

Down East

BEST
LOBSTER ROLL
CONTEST
WINNERS!

THE MAGAZINE OF MAINE | SEPTEMBER 2021

Best of Maine!

77

Reader
and
Editor
Picks



Plus!

**SECRET WEEKEND
GETAWAYS**

**FOLLOWING
THE MAINE
OYSTER TRAIL**

Readers' favorite roll,
from Woolwich's
Taste of Maine.

HOME & GARDEN

OUR PICK

Once upon a time, a person could walk into **F.T. Brown Merchantile & Marine Chandlery** (ftbrownco.com) and pick up a fishing license, hunting license, and marriage license in one fell swoop. After more than a century in business, Northeast Harbor's Main Street hardware store still has one-stop-shop appeal. Run by the fourth generation of the founding family, the sprawling "merchantile" is stocked with anything one can imagine needing during a summer stay: Felco pruners, a Helly Hansen raincoat, a foldable bike, skeins of yarn, children's toys, cans of house paint — the inventory goes on and on. Quite the display of taxidermic animals too. Alas, you'll need to go elsewhere for your marriage license. — J.V.A.

★ HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE

Aubuchon Hardware

Various locations
hardwarestore.com

FINALISTS

Ames True Value

Wiscasset

Grover's Hardware

Boothbay Harbor

Maine Hardware

Portland

Viking Lumber

Various locations

★ BUILDER

Knickerbocker Group

Boothbay, Portland
knickerbockergroup.com

FINALISTS

Artisan Builders

Swanville

Marden Builders Inc.

Boothbay Harbor

Nate Holyoke Builders

Bucksport

O'Shea Builders

Windham

★ GARDEN CENTER/ NURSERY

Skillins Greenhouses

Brunswick, Falmouth, Cumberland
skillins.com

FINALISTS

Broadway Gardens

South Portland

Estabrook's

Yarmouth

Longfellow's Greenhouses

Manchester

**Moose Crossing
Garden Center**

Waldoboro



OUR PICK

I'm a sucker for a primitive dry sink or pie safe repurposed in a modern home — my mom kept snacks in the former, and I have a kitchen corner reserved for my future Colonial dessert chest turned office-supply cabinet. One favorite hunting spot is **Cornish Trading Company** (cornishtrading.com). With three floors and 40 vendors in an 1864 former Masonic hall, the shop is filled to its tin ceilings with early American and European furnishings, art, and textiles that aren't overly precious — or decrepit. Longtime owners Lisa and Michael Fulginiti take pride in unusual finds, like a pair of 19th-century cast-iron doves that would look sweet perched on a pie safe. — S.S.

★ FURNITURE STORE

Chilton Furniture

Scarborough, Freeport, Portland
chiltons.com

FINALISTS

Country Farm Furniture

Bath

Dow Furniture

Waldoboro

FX Marcotte

Lewiston

Youngs Furniture

Portland

★ ARCHITECT

Knickerbocker Group

Boothbay, Portland
knickerbockergroup.com

FINALISTS

Kaplan Thompson Architects

Portland

OPAL Architecture

Belfast

Platz Associates

Auburn

Whitten Architects

Portland

TRAVEL & PLAY

★ B&B/INN

Topside Inn

Boothbay Harbor
topsideinn.com

FINALISTS

Harraseeket Inn

Freeport

Hartstone Inn & Hideaway

Camden

**Greenville Inn at
Moosehead Lake**

Greenville

Wolf Cove Inn

Poland

★ CRUISE

Casco Bay Lines Mailboat

Portland
cascobaylines.com

FINALISTS

Balmy Days Cruises

Boothbay Harbor

Cabbage Island Clambakes

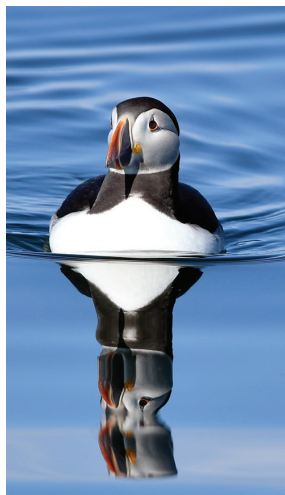
Boothbay Harbor

Hardy Boat Cruises

New Harbor

Katahdin Cruises

Greenville



OUR PICKS

I've taken guests ages four to 87 on cruises to Eagle Island State Historic Site with **Seacoast Tours of Freeport** (seacoasttoursme.com), and all were equally rapt. The trip to the former summer home of polar explorer Robert E. Peary embarks from South Freeport's town wharf, and during the 45-minute trip to the island, charismatic captain and owner Peter Milholland — who spent more than 20 years as a water steward and researcher for the nonprofit Friends of Casco Bay — gives a fascinating overview of the bay's history and ecology. On the island, there are docents to school you on Peary and plenty of trails to explore. Seacoast Tours also offers lobster cruises, tours of oyster farms, and other adventures. — J.V.A.

You'll feel like an expert on Maine's petite and charming little auks on a 90-minute puffin-watch cruise to Eastern Egg Rock with **Hardy Boat Cruises** (hardyboat.com). The tours leave from New Harbor, on the Pemaquid peninsula, the closest port to the island, and they're narrated by naturalists from the National Audubon Society. Both the puffin and seal-watch cruises are great for kids — if conditions are right on a seal-watching trip, captains will even let young passengers take turns at the helm. — A.P.