

# edible DELMARVA

Celebrating the Abundance of Delaware and Eastern Shore Maryland & Virginia



## FOOD WASTE

Waxing Kara  
RAR Cambridge  
Sumptuous Desserts

# AUTUMN 2017 CONTENTS

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## ON THE COVER

*A burst of golden beets illustrates the Ugly Produce is Beautiful message about food waste.*

*Food, styling, and photo by Sarah Phillips,  
@UglyProduceIsBeautiful*



from the editor

Here in Delmarva, the arrival of Autumn is subtle. There is a sweetness to the evenings, which begin a little earlier with some of the most spectacular sunsets of the year then cool down more quickly. There is an urgency to the days, savoring walks on the beach, sailing on the bay, sauntering through town. And on the farms, the harvest season arrives with all its glory while signaling the time for planning ahead. Among the corn and watermelon and tomatoes that keep summer going, there are Brussels sprouts and squash and sweet potatoes that herald the change of season and the arrival of new flavors to celebrate.

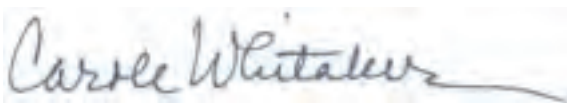
There are threads that connect the seasons and move us forward, just like there are ties that connect people and place and purpose. In this issue, we explore how a connection to a town, a community, a history, or a piece of land can blossom into something much bigger.

Like the friends from Cambridge who came back to their home town to start RAR Brewing, which sparked a revitalization effort and has helped to inspire more food-drink-artisan spots to open up there. Like Alisa Morkides, whose love of coffee and community (and a turning-point visit to Italy!) is the driving creative force behind her Brew HaHa! cafes across Delaware. Each one uniquely reflects the personality and charm of its owner and the location, and serves as a gathering place for locals and visitors – just like Alisa envisioned.

Stewardship of the land and an appreciation for the connection between its inhabitants is what inspires Kara Brook, and being open to seeing where life takes you also helps. While her discovery of a passion for bees came almost accidentally, her commitment to her farm and its future is deep-rooted and purposeful.

Wherever life takes you, the seeds of inspiration are often planted in the early years. For most chefs, a love of food and the kitchen started early, and those who feed that early passion bring so much to the table. Behind the success of Grotto Pizza's Dom Pulieri is a childhood love of the pizza from Friday night dinners. Chef Gretchen Hanson shows us how that connection is evident not only in the rituals of making and tossing the crust and creating the sauce recipes, but in how he and his restaurants are part of the fabric of life in the community.

There is much to be grateful for as we head into the harvest season and Thanksgiving. It has been a joy for my co-publisher Anne Monti and I to get to meet so many people across the region, and we appreciate all the support and positive feedback during this launch year. So, whether you celebrate with a 25-pound turkey and a houseful of relatives, or a feast-for-two with the catch of the day, or a stone-soup supper with your neighbors, we send all good wishes for an abundant table!



Carole Whitaker, Editor



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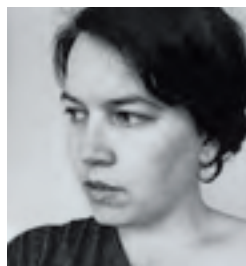
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Edible Communities  
Publications of the Year (2011)



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*drink local*



## KEEPING IT LOCAL, KEEPING IT REAL

*RAR Brewery, a cornerstone of Cambridge's vibrant rebirth,  
has deep local roots and plans on keeping it that way*

WORDS AND PHOTOS KATE LIVIE

If John Waters opened a brewery, ReAleRevival (or RAR to those in the know) is what it might be like. Playful, irreverent, and unexpected—their brews are flavorful, complex canvases on which the owners, Chris Brohawn and J.T. Merryweather, and the brewmaster, Randy Mills, craft nuanced pints of fancy. And just like *Hairspray* or *Cry Baby*, their beers are love letters to Maryland, inspired by the Chesapeake’s culture from Smith Island cake and the Choptank River to the Ripkens and blue crabs. There’s no doubt these sons of Cambridge are proud of their roots—and their commitment to keeping it local has made their thriving, cult-status brewery a cornerstone of their community’s vibrant rebirth.

Cambridge’s renaissance—and RAR’s role in it—might come as a surprise to those who recall Cambridge as a place that time and prosperity seemed to have passed by. But Dorchester’s county seat is not only up-and-coming—it’s also developing a serious reputation as the Eastern Shore’s foodie capital. Thanks to some savvy local investors, today Cambridge’s all-American historic downtown houses museums, galleries, and busy boutiques, and hip eateries that range from bistro fare to brick oven pizzas. RAR was right at the front of the town’s recent transformative trend, opening their taproom on Poplar Street in 2013.

It was a business gamble that took off, but for Merryweather and Brohawn, setting up shop in downtown was the only option. The two graduates of Cambridge-South Dorchester High School had left the Eastern Shore for college and followed careers elsewhere, because, as Brohawn explains, “sometimes you have to leave a place you grew up in, to start to appreciate what you had.” Ultimately drawn back home by the slower pace of life and the promise of families on the horizon, Merryweather and Brohawn decided to take their homebrewing hobby to the next level. The partners were committed to brewing in their re-found hometown—and they saw the potential in 504 Poplar, a former pool hall, under the crumbling plaster and dingy tile. On a shoestring budget, the two renovated the space on nights and weekends, ultimately creating a light-filled taproom with brewing rooms in the back.

Just as the work was nearing completion, brewer Randy Mills—also a local—joined the team. Mills was a homebrewer who had also turned his passion into a profession with a gig at Salisbury’s Evolution Craft Brewing. Inspired by the creative brewing range of Dogfish Head, another regional icon, Mills was committed to the idea that great beer should be unexpected, delicious and boundary-pushing.

RAR’s beer fully lives up to that standard. Working together, Mills, Brohawn, and Merryweather have created a brewery where beers are more than thirst-quenchers—they have a deep sense of place. The resin-y pine tang of their flagship brew, Nanticoke Nectar IPA, is like a brackish breath of loblolly-scented river breeze. RAR regularly releases new beers (35 in all) that more often than not are deeply rooted in the places and traditions of Maryland.

“It’s nostalgia,” Brohawn explains. “If you look at any of it, our recipes are based on childhood stories and memories.” Like 10 Layer, their dessert stout tribute to Smith Island Cake, which they grew up eating, or their blonde/Belgian ale hybrid shout-out to the Ches-

*“If you look at any of it, our recipes are based on childhood stories and memories.”*

apeake’s favorite aquatic scavenger, Bottom Feeder. They’ve created a beer in honor of the Ripkens (Puck Face) and in collaboration with Oxford, Maryland’s Scottish Highland Creamery (Ice Cream Seas). Their Bucktown Brown, Northeast Nectar, Groove City and Woodr all reference local places or local pronunciations. It’s clear from their beer—there’s a strong flavor of Maryland pride on tap at RAR.

These small-batch, experimental releases are a big part of RAR’s Cambridge magic. Beer collectors from around the state and even the nation will drop into one of their ticketed release events, which often have lines around the block. True devotees will post up in advance in order to secure a six-pack of a limited line (one notable regular is known for arriving at 2 am before each release)—a phenomenon that seems more Star Wars premiere than blue-collar Chesapeake community.

But hardcore beer nerds are just one part of RAR’s clientele. On any weekend, their lively, airy taproom, covered in original artwork and 90’s memorabilia, is just as likely to be crowded with people on their way to the beach and locals looking to slake a terrible thirst. Kids are welcome too, and for their recent release of Ice Cream Seas,



| TAPS | NAMES                    | STYLE  | ABV         | \$   |
|------|--------------------------|--|-------------|------|
| *1   | BOTTOM FEEDER            | FARM HOUSE BLONDE  | 4.5%        | 3.75 |
| *2   | COUNTRY RIDE             | PALE ALE   | 5.0%        | 4/6  |
| 3    | ICE CREAM SEAS           | IPA  | 7.5%        | 4/6  |
| 4    | ELLA                     | BARREL AGED PALE   | 5.5%        | 4/6  |
| *5   | GROOVE CITY              | HEFEWEIZEN   | 5.0%        | 3.75 |
| *6   | NANTICOKE NECTAR         | IPA  | 7.0%        | 4/6  |
| 7    |                          |  |             |      |
| 8    |                          |  |             |      |
| 9    | SHANDICOKE NECTAR        | IPA SHANDY   | 6.0%        | 4.00 |
| 10   | HOOP TEA - 3 FLAVORS     | WHITE MANGO / PEACH LEMONADE / WATERMELON MINT GREEN TEA | 5.0%        |      |
| 11   | VARIOUS CIDERS AVAILABLE | AUSTIN / CRISPIN / GRAFT                                 | 5.0% / 6.0% |      |
| 12   | ↑ BOTTLES + CANS ONLY ↑  |  |             |      |

The deep local roots and playful irreverence of owners and brewmasters Chris Brohawn, J. T. Merryweather, and Randy Mills, is evident in everything from RAR's décor to their small-batch, experimental releases, which draw customers and devotees from around the region.



the under-21 set got to enjoy towering sundaes while the legal-age folks drank their dessert.

RAR's laid-back local vibe permeates their Poplar Street digs, and is a pillar of their masterfully produced social media feed. Their Instagram in particular is a like a love letter to the Eastern Shore, written by your middle school class clown and published by the Goonies. A recent video to promote their Pulpicle release featured RAR artistic mastermind BJ Wheatley and Brohawn lounging on lawn chairs in neon swimsuits. A quick camera pan reveals their summer oasis is Cambridge's beloved but grody World War I Memorial fountain. It's a great example of RAR's brand of irreverent local showmanship, and deservedly went viral—to date, the fountain spot has been watched 18,000 times. You get the sense from their marketing, their artwork, and their general joie de vivre that there's nothing the RAR team won't do to gin up some local attention—except be staid or predictable.

Even as RAR's reputation for fine, fanciful brews makes its way around the region (along with their distribution range to Baltimore, DC, Annapolis and beyond), these local boys are doubling down on their Cambridge roots. RAR has made a point of investing in their local community—sponsoring the athletic and theater programs at Cambridge-South Dorchester High School, holding fundraisers for local animal shelters, donating auction prizes for the March of Dimes, and pitching in beer and support for countless local festivals. Their last philanthropic effort was a perfectly RAR affair—a pop-up art show featuring a 'Garbage Pail Kid'-inspired series by Wheatley where all the proceeds benefited Cambridge Main Street.

A rising tide lifts all boats—and as RAR floats to success on endless barrels of excellent, creative beer, they've made sure to bring Cambridge right along with them. They've certainly created beer that Cambridge can be proud of, but they've also managed to help put their hometown on the map. "We're glad that we can draw people from different states to downtown to experience Cambridge," Brohawn asserts. "We believe in this place, and we're going to stay right where we are."

As Brohawn and his team at RAR look forward to expansion—a restaurant is coming up next—they are adamant that they are already exactly where they want to be.

Surrounded by a new generation of entrepreneurs and their thriving businesses in the heart of the historic district, RAR represents an essential element of Cambridge's reclaimed vibrancy—one committed to keeping it local, keeping it real, and never letting a customer walk away thirsty. ☺

> RAR Brewing: 504 Poplar Street, Cambridge, MD; 443-225-5665; rarbrewing.com



### The Revitalization of Cambridge

If you haven't been to Cambridge recently, you're overdue to reacquaint yourself. The town has experienced a remarkable transformation over the last decade—and today its vibrant, bustling downtown is in stark contrast to its hard times past. A new generation of entrepreneurs—many of them locals—have revived the glorious but shuttered storefronts, clearing away the economic cobwebs left after the mighty Phillips Packing Company closed in the 1960's. Galleries, shops, museums and a bevy of hip new restaurants have earned the classic Chesapeake community a well-deserved reputation as one of the region's top foodie destinations.

Visitors to Cambridge should come hungry and come often. You can't miss the slate of downtown eateries established by restaurateur and chef Patrick Fanning, whose Highspot gastropub, Stoked wood fired pizzeria, Blackwater coffee shop/ bakery and Rock Lobstah New England-inspired seafood joint make sure that you can walk a block in any direction and get an excellent meal. For those looking for a high-end dining experience full of local flavors and ingredients, the stellar Zagat ratings of Poplar Street's Bistro Poplar say it all. And classic Chesapeake staples are prepared with

love at Jimmy and Sooks and Canvasback, where those seeking a fat crabcake are sure to find bliss.

Non-profit organization Cambridge Main Street is committed to seeing that the local renaissance flows beyond the restaurants into the streets, touching as many parts of the community as possible. They've helped to organize festivals like Taste of Cambridge, Cambridge Beerfest, and GrooveFEST that entice downtown crowds with brews, bites, and music, and to provide support and promotion for locally-oriented walking tours, First Fridays, the annual Ironman Triathlon and a farmer's market. Cambridge Main Street has also partnered with another local organization, Eastern Shore Network for Change, to highlight Cambridge's rich African-American history and provide community opportunities to discuss the reverberations of Civil-Rights era unrest and rioting.

From crabcakes to culture to craft brew, Cambridge's star is on the rise. It's a small town with a lot of local flavor, sure to satisfy any visitor's appetite for a great meal and a truly authentic Chesapeake experience.

Learn more at [www.cambridgemainstreet.com](http://www.cambridgemainstreet.com)