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**Newport Burger Bender is Back and the Heat is (Finally Back) On!**

*Thirty local chefs will compete for burger bragging rights and the coveted “best burger” trophy.*

Newport (R.I.) January 31, 2019 – [Newport Burger Bender](#) returns February 15 to 24, once again concurring with the Newport Winter Festival. With two years of competition under its belt (albeit with loosened notches), the third rendition of this simple “best burger” contest challenges 30 chefs to strut their stuff for culinary glory. Oozing cheese, special sauce, secret spices, tantalizing toppings, buttery buns – each perfectly charred patty, whether salty or spicy, griddled or grilled, seared, steamed or served slider-style, brings its own unique flavor and begs for the public’s vote.

“As a result of the recent National Grid natural gas outage, it’s been a challenging start of the year for many local business owners, none more so than restaurateurs,” said Brittany Lauro, Discover Newport’s social media manager and the contest’s organizer. “Owners, servers, chefs, bartenders and additional staff, as well as to food purveyors, restaurant suppliers, laundry services and other vendors, lost a week’s worth of revenue at an already quiet time of year. We’re pleased the Newport Burger Bender comes at an optimal time while tempting the taste buds of residents and visitors alike.”

The burger contest invites local restaurants to compete for the lauded “Newport Burger Bender Best Burger” title, burger bragging rights and the coveted Burger Bender trophy. There’s also

the opportunity to take home first place in the “Critic’s Choice” category, which will be named by Jenna Pelletier, food writer at the Providence Journal and former food editor at Boston Magazine, in addition to a “Creative Champion,” which will be named by Jamie Coelho, Associate Editor at Rhode Island Monthly and author of *The Dish*, the magazine’s popular food and dining-themed newsletter.

Diners can go to the [Newport Burger Bender website](#) to see the entries, plan their burger tasting adventure accordingly and then vote for their favorite burger. The burger with the most votes at the end of the contest will be crowned the winner. Voting will be activated from 12 p.m. February 15 through 11:59 p.m. February 24.

From restaurateurs who’ve competed in years past to first time entrants, the competition is deliciously fierce. “We’ve been grinding our own burgers since 2013 and figured heck, it’s time to throw our grub into the ring and see if we can win with a knockout punch!” said Julia Hoffer, a co-owner at Mission. Other first timers include Scales and Shells and Stoneacre Brasserie in Newport and Diego’s Barrio Cantina in Middletown. Burger entries can be found from restaurants throughout Newport and Bristol Counties.

Diners can tag their burger photos on social media with the hashtag [#NewportBurgerBender](#). Tagged photos will be automatically entered to win giveaways from Discover Newport.

2018 winners:

Best Burger: LaForge Casino Restaurant’s Crowley Burger

Critic’s Choice: 22 Bowen’s Wine Bar & Grill’s Secret Burger

Creative Champion: The Wharf Pub’s Antipasti Patty

2017 winners:

Best Burger: Jo’s American Bistro

Critic’s Choice: Midtown Oyster Bar, Pour Judgement and Jo’s American Bistro

## **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.

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