



# Off-Season Midcoast Arts & Culture Guide

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It is a well-established fact that Midcoast Maine is the artistic hub of the State. Keystone institutions like The Farnsworth Museum, Maine Media Workshops, and the Center for Maine Contemporary Art are at the heart of the bustling creative scene. The network of surrounding galleries, restaurants, hotels, and shops echoes with a deep appreciation for the creative arts. From hand-made works to architecture, fine art, and the written word – the creative spirit weaves its way through everything it touches in Midcoast Maine.

The off-season (October– May) is the perfect time for art lovers to visit – from Rockland up to Searsport – a few off-the-beaten-track detours. Whether you are a hands-on creative or a passionate art admirer, a weekend away is the perfect amount of time to take in some of the best of Maine’s Arts & Culture scene.

## Inside:

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# Rockland, Maine

**Discover Rockland - the vibrant gateway to Midcoast Maine's artistic treasures! Explore charming Main Street, home to iconic institutions like the Farnsworth Art Museum and CMCA. Indulge in culinary delights and unearth unique shopping experiences, all amidst the rich maritime legacy. Dive into a world where the arts and culture come alive.**

Rockland, Maine's vibrant arts scene echoes its rich maritime history, blending contemporary galleries, festivals, & a historic waterfront.

## UNIQUE FINDS

### Arctic Tern Books

- Immerse yourself in an inviting, literary world at Arctic Tern Books. The shop is a welcoming space and features titles and signature goods for bibliophiles you won't find at larger outlets.

### The Farnsworth Museum

- The Farnsworth offers studio art classes in a multitude of disciplines. Sign up for their newsletter to view the monthly offerings. Learn to paint with watercolor, rug hook, or draw with pastels. Classes are offered via Zoom and in person.





# ROCKLAND ARTS SCENE



## CURATOR

This high-end consignment shop is the perfect place to find a waxed Barbour jacket or a vintage Hard Rock Cafe tee. Look for Maine-made pieces that add a signature local touch to your wardrobe.

## CLEMENTINE

This gem of a shop in Rockland is home to signature fabrics designed in Maine, and wool shorn and spun from local Downeast Island sheep.

For anyone who loves to sew, knit, or dabble in fiber arts, the shop and its well-organized shelves and displays are a pleasure to peruse.



## BIXBY CHOCOLATE

Located in a 125-year-old Icehouse on the harbor, Bixby HQ is home to the Rockland Chocolate Boutique. Founded in 2011, Bixby is Maine's only bean-to-bar chocolate company. The store is chock full of culinary masterpieces like Maine Maple Vanilla bonbons and the classic "Maine Dinner." Sampling is encouraged.

## THE FARNSWORTH MUSEUM

A bedrock of Maine's Art history and culture. On the heels of its 75th Anniversary, The Farnsworth Museum launched its new initiative called "Momentum." With an eye on supporting artists in their lifetime, the museum is focusing on the work of people with a long-standing connection to Maine. The initiative is grounded in The Farnsworth's tradition of giving artists like Andrew Wyeth and Jamie Wyeth their first solo museum shows.





# ROCKLAND/CAMDEN FOOD SCENE

## COSTA MEDIA/CAFE LOUIS

Enjoy vibrant flavors like Local  
Mussels with Green Curry and  
homemade sourdough



## RUCKUS DONUTS

Mile-high brioche donuts at their best



## CLAN MACLAREN

Inviting, home-cooked food -  
A local's favorite hangout







## STAY IN ROCKLAND

Modern Luxury meets Maine comfort. Local art hangs in every public space and sweeping views of Rockland Harbor make **250 Main** the ideal spot to explore the historic town. Book a package and enjoy the daily happy hour specials. The hotel is pet friendly too



## Superb Views & Stunning Art



**Pro-tip- Indulge at 250 Maine:** Book a Revive & Relax package, complete with two fluffy robes, two Maine Mule Cocktails from Maine Craft Distilling, and a locally made sea salt and seaweed scrub. It will set you up for a stress-free weekend and help you to settle into the pace of life on the seacoast.



# Searsport, Maine

Searsport, Maine, steeped in maritime history, is undergoing a vibrant downtown revitalization. With historic charm and creative energy, new galleries, studios, and performance spaces are breathing life into the area, attracting visitors and locals alike.

In the shoulder season, explore Searsport's Art Walk. Marvel at unique works in The Parsonage Gallery, enjoy live performances at the Starboard Lounge and discover Maine crafts at Trove. Support local artists and immerse yourself in our vibrant community.

**"Our community is very supportive. You can feel the energy in the room and it is a safe space for people to come and share. It is exactly what we were hoping to create."**

**-Kirk Linder, Co-Owner  
Hey Sailor! & The Starboard Lounge**

## The MAGIC that is Hey Sailor! & The Starboard Lounge

Hey Sailor! & the Starboard Lounge have long been a dream for owners Kirk Linder and Charlie Zorich. The business has become the go-to spot for exceptionally scrumptious food.

The adjoining Starboard Lounge is a performing arts hub in downtown Searsport. The room boasts booth and table seating, with colorful high-top tables and bar stools next to the open pizza kitchen. The vibe is energetic and magnetic.





# SEARSPORT ARTS SCENE



## TROVE & SEA BIRD

Located in a historic brick store on Main Street in Searsport, Trove is owned by Laura Brown – a dedicated art lover whose goal is to showcase the shop’s artists in the best possible light. The result is inviting & tranquil. Sea Bird is an extension of Trove and is a seasonal pop-up gallery with unique Maine art.

## THE STARBOARD LOUNGE

Hey Sailor’s other half, this performance space and gallery is THE hotspot for live music, open mic nights, drag shows, and Writers & Poets nights. Come for the food and enjoy the show at this inclusive and inviting environment in Maine’s midcoast.



## HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

Searsport boasts a rich maritime history, evident in its historic Main Street lined with charming buildings. Experience the town's nautical heritage through museums, shipyards, and waterfront harbor views. Many of its buildings are currently undergoing renovation and new breweries, shops, and community spaces will open in the coming months. Make sure to Check out the Parsonage Gallery – just off of Route One in a historic 1830s carriage house.



# SEARSPORT FOOD SCENE

## HEY SAILOR!

Gochujang fried cauliflower has quickly become a fan favorite. Order one for yourself - we promise it will be hard to share!



## DOUBLE DOUBLE

The double patty burger on house brioche bun is divine at Hey Sailor! Add the bingeable hand cut fries



## AMANDINE

Rich coffees and expertly made pastry are the order of the day at this European Café







## STAY IN SEARSPORT

**The Captain Nickels Inn** is a woman-owned B&B located on the coast of Searsport. Built in 1874, this seaside beauty has stunning views of Penobscot Bay. Walk to town to take in the gems of Searsport. The acreage and Inn itself are transporative. The Amos Suite features a private balcony with a fire pit overlooking the ocean. Many of the rooms have their own fireplaces and all rooms feature luxury linens. It is an oasis for any traveler.

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Maritime  
History  
Modern  
Luxury



Start your day with **Captain Nickels'** famous multi-course breakfast – featuring Maine blueberry pancakes, Eggs Florentine, and caramelized French toast. After breakfast make your way onto the lawn and play croquet if the weather cooperates in the off-season.

Head up the road to nearby Belfast to explore, then make your way back to the Inn to sip local beers at the newly renovated 1874 Pub.



# ART IN ACTION

## THE NORUMBEGA IN CAMDEN, ME



The Norumbega celebrates the Arts & Culture of the seacoast with community events including pop-up dinners, cocktail hours, and a la carte watercolor classes.

Above you will see local artist Kristin F. Simmons collaborate with guests to create beautiful watercolor compositions.

**In the shoulder season, the bar is open, and guests can order from the small plates menu. Take in the views of Penobscot Bay from the porch or walk the extensive grounds for a post-prandial constitutional. All are welcome.**



The Norumbega, known as the "Stone Castle by the Sea," was beautifully restored in 2022 by Architect Will Tims and his partner Brett Haynie. Each aspect of the hotel pays tribute to the Inn's history and its significance to visitors along the seacoast. Collaborating with local artists, Haynie and Tims curated remarkable pieces that adorn the communal spaces, creating a breathtaking and serene ambiance. During the off-season, guests can appreciate the art, relax by the fire with a coffee or cocktail, and enjoy a book or game from the extensive in-house library.





# WORTH THE DETOUR

As you make your way up the coast, take a slight detour to the west to Warren, Maine where you will find **Oyster River Winegrowers**. You may see the ultra-popular wine Morphos on menus across New England. This pet-nat is made in Maine from Seyval and Cayuga grapes grown in New York's Finger Lakes region. The flavor is bright, fizzy, and fruity and mellows over time with toasty notes.

It is no surprise that **The Alna Store** is a 2024 James Beard semifinalist for Best New Restaurant. For those who make the trek to this sweet spot, it is an IYKYK situation. The food is exceptional. Rotating specials like local eggs with mushrooms and grits, or the house burger on a Japanese milk bun with hand-cut fries, keep people coming back.

Just off of Old Route One is an 1820s farm that is home to **Odd Alewives Farm Brewery and Tasting Room**. Founders Sarah and John MacNeil are on a mission to make beer that is as close to 100% sourced from ingredients in Maine as possible. The surrounding gardens and extensive acreage are a testament to their dedication to local ingredients, and what they don't grow themselves, they get from local sources.







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## The Best Parts Of Travelling to Maine

Click through the links in this guide and discover some of the gems of the Midcoast Arts and Culture Scene.

The Off-Season is an ideal time to explore. Share your tips, ideas, and add-ons with Visit Maine on social media.



EXPLORE MORE WITH  
GOOGLE LENS

Learn more about the region by using the Google lens feature on your phone and Google App.

## How The Guide is Created

**Inclusivity:** Our itinerary is an open invitation to all, regardless of age, race, sexual orientation, body size, economic status, or ability, exemplifying Maine's welcoming spirit.

**Deepened Partnerships:** We're collaborating with a variety of locally-owned small businesses, including those in the arts, to support growth throughout each region.

**Development:** By showcasing the variety of unique experiences and hidden gems throughout Maine, we seek to highlight community involvement and growth throughout the region.

**Sustainability:** Investing in smaller communities and preserving the pristine natural resources that define Maine through crafting experiences that encourage visitors to cherish and sustain our environment.

**Authentic Curation:** A specially curated journey thoughtfully crafted to introduce travelers to our state during the quieter seasons. Developed by long-time Maine resident and artist/writer **Kristin F. Simmons**, and born & raised Mainer and photographer **Amy Welch-Olson**.









