



## Ask the experts: Who are Maine's best chefs and bartenders?

In the food world, the James Beard awards are like the Super Bowl, a coveted championship where food writers, chefs, bartenders and bakers vie for top honors.

The semifinalists for the restaurant and chef awards were announced last week. The majority of the 10 chefs, bartenders and bakers who made the cut from Maine are based in Portland. With a few exceptions, this year looked like a redux of last year.

While Portland is a cultural hot spot, Maine has excellent chefs and bartenders all over the state.

“Maybe there are other ways of looking these awards,” says Michael S. Sanders, a Brunswick journalist who wrote “Fresh From Maine: Recipes and Stories from the State’s Best Chefs” and was the founding editor of Zest magazine. “Why aren’t people in Maine picking these awards?”

That’s what we thought, so we invited them to help us do just that. We tapped local food notables — Sanders, travel writer Hilary Nangle, EatDrinkMaine blogger and full-time foodie Bill Minkowitz — to create a list of notable chefs and bartenders throughout Maine.

### Best Chef Downeast/Acadia: Hancock Washington counties

Burnham: Devin Finigan at Aragosta in Stonington is in her second year of cooking luscious, locally sourced treats in a beautiful location. And I still love **Mache Bistro, now a mainstay of fine dining on MDI.**

Sanders: In the Bar Harbor region, it’s a tossup between **Kyle Yarborough at Mache Bistro** and [James and Elizabeth Lindquist at] Red Sky. So many others are so seasonal it’s almost not fair.

Nangle: Devin Finigan of Aragosta in Stonington. James Lindquist of Red Sky in Southwest Harbor and **Kyle Yarborough of Mache Bistro in Bar Harbor.**