

# 10 RI restaurants, chefs score nominations for James Beard awards. See who made the list.

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Rhode Island has four restaurants and one chef as semifinalists in national categories for the 2024 James Beard Foundation Awards, considered the Oscars of the dining world. There are five local semifinalists in the Best Chef: Northeast category.

That is the best showing ever for the Ocean State's dining scene and the widest geographically. The semifinalists come from Providence, Newport, Warren, Central Falls, Middletown and Bristol.

All but one of the semifinalists are first-time nominees.

Established in 1990 and first awarded in 1991, the James Beard Foundation's Restaurant and Chef Awards are just one of its recognition programs, but its most prestigious. The awards will be presented on Monday, June 10, at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Watch for the finalists' names on April 3. View more on the awards and the entire list at [jamesbeard.org](https://jamesbeard.org).

## **Bywater for Outstanding Restaurant**

Nominated for Outstanding Restaurant is Bywater, the Warren eatery at 54 State St. The nomination is a first for owner Kate Dickson and her oyster bar with a curated menu of local seafood. She opened nine years ago. Bywater chef Luke Mersfelder was cited by StarChefs for their Best of Coastal New England list last year.

Bywater is one of 20 semifinalists on the list, which will be narrowed to five finalists in the next round, to be announced April 3.



## **Gift Horse's Sky Haneul Kim for Emerging Chef**

Sky Haneul Kim, chef at Gift Horse in Providence, is a semifinalist for "Emerging Chef." The category honors "a chef who displays exceptional talent, character and leadership ability, and who is likely to make a significant impact in years to come while contributing positively to their broader community."

Gift Horse was opened by Ben Sukle and general manager/partner Bethany Caliaro last summer at 272 Westminster St. Coincidentally, Sukle was nominated as a James Beard Rising Star Chef (then an under-30, national category) in 2012 when he was at The Dorrance in Providence.



## **Tuxpan Taqueria for Best New Restaurant**

Tuxpan Taqueria in Central Falls is a semifinalist for Best New Restaurant. The family-owned restaurant serves Mexican street food at 355 Broad St. It opened in December 2022. It is one of 30 semifinalists in the national category.

## **Giusto for Outstanding Hospitality**



Newport's Giusto is a semifinalist for Outstanding Hospitality. This national category honors "a restaurant, bar or other food and drinking establishment that fosters a sense of hospitality among its customers and staff that serves as a beacon for the community and demonstrates consistent excellence in food, atmosphere, hospitality and operations."

Chef Kevin O'Donnell opened Giusto at 4 Commercial Wharf in 2020 as a freestyle Italian restaurant. He will open a second one in Providence at the planned food hall Track 15 this year.

His SRV in Boston was a semifinalist for James Beard Best New Restaurant in 2016.

## **Courtland Club for Best Bar**

Courtland Club in Providence is a semifinalist in the national category of 20 for Best Bar. It honors "A wine bar, beer bar, cocktail bar, coffee bar or any other business whose primary offering is beverage and that demonstrates consistent excellence in curating a selection or in the preparation of drinks, along with outstanding atmosphere, hospitality and operations."



The speakeasy opened in 2017 at 51 Courtland St., a quiet lane between Broadway and Atwells Avenue. It was conceived of by Jason Shechtman. It's

also a performance venue with DJ sets most nights and a social club as well as a cocktail bar.

## **Best Chef: Northeast**

There are five Rhode Island chefs in the regional semifinalist list of 20. They are Andy Teixeira of Newport Vineyards in Middletown, Basil Yu of Yagi Noodles in Newport, Maria Meza of Dolores in Providence, Subat Dilmurat of Jahunger in Providence and Peter Carvelli of Foglia in Bristol. Also on the list is Cecelia Lizotte for Suya Joint in Boston. She plans to open a second restaurant in downtown Providence this year.

At Newport Vineyards, Teixeira has done everything from launching the menu at their Taproot Brewing to sourcing local ingredients and even planting the vegetables, greens and herbs to supply produce for their food. They also host a monthly brunch at the Vineyards, which is at 909 East Main Road, Middletown.

Running Yagi Noodles at 20 Long Wharf in Newport, chef Yu specializes in handmade-from-scratch ramen and other creative dishes. He is a first-generation Chinese American named a StarChef last year for his Asian-inspired comfort food.



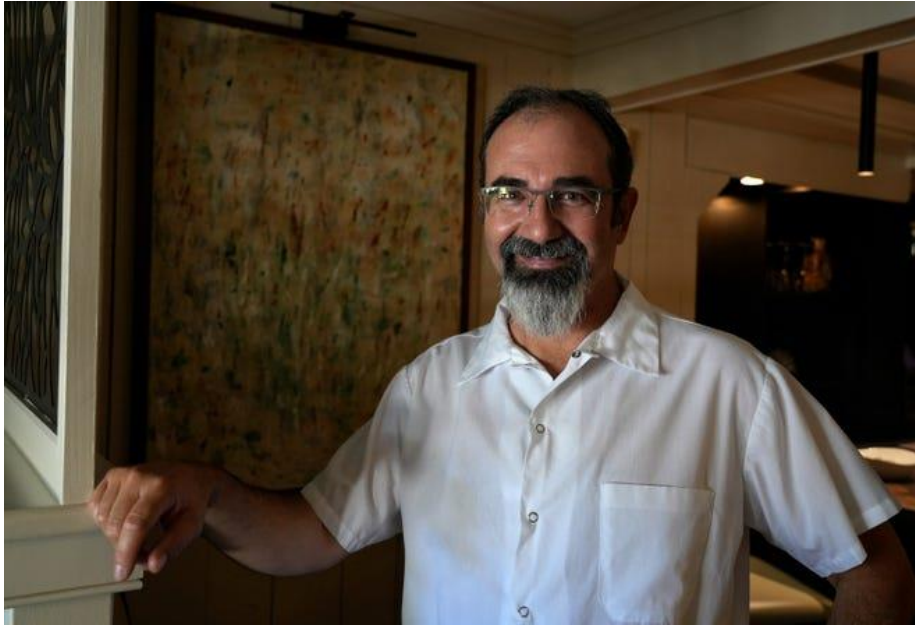


Dilmurat cooks at Jahunger, 333 Wickenden St. in Providence, offering a taste of Uyghur Asian cuisine including lamb dumplings, lamb kebabs and noodle dishes.



Maria Meza opened her first family restaurant, El Rancho Grande, in Providence in 2008, and now cooks at Dolores, 100 Hope St. in Providence and soon will open a second restaurant at Track 15, the planned food hall in

Providence. She is nominated for her contemporary dishes from the Mixteca Region, in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico.



Carvelli, of Foglia, 31 State St. in Bristol, is a lawyer who became a chef. But not just any chef. He cooks only plant-based dishes at the restaurant that he opened in 2022. Now he is a James Beard semifinalist for the restaurant.