

# Progress



## People we love

Shaun Majumder's newfound passion for social enterprise could pay dividends for his hometown's economy

### Best of the East

Relax. Reset. And try some place new on your next road trip

### Plus:

Spring cleaning for your mindset

How to stay attuned to bizarre connections

Why skepticism can be your best strategy



Happy  
Nova 7  
season.

The iconic  
Nova Scotia  
wine returns  
April 18.



**Best Restaurant and Chef for a Locally Sourced Menu**

*The Wooden Monkey*

Halifax

[www.thewoodenmonkey.ca](http://www.thewoodenmonkey.ca)

The Wooden Monkey is known for crafting fresh, flavourful, health-conscious meals from locally sourced and organic suppliers, but co-owner Lil MacPherson insists, "We're not a vegetarian restaurant." She and co-owner Christine Bower brought the Grafton Street restaurant in 2009. Since its launch, it has been one of the hottest spots to eat in Halifax. In fact, last year the pair expanded by opening a second location in Dartmouth on Alderney Drive with a third partner,

Matthew Gass. Every weekend, diners line up to enjoy its local fare, including grass-fed beef and award-winning lentil burgers. "We cater to people who want beer and burgers, pizza and seafood lovers, vegans, people with celiac disease—the list goes on," says MacPherson. "We want everyone to come to the table." — L.G.

**Runners-up:**

**N.B.:** The Blue Door Restaurant and Bar/Lizzie Stewart (Fredericton, [www.thebluedoor.ca](http://www.thebluedoor.ca))

**N.L.:** Portabello's Restaurant/Edward Farrell (St. John's, [www.portobellosrestaurant.ca](http://www.portobellosrestaurant.ca))

**P.E.I.:** Lot 30/Gordon Bailey (Charlottetown, [www.lot30restaurant.ca](http://www.lot30restaurant.ca))



**Best Local Coffee Shop/Barista**

*Rocket Bakery & Fresh Food*

St. John's

[www.rocketfood.ca](http://www.rocketfood.ca)

Rocket Bakery & Fresh Food is known for its baristas, who include Steven Faidosi, Becky Gibson, and Anja Sajovic. All are tremendously friendly, even by St. John's standards, and have an uncanny recall of their many customers' names. The drinks are always perfect, and staff members chat and joke while making your beverage of choice, whether it's an organic micro-lot coffee or direct-trade roast.

The bakery sells mouthwatering breads, sweets, and sandwiches and boasts the best selection of gluten-free options in the downtown core. Rocket offers all sorts of goodies, but one of them truly sets it apart: the fresh, flaky, buttery croissants. Upstairs, live music plays in what has been dubbed the Rocket Room. It accommodates up to 150 people and is the perfect spot for a simulated Newfoundland kitchen party. Whether in the café or upstairs, the charm of the more-than-100-year-old restored building makes for a homey experience that captures the Newfoundland spirit. — Jamie Gilfoy

**Runners-up:**

**N.B.:** Java Moose/Glen McLean (Saint John, [www.javamoose.com](http://www.javamoose.com))

**N.S.:** Just Us! Barrington Street/Liz Bishop (Halifax, [www.justuscoffee.com](http://www.justuscoffee.com))

**P.E.I.:** Bean Espresso Bar & Coffee/Lori Kays (Charlottetown, [www.beanzespresso.com](http://www.beanzespresso.com))



BB

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[benjaminbridge.com](http://benjaminbridge.com)