

# Down East would be incomplete without the

By BARBARA ANN ROSENBERG  
Special to the Herald

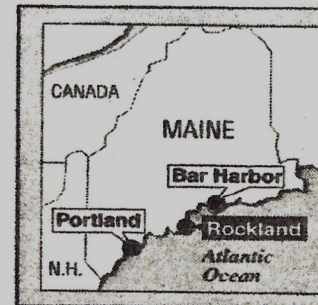
If when you hear "Maine" your next thought is "lob-

ster," then Rockland, one of the state's charming coastal towns — midway between Portland and Bar Harbor — takes the association to a new level.

You can hardly travel anywhere in the area without bumping into a restaurant, a shack or a roadside cart offering the delicacy in a variety of permutations: live, steamed, broiled and — at some of the fancier places — baked and stuffed.

There's even a huge, appropriately weather-beaten metal statue of a lobster just off the main street as you stroll down a gentle slope toward the harbor. This rusty lobster is the town landmark. In Rockland, the meeting place of choice, even for strangers, is "the lobster."

Rockland has changed a lot in the past few years. Formerly known best for its fisheries and less-than-fragrant sardine canning plant (now torn down), it has become a destination for pleasure boaters, who formerly didn't have sufficient berthing



## IF YOU GO

**GETTING THERE:** Take I-95 north to Brunswick, then U.S. Route 1 north to Rockland. Colgan Air offers flights from Boston to Rockland for about \$130 round trip. Call (800) 272-5488.

**INFORMATION:** Rockland-Thomaston Area Chamber of Commerce: (207) 596-7194. □

space because of all the commercial trawlers. It's also a favorite picturesque harbor for salt-water anglers and for people who enjoy feeling like true "Down Easters."

There's more to Rockland than fishing and lobstering, however. There's an outstand-

ing museum with a fine selection of 19th- and 20th-century works by American artists. Farnsworth Museum, in a neat modern building on the main street, has a choice selection of Andrew Wyeth's tempera paintings. There also are major works by John Marin, Mardell Hartley, Louise Nevelson and others.

To see one of Wyeth's principal sources of inspiration, take a trip through Maine's beautiful countryside to the Olsen House in Cushing, about 30 miles from Rockland.

This stark, poetic home is one that Wyeth painted many times. It can be seen in "Christina's World," now at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The Olsen House, under the stewardship of the museum, is open to the public every day from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Memorial Day to Columbus Day, when it begins closing Mondays and shortens its hours.

En route to the Olsen House, you'll pass some of the huge, startling outdoor sculpture of Bernard Langlois, an eccentric who died about 10 years ago, leaving several prime pieces of his work in the front and side yards of his home.

There are plenty of activities on the water. Take a cruise around Rockland Harbor and Penobscot Bay on the Three Cheers, an immaculate Coast Guard-certified lobster boat. While you sit back and relax, the captain will be hauling in his traps and explaining what

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# famous Rockland lobster

that meets the size requirements), all while pointing out the outstanding lighthouses along the way.

Nearly as dear as lobster to the hearts of many Maine visitors is the opportunity to browse the region's many antiques shops. Coopers Mills, about 35 minutes west of Rockland, is home to one of the quirkiest antiques destinations in the country. Elmer's Barn has an incredible mixture of junk and treasure. Elmer says he "buys junk and sells treasures." There are three floors of chairs, picture frames, clocks and nearly everything else. Last year, Elmer said, he sold a stuffed zebra, two mooseheads, a player piano and a totem pole.

The Victory Chimes, the only original three-masted schooner in the Maine Windjammer fleet, is berthed in Rockland and sails three- and six-day cruises from June through October. Call (800) 745-5651.

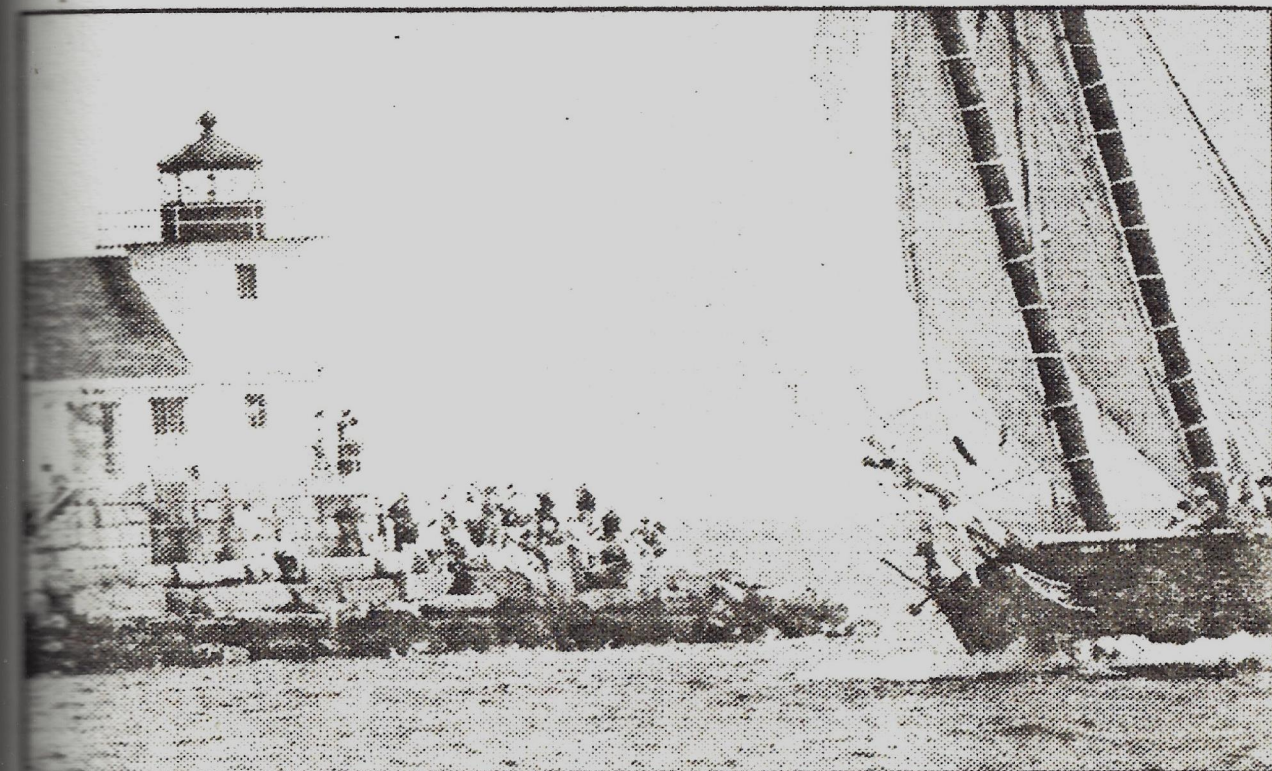
In keeping with the theme of the sea is a fine collection of historical lighthouse artifacts

at the Shore Village Museum. The exhibits are mounted by the Shore Village Historical Society, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Grand Army. There's a fascinating collection of Fresnel lenses taken from manned lighthouses, working foghorns, search and rescue gear, buoys, bells and boats, all housed in a little banner-draped house on Limerock Street. There is no admission charge, but donations are welcome.

Next door to the Shore Village Museum is the Limerock Inn, one of the most delightful bed-and-breakfast inns in New England and beyond. The inn is a study in Victorian architecture, turrets and all. Every room is individually and distinctively furnished in impeccable taste by innkeepers Kathy and Jerry Dougherty and Denise and Thom Perkins, who take weekly turns caring for their guests. Breakfasts are outstanding, featuring seasonal fruits in homemade pancakes (including wild Maine blueberries) and as garnish for made-

in-the-house granitas, and freshly squeezed juice. The innkeepers, coffee lovers themselves, order their favorite blends from purveyors all over the country. And, at about 5 p.m., guests are invited to tea — or something stronger — and conversation with the owners.

There are assorted chain motels as well, and a charming, unusual eating spot called Cafe Miranda in a tiny clutch of shops on Oak Street. The cafe features brick oven cooking and an international array of dishes — everything *except* lobster. It's closed Mondays. □



**SALT SPRAY:** Rockland, Maine is a destination for pleasure boaters as well as the launching spot for a windjammer cruise.