

ZAGAT®

Cape Cod &
The Islands
Restaurants

2007/08

Including Cape Cod,
Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket

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Published and distributed by

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What's New

With their clam beds and cranberry bogs, lighthouses and saltboxes, Cape Cod and the Islands remain among New England's most picture-perfect escapes from the urban crush and sprawl. When it happens at all, change comes slowly to the area – and that's just the way everyone likes it, including those foodies who can never get enough seafood in the rough. Still, a few surprises were in store even for them this year.

GLOBAL MEETS LOCAL: The names say it all: hot spots Lo La 41° on Nantucket and Hemisphere in Sandwich inject eclectic, even exotic, elements into the routine mix of cod and lobster, and Level did likewise in Provincetown. South Yarmouth's already-established Ardeo spread its Mediterranean "ardor" (as translation would have it) to Yarmouth proper and Hyannis. Of course, not every newcomer scrapped tradition: Wellfleet's Catch of the Day, for one, proved equally true to its moniker by serving up a pure-and-simple selection of locally sourced fish and shellfish.

MOVIN' ON: Meanwhile, some known entities sought to shake things up with new places and faces. Formerly located in the Charlotte Inn, Edgartown's L'Étoile put on a more modern front a couple of blocks away, complete with full bar and lounge. At press time, the Island Merchant in Hyannis was exchanging its wee space for bigger digs on Main Street. And as it celebrated its 30-year anniversary, the Nantucket institution known as Straight Wharf gained a new lease on life with the arrival of acclaimed Boston chefs Gabriel Frasca and Amanda Lydon.

PHONE FIRST: As predictable as the tides themselves is the very unpredictability of area eateries' seasonal schedules. Darkened doorsteps are the norm in winter, while summer inevitably means solid bookings and long waiting lists. So do yourself a favor and give the reservationist a ring.

Boston, MA
April 12, 2007

Ruth Tobias