

New England - the name conjures cozy images of russet leaved maple trees, covered bridges, white-steepled villages, maple syrup, dairy farms and ivy covered bastions of higher learning. But don't let this detached and picturesque vision fool you. New England is not for the indolent, lazy or faint of heart, and this is amply reflected in its cuisine.

New England, and especially Boston, has always been a haven for stalwart individualists and hard workers. The stout-hearted Puritans left a land of plenty to wrest a living from the unforgiving and rocky New England soil. They cast their nets in the often stormy and treacherous North Atlantic. Their hard work, toil and industriousness led to the economic prosperity and dominance of Boston among all other colonial ports. Long a crucible for progressive politics, the seeds of the American Revolution were sown over gleaming pewter tankards of ale in the amber light of the taverns and meeting houses of colonial Boston. Those traditions of iconoclastic thinking are illuminated in the theories of sages such as John Adams, and Henry David Thoreau, to whom we owe much of our modern understanding of civil disobedience and libertarianism.

Everything we eat is, of course, the product of culinary evolution. Yet New England cuisine retains a great deal of its original colonial character. Successive waves of immigration seem barely to have altered its identity. For such sturdy, sensible people, nothing but sturdy, sensible food will do. The regional cuisine reflects this brusque, no-nonsense "yankee" character. Anything that would stick to your ribs that fueled a long day's toil was a daily presence on a New England table. Hearty, uncomplicated fare, starchy stews and chowders and succulent baked goods predominated. Native herbs such as parsley and sage, plus a dash of imported Caribbean nutmeg flavored these dishes. With its heavy reliance on the fishing industry, no yankee place setting would be complete without a bowl for the chowder or a nutcracker for the lobster shells.

Oscar's of St. James is delighted to present to you the best of this iconic cuisine. Our talented chef's contemporary twists on traditional themes will draw you back in time to those windy, gale swept taverns in Gloucester as you revive with a hearty meal of fish-n-chips. Slip back in time to Salem, and imagine a blustery fall day on the Common as you eat a meal of Shepherd's Pie. Let the vigor and robustness of this menu remind you of the values and character that gave birth to our country. Enjoy!