



HARVEST HEAVEN

Fall gathering time has been stoking our palates since Neolithic days, and we still haven't tasted the half of it. From bird to bacon, citrus to cider, and shellfish on a whole other scale, this artisanal lineup takes harvest season to infinity and beyond.

BY ADAM ERACE

LOBSTER

Luke's New Shell Lobster

When most people think of the best season to be eating lobster, summer springs to mind. According to Ben McKinney of Luke's Lobster based in Portland, ME, "Fall is when landings and taste hit a perfect balance." While the company ships frozen lobster year-round all over the country, early fall is when you should be logging on for the new shells. Starting in September, the crustaceans begin molting into the next stage of their lives. The delicate exoskeletons "mean that the meat is almost marinated by the cold Atlantic Ocean," adds McKinney. "So this is arguably the best tasting lobster of the entire year." lukeslobster.com

LOBSTER: JENNY BRAVO PHOTOGRAPHY / YUZU: FLAVORS BY BHUMI

YUZU *Bhumi Growers*

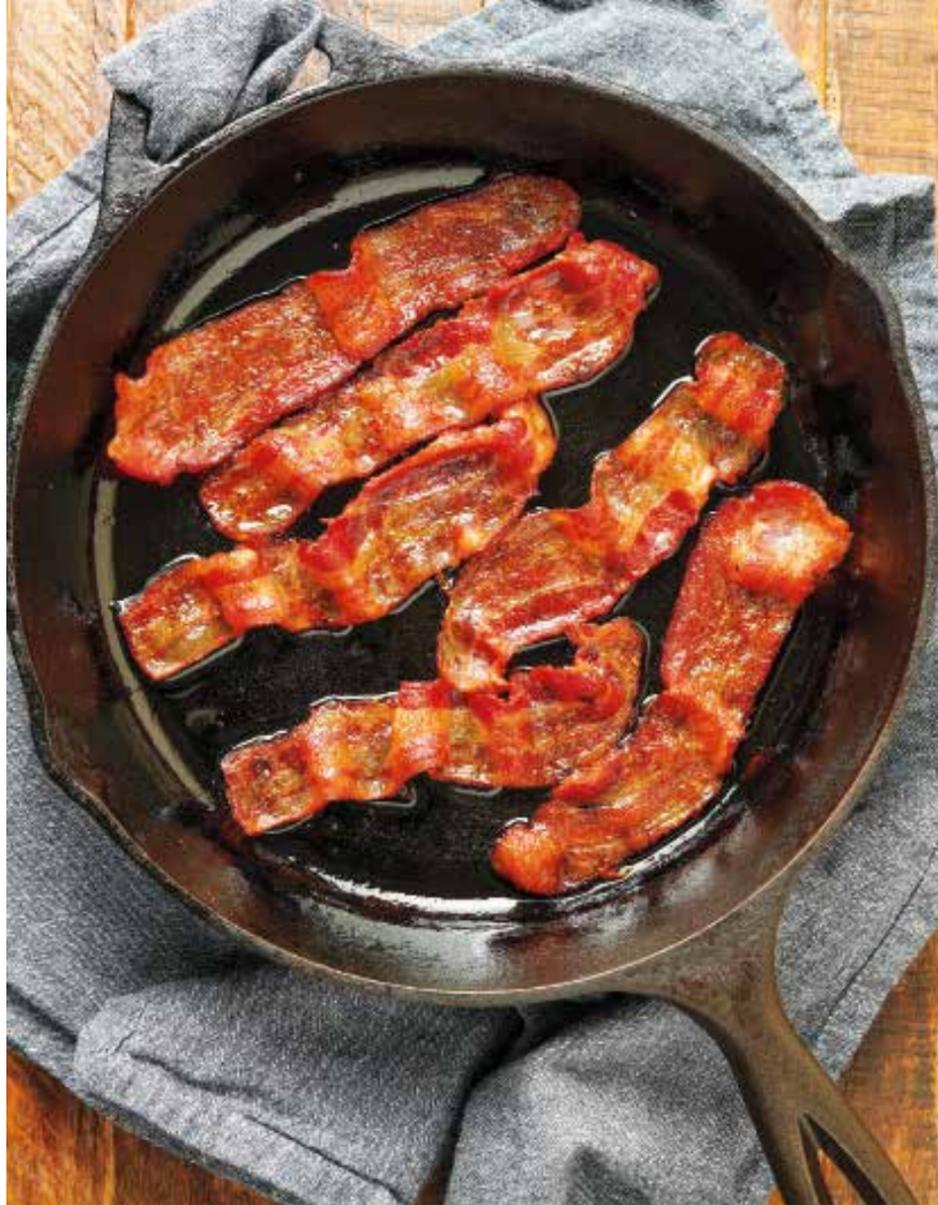
Most of the yuzu you get in the U.S. comes from California. But the very best of this hauntingly floral citrus favored in Japanese cuisine is grown just outside of Trenton, NJ. Here, in a container orchard that moves between an outdoor field and a greenhouse powered by landfill emissions, Wall Street financiers turned farmers Vivek and Seema Malik raise dozens of uncommon citrus varieties—from finger limes, sudachi and calamansi to at least a half-dozen kinds of kumquats.

The undisputed queen of the harvest here is their baseball-sized, yellow-green

yuzu. Loosely described as a mash-up of more common cousins like lemon, grapefruit and mandarin, yuzu is the citrus outlier that launched Bhumi. The couple first tasted it

at Nobu in New York, inspiring them to grow some themselves. In the fall at their Jersey grove, Bhumi's original yuzu trees still bear bountiful stock of their star player. bhumigrowers.com





BACON

Snake River Farms American Kurobuta Bacon

Snake River Farms out of Idaho is the pioneer of American Wagyu, but it also trades in fantastic Kurobuta (aka Berkshire) pork—available in mail-order cuts including spare ribs, sausage, chops and, of course, bacon. “Sourced from Berkshire hogs, Kurobuta is a heritage pork with close ties to Japan,” says Snake River Farms’ Dave Yasuda. “It’s world-renowned for its rich marbling and deep pink color, providing exceptional flavor and tenderness—the pork equivalent of Japanese Wagyu beef.” Made from brown-sugar-cured and hardwood-smoked belly, Snake River bacon comes sliced nice and thick—a cut above the usual pedestrian strip curled next to your eggs. snakeriverfarms.com



CIDER

Ploughman Stayman Winesap Mixed Culture

Ben Wenk grows over 50 kinds of apples on his family’s generations-deep Three Springs Fruit Farm just outside Gettysburg, PA. For fresh eating, but also pressed and fermented into Ploughman Ciders. His award-winning line focuses on single-variety bottlings. “Most cider in the U.S., you can’t find the apple variety on the label,” says Wenk. “We focus on the unique characteristics that different varieties impart to the cider.” One due out this fall is Stayman Winesap Mixed Culture, starring an heirloom dating to the early 1800s. For this limited bottling, Wenk collaborated with Lovedrafts Brewing in nearby Mechanicsburg, which provided a carefully nurtured yeast culture to complement the cider’s wild strain. ploughmancider.com

TURKEY

KellyBronze

If you’re eating the same old turkey on Thanksgiving, you’re doing it wrong. Especially when poultry can be as succulent and deeply flavorful as the KellyBronze. A proprietary Virginian breed with noble British heritage, KBs grow on pasture in Crozet, near Charlottesville at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. From hatch to harvest, they spend their lives at the Kelly Turkeys farm, and have been tapped as the “best of the best” by chef Jamie Oliver. That’s why we’ve already preordered our KellyBronze, which starts shipping Nov. 14. kellybronze.co.uk



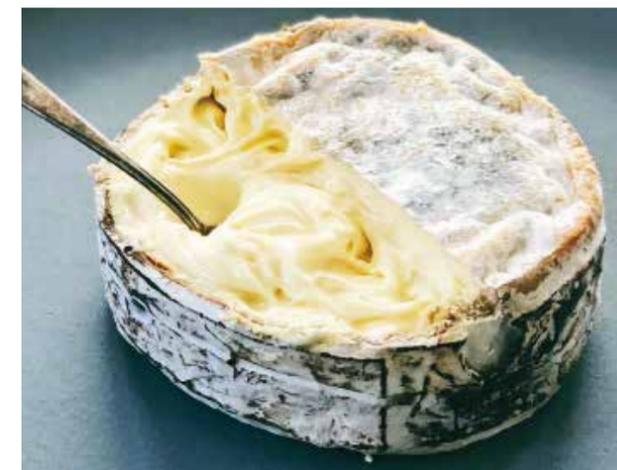
HONEY

Blackberry Farm

By the hazelnut orchard at the legendary Blackberry Farm in the lush blue-green hills of Walland, TN, half a dozen hives percolate with about 50,000 bees each. While serving as key pollinators for the resort gardens, the bees produce incredible honey in shades of amber, gold and blonde. Blackberry’s apiary team begins harvesting intermittently in the spring, with the honey reaching its richest apex in the fall when the nectars get jarred and placed for sale both in the property’s gift shop and online. blackberryfarm.com



BACON: SNAKE RIVER FARMS / HONEY: BLACKBERRY FARM



CHEESE

Upland Cheese Rush Creek Reserve

Like proper Wisconsinites, the cold doesn’t scare Upland Cheese’s hardy, athletic herd of dairy cows. They live outside year-round on Andy Hatch and Scott Mericka’s acres of pasture

an hour west of Madison, WI—feasting on grass in the spring and summer, then hay as the weather drops. “When the cow starts eating hay, the milk gains a lot of weight and texture because the fat con-

tent skyrockets,” says chief cheesemaker Hatch, who bought Uplands with Mericka and their wives, Caitlin and Liana, from its original owners in 2014. “It’s perfect for a soft, unctuous, rich cheese.” That cheese is Rush Creek Reserve, a spruce bark-banded puck of fudgy, lactic magic aged in Upland’s cave for six to eight weeks. The first round of Rush Creeks typically roll out in November. Like a rare whiskey, the stock is spoken for months ahead by cheese counters around the country, but Hatch and Mericka hold a stash for direct orders. “It’s become a family tradition for a lot of our customers. They get one for Christmas, one for Hanukkah, and other gatherings.” No judgment if you devour yours on an ordinary fall weekday. uplandscheese.com



WINE *Scribe Nouveau*

The reputation of Beaujolais Nouveau—France’s contingent of first harvest gamay released each year on the third Thursday of November—has risen and fallen over the last several decades. At best, B.N.s are swift and sprightly. At worst, so fruity and sweet they might as well be Hawaiian Punch, which is the industrial style that came to dominate American imports in the 1980s and ’90s. But lately, California producers have been rethinking and rehabbing the maligned wine, which dovetails nicely with the zeitgeist’s affection for young, natural juice. This fall, we’re looking forward to the ninth vintage of 100 percent pinot noir, naturally fermented nouveau from Sonoma’s Scribe Winery. “The goal every year is to make a vibrant, juice, high-energy celebration wine,” says Andrew Mariani, who owns Scribe with his brother, Adam. “The year’s first bottling is a glimpse of the quality of the vintage and offers a fun counterbalance to our far-reaching pinot noirs,” Mariani adds. “It’s all about capturing juicy fruitiness, carbonic crunchiness, vibrant acidity, and freshness without tannin. And it’s meant to be drunk immediately.” Yeah, pour us a glass. scribewinery.com

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GAME *Maui Nui Venison*

The Axis deer have become a unique problem in Hawaii. Wait—you’re thinking, deer? Hawaii? These four-legged lawn mowers are not generally associated with tropical isles, so you might be wondering how in the world they got here. Arriving as a gift to King Kamehameha V from India in 1867, the animals would become particularly problematic on Maui after being released into the wild nearly a century later and doing what deer do. Devoid of any natural predators, the animals have overpopulated and pose an ongoing threat to the lowlands ecosystem.

Enter Maui Nui Venison. Unlike the great majority of venison available for purchase in the U.S., this meat is truly wild, not farmed. It’s also carefully managed under a humane harvest plan that involves nighttime hunting and infrared scope technology to avoid stressing out the animals. Not only is this technique more ethical, it results in meat with better taste and texture—which you can sample for yourself by ordering from Maui Nui’s virtual butcher shop. From tenderloin to soup bones, chops to osso buco shanks, they ship across the country. mauinuivenison.com



WHISKEY

Tamworth Distilling Graverobber Unholy Rye



The roots of the maple trees stretch down deep in the colonial-era graveyard on New Hampshire's Great Hill Farm, their sap producing a lustrous amber syrup of, shall we say, otherworldly excellence. When October rolls around, this distinctive cemetery syrup infusion with Tamworth Distilling's rye whiskey emerges from three years in oak as limited-edition Graverobber Unholy Rye. The backstory may be just ghoulish enough for a macabre marketing catchphrase—"I drink dead people"—but never mind all that. The resulting whiskey is just plain delicious. Its persistent black pepper-and-spice notes are laced with the mature sweetness of New England autumn. tamworthdistilling.com



SPICE

Burlap & Barrel Pemba Cloves

From September through November, Bwana Mohammad and his fellow farmers at the 1001 Organic co-op on Pemba, the spice island northeast of Zanzibar, harvest the

magenta buds of the clove tree right before they flower. They then sun-dry them in a jungle clearing for a few days before sorting, bagging and boating them to New York, where Ori Zohar and

Ethan Frisch bottle them for their sourcing-obsessed spice company, Burlap & Barrel. "Pemba is world-famous for cloves because of their high essential oil content," says Zohar. "You can press into them with your fingernail and they're just glistening with oil." On his last visit to Pemba, Zohar brought home two duffel bags filled with spices—and got stopped by the Zanzibari authorities. Spices here are regarded like gems and gold, as they have since the days when Zanzibar served as a key trading post for the Omani Empire. Fortunately, Zohar had all the proper paperwork. Extra fortunately, you don't need to jump through any hoops for a taste of the harvest—an instant upgrade to your holiday baking. burlapandbarrel.com

SUBSCRIBE AND SAVOR

If it seems like you can't open a web tab without being conned into signing up for a monthly shipment of something you don't need, these quality culinary subscription box services are the cure, offering both great value and delicious discovery.

Sitka Salmon Shares

Four and a half pounds of sustainably harvested, flash-frozen Alaskan seafood arrive each month in three price-tiered options. Think spot prawns, Coho salmon, sablefish, Dungeness crab and more. sitkasalmonshares.com

Culinary Adventure Society

South Carolinian Jimmy Red grits, Canadian maple



mustard and other inspired global goods arrive four times a year from Ann Arbor's Zingerman's Delicatessen—famous for its myriad deli offerings, farmhouse cheeses and specialty items. Each product comes complemented with its own unique backstory. zingermans.com

Bokksu

A collection of rare, idiosyncratic, delectable treasures straight from Japan to your door each month have been carefully curated by owner Danny Taing around a monthly theme—e.g., mochi, Okinawa, the moon festival. bokksu.com

WHISKEY: TAMWORTH DISTILLING / SPICE: BURLAP & BARREL / SITKA SALMON SHARES