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LaForge Casino Restaurant's Reign as Newport Burger Bender Champion Continues

The restaurant takes top honors for "The Winterburger," the successfully savory sequel to their 2018 winning entry.

Newport (R.I.) February 25, 2019 – For the second year in a row, LaForge Casino Restaurant has taken top honors by securing the popular vote in the Newport Burger Bender contest. The Bellevue Avenue restaurant's "Winterburger" was comprised of an 8 oz. ground brisket blend patty and topped with signature slow-braised short rib, baby arugula, cheddar and smoked bacon-cranberry jam on a toasted brioche bun. The burger garnered more than a quarter of the total votes cast.

In addition to the popular vote, there were two coveted superlatives up for grabs: Critic's Choice and Creative Champion.

Jenna Pelletier, food writer at the Providence Journal, named The Mooring's "Sweet N' Spicy" burger her Critic's Choice. "It was a very difficult decision, but I was ultimately won over by The Mooring's version. The toppings, pepper jack cheese, pineapple jalapeño marmalade, Cajun bacon, and fried onion strings added flavor and texture in a creative way without overwhelming the star of the show – a perfectly cooked Brandt Farms beef patty," said Pelletier. "It was a welcome surprise from a restaurant known for its seafood, and the Newport Harbor view, even in the frigid weather, didn't hurt either."

Jamie Coelho, Associate Editor at Rhode Island Monthly and author of *The Dish*, the magazine's popular newsletter, crowned the "Towering Inferno" burger at Chomp Kitchen & Drinks in

Warren Creative Champion. “Not only were the toppings nostalgic and over-the-top (Andy Capp Hot Fries and deep-fried jalapeño and cheddar cream cheese bomb), but the patties themselves were unmatched,” said Coelho. “The mortadella pork patty had such a rich flavor and quality texture, and the dollop of guacamole gave me just enough reassurance that it was just a tiny bit healthy. Even the size of the burger was impressive with double patties and a steak knife sticking out of the top to help cut it down to a more manageable, burger-to-face size.” Though she could only choose one winner, Coelho noted that Mission's mushroom patty melt with raclette cheese and sauce gribiche was extraordinary.

Newport Burger Bender is an annual simple burger contest which recognizes the bevy of culinary creativity throughout our destination. There is no participation fee for restaurants nor has there ever been. Participating restaurants must be located in Newport or Bristol County, Rhode Island, and this year's contest was limited to the first 30 restaurants to register. Participants receive complimentary promotional materials including custom menu inserts and Burger Bender coasters. Each entry was photographed and are featured on DiscoverNewport.org.

Images available.

ABOUT DISCOVER NEWPORT

Discover Newport is the official destination management organization (DMO) dedicated to promoting the City of Newport and the eight surrounding coastal townships in Newport and Bristol counties, Rhode Island. These include Barrington, Bristol, Jamestown, Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, Tiverton and Warren. As a non-profit organization, Discover Newport partners with stakeholders throughout our tourism and hospitality industry to market the region as a premier destination for business and leisure travel. DiscoverNewport.org

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