PLACES TO EAT

Where to Find the Best New England Lobster Roll in Winter

Favorite lobster shack closed for the season? Head to one of our top picks for where to find the best New England lobster roll in winter.

Mike Urban · January 25, 2022 · Read Comments (39)

4.38 avg. rating (85% score) - 8 votes

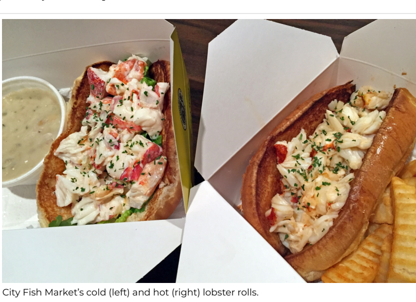
Even when Nor'easter winter winds are blowing and the majority of the region's lobster shacks are shuttered for the season, there are still plenty of great places to get a top-notch New England lobster roll. Frequent *Yankee Magazine* and NewEngland.com contributor Mike Urban shares his expert picks for the the 10 best lobster rolls that will satisfy your wintertime craving for New England's favorite seafood sandwich.

Where to Find the Best New England Lobster Roll in Winter

Matunuck's New England lobster roll, with fresh greens tossed in a light vinaigrette.
Mike Urban

Matunuck Oyster Bar | South Kingstown, RI

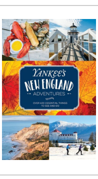
Tucked away on a sliver of land close to the Block Island ferry, this innovative oyster and organic vegetable farm has an excellent cold New England lobster roll that's served year round in a beautiful setting overlooking the restaurant's thriving oyster beds. You get five ounces of super-fresh lobster meat, tossed with a bit of mayo, on a leaf of lettuce, all tucked into a toasted bun. The side of choice is definitely the fresh-picked greens from the adjacent organic vegetable farm, much of which is under glass for year-round production.



City Fish Market's cold (left) and hot (right) lobster rolls.
Kim Knox Beckius

City Fish Market | Wethersfield, CT

This central Connecticut purveyor of all things seafood serves up excellent hot and cold lobster rolls year round. The hot version, which features warm lobster meat bathed in butter, outsells the cold version five to one (this *is* Connecticut), but both rolls are more than worthy. City Fish gets its lobster from its voluminous lobster tanks, and the toasted, buttered buns come from Mozzicato's Bakery in nearby Hartford.



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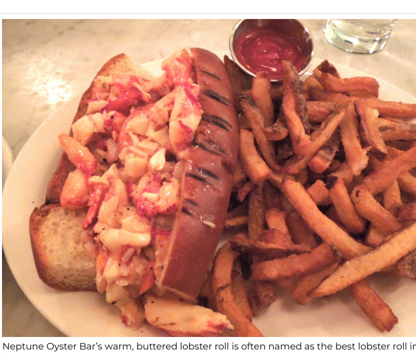
Lenny and Joe's has sold over a million hot New England lobster rolls.
Mike Urban

Lenny and Joe's Fish Tale | Westbrook, CT

A Connecticut shoreline institution since 1979, Lenny and Joe's claims to have sold over a million hot lobster rolls—and one bite will erase any doubt you may have of such a claim. Served on a toasted, split-top **New England hot dog bun**, the lobster is plentiful and drenched in sweet, melted butter. The roll pairs nicely with Lenny and Joe's famous salt potatoes and a cup of clear-broth **Rhode Island clam chowder**. Cold lobster rolls are also available.



Neptune Oyster Bar's warm, buttered lobster roll is often named as the best lobster roll in Boston.
Mike Urban

Neptune Oyster | Boston, MA

The wait to get a seat in this cramped, dimly lit North End oyster bar can be maddening, but the hefty, warm-buttered lobster roll makes it well worth the effort. Served on a lightly grilled brioche bun from Iggy's Bread in Cambridge, this six- to seven-ounce roll calls for a fork to lighten the lobster load before getting a grip on the roll itself. The cloth napkins and sterling silverware add an element of class to the place, but it's as informal and convivial as any trattoria in this famed Italian neighborhood.

The bun is all but buried beneath a half-pound of lobster at Belle Isle Seafood.
Mike Urban

Belle Isle Seafood | Winthrop, MA

Perched across an inlet from the runways at Boston's Logan International Airport, Belle Isle is locally known as the home of the monster lobster roll. Owner Jim Costin loads his lobster sandwich up with a full half-pound of cold, mayo'ed chunks of tail, claw, and knuckle meat and throws in a side of fries, onion rings, coleslaw, or rice pilaf. This belt-busting combination is a favorite of many in the restaurant's working class neighborhood. For a few dollars more, there's an equally hefty version of the roll made solely from prized tail meat.

Sanders Fish Market's round bun and leafy lettuce are nice complements to the fresh-picked lobster.
Mike Urban

Sanders Fish Market | Portsmouth, NH

Some of the best lobster rolls come from lobster-fishing and distribution operations, and Sanders is no exception. The market is a spinoff of Sanders Lobster Company, which has been wholesaling lobster from the Portsmouth docks for decades. The Sanders roll distinguishes itself with its round, toasted, buttered bun, its fresh leaf of curly lettuce, and its lovingly fresh-picked lobster meat. Throw in a bag of Cape Cod potato chips, and your New England lobster roll feast is complete.

SEE MORE: Sanders Fish Market | Where to Find a Good Lobster Roll in Portsmouth, NH

The chunk-filled lobster roll is one of the favorite menu items at the Maine Diner.
The Maine Diner

Maine Diner | Wells, ME

In addition to the Maine Diner's famed seafood chowder, there's an excellent Maine lobster roll that's served year round and that's definitely worth stopping in to try. The fresh-picked lobster meat is served chilled on a toasted, split-top hot dog bun and is accompanied with mayo or melted butter. Never underestimate the seafood to be found at some of the **Best Diners in New England**!

SEE MORE: In Praise of the Maine Diner in Wells, Maine

Bob's lobster roll is a welcome treat just over the border in Kittery, Maine.
Mike Urban

Bob's Clam Hut | Kittery, ME

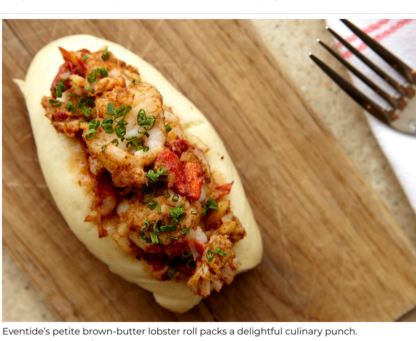
Just over the border and a stone's throw from I-95, Bob's is well known to the summertime crowds heading to and from Maine. This seafood shack is also a great place to go for an excellent lobster roll in the dead of winter. The grilled-bun, cold-meat roll is chock-full of fresh-picked lobster meat and comes with fries and a large dill pickle spear. The colorful dining room is spacious and cozy at the same time.

SEE MORE: Bob's Clam Hut | Local Flavor

J's lobster roll features a nice mix of tail, claw, and knuckle meat.
Mike Urban

J's Oyster | Portland, ME

A longtime fixture on the Portland waterfront, J's is equal parts tavern, oyster bar, and seafood restaurant, serving one of the best lobster rolls in Portland—and it's available even in deepest, darkest winter. The U-shaped bar is a great place to belly up and order a cold roll served on a piece of crisp lettuce on a toasted, side-split bun and a quaint ballpark-style packet of mayo. The lobster meat is picked locally and brought in fresh daily, guaranteeing consistently high quality.



Eventide's petite brown-butter lobster roll packs a delightful culinary punch.
Photo by Zack Bowen/Knack Factory

Eventide Oyster Company | Portland, ME

Eventide's lobster roll is one of the most unusual and exotic to be found in New England, and it's certainly one of the most satisfying. The warm version is made using clarified brown butter and is served on a home-baked, Asian-style bao bun. Though diminutive in size, its flavor stands tall and distinctive. One roll, accompanied by a few of Eventide's excellent oysters, is a wintertime meal not soon to be forgotten. Want to recreate the Eventide lobster roll at home? We were delighted when they shared their **Brown Butter Lobster Roll** recipe in a recent issue of *Yankee*.

Where's your favorite spot for a New England lobster roll in the winter? Let us know!

This post was first published in 2017 and has been updated.

SEE MORE:
10 Best Lobster Rolls in New England
Best Cape Cod Lobster Rolls
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The McDonald's Lobster Roll Experience

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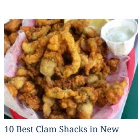

10 Best Clam Shacks in New England

Tags

12 best lobster shacks in new england, best diners in new england, best lobster, best lobster roll, best lobster roll in boston, best seafood, block island, block island ferry, boston, bread, brown butter lobster roll, cape cod, cape cod lobster, cape cod potato chips, chowder, clam chowder, coleslaw, connecticut, dining, eventide lobster roll, farm, fresh lobster, fresh lobster meat, Hartford, Home, j s oyster, kittery, kittery maine, lobster, lobster meat, lobster roll, lobster roll recipe, lobster sandwich, maine, maine lobster, maine lobster roll, matunuck oyster bar, mcdonald s lobster roll, neptune oyster, new england, new england hot dog, new england hot dog bun, new england lobster, new england lobster roll, north end, portland, Portsmouth, portsmouth nh, potato chips, recipe, rhode island, rhode island clam chowder, seafood, seafood chowder, the place, wells maine, wethersfield ct, winter, yankee, yankee magazine.

Comments

Robert C. January 25, 2022
In central Massachusetts go to JP's Restaurant and Pub, 166 Milk Street, Westborough (route 9).
Reply

Elizabeth January 25, 2022
We have discovered The Main Moose's wonderful outdoor dining in Coventry, CT. It is nowhere near the shore, but has the best lobster rolls bar none! The restaurant is only open seasonally, as it's seating is outside only, but the great food and charming country environment is worth the drive away from the coast! Try it! You'll love it!
Reply

Elizabeth January 25, 2022
My apologies. The Main Moose is located in Columbia, CT. Still worth the trip!
Reply

Paul L. January 11, 2021
O'Rourke's Bar& Grille in historic Pawtuxet Village, Cranston, RI has the best lobster roll. Sells out constantly. Summer & Winter. Your first won't be your last.
Reply

Patricia Berger L. January 14, 2020
I'm surprised PETEY'S in Rye, NH didn't make this list!
Reply

Kellie March 17, 2019
The "Chart room" at Kingman Marina in Pocassette ma has an amazing Lobster Roll. In the summer (they are only open Memorial Day thru Labor Day) the also have Crab salad stuffed local tomatoes…so delicious????
Reply

Steve L. February 10, 2019
Just curious what the "average/typical" price is for a good quality lobster roll from a casual "lobster/clam/oyster" shack like these joints? Any of these places offer really good price/value?
Reply

Dj M. February 9, 2019
How could you not include The Beach Plum Restaurant. Their lobster rolls have been voted the best of the best in the NH seacoast countless times!??
Reply

Karen February 9, 2019
How about the Fish Hook in Northampton,Ma. Yummy.
Reply

Ronald R. February 1, 2020
The Wiliamsburg snack bar on route 9 Wiliamsburg Ma. is second to none and the price is right .
Reply

John A. February 5, 2019
I also suggest trying the overstuffed lobster roll at The Brick Alley on Thames Street in Newport, RI across from Long Wharf. It's always terrific!!!!
Reply

Carolyn L. June 23, 2018
I miss my NE home and lobster meals. We did find a small restaurant at JAX BEACH where a chef (orig. from Salem, MA) was making delicious Maine Lobster flown in weekly and then he retired and so went the lobster rolls.
Reply

Mimi S. March 6, 2018
I remember seeing Anthony's "dining hall" very well, several times. We never ate there because my husband wasn't too fond of seafood, having had it forced on him growing up in Hull, MA, where his father always had boats and caught tons of haddock and flounder, which went into their freezer and my husband was "force fed" all of that fish!!!!!!! He didn't even like lobster much. If I made him a lobster roll, with Iggy's brioche rolls, he would "consent" to eat that once in a great, and I mean great!, while! He loved catching fish (we had several local small boats, too) and didn't mind cleaning them (I cleaned plenty of flounder, too, which I never minded, either, because it was so yummy)…that eventually got fished out of Hull by "a regular crew" who came up from Long Island, NY every spring to fish there.
Reply

bryan s. February 5, 2019
i'm one of those long islanders who often made the drive from the middle of long island up to Hull. Most of the time the fishing was pretty much non stop for nice fat frisky flounders. For a very reasonable price we paid to have our catch fileted, skinned and iced down in our coolers, leaving room for some beer. these flounders, my favorite fish in the late fall or early spring have basically been "no shows" in the Moriches Bay and Great South Bay and Shinnecock and even Montauk spots. I dearly miss flounder fishing . If you know of any reasonable parts of Mass, i'd like to try my hand again before i'm too old.. yr 80 is coming this year.
Reply

Kate March 5, 2018
Beach Plum on Route 1 in Portsmouth, NH is the best in the Seacoast NH/Maine area. Exquisitely sweet, tender lobster with just a bit of mayo on a lightly toasted split-top roll. So much lobster I usually have to take part of it home for a second meal. Only a few years old, Beach Plum/Portsmouth is the year-round sister of the seasonal Beach Plum/North Hampton on Route 1A across from North Hampton State Beach which was and still is the gold standard for lobster rolls in our area. Never thought it would happen but I must admit I sometimes choose Portsmouth in the summertime when I just can't face the long lines of tourists in North Hampton. Now I usually save that for lunch on beach days with my grandchildren and out of town guests; yes tourists but my tourists…
Reply

Dj M. February 9, 2019
Amen!!
Reply

Mimi S. March 5, 2018
Hi again, Mike: It has already been a very long winter in the entire coastal areas of Massachusetts, as I'm sure you're well aware, not to mention the entire eastern seaboard!!!!!!!!! The Barking Crab on Sleeper St. in Boston, MA seaport district has already been under water from the March Nor'easter!). My mothers' cousin Stu (his real name was Jacob!) rented a house at Salisbury, MA beach every summer for the entire summer (fortunately it was away from that beach, on a street near the beach. There is a street both in front and in back of that house, which always had a lot of traffic when we visited him there frequently). He used to direct traffic, in the middle of the back street, when we needed to get cars in or out! His wife worked for IRS (they lived at 225 Foster St. in Lowell, MA, which is the neighborhood where Charlenes' apartment was located, the Highlands, in the movie The Fighter) and was paid unemployment benefits for the entire summer when they had no work for her. He was orphaned young and my mothers' family raised him, so the sky was the limit when we visited. He liked Brown's Lobster Pound in Seabrook, NH, where he took us frequently for lobsters. I also love their delicious fried clams and onion rings (I know they had a fire last August). He also took us to a fabulous restaurant in Dover, NH, The Flagstones, which was very elegant where my mother took me for lunch when she had business there (Dad asked me when we returned to his store where we ate and I "very importantly" informed him we ate at Tombstones!!!, we also ate there several times, my father really liked it too, while I was at UNH, and he didn't even laugh at me!!!!!!…lobster stew, my very favorite…I have the Locke Ober (now out of business) recipe that they served to JFK (it is a 2-day project making, so I decided to "eat it elsewhere"), whom I met when he was campaigning; he stopped to talk to me and my friend Peggy, I will never forget meeting him; he really had a way about him!), which was near Newick's; that building was torn down many years ago. That area is called Broad Cove where Newick's is located. I had an apartment while I was at UNH and bought and cooked many Newick's lobsters, which were $1.10/pound in the fall when there was red tide that summer affecting the clams in that area. I ate them every week. I love Newick's fried clams and onion rings, also! Another of my mothers' cousins had a home on Ocean Boulevard in Rye, NH (Salisbury, MA and Rye, NH were also flooded in this storm… Ocean Boulevard in Rye, NH was closed due to this nasty storm), where I visited him several weekends while I was at UNH. He was really fun, too, and liked taking me to Newick's. There was a tv program called Tombstone Territory, which obviously stuck in my young mind regarding having lunch at The Flagstones!!!!!!!!!! I have recently discovered, "poking around" on the internet Lena's Seafood in Salisbury, MA, which is supposed to open for the season soon, yikes!, since Salisbury, MA beach was just flooded out, worst storm there in over 50 years a beach resident said who was interviewed on WCVB-TV, Needham, MA, makes batter fried clams, looks like that opening is going to be delayed. I'm looking forward to going there for them, having always gone to Newick's and Brown's Lobster Pound for fried clams. Lena's' batter fried onion rings are also supposed to be outstanding, I'm looking forward to having those with their batter fried clams. Their lobster rolls are also supposed to be outstanding. That business was originally on Salisbury, MA beach; that property is now condos. My husband and I have gone to Newport, RI many times over the years. That's one of the first places he took me after I met him in 1980. We ate at several fun places there and we never ate at Anthony's Seafood, which we have driven by countless times. I saw their feature on Diners, Drive-Ins, Dives a long time ago and I am aware their food in their restaurant and adjoining fish market are outstanding. I just read all of their Yelp reviews. I'm looking forward to eating there and buying fish and scallops to bring home to cook, as well. Looks like we're having another Nor'easter this Wed… fortunately I haven't had too much trouble "getting around" this winter. My husband grew up in Hull, where they had to build a concrete sea wall long ago the entire length of the bay side beach, which was one block from the house his mothers' mother had built for his family to live in. She was over 80 when she passed away. Having grown up where he did, my husband made sure our house wasn't "on the water"!!!!!!!! There is an estuary with marsh grass 1/2 mile from the house. That's the "closest" my husband wanted to be to the Atlantic Ocean when we bought this house in 1986!!!!!!!!!! I'm also very impressed with Matunuck Oyster Bar, however, I'm not "wild about oysters". I went on his website and watched his video and also saw a program about him on the RI Public television station. He is really something!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Reply

Patti B. January 10, 2018
What about The Red Barn in Augusta. They have the colossal lobster roll!!!
Reply

Steve M. January 9, 2018
You left out Vermont. The Anchor Seafood Restaurant in Wilmington, Vermont has great lobster rolls. And I know you are going to disagree with this, but: in my neighborhood in Glendale, Queens, NYC, the local Stop & Shop has lobster rolls all year long for $8.99. We all know the lobster meat is thawed out from being frozen. But they still give you a claw and piece of tail. It's great comfort in the dead of winter.
Reply

Tony January 9, 2018
A family favorite in Harwich, MA, is Brax's Landing on RT 28. A great lobster roll.
Reply

Paul B. January 9, 2018
Let's not forget the 'Snack bar' at first beach in Newport, summer, still $16.97+tax, for 2 buttered lobster rolls with fries, upstairs, free parking. Beach view include.
Reply

Mason K. January 9, 2018
Now, we need a list of the best ones in Florida. Thanks for mentioning the Englewood one; we will try it soon.
Reply

Chris A. January 9, 2018
Alive and Kicking in Cambridge, MA has succulent lobster rolls (on toasted Scali bread instead of buns) year round. Park on the street and discover this hidden gem!
Reply

Karen January 18, 2020
I agree … Alive & Kicking has fabulous lobster rolls (without the roll) on scali bread …even better …. you'll want to have another, that's how good it is . Don't

blink or you'll drive by it. GO !!
Reply

Reader L. January 9, 2018
I have to admit I looked at this emailed article today anticipating to see Red's Eats at the top of the list. I have never had a better lobster roll and we always make a visit when we visit Maine. How is it remotely possible to not have them the very top of any lobster roll list? The ingrediants are the best as well. Debbie, the owner, greets all with her cheerful glowing smile welcoming all! This is the 2nd time Red's Eats has not gotten the accolades they richly deserve – last summer's best lobster rolls down graded them for using too much lobster.
Reply

Aimee T. January 9, 2018
Hi there. This list is for where to find the best New England lobster rolls in winter. Red's closes for the winter, so they don't qualify. We hope you'll be glad to know they are prominently featured on our NewEngland.com list of the 10 best lobster rolls in New England. You can find it via a link at the bottom of this post and here: https://newengland.com/today/travel/new-england/places-to-eat/10-best-lobster-rolls-in-new-england/ Thanks, and have a great day!
Reply

Grumpy_Gumbo January 9, 2018
You can never have enough butter in my opinion.
Reply

Eyda January 10, 2018
I totally agree !
Reply

Sue January 9, 2018
Mac's Seafood Market and Kitchen in Eastham, MA makes a superb hot lobster roll. Check them out if you're on the Cape in the winter (or the rest of the year for that matter!)
Reply

Byrla March 17, 2017
We love the Beach Plum and how could Reds in Wiscassett not be mentioned! Both yummylicious!!!
Reply

Rick L. February 25, 2017
Pine Tree Seafood in Scarborough, ME Their lobster rolls are terrific.
Reply

Judy O. February 26, 2017
Move over, New England! I had the best lobster roll of my life in Englewood, FL last week at Boca Royale golf course and restaurant. The butter was served on the side, the roll was from a local bakery and the pieces of lobster were huge!
Reply

Mike M. February 25, 2017
Bayley's Lobster Pound at the tip of Pine Point ME is a family favorite for over 70 years.
Reply

Shirl February 25, 2017
The Dog Watch in Stonington, CT have the best lobster rolls.
Reply

Cindy February 25, 2017
Fody's in Nashua, NH–awesome Lobster BLT!
Reply

Alexis O. February 24, 2017
Blue Lobster Seafood in Berlin, CT. This place is amazing! Fantastic Lobster rolls!
Reply

Carol T. February 24, 2017
you should try temple street diner in Nashua, NH you won't be disapointed
Reply

Kathleen February 24, 2017
Robert's Kittery, Maine. or more casual, Bob's across the street.
Reply

doug February 24, 2017
What about the Beach Plum, in Portsmouth NH on US 1 for lobster rolls?
Reply

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