL BE A SWEET RETURN ON YOUR DEDICATION TO GROWING OUTRAGEOUS WEED. PLUS, YOU'LL KNOW IT'S ORGANICALLY CLEAN AS YOU WATCH YOUR BOUQUET OF WEED FORM THIS MONTH INTO BUDS.**

The photoperiod feminized cannabis beans have been seeded, planted, watered, fed, and protected from predators by us growers, aka craftspersons. The ingenious combined effort of heart and soul, nature and you, hopefully produced lush, green, outrageous weed that is now approaching her fabulous bloom.

Your backyard grow should have taught you by now about the constant adaptation needed for Maine's three-season grow cycle. Growing for our livelihood should make us aware of the need for constant change. The weather governs the health of our outrageous weed and this topic tends to bring growers together to share their favorite small talk about the weather's eccentricities and keys for successfully adapting to it.

In August, you might hear chatter at the local grow-supply shop about keeping a lookout for the Eurasian Hemp Borers and European Corn Borers or Corn Earworms invading your nearby corn fields, possibly traveling into your backyard grow, and boring into your plants. Or how to avoid powdery mildew or botrytis (gray mold) during the last part of the growing season.

The Eurasian Hemp Borer (EHB) is a reddish brown caterpillar; the European Corn Borer (ECB) is more of a tannish color. When corn is harvested, the European Corn Borer needs a new source of food and shelter and may move onto cannabis plants, flying to your plants as little tan moths. These adults have 1.5"-2" wingspan. Their larvae are 1"-2" long, light yellow, green, pink, or brown, often with white and dark stripes along the sides. You'll know them particularly by their yellow heads and black legs. Their eggs are white, ribbed, and round.

Look especially for eggs on leaves right after the local corn comes down. Moths emerge in late May to mid-July and again in early August through September.

That's when you'll need to be on the lookout, before the eggs the moths lay turn into caterpillars that then bore into your cannabis stalks, make and hide their pupa, and transition into the adult stage of the moth, which then lays eggs and the pattern begins in earnest.

They will become obvious by the wilted and curled leaves in or around the bud of the flower or bore holes into the cannabis stalk (you might see a little powder collect in the crook of branches, right below the hole). But by that time, it's too late. Manage pest problems before they begin. Prevention of invasion is easily managed in the egg and larva stages, but once the caterpillars enter the stalk, they are more difficult to deal with.

The damage that larvae bring to corn is that the larvae feed on fresh silks, then move down the ears eating the kernels, leaving trails of excrement. Early and late cultivators are most affected. The larvae will also feed on a broad range of vegetable crops, fruits, and flowers — including your outrageous weed plants.

This is why it is important to attract native parasitic wasps and predatory insects, like lacewings or minute pirate bugs.

If you are noticing emerging moth adults in your garden, spray them with neem/Bronner's solution.

Next alert: Wet weather late in the growing season is a heads up for possible moldy flowers.

Hopefully, you have been able to source aged animal manure for your sun tea; manure-based compost may help control fungal diseases. The microorganisms present in composted tea attack the problematic fungi that can bring powdery mildew and botrytis blight.

Look for any indication of mold on the leaves. The first sign may be dry brown leaves and or tiny hard-to-spot small white dots (powdery mildew) on the green leaf. Examine the cannabis in every nook and cranny. Fungus will increase quickly and cover the leaf.

Preventive measures are key when the weather has been cold and wet. Air circulation is a big help to keep buds from becoming moldy. Keep her vegetation open to allow sun and air to keep her healthy, trimming bottom leaves and keeping weeds and grasses beaten down.

If you are noticing any leaves that look sick, clip them off and then spray the rest of the plant with composted sun tea that is strictly made from composted animal manure, without the Pro-Gro fertilizer. Make this composted sun tea in a five-gallon bucket filled with aged animal manure and covered with water. Set it in the sun for three days, stir often, put the liquid into a spray container, and apply to leaves. Check your weed plants often and if needed apply every three to four days if plants still show symptoms.

Don't forget to check down to the root system, too, for any signs of infected roots. Assess the soil and fluff it up — aerate by scratching the surface soil, taking care to not rip the roots (healthy roots are white), as they will be close to the surface. Keep the soil away from the stalk and bottom branches, making sure that the roots are covered well with soil, and apply the saucer-like method we've often discussed.

If the root system is infected, the stalk becomes discolored, usually yellow or brown. The soil may have white spores growing on the surface, possibly a bad odor, and any visibility of root rot will be seen in mushy brown roots.

Botrytis, aka gray mold, can be identified as brown or gray spots inside the center of the bud. A healthy bud will have the same color on the inside as the outside of the bud. Sorry: Infected buds have to go. Rip them right off. It hurts, but it's worth it.

Important: Do not discard the infected leaves or buds into your compost or garden area and make sure to disinfect your clippers after each cut with isopropyl alcohol.

But don't worry: Keep feeding the composted sun tea and the increased potassium will help protect your outrageous weed from pests and disease and power your plants into full flower next month.



WORDS / DIRT DIVA  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



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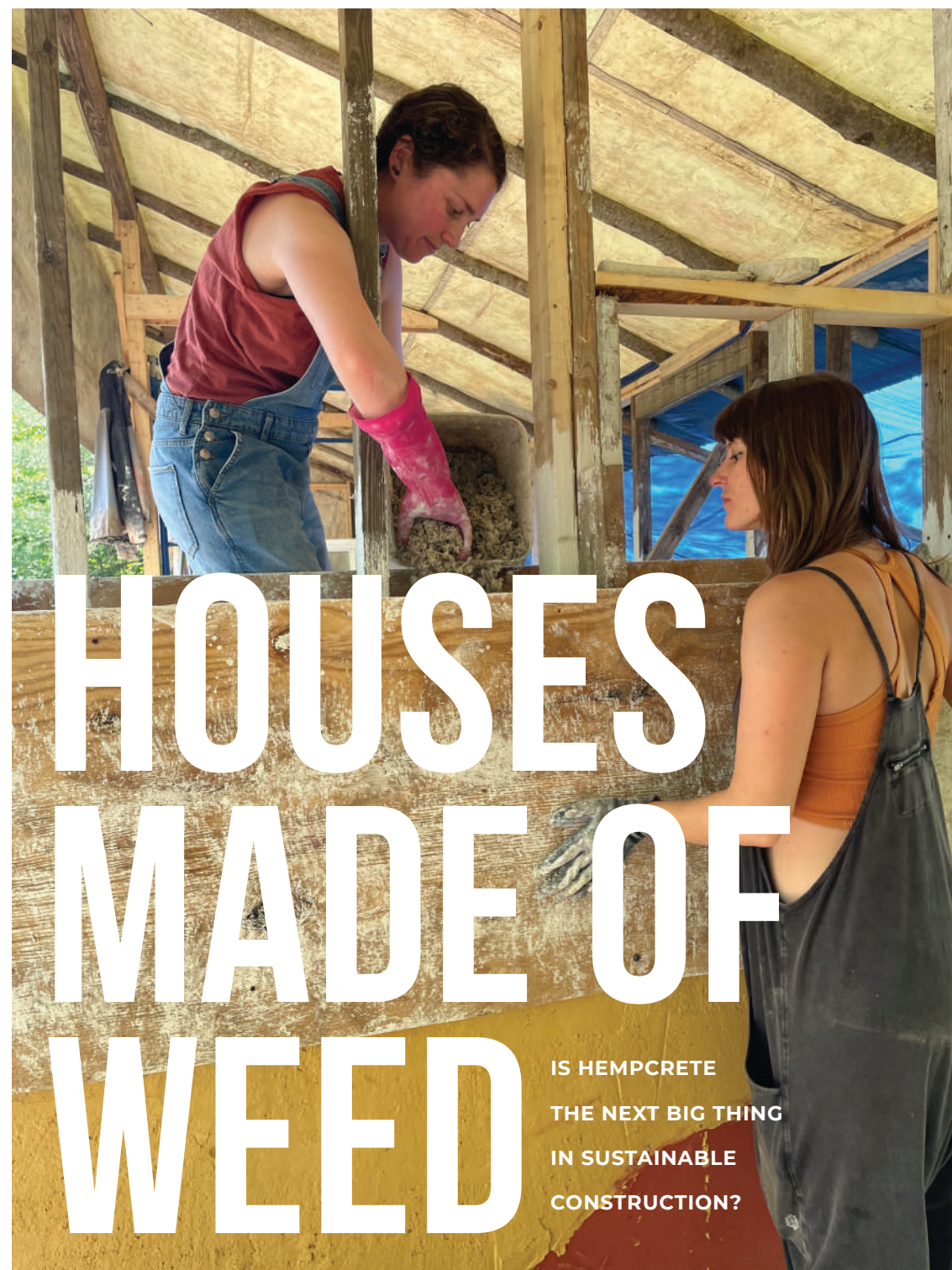
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# HOUSES MADE OF WEED

IS HEMPCRETE  
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IN SUSTAINABLE  
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WORDS / CYNDLE PLAISTED RIALS



HEMP. IT'S EVERYWHERE IN THE HEADLINES THESE DAYS, FROM THE BENEFITS OF CBD PRODUCTS WE'RE ALREADY PRETTY FAMILIAR WITH TO IT BEING A GREAT ALTERNATIVE TO OTHER PLANTS USED FOR CREATING TEXTILES. UP IN LIMESTONE, NEAR THE CANADIAN BORDER, MEMBERS OF THE AROOSTOOK BAND OF THE MICMAC NATION ARE EVEN USING HEMP TO PULL PER- AND POLYFLUORINATED SUBSTANCES (PFAS, ALSO CALLED "FOREVER CHEMICALS") FROM THE SOIL AT THE LORING AIR FORCE BASE THROUGH A PROCESS CALLED PHYTOREMEDIATION.

And right here in southern Maine, folks are learning how to use hemp to build houses.

Maybe you're envisioning some kind of rustic woven grass hut when you think of a hemp house, but it's a lot more advanced than that, and the benefits extend far beyond what you might imagine. Early this summer, people came from far and wide to Digger's Cooperative in Acton, Maine, to visit the "Hempcrete Build Experience and It Takes a Village Festival," put on by Permatours, which is a Maine-based organization that seeks to co-create a sustainable future through joyful learning experiences; they design and facilitate permaculture action and natural building-focused events both here and around the country. I took a trip up there to find out more about how houses made of hemp could open up an alternative avenue for sustainability and safety in construction.

Providing the knowledge was John Patterson, a man with the contemplative air of a medieval sage and more than a decade of knowledge of building with hemp, in a khaki boonie hat with the sides snapped up.

"The system that we use is commonly known as hempcrete," Patterson explains, "but I have to explain to people it's not a replacement for concrete. It replaces the thermal wall system. In essence we replace drywall, insulation, exterior boarding, house wrap, siding, caulk, and paint."

The hempcrete itself is made from a mixture of lime-based binder, water, and the inner part of the hemp stalk known as the hurd or shives. The hemp hurd, a dried fibrous mass that looks kinda like wood chips, is then mixed with water and a lime-based binder. That mixture is typically poured into some kind of molding structure pretty similar to the way concrete works – hence the name.

In 2012 at the cusp of the "green building movement" — to which he was introduced by a series of classes in Fort Collins, Colorado, when he was working as a full-time carpenter — Patterson found "we were using more and more petroleum and chemical-based products to green up our homes," he says. "Didn't sound so green to me. But I'm the type of guy that if I don't have another solution, we keep doing what we've been doing. At least we were attempting to make buildings more energy efficient."



◀ FROM PAGE 27

But then Patterson heard about a hempcrete building course in Wisconsin. Patterson attended, and went back to Colorado ready to get started on sharing what he learned with others. He hired Steve Allen, the man who ran the Wisconsin workshop, to come out to their first build and use it as a teaching opportunity for his fellow Coloradans. They planned a 10'x12' structure, a size that allowed them to squeak by the need for a building permit. Which was important, Patterson says, "because the city officials didn't know anything about how to approve or build it."

In that first workshop, they had about 25 people from around the world come to learn the system. Then Patterson took the reins and went solo. "I did my first class with only a few people to test out doing it on my own," he says. "Ended up doing a few more classes on that build to finish the structure. The second one I had more like 15 in the class, and started going away from just what my mentor taught, adding in what I thought was important for our area and making the class my own."

From there, he started tinyhemphouses.com to share his knowledge with a broader audience, and took it even further by speaking at cannabis events and hemp expos. "I'd go up on stage with the mixing stuff, make a little sample and talk about it," he says, "and then have a booth and stand there for two or three days educating people with the basics."

But it got to be more than just a simple workshop. "Another mentor helped with my mission statement and taught us to meditate. He had been at several [hemp-building workshops], and he said, 'John, you're not just doing a workshop, you're offering an experience.' Just changing that one word in my promotions caused me to say, 'What are we doing to create an experience?'"

Enter Permatours, led by the likes of Scott Guzman and Syd Harvey Griffith, among others. They took this idea of an "experience" and ran with it, creating the "It Takes a Village Festival," which went far beyond the hempcrete build. "I told Scott & Syd about that [desire to create an experience], and that's why this whole festival is here. Syd took it to the extreme. I told them they were getting too carried away, and they didn't believe me. They said, 'You said you wanted an experience!'" His placid blue eyes crinkle as he chuckles. "So now there's meditation, cacao ceremonies, sound healing, live music..." (see "Wandering," on page 31).

Is hempcrete really worth all this fuss, though? It sounds like it.

First, hemp is a really good dual crop; if you're harvesting the crop for seed (which contain hemp hearts, a great source of protein and omega 3, 6, and 9 fatty acids), the hurd that makes up the basis of the hempcrete is a usable byproduct. Similarly, the outer fiber of the plant can be used for textiles and still yield usable hurd. Other sustainability benefits of hemp are that it's carbon-negative — the crop absorbs more carbon from the atmosphere than is released in its use — and it's a high-yielding crop that can produce more on less land and with less water than a lot of other fiber crops.

But beyond its sustainability, what makes it a good building material? Well, Patterson has all the answers on that. "It's more energy efficient than traditional building materials. It's breathable, transfers moisture through the system, and at the same time it regulates the heat and cooling in both warm and cold climates. There's less need for HVAC, which is expensive and circulates toxins." Patterson rattles off these benefits with practiced precision. "There's also less off-gassing. Likely all of us have chemical sensitivities that we don't realize or attribute to our indoor air



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environment. Fibromyalgia and Lyme disease are connected to chemical sensitivities; there are probably others we don't know, because it hasn't been studied enough. I think the more we clean up our indoor environment, the less problems we have with our bodies."

Hempcrete is also better for the installer, because the person working on the structure isn't exposed to the toxicity of traditional building materials, many of which contain known carcinogens like formaldehyde (found in composite wood products, carpet, fiberglass batt insulation) and polyvinyl chloride (found in vinyl flooring, wallpaper, carpet backing, resilient siding, window treatments, roof membranes, waterproofing membranes, pipes, electrical cord insulation, etc). Then there's halogenated and organophosphorous flame retardants, which you can find in insulation, polyurethane foam, carpet cushion, wire, and cable.

The NIH, a department of the US Department of Health and Human Services, published a study in 2013 on the effects of these compounds on animals and humans and found that exposure has been associated with endocrine and thyroid disruption, immunotoxicity, reproductive toxicity, cancer, and adverse effects on fetal and child development and neurologic function.

Basically our homes are full of chemicals that could very likely be having negative effects on our bodies and health. Kinda makes you want to run right out and build your own hempcrete house, doesn't it? Well, you might have a tough time with that. As with many green initiatives, there are some hurdles in the way before hempcrete can be rolled out on a grand scale.

"The materials aren't very accessible," Patterson says. "That's changing as the movement grows. Companies in Europe and now the U.S. are looking for faster ways to install it with a sprayer system. There are different systems that still use hemp and the lime-based binder, but the movement is getting to where we can move away from this hand-packing, and build larger residential homes and commercial properties."

It's currently a pretty a labor-intensive process. The structure they're building at Digger's has a concrete foundation and is framed like a traditional build, with two-by-fours and beams. Sheets of plywood are then temporarily affixed to both sides of the framing to create a barrier, and then the hempcrete is dumped in between the studs and packed down by hand, like Patterson mentioned, and left to cure partially within the plywood. It's likely to be months of work at this rate.

But the people that are here to learn this process are in it for the long haul — people like Elaina McClure and her mother Rachel Chrane. They came up all the way from Asheville, North Carolina, after randomly running into a woman in a coffee shop who was talking about the hempcrete workshop. They're so committed to this vision that they've started a company called New Earth Housing LLC, where they plan to build with hempcrete and create sustainable neighborhoods.

"It's about connecting with people that are tapped into the collective dream, living with love and gratitude for Mother Earth at the center of our lives," says McClure, elbow deep in a wheelbarrow of hempcrete dyed cranberry red with iron oxide. "COVID taught us so much, especially about our need for connection. My sister has been failed by the mental health system and we've learned a lot about how broken our systems

are. Our goal is to create what people need so badly, with housing, the homelessness crisis, and social justice issues at the forefront of our business. These communities are going to be safe spaces for everyone."

Sounds like a pretty pleasant dream, and an admirable goal.

Sitting under the dining tent as lunch is about to be served on the last day of the festival experience, Patterson still gazes around in wonder at what Permatours made happen. "They pulled it off magically," he says. "I say magic, but it was inspired intention. They masterfully, not magically, created this. This is all in celebration of the hemp-building event. I'm proud and honored to be celebrated for what we do."

#### Wandering the It Takes a Village Festival

The smell of patchouli and herbs (and herb) abounds. Campfire smoke. Drum circles. Smiling faces, tattooed arms, and bare feet in the rich muddy earth. Merchants offer herbal skincare and elixirs, candles, and things like reiki, traditional massage, and something called a "kinetic aura reading" — I think "why not?" and get one.

Apparently I'm carrying around big-time Christ energy, and the protection of my favorite archangel, Michael, with his glorious gold wings wrapped around me, among other esoteric chakra stuff. Later, Hila the Earth, a Soho-raised eco-rapper with a sizable Instagram following, will perform songs like the cheeky innuendo-laden "Wet Ass Planet" (her eco-conscious, H2O-focused version of Cardi B's "WAP," obviously).

Now though, two men spray-paint a short bus with flora and fauna over a background of swirling blues and greens. I stop by one of the stages where HannaH's Field is the first act of the day — during the song "Brain on Hugs" they ask if everyone got their hugs this morning. People who hadn't gotten their daily squeeze raise their hands, and I join the others, laughing and embracing strangers. There are plenty of hugs to go around. There's also lots of tie dye, dreadlocks, and more than anything, freedom.

If this is the village, I think I want in.

**bw** WORDS / CYNDLE PLAISTED RIALS  
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# RISOTTO, IN DEMAND

WORDS / PHOTOS **BRANT DADALEARES**

Here's something a little different than my usual dessert recipe: a seafood risotto to end all risotto dishes. Our good friends Charlie and Hunter came for a week-long visit from Los Angeles, and their one request was for a seafood dinner when they arrived. And boy does this deliver a plethora of Maine seafood.

There is a fair amount of prep that goes along with a good risotto, but it's well worth the time and effort. I used homemade lobster stock, and I fully recommend you doing the same. While being incredibly flavorful, it is very simple to make. When you are finished with breaking down the lobsters for the meat, rinse all the shells well, place them in a large stock pot, add the leek tops to the pot, then add enough cold water to cover and bring this to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 45 minutes. Finally, strain it all through a fine sieve into another pot and reduce the stock slightly to intensify the lobster flavor.

You'll have way more stock than needed, so freeze what's left for later use. You'll want your stock hot throughout the cooking process, so keep it on a low burner on the back of your stove. Lastly, always use a wooden spoon to stir risotto; metal spoons are too aggressive on the rice and tend to break up the grains too much.



# SHOWING OFF MAINE SEAFOOD, BY REQUEST **YIELD: ENOUGH FOR 10-12 GUESTS**

## MAINE SEAFOOD RISOTTO

### Risotto Ingredients:

- 3 small** shallots diced
- 3** garlic cloves chopped fine (I use a microplane)
- 1 medium** sized yellow onion diced
- .5c** cleaned and diced leek (use the light-green part only). Save the green top for the lobster stock.
- 1#** salt pork diced and rinsed under cold water
- 1 bottle** of dry white wine (use a good quality wine that you would drink and not just a cheap boxed wine)
- Meats from a **2#** bag of Maine mussels (I steamed them open very quickly in a covered pot with a very small amount of white wine, shallots, and a few sprigs of thyme)
- 8oz.** container of fresh picked Jonah crab meat
- Meats of **five 1.5#** Maine lobsters
- 1#** captain's cut cod filet cut into large chunks
- 2#** dry jumbo Maine scallops
- 4T.** chopped fresh chives
- 2T.** chopped fresh thyme
- 6c.** hot lobster stock
- 1c.** arborio rice
- .5c.** dry white wine (from above)
- Chunk** of Parmesan for grating over the finished dish (omit for dairy-free version)
- 10** fresh basil leaves

### Risotto Directions:

Begin by adding the salt pork to a large cast iron skillet and cook over medium heat to begin rendering the fat. Once the fat starts to render, raise the heat and stir constantly until all the fat has rendered and the pork is nice and crispy. Then add the onion, shallots, and leeks to the pan and cook until softened, stirring throughout (about 8 minutes). Add the garlic and cook for one more minute. Now add the rice and stir well to coat before adding the wine, cooking until all of it has been absorbed by the rice.

Keeping the heat on medium, begin adding the stock one ladle at a time, stirring gently throughout the entire cooking process. Do not add another ladle of stock until the previous one has been absorbed. (Fun fact: Traditional risotto does not contain cream; the creaminess comes from the gentle stirring of the rice as it releases its starch over time.) Continue adding the stock, ladle by ladle, stirring constantly until the rice is tender, which is usually about 25 minutes.

Once the rice is finished cooking, remove from the heat and add another ladle of stock, then gently fold in the cod pieces.

Now heat a non-stick sauce pan over high heat, season the scallops with salt and pepper, and sear them in the pan on one side (do not shake the pan, you want good color on the sear side) for about three minutes.

Remove the scallops from the heat and finish risotto by stirring in the chives and thyme, seasoning with salt and pepper to taste. Finally, add the lobster, mussels, and crab, and gently stir them in.

Portion the risotto into bowls, grate a bit of parmesan over the top, and garnish with a few fresh torn basil leaves. Make sure to serve with a good loaf of sourdough, perfect for mopping up risotto. Oh, and then take a shit ton of pictures, cuz this is a dish to show off to your friends.

*Brant Dadaleares is the founder and owner of Gross Confection Bar, which features a bakery, dessert restaurant, and bar in Portland's Old Port. Find it at [www.GrossConfectionBar.com](http://www.GrossConfectionBar.com).*





# A SHITTY 2023 MEANS I CAN'T GET THE ARCTIC MONKEYS OFF MY BACK



LATELY I'VE BEEN OBSESSED WITH THIS BAND ARCTIC MONKEYS. I'D ALWAYS PERIPHERALLY KNOWN ABOUT THEM, THEIR BUZZY FIRST ALBUM AND THEIR MONSTER ARENA ROCK COMEBACK, BUT I REALLY BECAME A FAN ONCE I HEARD THEIR OUTER SPACE LOUNGE-ACT ALBUM, "TRANQUILITY BASE HOTEL & CASINO," IN 2018. I'M EITHER OLD SCHOOL OR JUST

OLD BECAUSE I STILL LIKE TO BUY ALBUMS ON CD AND LISTEN TO THEM IN THE CAR. THIS YEAR, I'VE GONE THROUGH A STEADY ROTATION OF THREE OF THEIR ALBUMS: "THE CAR," "LIVE AT ROYAL ALBERT HALL," AND "AM."

My kids can attest (and detest) that the Arctic Monkeys are pretty much all I've listened to this year.

This year, however, has been shit. I wonder if I'll forever associate Arctic Monkeys with the trash bag of a year that has been 2023. I hope not. Because they're fucking amazing. I'm going to see them in September, to perhaps fully solidify them as my soundtrack to this godforsaken hellstorm on the calendar.

Do you have any music like that? That you forever associate with a shitty time?

I've never enjoyed the band Taking Back Sunday for this reason. Same with the singer Avril Lavigne. I got both those CDs for Christmas one year when I was a teenager. Unfortunately, during Christmas break, I got sick with mono. I was in bed for weeks. A friend of mine came over one day after school had started back up to see me, and I'll always remember her saying, "Wow you look awful."

I bet I did.

I would stay in my room, sick forever it seemed like, with an illness you allegedly get from making out (probably with Liz Condon - RIP!), listening to that damn Taking Back Sunday album. I never wanna hear those songs again. The colors on the album cover even turn me off to this day. What is it about music and a time period that remain embedded together forever in your brain? I'm not a scientist. You'll have to Google that. I'm just wondering aloud (in text).

Then there are the good memories you associate with songs. I remember when the same Liz came to visit me at college and

showed me "Three Cheers for Sweet Revenge" by My Chemical Romance, which fucking ripped! Hearing "Helena" or "Thanks for the Venom" will always transport me back to her Jeep, burn-cruising around Durham, New Hampshire, screaming all the words until we landed back at my dorm.

The other day I was listening to Migos — the Atlanta rap trio unfortunately turned duo (RIP Takeoff). Their music reminded me of the godfathers of Atlanta rap music: OutKast. I threw on my favorite OutKast album — their debut "Southernplayalisticadillacmuzik" — and was transported back to my '03 Altima, slicing through the backroad nights of Kennebunkport and Wells as an early-20s delinquent, singing along to "Crumblin' Erb" on my way to no good. Music can be like a time machine in that way.

I'm not a scientist. You'll have to Google that. I'm just wondering aloud (in text).

I hope 10 years from now, I'm listening to Arctic Monkeys and I remember the good times. I hope I remember forcing my kids to listen to the live version of "Cornerstone" so many times that they could list all the bars that the singer and lyricist Alex Turner visits in the song, searching for his missing love: the Rusty Hook, the Parrot's Beak, the Cornerstone, etc. I hope I remember belting out that, "there'd better be a mirrorball for me," with the windows down with all the conviction and heart of somebody who really wants some light.

It's likely, however, that that won't be the case. I'll remember "Snap Out Of It" as a desperate plea through the hardest times. I'll think of "Four Out of Five" as a musical antidepressant amid snowy, miserable late winter mornings. I do plan on singing my heart out when I see them in September, though. Maybe shedding a tear or two. Music, both in the good times and bad, tends to unlock emotions that have been bubbling under the surface.

Either way, long live the Arctic Monkeys.



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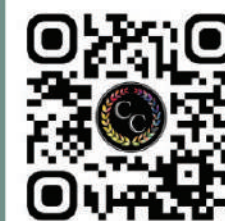
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