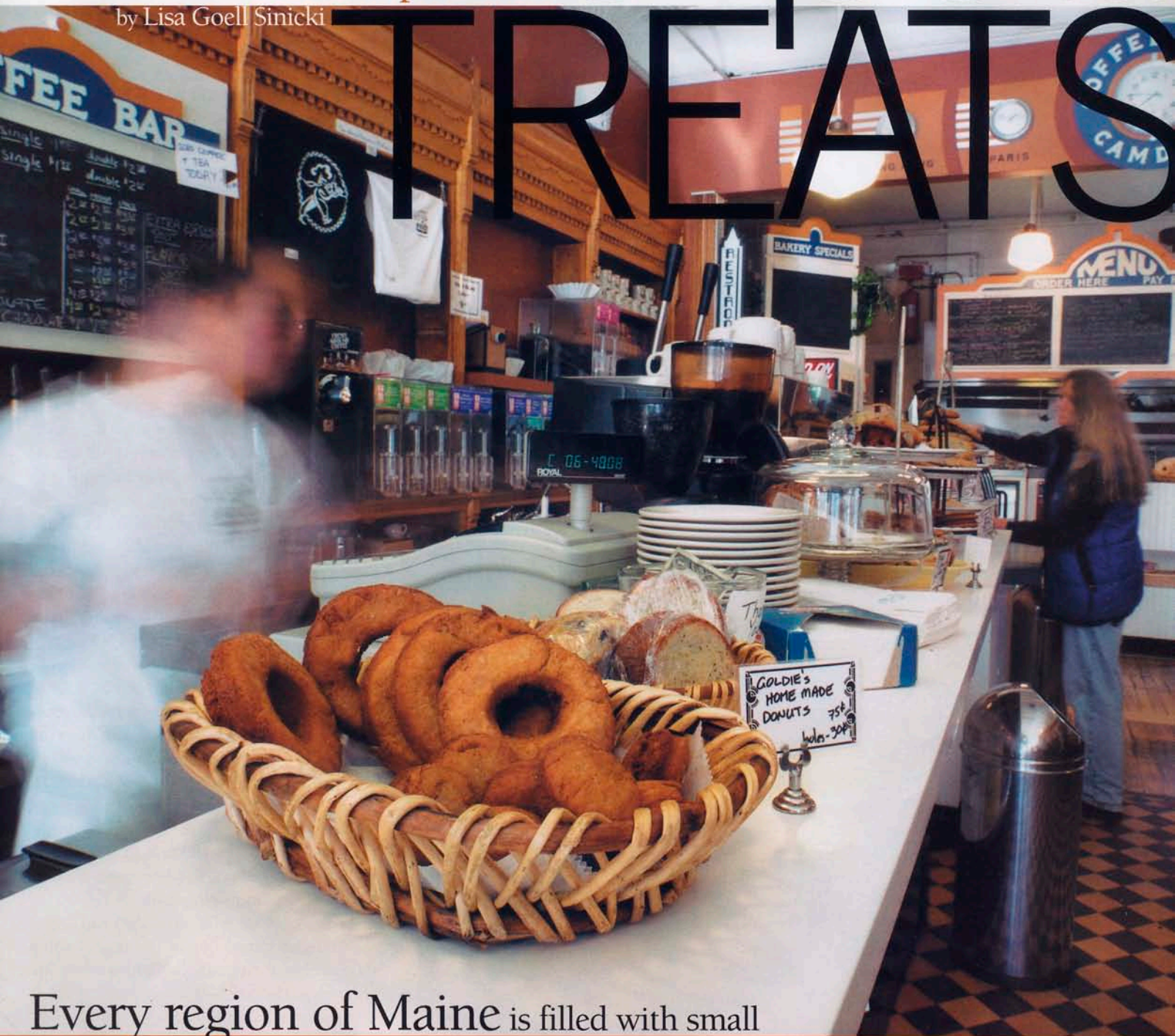


from Pie in the Sky to Seaside Chocolates, here's a sampler of some of Maine's best roadside specialties.

by Lisa Goell Sinicki

trips for TREATS



Every region of Maine is filled with small

food businesses that create unique products. In many cases, the establishments have become “roadside diversions”—popular destinations that justify out-of-the-way trips for those with a taste for special treats. Finding such specialties is often a matter of word of mouth. So *Maine Times* asked some of the state's top food experts (see box, page 37) to share their favorite summer “diversions.” From more than 20 recommendations, we selected six destinations. Although each of the producers has unique recipes, all have one thing in common: the philosophy that fresh, high-quality, local ingredients are the secret to success. Here's a summer sampler.

PHOTO: JAMIE BLOOMQUIST



old-fashioned donuts

boynton-mckay

30 Main St., Camden (236-2465)

Open Tues.-Sat., 7 a.m.-5 p.m.;

Sun., 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

FOUR YEARS AGO, WHEN PHIL McELHANEY HIRED Monica Loring to work at Boynton-McKay, his small diner in Camden, he didn't realize Loring came with an added bonus: her 79-year-old grandmother Goldie Green's cake donut recipe. Sam Hayward, executive chef at Fore Street restaurant in Portland, calls Goldie's donuts, "A true donut—plain and unglazed, crispy on the outside and cake-like on the inside."

The traditional donuts are very appropriate at the diner, which is located in a brick building built in the 1890s as a pharmacy. It still has the original floor and ceiling tile, as well as many original fixtures. The awning outside sets a simple yet eclectic tone, announcing coffee bar, ice cream, and good food. Open for breakfast and lunch, Boynton-McKay attracts both locals and tourists, and often requires a short wait during the summer season. The menu includes omelets, wraps, salads, and a variety of Loring's home-baked goods, including the donuts.

McElhaney bought Boynton-McKay in 1999, after cooking at other restaurants for 22 years. At 45, he has a kind yet brisk manner, the result of running a fast-paced small business—while simultaneously cooking the meals. Loring, 31, joined McElhaney when her cousin suggested her for a baking job. She has lived up to the recommendation—in addition to her donuts, customers rave about her brownies, muffins, biscotti, and peanut-butter balls.

Loring's donuts, which are larger and denser than those stamped out by the typical donut shop, are hearty and satisfying with a subtle hint of nutmeg. They are best savored while fresh—with a cup of coffee or cocoa for dunking—so Loring makes only two batches of a dozen each day. And when they're gone, they're gone—sometimes as early as 9 a.m. Regular patrons, especially those who have been away, often call and ask to have a donut reserved. The donuts sell for 75 cents each (holes cost 30 cents).

PHOTO: JAMIE BLOOMQUIST

FOR THOSE WHO DREAM OF FINDING THE ultimate lobster roll, Robert and Jennifer Patterson's version at the New Friendly Restaurant in Perry is the real deal, reports food specialist Nancy Raye. Robert Patterson says it's simply a large helping of fresh, tender lobster meat tossed with just a touch of mayonnaise, then piled high on a soft roll. But locals are more likely to compare it to heaven on earth.

lobster roll

new friendly restaurant

1014 Rte. 1, Perry
(853-6610)

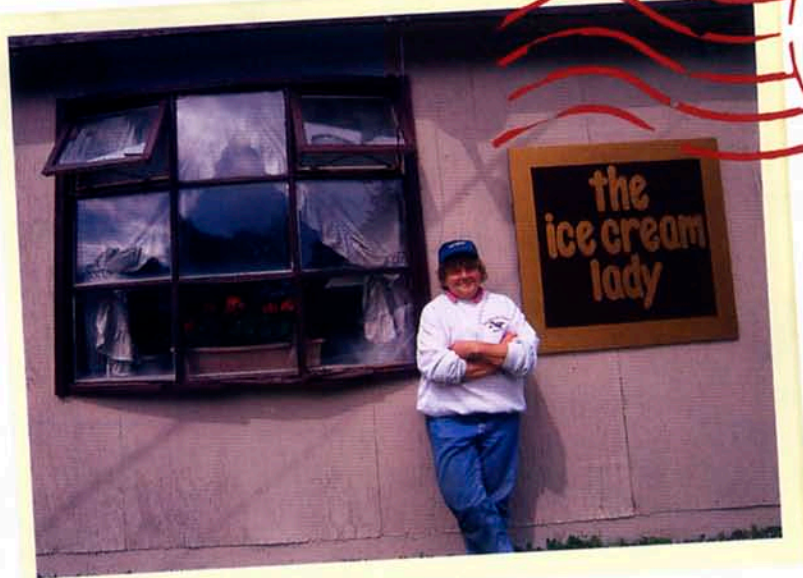
Open Mon.–Fri.,
11 a.m.–8 p.m.; week-
ends, 8 a.m.–8 p.m.

Besides lobster rolls, which cost \$10.25 and are served with fries and coleslaw, the restaurant serves sandwiches and entrees for lunch and dinner. The relatively small, 69-seat eatery has a loyal following. Although it serves

many summer tourists, New Friendly Restaurant depends on its local customers to keep it going through the winter. "We're lucky," Patterson explains. "We have seven standing reservations for Friday night—they only call if they *aren't* going to come."

Patterson, who grew up in the area, began working at the restaurant when his parents bought it in 1987, the same year he returned home from the Navy. They purchased it from two women who had owned a restaurant in Pembroke called Friendly Restaurant; they called their second location, in Perry, the New Friendly Restaurant. "We wanted to change the name, but it was just easier not to," he explains. "People up here are funny about that kind of thing."

The restaurant business grew on Patterson. In 1990, he became partners with his mother, and in 2001, bought her out entirely. Now he and his wife, Jennifer, run the business, along with daughters Megan, 10, and Vanessa, 8, who often bus tables to earn spending money. The restaurant is busiest during the summer, with up to a 30-minute wait some weekend evenings.



FEW PEOPLE KNOW TENNEY GAVAZA BY NAME, mostly because her moniker, "The Ice Cream Lady," has taken on a life of its own. Gavaza, 57, has been developing gourmet ice cream since the 1980s. "Her ice creams are extraordinarily creamy and have strong, intense flavors," says organic farmer Barbara Damrosch, who counts herself as a big fan and recommends Gavaza's fresh ginger, espresso toffee chip, and kahlua fudge brownie.

Gavaza started experimenting with ice cream when she worked at a restaurant in Brooks. Her first creation was rose, a flavor she continues to make every May for Mother's Day. Those who've tried it say the ice cream really does have the scent and delicate taste of garden roses. Since then, Gavaza has continued to experiment, inventing flavors such as red raspberry truffle and key lime coconut. Even her versions of traditional favorites such as chocolate (which she calls chocolate velvet) benefit from her special touch as they surprise and delight with smooth texture and rich, crisp flavor.

Gavaza's repertoire includes 14 standard flavors, and 10 fresh fruit flavors that are rotated into the mix as the requisite fruits or berries come into season. She also makes five fruity sorbet flavors for those who prefer a lighter, non-dairy treat. Next to espresso toffee chip and fresh ginger, Gavaza's best-selling flavor is Madagascar vanilla, which has a clean, sweet taste and scent.

After operating for several years from the Lookout on Flye Point, she recently moved to a new roadside location on Rte. 1A in Dedham, where you can try a regular cone or cup for \$2.75, a large one for \$3.25, or take a pint or quart for \$4 or \$7.75, respectively. Gavaza also sells sundaes, frappes, and fresh produce at her store.

homemade ice cream

the ice cream lady

1902 Rte. 1A, Dedham
(843-6214)

Open daily, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

"We have seven standing reservations for Friday night—they only call if they *aren't* going to come."

—Robert Patterson,
New Friendly Restaurant, Perry





ALTHOUGH THE LINCOLNVILLE LOBSTER POUND HAS grown to seat 300, it's still a family restaurant. Owner Richard McLaughlin, who took over from his parents in 1972, and his son, Peter, the restaurant's chef, draw guests who enjoy gazing out the window at the postcard-perfect view of Penobscot Bay while enjoying cups of the McLaughlins' classic lobster stew.

Cookbook author Nancy Harmon Jenkins is a big fan of the stew, which includes generous chunks of lobster meat steeped overnight to allow lobster flavor to saturate the velvety broth. "It's made the old-fashioned way, with lots of lobster, butter, and cream," notes Jenkins.

McLaughlin started working at Lincolnville Lobster Pound in summer 1956. When he heard the owners say they wanted to sell the business, he urged his parents to purchase it. At the time, it seated just 84 people. Three years of culinary training at the University of Maine gave him the background he needed to enhance the recipes. "We

lobster stew

lincolnville lobster pound

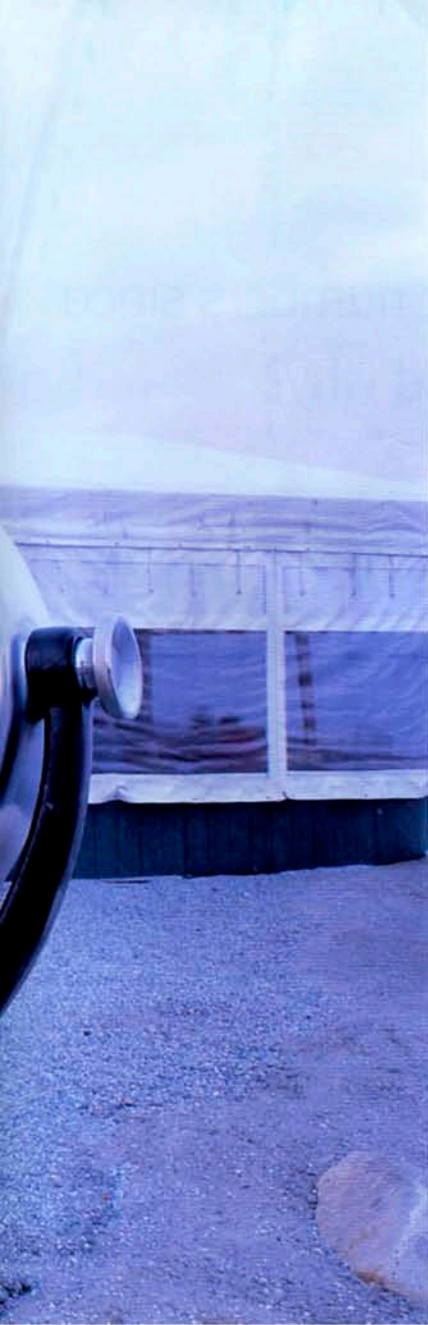
Rte. 1, Lincolnville Beach
(789-5550)

Open daily, May–October,
11:30 a.m.–8 p.m.

improved everything, especially the quality of the ingredients," he explains. "All the lobster meat comes from locally harvested lobsters that we pick daily ourselves."

The establishment remains a classic family operation in every sense. Richard met his wife Patricia in 1958, when she worked there as a waitress and dishwasher. She now manages the gift shop, as Richard, 61, handles operations and son Peter, 40, supervises the kitchen. McLaughlin's other son, Rick, owns the nearby lobster pound next to the Islesboro ferry, which he bought from his father. "Family" is also an appropriate description for the restaurant's customers, many of whom recount stories of having visited as children, and now return to share the experience with their own brood.

To satisfy its customers, the Lincolnville Lobster Pound ladles up approximately 1,000 gallons of lobster stew each year, which is served by the cup for \$8.95 or by the bowl for \$15.95—quite a deal consid-



bonbons

seaside chocolates

72 Water St., Lubec (733-2575)
Open Mon.–Sat., 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

THE SECRET BEHIND MONICA Elliott's bonbons is a recipe from her childhood in Peru. The huge confections, filled with sugar, cream, and nuts, then hand-dipped in bittersweet chocolate, are the specialty of the house at Seaside Chocolates in Lubec, which Elliott co-owns with Eugene Greenlaw.

"It's an incredible treat that's an entire dessert by itself," says Nancy Raye, whose favorites are the golf-ball-size pecan bonbons. Elliott's formula, derived from a recipe her father shared with her, includes almost an ounce and a quarter of "Peruvian filling." The filling is luscious and sweet, and although caramel colored, is thick and creamy, rather than sticky. Each bonbon includes almonds, walnuts, pecans, or dried fruit, and comes individually wrapped in a colorful foil that sparkles like a gem. Seaside Chocolates sells the treasures for \$1.35 each, or in bags of six and 12 for \$7.50 and \$15, respectively.

Elliott, 50, and Greenlaw, 54, met several years ago when they were both working in salmon processing. One day, out of the blue, Elliott called Greenlaw and asked, "Want to go into the food business?" She was an excellent chef, but Greenlaw had no food industry experience. "Monica brought her recipes and taught me what to do," he says.

Now the two make a variety of confections, including bonbons, truffles, Needhams, and lollypops, which they sell from their shop as well as wholesale to small markets in eastern Maine, including Tideway Market in Sullivan, Nature's Pantry in Calais, and John Edwards Market in Ellsworth.

ering a cup contains roughly the equivalent of the meat of a pound-and-a-quarter lobster. Other menu favorites include fried clams and the shore dinner deluxe, a feast that teams a cup of lobster stew with steamed clams, fried clams, salad, and a lobster dinner.

Despite the size of the restaurant, there is usually a wait during the summer—sometimes up to 40 minutes on Saturday nights. To beat the crowds, try a Tuesday or Wednesday, or evenings before 6 p.m. The Pound does take reservations and has a priority-seating list for those who call ahead.

jumbleberry pie

pie in the sky

Rte. 1, River Rd., Cape Neddick (363-2656)
Open Thurs.–Mon., 9 a.m.–6 p.m.

NANCY STERN knows the secret to a perfect piecrust—high quality butter and a little citric acid from lemon or orange juice for tenderness. After 22 years, she says, there's still nothing quite like opening the oven door to reveal perfect pies, lightly

browned, with flawless crimped edges and no leaks.

The result of Stern's passion is "crust that is better than anything you've ever tasted," insists chocolatier Susan Tuveson, whose favorite is jumbleberry, a combination of blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries. And Tuveson isn't alone in her affection for Stern's pies. Stern bakes approximately 7,000 pies a year from her home and shop, Pie in the Sky, in Cape Neddick.

A Maine native, Stern started baking professionally when she was 22. She was working at the Lobster Barn in York and felt they could improve their desserts, which were being purchased frozen. "After I convinced them to let me make the desserts, they let me go wild," she recounts. "I played around with the recipes, and the tastes and textures kept getting better and better."

Stern then moved to New York City for several years, where she occupied an apartment that "had a great stove." One day she baked some sample pies and took them to local restaurants. The orders started rolling in immediately. In 1981, she returned to Maine and opened Pie in the Sky. Now 51, Stern continues to bake passionately with the help of three high-school students she hires each summer to help handle the seasonal load.

Besides fruit pies, such as blueberry and strawberry-rhubarb, that cost \$19.95, Stern makes pecan and chocolate fudge pies that sell for \$18.95. She also bakes frosted walnut brownies, muffins, scones, and giant chocolate chip cookies for \$2 each.



Lisa Goell Sinicki is a freelance writer based in Peaks Island.

MAINE TIMES food pros

BARBARA DAMSROSCH, nationally recognized authority on organic farming and author of gardening books, Harborside

SAM HAYWARD, executive chef of Fore Street restaurant, Portland

NANCY HARMON JENKINS, nationally known food authority and award-winning cookbook author, Camden

NANCY RAYE, third-generation owner of Raye's Mustard Mill, Eastport

SUSAN TUVESON, chef-owner of Cacao Chocolates, Kittery