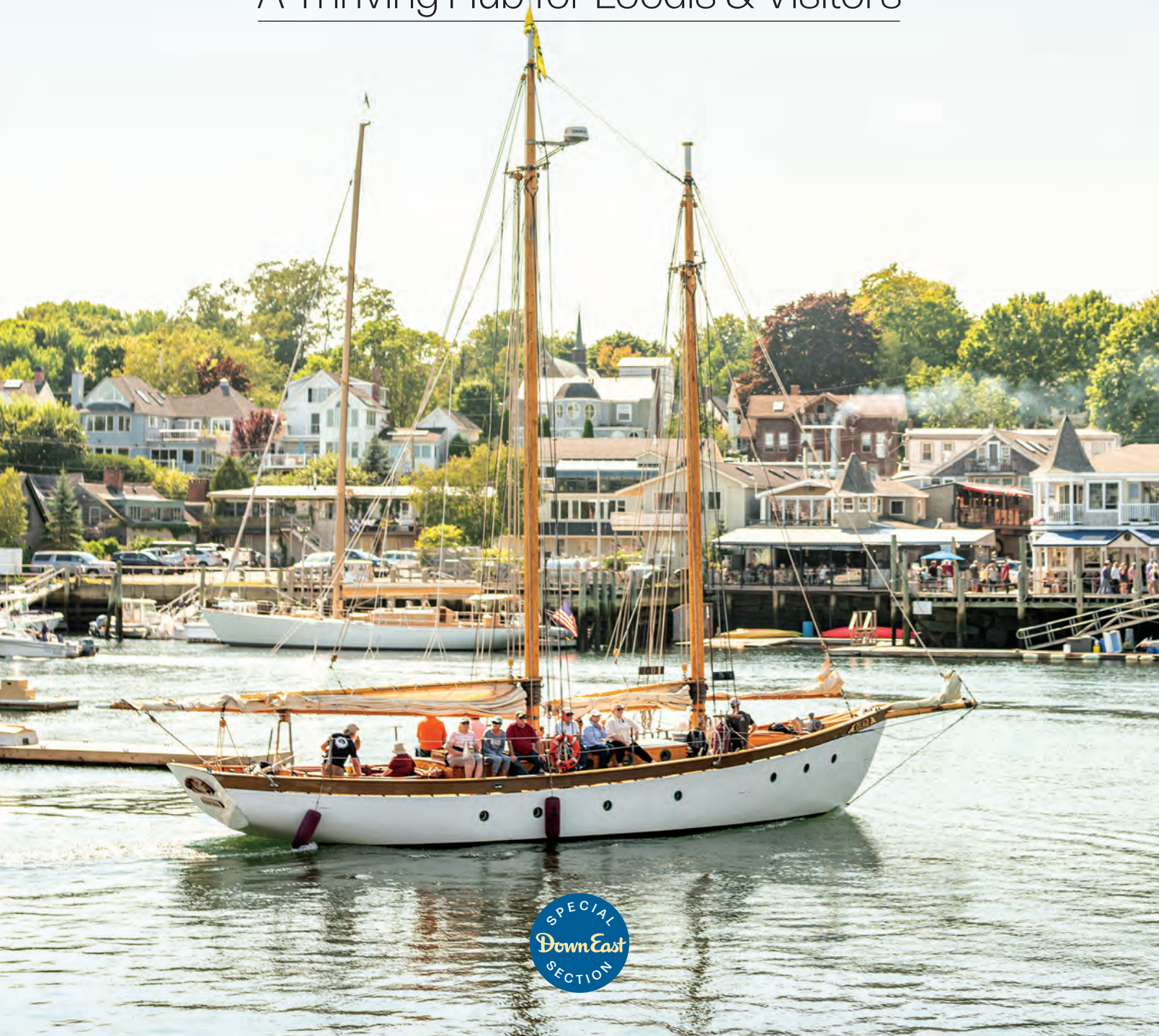


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**R**ick Johnson and Charles Luna fell in love with Camden when they vacationed there during the pandemic. “We had always romanticized New England,” Luna says. “We started in Martha’s Vineyard and drove up to Maine, ending in Camden. We said, ‘Oh my god, it just keeps getting better and better.’” They spent the entirety of their next vacation in Camden. When they started planning a third trip, they decided they should consider moving.

“We noticed something, like a shift had happened,” Luna says. “There was a younger crowd coming in to open businesses, boutiques, and restaurants. We said, ‘Something’s happening here and we want to be a part of it.’” Johnson and Luna dreamed of one day leaving their corporate jobs to open a

restaurant and wedding venue. When they heard the Hideaway Inn was for sale, they took the leap into innkeeping instead. They purchased the historic 1810 property in February 2024.

To create a new aesthetic for the inn, the couple drew on their experiences at Fortune 500 companies in Portland, Oregon — Johnson had been a senior strategic planner for retail, and Luna had worked in footwear design. “We took off a lot of old wallpaper and removed a lot of roosters and doilies,” Luna says. “That’s good for some places, but we had our own vision.”

The Hideaway reopened in May 2024 and almost immediately booked solid from the end of June through October. Return guests praised the updates, which honor the home’s historic architecture, but make it more functional. “The before-and-afters got addict-

ing,” Luna says. “It’s nice to have people appreciate it.” After spending the quiet season getting to know their new neighborhood, Johnson and Luna are ready to welcome returning summer guests. “What we envisioned actually worked,” Luna says. “It’s now a reality.”

Dan Hall and Matt Dempsey also needed a career change when they bought Camden’s Windward House in 2017. “We used to wake up miserable,” Hall says of their previous life in New Jersey. “We would rush through our work days, dealing with corporate and sales goals and all this pressure. I started looking at what the next stage of life could be for us.” The couple enrolled in an intensive seminar on innkeeping and found their calling.

Like the Hideaway Inn, Windward House, an 1854 Greek Revival, was heavily wallpapered. “We joke that the inn was



## Working from Home

A new wave of Camden-area innkeepers is refreshing historic properties and attracting the next generation of guests.

100 percent turnkey when we purchased it, but it was the old innkeeper’s definition of the word ‘turnkey,’ not ours,” Hall says. The couple took over operations in the height of the summer season and renovated one room at a time. They also built a breakfast deck and planted gardens. This year they are putting in a small fruit orchard. “We’re at a period of time where the bed-and-breakfast industry is changing,” Hall says. “The baby-boomer generation is starting to age out, and the younger generations coming in may not have an appreciation for the traditional bed-and-breakfast. We’re updating things, but without sacrificing the historical aspect of the property.”

Heading into their ninth season, Hall and Dempsey say that innkeeping is their second career, not a retirement job. “We work harder physically now than we’ve ever worked in our lives, but it’s honestly one of the best decisions we’ve ever made,” Hall says. “Maine is a bucket-list trip for a lot of people, and being part of that memory is a special feeling.”

Cleveland restaurateurs Michael and Karrie Nowak weren’t looking for an inn when they explored leaving Cleveland to move to Maine in 2021. “We were looking for a restaurant,” Michael says. “When we found the restaurant that we fell in love with, it happened to have six guest rooms.” Undeterred, they made



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Charles Luna and Rick Johnson describe the interior design at The Hideaway as historic with an edge. The Belmont Inn’s guests love the property’s white picket fence and perennial gardens. The new garden at Windward House includes whimsical lawn ornaments and colorful lights. The home that is now The Elms was a private residence owned by the Curtis family from 1806 until the late 1950s. At the Youngtown Inn, Michael and Karrie Nowak source ingredients from nearby farms for their on-site restaurant, Aster & Rose.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DAVID WADDELL; LAUREN CAFFE; DAN HALL; STEPHEN Z. CLARK; DAVID WADDELL



an offer to purchase the building, an early-19th-century farmhouse in Lincolnville that had been operating as the Youngtown Inn for nearly 40 years.

The Nowaks took over the property the day after Labor Day and, with a full fall reservation calendar, got a crash course in innkeeping. “I’ve never done anything but cook and serve food, so flipping rooms was brand-new to me,” Michael says. “It was hard work, but it was also an invaluable experience for learning what needed to happen on a day-to-day basis.” When the inn closed for the season in November, the Nowaks overhauled the restaurant space and refreshed guest rooms with new paint and furniture.

The Nowaks are now starting their third full season of running the inn and Aster & Rose restaurant. They and their three children live in the house next door, and Michael says he especially enjoys being able to see his kids more frequently than when he ran the couple’s restaurant in Cleveland. He also credits living on-site

for their success as first-time innkeepers. “We never had any formal training in the hotel hospitality world, but we live here so it’s easy to treat people like they are guests staying in our house,” he says. “That’s what we’ve always done, and it has worked out really, really well.”

James Carmack, a former barber-shop owner, and his partner, Gary Born, who worked in human resources, got a similar crash course in hospitality when they moved from Kansas to take over The Elms in Camden in July 2017. “We had the whole stretch of the season ahead of us so it was trial by fire,” Carmack says. “We didn’t even get to unpack a lot of the stuff we brought with us until November.” Guest feedback from their first season helped inform how Carmack and Born updated the 1806 building to have more modern comforts like heat pumps, while maintaining its historic charm.

Carmack says The Elms has seen an increase in younger guests, who sometimes appear anxious about

what to expect. “They will say, ‘This is our first time at a B&B and we don’t know how it works,’ he says. “We say, ‘You’re overthinking it – think of it like a hotel. This isn’t your great-grandmother’s bed-and-breakfast.’”

Kim Caffé, who purchased the Belmont Inn in Camden in December 2018 and runs it with occasional help from her daughter Lauren, also welcomes a lot of guests who are new to the bed-and-breakfast experience. “I have noticed an influx of younger people, which I’m thrilled with,” she says. “Millennials will ask me a million times if I’ve seen *Gilmore Girls*. It reminds them of that.”

The Queen Anne-style home was built in 1891 and converted to lodging in the 1920s. Caffé previously worked as a rehabilitation counselor in Illinois, but has deep family roots in Maine. Camden appealed to her because it feels like the “real Maine.” “That’s what we’ve tried to do here,” she says. “Make it feel like a real Maine home.” – BRIDGET M. BURNS

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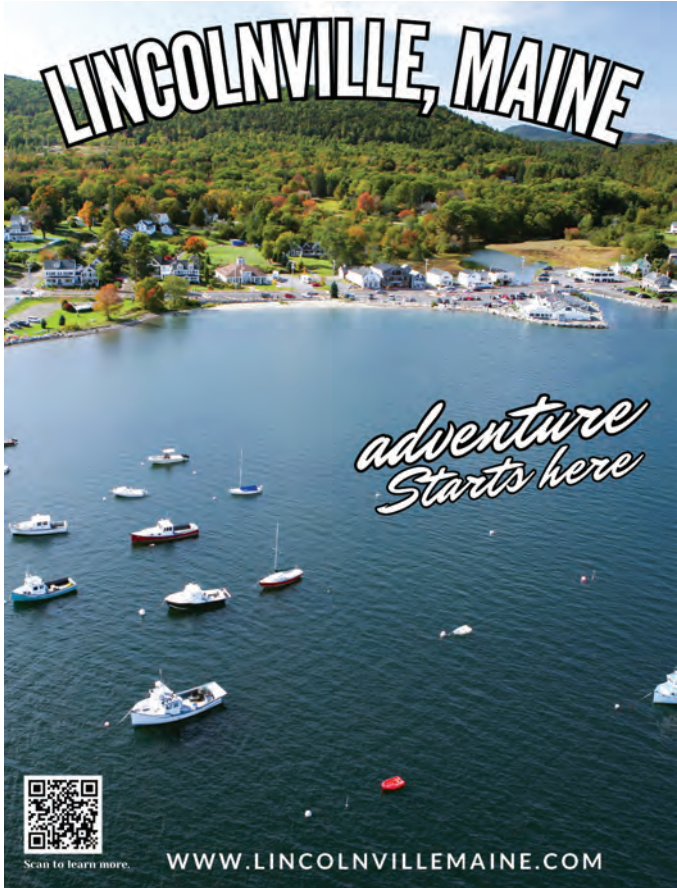
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 <p>Cheryl Oliveri-Daly</p>	 <p>Bill Pickford</p>	 <p>Ken Twaddel</p>	 <p>Alex Uhll</p>	 <p>Tommy Uhll</p>	 <p>Wendy Zwecker</p>

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# Happy Trails

Thanks to local land preservation efforts, there's no shortage of trails for hikers to enjoy in Camden and the surrounding area — including this nonexhaustive list for all ability levels.



## BEECH HILL PRESERVE

This Coastal Mountains Land Trust preserve encompasses 295 acres, including grassland bird habitat and organic blueberry barrens on 533-foot Beech Hill. The Summit Road Trail follows an old farm road from Beech Hill Road to the hilltop open meadow, making for an easy 1.2-mile out-and-back hike. The 0.9-mile Woods Loop Trail, also easy, begins at the Rockville Street trailhead and winds through a mixed hardwood forest before dividing into a loop trail with two possible routes to the summit. On top of the hill sits Beech Nut, a sod-roof stone picnic hut built in 1914 and offering panoramic views of Penobscot Bay, the Camden Hills, and the St. George peninsula. *316 Beech Hill Rd./76 Rockville St., Rockport; 207-236-7091; coastalmountains.org*

## CAMDEN HILLS STATE PARK

Camden Hills State Park includes 30 miles of hiking trails to some of the area's most scenic vistas. The 0.5-mile Mount Battie Trail ascends up the south-facing side of the mountain and ends with a

view of Camden village and the Penobscot Bay islands. Get an even better view by climbing the circular staircase of the summit's 26-foot-tall stone Mount Battie Memorial Tower. The park's highest peak, 1,385-foot Mount Megunticook, is reached via the 2.6-mile Megunticook and Adam's Lookout Trail Loop. A detour to the ledges at the Ocean Outlook offers a view to Mount Battie. *280 Belfast Rd., Camden; 207-236-3109; maine.gov/dacf/parks*

## HARKNESS PRESERVE

Families with young children can enjoy the easy, 1-mile loop trail in the Coastal Mountains Land Trust's Harkness Preserve. The trail includes two footbridges over the gentle Ott Brook and passes a lime-kiln chimney cap, a relic of the area's once-thriving industry. Little ones can refuel on the stone seat overlooking Rockport Harbor. *Spruce St., Rockport; 207-236-7091; coastalmountains.org*

## MERRYSRING NATURE CENTER

This 66-acre nature park and education center includes 4 miles of trails through forests and meadows and past cultivated gardens and vernal pools. The Kitty Todd Arboretum hosts 35 different native-Maine tree species, and visitors are invited to add houses to the fairy village next door. *30 Conway Rd., Camden; 207-236-2239; merryspring.org*

## PEN BAY HOSPITAL COMMUNITY WELLNESS TRAIL

This 1.5-mile, easy-to-moderate loop trail winds around the MaineHealth Pen Bay Hospital campus and is accessible from trailheads on the campus and off Route 1 near the hospital entrance. It has several benches overlooking Penobscot Bay and 11 fitness stations. *6 Glen Cove Dr., Rockport; 207-301-8000; mainehealth.org/penbay*

## RAGGED MOUNTAIN

Ragged Mountain is home to an 11.5-mile trail network on a Coastal Mountains Land Trust preserve and conservation easement land, with some of the most challenging hikes in the area. The Hosmer Brook Trail climbs from the Camden Snow Bowl parking area to the top of the Ragged Mountain ridge, where it connects to the Georges Highland Path, maintained by the Georges River Land Trust. The trail is open to foot traffic only due to exposed roots and loose rocks. The Thorndike Brook Trail has a smoother surface and more gradual ascent from its trailhead off Route 17 in Rockport. Follow it to the Ragged Mountain ridgeline for views of Penobscot Bay. The 5.5-mile Round the Mountain Trail is a more accessible option with wide gravel paths for hiking and biking. Accessible from the Camden Snow Bowl and the Thorndike Brook Trailhead, it winds through mixed forest and offers views of Mirror Lake and Hosmer Pond. *20 Barnestown Rd., Camden/223 Hope St., Rockport; 207-236-7091; coastalmountains.org*

— BRIDGET M. BURNS

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# Service With a Smile

Shirley Marriner has learned a few things about customer service in her 26 years working at downtown Camden institution French & Brawn Market Place. The grocery's manager shares how the store has survived since 1868 – and why she has no current plans to retire.

■ We tell all of our cashiers that the first thought a person has about the store is how you speak to them when they come through the door. Everything should be positive. People come here because we care. We talk with them, we joke with them, and we make everything right if there is a mistake.

■ We are very dedicated to good, proper service. If I see somebody not being nice to a customer, I take them aside and say, listen, this isn't how this goes. I don't care how they are to you, you have to be kind to them, because we don't know what their life is. If somebody comes in angry, you have to take a deep breath and treat that person with respect and kindness. Treat them how you want to be treated.

■ We have people who come in and have, say, a scone, and then call up from out of state and ask if they could have our recipe, or if we could ship it to them. If people come in and want different types of meat, different fishes, we try to get those in. Todd Anderson, the owner, he'll search and search and search. He'll say, give me a few days. We very seldom say no to anything that somebody wants. We have stuff that's common, and then we have the higher-end stuff also. We can't get the prices that big chain markets can get, but we try to keep our prices within reason. We do our best.



— AS TOLD TO BRIDGET M. BURNS

■ We're well-known. And people know we have good products. We have a nice meat room. We have the full-fledged deli. We do entrées. I mean, we can't keep up. A lot of people buy the entrées. Sarah Anderson, the owner, is an excellent cook. And a lot of my girls who are in the deli, they're excellent too.

■ When COVID started, we closed our store, but we stayed open for curbside and we did home deliveries, and we still do. I think with us being that loyal to our customers, people grew to respect us. They know we care. And I think when you're in a business, you have to really care. We've got tremendous loyalty. It's wonderful.

■ I'm a funny person. I mean, I'm 71 years old, and I respect every day that I can wake up in the morning and go to work. I love doing it, and my bosses are out of this world. If you work hard for them, they will work hard for you. I said, "Todd and Sarah, when you feel that I'm not doing my job, just let me know." But I feel that I do my job just as well as anybody who is here. I'm going to stay working as long as I can say that I still love working here. When the day comes that I can't say that I like this, then I'm going to say, it's time for me to go.

DAVE WADDELL



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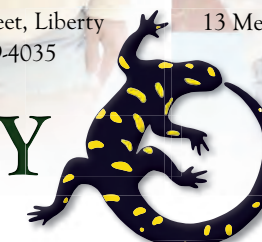


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## Setting Sail on Penobscot Bay

Pleasure cruisers can see lighthouses, islands, working lobsterboats, and marine life while boating in Maine's most scenic bay.

Captain Aaron Lincoln, who offers short and multi-day cruises aboard the schooner *Olad* and cutter *Owl*, didn't grow up sailing.

His father worked for the Coast Guard's search-and-rescue program, but on his days off, he got as far away from the water as he could. "So it's kind of funny that I have the same aptitude as him," Lincoln says. "I enjoy working on the water."

Burned out from an unsatisfying career in advertising, Lincoln learned to sail when he took a job aboard the *Olad* to bide time while he figured out what he wanted to do next. "Now I own the boat I learned how to sail on," Lincoln says. "This year, I'll have officially been on the *Olad* for 25 years and will have owned it for 20."

The completely restored *Olad* was built in 1927 and can fit up to 22 passengers. Twelve years ago, Lincoln acquired the smaller six-passenger *Owl*, built in 1941 and rebuilt to today's standards. "It added some variety to my life," he says. "When I drive the schooner, I feel like I'm a sailor as much as I am an entertainer. When I'm sailing people around in the *Owl*, it equates to having everybody at my house for a dinner party. It's very intimate. You feel everything on a little boat. That's part of its charm."

Lincoln has sailed fiberglass boats and steel boats, but prefers wooden sailboats. While they are not as agile as modern boats, their wooden hulls dampen noise, making it more likely that seals, porpoises, and other marine wildlife will approach. "There's something about those old boats," Lincoln says. "They're very sea-kindly."



DAVE WADDELL



Boatbuilding company Lyman-Morse operates a full-service marina with slips, moorings, and inner-harbor floats available for short- and long-term rental in Camden Harbor.



Schooner *Stephen Taber* sails towards Curtis Island Light, at the entrance of Camden Harbor. The boat offers three- to seven-night sailing trips and private charters out of Rockland Harbor. Opposite page: Sailors congregate at the annual Camden Classics Cup regatta.



## Sailboat Glossary

### SCHOONER

Schooners have at least two masts, with the largest mast, or mainmast, located second from the bow. The majority of cruise sailboats in Camden Harbor are schooners originally designed as working boats for cargo or fishing. “They’re so powerful and

fast – that’s why they started racing,” Lincoln says. “The America’s Cup is named after schooner *America*.”

### KETCH

A ketch’s mainmast is forward and its smaller mizzenmast is aft. “In the old days, when they were sailing cargo, the

schooner wasn’t as great going upwind, so putting that bigger sail forward made the boat sail a little better,” Lincoln says. “They were the semis of their time.”

### YAWL

A yawl’s mizzenmast is positioned behind a rudder post with a small, stabilizing sail.

DAVE WADDELL

Yawls were popular with racers during a time when rules limited the square footage of sail allowed between the helm and the stern but didn’t specify anything beyond the stern. On fishing boats, the smaller sail would help keep the boat steady when hauling nets. “Cruising people liked it because it would keep

them from moving around as much when they anchored at night,” Lincoln says.

### SLOOP AND CUTTER

A sloop is a single-masted sailing yacht with two sails that are relatively easy to handle due to their minimal rigging and lines. A cutter also has only one mast, but it is generally situated closer to the rear of the boat.

### WINDJAMMER

Historically, windjammer was a derogatory term used by sailors of square-

rigged ships, whose sails are set perpendicular to the masts, to refer to sailors of newer fore-and-aft rig ships where the sails are set along the line of the keel. “The amount of seamanship skills you needed to sail square-rigged ships was significantly higher,” Lincoln says. “When schooners first started to show up and make a living, the older traditional sailors thumbed their nose at them. They thought they were lesser sailors.” In modern terms, windjammer usually refers to a boat that goes out overnight. – BRIDGET M. BURNS







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## MAY

### 5/4 CALF UNVEILING DAY 10 A.M.–1 P.M.

Aldermere Farm, a working Belted Galloway cattle farm, welcomes visitors to tour the barnyard and meet the calves born this spring. Aldermere Achievers 4-H Club demonstrations, live music, and food, including grilled Aldermere burgers.  
*20 Russell Ave., Rockport;*  
*207-236-2739; aldermere.org*

### 5/13–5/17 CAMDEN FESTIVAL OF POETRY

Celebrate Maine poets and singer-songwriters of all ages with a week of readings, workshops, and creative events. Award-winning poet, translator, and essayist Jane Hirshfield will give the keynote address.  
*Locations throughout Camden;*  
*camdenfestivalofpoetry.com*

### 5/15 CAMDEN ART WALK 5–7 P.M.

Galleries and shops are open throughout town and Bay View Street is closed to traffic for live music, kids' crafts, and food vendors. Held monthly May through October with events on 6/19, 7/17, 8/21, 9/18, and 10/16.  
*camdenartwalk.com*

### 5/15–5/18 CAMDEN IS BLOOMING

The Camden Area Business Group invites downtown visitors to celebrate the arrival of spring while shopping local. Sidewalk sales, live music, and activities for children.  
*Main St., Camden*

### 5/16 & 5/17 MERRYSRING PLANT SALE

Perennials, annuals, and herbs for sale. Purchases support the upkeep of the Merryspring Nature Center's public gardens and continuation of its nature education programs.  
*30 Conway Rd., Camden; 207-236-2239; merryspring.org*

## JUNE

### 6/13 & 6/14 ROCKPORT DONUT FESTIVAL

Celebrate Rockport's Captain Hanson Crockett Gregory, the creator of the donut hole, with a parade, 5K race, artisan market, homemade donut

contest, donut vendors, and more.  
*207-236-0989; rockportmaine.gov/rockportdonutfestival*

### 6/13–6/15 JAZZ IN JUNE

Three days of live jazz from renowned musicians, including Grammy Award-winning jazz fusion act Spyro Gyra.

# Camden Area Spring & Summer Events Calendar



The Camden Area Business Group's Fourth of July fireworks display can be viewed from Harbor Park and Laite Memorial Beach.



Performances are held at the Camden Opera House and pop-up venues around town. [jazzinjunecamdenme.com](http://jazzinjunecamdenme.com)

6/14 PACES FOR PAWS

A 5K run/walk and 1-mile walk to benefit Camden’s PAWS animal shelter held on the Belfast Rail Trail as part of the RunBelfast race series. 13 Oak Hill Rd., Belfast; [pawscares.org](http://pawscares.org)

JULY

MONDAY MOVIES IN THE PARK

Enjoy movies outdoors in the Camden Library Amphitheatre. Every Monday through July and August, starting at dusk. 55 Main St., Camden; 207-236-3440

7/4 GREAT SCHOONER RACE

A day of racing that welcomes traditional vessels from all over the Eastern Seaboard. The event has been held every summer since 1977. At least 20

schooners are expected in 2025. [Rockland Harbor Breakwater, Rockland; greatschoonerrace.com](http://Rockland Harbor Breakwater, Rockland; greatschoonerrace.com)

7/4 FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENCE FIREWORKS

Celebrate the Fourth of July at the Camden Library Amphitheatre and Camden Harbor Park with Music by the Sea from noon to 9 p.m. and a fireworks display over Camden Harbor starting at 9 p.m. Atlantic Ave., Camden

7/12 & 7/13 HARBOR ARTS FAIR

A juried arts fair with around 80 artists and craftspeople plus rare and collectible book vendors at the Camden Library Amphitheatre and Camden Harbor Park. Atlantic Ave., Camden

7/12 & 7/13 NORTH ATLANTIC BLUES FESTIVAL

One of the most prestigious blues festivals on the East Coast featuring

all-day entertainment from top blues musicians at Rockland’s Public Landing. 275 Main St., Rockland; 207-691-0825; [northatlanticbluesfestival.com](http://northatlanticbluesfestival.com)

7/16 CAMDEN SHAKESPEARE

Festival Opening 6 p.m. See *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* performed by a professional theater company in the Camden Library Amphitheatre. Additional performances 7/17, 7/18, 7/22–7/25, 7/29–8/1, and 8/6–8/10. 55 Main St., Camden; [camdenshakespeare.org](http://camdenshakespeare.org)

7/17 CAMDEN GARDEN CLUB HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Annual tour of remarkable homes and gardens, with artists, musicians, and horticultural demonstrations at each stop. [camdengardenclub.org](http://camdengardenclub.org)

7/24–7/26 CAMDEN CLASSICS CUP

An annual celebration of classic yacht



Union Fair, 7/30–8/3

racing and boatbuilding with a shore cleanup, caviar and champagne reception, regatta, and a fleet parade. [camdenclassicscup.com](http://camdenclassicscup.com)

AUGUST

7/30–8/3 UNION FAIR, MAINE’S WILD BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL

Celebrate Maine’s agriculture and

wild blueberries with baking contests, pie-eating contests, and the crowning of the Blueberry Queen, plus livestock shows, carnival rides, and a demolition derby. 175 Fairgrounds Ln., Union; 207-785-3281; [unionfair.org](http://unionfair.org)

7/30–8/3 MAINE LOBSTER FESTIVAL

Five days of feasting in honor of Maine’s most iconic crustacean. Events include a seafood-cooking contest, parade, and road race. Festival organizers cook 20,000 pounds of lobster for lobster dinners, lobster rolls, lobster bisque, and more. 1 Park Dr., Rockland; 207-596-7126; [mainelobsterfestival.com](http://mainelobsterfestival.com)

8/13–8/17 SCREEN DOOR FESTIVAL

Five days of music performances at Bay Chamber’s Hammer Hall and on the Camden Village Green from more than 50 renowned artists. 5 Mountain St., Camden; 207-236-2823

8/29–8/30 CAMDEN WINDJAMMER FESTIVAL

A Labor Day weekend celebration of maritime heritage that includes boat races, a lobster crate running race, Fun Run 5K, chowder challenge, and fireworks over Camden Harbor. Camden Public Landing; [camdenparksandrec.com/camden-windjammer-festival](http://camdenparksandrec.com/camden-windjammer-festival)

SEPTEMBER

9/11–9/14 CAMDEN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

This showcase of international documentary cinema attracts filmmakers and cinephiles from all over the world. Screenings, panels, workshops, and parties are held at venues throughout Camden, Rockport, and Rockland. [facebook.com/camdeniff](https://facebook.com/camdeniff)

— BRIDGET M. BURNS AND BHAVANA SCALIA-BRUCÉ

DAVE WADDELL

AN EVENING WITH  
**Spyro Gyra**

**June 14**

**June 13**  
**Julia Keefe Quartet**

**CAMDEN OPERA HOUSE**

Jazz in June / June 13 - 15 / For Full festival info: [jazzinjunecamdenme.com](http://jazzinjunecamdenme.com)

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**CAMDEN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**  
September 11-14, 2025

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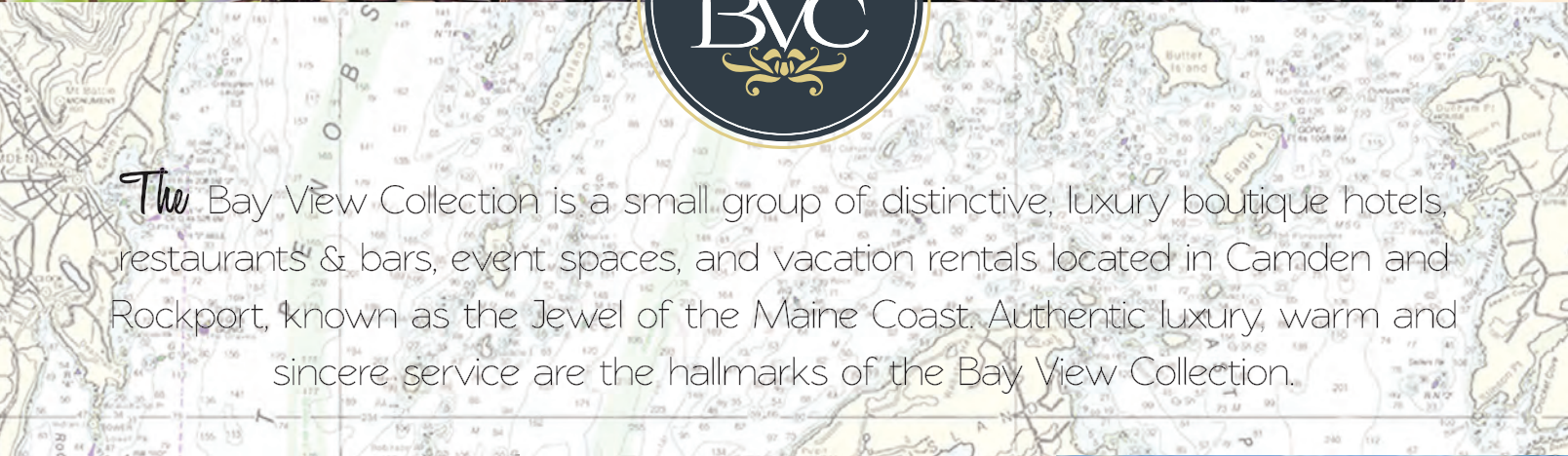
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[www.BayViewCollection.com](http://www.BayViewCollection.com)





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