



# Seaweed Festival celebrates kelp, kombu

BY KATHLEEN PIERCE  
BDN STAFF

SOUTH PORTLAND — Fresh from the ocean, it's slimy, salty and unappealing. But Maine seaweed, the not-so-secret weapon for a growing roster of local chefs, is coming ashore. "Seaweed is now welcome on menus and highlighted as a main ingredient," said Kennebunk chef David Ross of 50 Local, where seaweed in salads and entrees such as macaroni and cheese get top billing.

The seaweed evangelist was one of several chefs and food entrepreneurs singing algae's culinary praises at The Maine Seaweed Festival held on the grounds of Southern Maine Communi-

ty College last weekend. A longtime staple of Asian cuisine, seaweed is sashaying into much more than sushi.

Seaweed gazpacho, ice cream, crunch bars and fish and chips were served in the hot sun. Seaweed goat cheese smeared on seaweed bagels and popcorn flecked with seaweed sated the hungry throngs. Chefs such as Ross, who also owns wood-fired pizza shop Owen's Farmhouse, bakes seaweed into pizza dough.

"It has been more of a deterrent for diners than an enhancement mainly because what comes to people's mind when they hear seaweed is that pungent smell you get when you drive by the beach at a certain time," said Ross,

whose multicourse seaweed cooking demonstration attracted an at-capacity crowd Saturday.

"This is all changing now because more diners are seeking out ingredients at farmers markets and natural food stores, and seaweed harvesters have been well represented at farmers markets, offering samples, recipes and selling their items."

One company, Vitamin-Sea, is pushing the movement in Maine.

The Scarborough-based outfit harvests seaweed from Harpswell to Lubec and sells a line of seaweed in flakes, whole and bar form.

"The popularity of vegan and macrobiotic lifestyles are pushing the trend," said co-owner Kelly Roth, who

supplies many food companies such as Smiling Hill Farm and Little Lad's with seaweed for their latest inventions.

From kelp to dulse, laver to alaria, sea vegetables no longer are reserved for Japanese cuisine. To prove it, Ross and chef Frank Giglio of Three Lily Farm in Thorndike concocted a gourmet dinner featuring the versatile, sustainable, plentiful sea veggie Saturday night.

Dried seaweed adds crunch to toppings and also is a great addition in fermentation. You can pan fry kelp with garlic and add it to meatballs, a tip Giglio shared during his demo.

"It's a wild food," said Giglio, a forager and self-described "DIY guy," who



KATHLEEN PIERCE | BDN

Seaweed is a great fermentor and adds culinary pizzazz to many dishes. Locally harvested seaweed was celebrated on Saturday at the Maine Seaweed Festival in South Portland.

added that he is a "big fan of the nutrients and minerals" from seaweed, chiefly

iodine, in which "most people are deficient." See *Seaweed*, Page C2

## Summer is fleeting, but it's not over yet

"I'm not ready for summer to end," I confessed to a dear friend the other night in a text message. Although the warm weather remains, the spirit of it feels fleeting.

In my mind, winter is all too close. (There's a joke in here somewhere about this — it's only my second year here, after all.)

Kids, including mine, have returned to school. There's more structure to our days and less of the feeling we could just pick up and hit the beach just because. And evenings? I no longer can justify late nights at the drive-in or getting ice cream by saying "it's summer." No, my kids need their bedtime to be constant again so they are fresh for their school days.

Still, the tug of war between wanting my kids to enjoy life and needing to provide structure is real. But the responsible side of me ultimately wins out. Every time.

As much as I wish there could be more time for spontaneous nights and warm weather weekend adventures, it's been a good summer. One where so many wonderful memories were created.

This summer has been one of discovery and excitement. It's been of new experiences, goal realizing and being open to new possibilities. And it's been one of laughter and joy.

We've played countless games. We've welcomed special new people into our lives who make life a little bit more fun. We've visited lakes and beaches. We've watched "Jurassic World" at the Bangor Drive-In and hiked to the top of Gorham Mountain. Last week, we spent the evening with Penobscot Theatre Co. for their "Scenes and Songs" preview of their upcoming theater season. And we've sampled ice cream flavors from Belfast to Bangor.

This past weekend, we also did something that seems quintessential Bangor: We went to the American Folk Festival for the first

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SARAH WALKER CARON



## CHORIZO STUFFED ZUCCHINI BOATS

SERVES 4

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 lb chorizo, removed from casings
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup mozzarella cheese
- 2 medium zucchini, halved

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Heat a medium saute pan over medium heat on the stove. Add the chorizo and brown thoroughly. Add the onions and bell peppers and cook, stirring often, until softened, about 3-5 minutes. Add the tomatoes and garlic and season with salt and pepper. Cook for 3-5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the breadcrumbs and mozzarella cheese.
3. Scoop out the flesh of the zucchini, leaving a boat-shaped shell. Spoon the chorizo mixture into the opening, pressing it down and mounding to fit as much filling as you can. If you are using smaller zucchini, you might need three to use all the filling. Bake for 20 minutes, until golden. Let cool slightly before serving.



RECIPE: SARAH WALKER CARON  
ART: ERIC ZELZ

## Rice salad, made how you want

Boil rice, then, while it is warm, sprinkle with rice vinegar (seasoned or not), drizzle in some olive oil and consider the result as you might a canvas stretched and gessoed and ready for painting.

It is fun to try different combinations of grains, beans, lentils with whatever summer vegetables come to hand, plus dried fruits, such as currants, raisins or dried cranberries. These salads have enough heft to serve as a light supper by themselves or the accompaniment to, or even mixed with, meat or seafood for a more substantial meal. Lately I have been working with rice because, mixed with colorful ingredients, it is downright pretty.



SANDY OLIVER

TASTE BUDS

### Rice Salad with Vegetables

Servings vary

1/2 cup cooked rice per person  
Oil and vinegar or vinaigrette to taste  
Handful of raisins and/or currants to taste  
Hot water  
Assorted vegetables to taste:  
Shallots or red onion finely diced  
Chopped peppers  
Blanched green beans, broccoli, cauliflower, peas  
Shredded carrots  
Diced cucumber  
Diced tomatoes or halved cherry tomatoes  
Coarsely chopped dried cranberries  
Salt and pepper

Put the cooked rice in a large bowl.  
While the rice is still warm, drizzle the oil and vinegar or vinaigrette over it.  
In a separate bowl, put the raisins or currants and cover with hot water to plump them.  
Chop the rest of the vegetables and add them to the rice.  
Drain the raisins and/or currants and add them to the rice.  
Add the cranberries.  
Toss everything together until evenly mixed, then taste and add salt and pepper and more dressing if needed.



TROY R. BENNETT | BDN  
Portland chef Shannon Bard makes fancy lobster grilled sandwiches and gazpacho in an outdoor kitchen at a Falmouth mansion on Friday.

## Chef camp in session at Falmouth mansion

BY KATHLEEN PIERCE  
BDN STAFF

FALMOUTH — What do you do when your house exceeds your needs? If you are Falmouth neurosurgeon Marc Christensen, you invite the Food Network and a top Portland chef over to experiment.

On a lush 3.5 acres, the mansion Mirabelle quietly is transforming into a gourmet getaway for well-heeled urbanites. Celebrity chef Bobby Flay hasn't checked in yet, but he is waiting off stage.

"Bobby loves Maine," said Stacy St. Onge, Flay's field producer and a partner in Maine's newest experiential travel concept: Mirabelle House Culinary Vacations.

Watch the video  
bangordailynews.com

One may be tempted to write off this weekend workshop as a Canyon Ranch for the pampered, but Food Network conditioning

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I prefer to load up the rice with celery; shallots; red, green, red or yellow peppers; cherry tomatoes; cucumber; chopped up green beans; shredded carrots; or cooked peas. It is different every time and depends on what is in the vegetable drawer calling out to be used quickly — two florets of cauliflower, a few desperate broccoli stalks. Then I add golden raisins or a few chopped up dried cranberries or plain raisins or currants plumped up with a dash of hot water. Then we eat it.

The trick to this recipe, if there is any, is to make sure you put the oil and vinegar on it while it is warm; then the rice will stay soft, even if you have to refrigerate it, though I recommend keeping it at room temperature before serving it.

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