

Maine Story Ideas and News for 2026

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Ski slopes go year-round. Maine's largest ski resort, Sugarloaf, has opened the [Sugarloaf Bike Park](#), New England's newest gravity-fed bike park with unlimited access to the Sugarloaf Bike Park Friday through Sunday, with zero blackout dates. Several Maine ski resorts now offer mountain biking, including [Saddleback](#) and [Mount Abram](#).

Maine disc golf builds a national following. Maine has 7 courses on [UDisc](#)'s top 100 list in the US (2nd behind North Carolina, which has 8) and 4 courses on its top 100 list globally. The sport is booming, and Mainers play more rounds per capita than any other state. The list of the 10 best courses in the state is topped by Sabattus Disc Golf: Hawk in Sabattus, which features three friendly goats at the finish.

Bangor builds its own outdoor recreation adventures. The nexus for Maine points to the north (Katahdin region), northwest (Moosehead Lake), and Downeast (Acadia National Park, Cobscook Shores), Bangor has always played an important role for travel to outdoor recreation. But registered Maine outdoor guides have designed new adventures right in Bangor, opening the city's Penobscot River and surrounding highlands up to recreators. Paddle the river with [Skyline Maine Adventures'](#) guide Chris Francis, a member of the Penobscot Nation and national whitewater canoe champion, or try a combination bike ride & packrafting trip in Bangor with [Pack Raft Maine](#).

In Freeport, shoppers stock up before outdoor adventures. [L.L. Bean](#)'s newly imagined flagship campus in downtown Freeport features a two-tier trout pond, a 6,000-gallon stream tank, and an expanded Discovery Park with 17,000 additional square feet of green space for recreation and outdoor programming. Freeport's charming downtown has always attracted shoppers to a mix of local boutiques and national outlets, but it's also where newly purchased gear gets put to use. Choose your adventure at L.L. Bean's [Outdoor Discovery Programs](#), [Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture & the Environment](#), [Wolfe's Neck Woods State Park](#), and many [local oyster farms](#) offering tours. And to try before you buy, [Maine GearShare](#) recently opened a gear library in downtown Freeport.

Two new visitor centers improve access to major public lands. The [Rachel Carson Center for People & Nature](#) offers information about Maine's salt marsh ecosystems across the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge's 11 properties along 6,000 acres of Maine coastline. The new [Acadia Gateway Center](#) welcomes visitors to Acadia National Park with free day-use parking, a bus stop for the free Island Explorer and commercial tour buses, and an 11,000- square-foot visitor information center featuring exhibits on Acadia National Park, the region, and state.

Maine inspires visitors to commit to a shared promise to care for our landscape and culture. Through the [Look Out for ME](#) initiative, visitors and residents alike are encouraged to travel thoughtfully by staying on marked trails, packing out what they bring in, supporting local businesses, and respecting the traditions and communities that make Maine unique. By exploring with care and consideration, each of us helps ensure that Maine remains the extraordinary place we love, today and for generations to come.

Gear libraries make outdoor adventures more affordable, equitable, and accessible. The [Maine Gear Library Network](#) (MGLN), a first-of-its-kind statewide alliance of gear libraries, provides access to high-quality outdoor equipment from bikes and kayaks to tents and camp stoves. The community-driven gear lending program's [website](#) offers a statewide directory, with libraries in Portland, Freeport, Skowhegan, Maine's 100-Mile Wilderness, Old Town, and Millinocket.

CULTURAL GEMS

Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument opens a welcome center. Atop Lookout Mountain sits [Tekakapimək Contact Station](#); Tekakapimək is Penobscot for as far as one can see, and is pronounced de gah-gah bee mook. The architecture, landscape and cultural exhibits are the result of an extensive process with representatives of the Houlton Band of Maliseet, Mi'kmaq Nation, Passamaquoddy Tribe, and Penobscot Nation.

Maine heritage comes to life in two new, expanded homes in central Maine. The [Maine Museum of Innovation, Learning, and Labor](#) (Maine MILL) unveiled a new 22,000-square-foot cultural destination designed to serve as a hub for history, culture, and community connection in the heart of Lewiston. Founded 30 years ago, the museum has evolved into a dynamic community museum dedicated to exploring the intersection of labor, industry, and innovation. In Augusta, the [Maine State Museum](#) has reopened after a years-long renovation. Highlights include a 4,130-square-foot gallery devoted to two humpback whale skeletons, including “Vector,” a 45-foot-long adult female humpback whale who was tracked in the Gulf of Maine and studied by scientists for 35 years, and museum’s first-ever children’s space dedicated to learning, curiosity, and play in the Lunder Education Center.

In Maine, works of art spring from our lands and waters—granite shaped by tides, timbers marked by time and even ice born from winter’s chill. These raw materials are storytellers, carrying the history of Maine’s landscapes, industries and communities. The latest collection of outdoor art can be found along the [Union River Sculpture Trail](#) with two sculptures by Maine-based artists along the Riverwalk in downtown Ellsworth.

Maine’s newest national monument preserves the legacy of an American labor leader. The [Frances Perkins National Monument](#) in Newcastle is located on the homestead of Frances Perkins, a remarkable woman who shaped American labor laws, helped establish Social Security, and worked to abolish child labor. The Welcome Center is open June through October, while the grounds and trails of the 57-acre saltwater farm adjacent to the Damariscotta River are open year-round from dawn to dusk.

CULINARY HIGHLIGHTS

Farm to table dinners immerse diners in pastoral settings. The farm-to-table ethos has always been central to Maine’s culinary identity, and chefs continue to elevate the dining experience with on-farm dinners. These seasonal, reservation-based dinners book up quickly, but thankfully you have options: [The Rooting Pig](#) at Broad Arrow Farm in Bristol, [Applecroft](#) in Waldoboro, [The Well at Jordan’s Farm](#) in Cape Elizabeth, [Toddy Pond Farm](#) in Monroe, [Turner Farm](#) on North Haven Island, [Pineland Farms](#) in New Gloucester, [Wolfe’s Neck Farm](#) in Freeport, [Norlands Farm](#) in Livermore, [Wander at LongWoods Preserve](#) in Cumberland, [122 Corson](#) in Mercer, [Wanderwood](#) in Nobleboro, [Roberts Harbor Farm](#) on the island of Vinalhaven, and [East Forty Farm](#) in Waldoboro.

Recent restaurant openings:

- [Lady Fish](#), Portland
- [Gill’s](#), Portland
- [Douro](#), Portland
- [Allagash Bungalow](#), in partnership with [Bite Into Maine](#), Scarborough
- [Dry Dock](#), Portland
- [Elevenes](#), Brunswick
- [Pomelia](#), Brunswick
- [Table Salt](#), Bar Harbor
- [Crooked Spoon](#), Thomaston

For the latest Portland restaurant openings, check out [Portland Food Map](#). And from Eat Drink Lucky, here is the [2026 Must-Eat List](#).

NEW LODGING

[Residence Inn/Moxy Hotel by Marriott](#) opened in August 2026 as the first hotel to be built at Thompson's Point, Portland's pre-eminent entertainment venue for concerts, events and seasonal ice skating. Neighbors include the Children's Museum & Theatre of Maine, Bissell Brothers Brewing and Stroudwater Distillery.

In Summer 2026, [Lantern Camp](#) in Orland opened with 24 low-impact cabins set among a 30-acre wild blueberry meadow. The landscape hotel, located near Castine and 30 miles from Acadia National Park, offers 100-mile sunset views, walking trails, a cedar sauna, and guided stargazing.

In May 2026, the [Evalina Hotel](#) will open in a historic waterfront building in Portland's Old Port district. The boutique hotel will offer 15 apartment-style suites in the restored 1854 Granite Block Building, designed with a preservation-first approach that highlights artisanal craft, unique historic character, and intimate connection with the Old Port neighborhood.

[Waters Run Bed & Breakfast](#) in Monmouth opened in July 2026 on the historic Woolworth Estate. The building was a former bed & breakfast, and has undergone a thoughtful transformation by Chase Morrill, one of the stars of [Maine Cabin Masters](#) on Magnolia Network, and his wife, Sarah. The Morrills will operate the 12-room property, which includes newly built cabins.

[Birch's Campground](#) opened in Millinocket in 2026 with camping sites, cabins, yurts, and a beer garden with craft pours and delicious small bites. A welcoming basecamp just 20 minutes from Baxter State Park's south gate, Birch's Campground is in the heart of Maine's Katahdin wilderness, with paddling, hiking, wildlife watching, and internationally renowned dark, starry skies.

[Blair Hill Inn](#) is a 10-room hotel overlooking Moosehead Lake in Greenville, a luxury Northwoods getaway and the state's only Relais & Chateaux properties. They recently opened six new cabins that offer more privacy and space while maintaining the same great views and service. The Inn has a fine-dining restaurant serving seasonal, farm-to-table cuisine.

[Arbor Camp](#) is a collection of cabins and treehouses on the Union River in Ellsworth Falls. After a soft launch in late July 2025, they debuted additional treehouses in 2026. The dwellings offer year-round stays that keep guests close to the beauty of the Maine outdoors. Each space stands alone and includes a compact, complete kitchen, outdoor grill, wood-burning stove, Breeo® smokeless fire pit, private hot tub, and EV charging at private parking.

In 2025, [The Trident Inn](#) in Ogunquit was completely transformed. What was formerly 2 Village Square Inn and Ogunquit's oldest inn property, The Trident Inn has been reimagined for today's traveler while honoring the inn's rich past. The inn includes their new on-property restaurant, [Coastal Alchemist](#).

[The Nevada](#) is the completely renovated 70-year-old landmark on Long Sands Beach in York. The building style remains as a classic motel with a sleek new look, larger rooms, some with private terraces, and an onsite restaurant called Lulu's.

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Media Contacts: Whitney Raymond & Elaine Theriault-Currier | Tourism@marshallpr.com