Outstanding in the Field, the California-based company that pioneered the farm-to-table movement, creates a highly anticipated—and quick-to-sellout—outdoor dining experience in late summer at Chatham Bars Inn. Guests, farmers and purveyors gather for a communal feast at an impressive 220-seat table along the shore adjacent to the Chatham Fish Pier. “We procure and prepare all of the food, featuring locally sourced ingredients, including produce from Chatham Bars Inn Farm, while the Outstanding in the Field crew provides the rest—it’s really fun for us,” says CBI executive chef Anthony Cole, adding that the inn started working with Outstanding in the Field in 2017.

Along the shore near Chatham Fish Pier, guests connect with one another through locally sourced meals prepared by Outstanding in the Field and Chatham Bars Inn.

Written by MARJORIE NAYLOR PITTS | Photography by JULIA CUMES
Last year’s event began with a beachside lawn reception featuring Chatham Shellfish Company oysters paired with a rosé from Flowers Vineyards & Winery and a selection of craft beer from Devil’s Purse Brewing Co., followed by a brief talk by Jim Denevan, founder and CEO of Outstanding in the Field. Denevan then introduced the featured purveyors, before inviting guests to stroll along the beach to the table.

Once seated, guests sipped chardonnay while enjoying a gorgeously presented tomato tasting with heirloom tomatoes, Chatham sea salt, Genovese basil, kefir cheese and farm botanicals, served with pickled green tomatoes and cucamelon, as well as slow-roasted tomato-onion jam, house-made duck focaccia and sundried tomato flatbread. Next came a platter of fire-roasted peppers and grilled eggplant, burrata, Grenada pepper purée, with a chickpea garlic crumble. Guests, many strangers to one another just hours before,
engaged in lively, comfortable banter as the exquisite CBI farm fare was passed and shared family style. “For me, that’s the really powerful, meaningful aspect of what we do,” explains Denevan. “There’s an incredible synergy of meeting new people, connecting to one another through local foods and the beauty of being in this stunning setting.”

Two main courses with wine pairings were presented next: A perfectly seasoned cioppino with Chatham Shellfish Company mussels, clams, lobster, monkfish and squid, followed by char-grilled Vermont ribeye steak, warm potato salad and petit greens. As the sun set, a farm berry and ricotta custard tart with vanilla-fennel anglaise and botanicals completed the magical evening. Standing beside the gently lapping water of Aunt Lydia’s Cove amid the glow of a luminaire-lined path guiding sated guests back to Chatham Bars Inn, Denevan took in the scene with a contented sigh: “It’s so good to be here.” This summer’s Outstanding in the Field dinner at Chatham Bars Inn is scheduled for Aug. 29, 2019: Outstanding, indeed!
Chatham Bars Inn has long enjoyed a solid reputation for exceptional cuisine—from Stars and The Sacred Cod to The Veranda and The Beach House. Adding to its already exceptional offerings, last summer CBI piloted a truly memorable al fresco dining experience in an idyllic setting at its farm on Route 6A in Brewster.

“The ability to create events like this is amazing,” says executive chef Anthony Cole. “It’s great to be able to showcase the farm, which is such a spectacular place.”

Arriving at the farm in the early evening, guests were welcomed with flutes of sparkling wine and invited to stroll the lush colorful gardens: row upon row of bountiful vegetables mixed with rows of eye-catching—and mostly edible—flowers. In this enchanting setting, a single long table set for 60 people with fairy lights strung from poles hinted at the unpretentious romance of the evening.

“We want people to feel the personality of our resort, its spirit,” says Gary Thulander, managing director of Chatham Bars Inn. “Sitting out in the middle of the farm amid the beautiful palette of these wonderful gardens is remarkable.”

Once seated, Thulander welcomed guests: “I’m very excited to be here, but most importantly, I’m excited to be sharing this experience with you.” Thulander then introduced his staff: Chatham Bars Inn Farm manager Joshua Schiff, executive chef Cole and director of banquets Chelsea Davis—a few of whom, along with the farm crew, joined guests at the table for an elevated backyard family feast.

While sauvignon blanc and pinot noir were generously poured, diners at the table were abuzz with delight as they enjoyed assorted fresh and pickled vegetables, white bean hummus, whipped garlic and nasturtium butter and farmers flat bread, followed by a tomato and cucumber salad, kefir cheese, salad burnet and farm botanicals. The entrées included steamed Chatham mussels, as well as char grilled Vermont Delmonico strip steaks with roasted root vegetables and a basil and mint chimichurri. The evening was capped off with a dreamy ricotta and farm berries tart with citrus zest crust and vanilla fennel anglaise.

“The menu was excellent and the setting really just perfect,” says repeat guest Paul Hewins, who attended both pilot events with his wife, Ellen. “What made it such a special event was the adventure of joining 60 strangers, all sharing a unique experience.”

Want a seat at the table? Check out the season’s schedule of events at Chatham Bars Inn and Chatham Bars Inn Farm at chathambarsinn.com.

Written by MARJORIE NAYLOR PITTS

Diners enjoy exquisite cuisine at idyllic Chatham Bars Inn Farm
If you farm it, they will come—and keep coming back for more. Indeed, keeping them down on the farm is easy when the farm is Chatham Bars Inn Farm, located on Route 6A in Brewster. In support of the local food movement, Richard Cohen, owner of Chatham Bars Inn and Capital Properties, purchased the eight-acre property in 2012. A short time later, he hired Midwest marketer-turned-farmer Joshua Schiff to manage the farm and oversee its transformation from a retail garden center surrounded by scrub pines to the picturesque and highly productive commercial farm it is today. “A lot of work went into clearing, leveling and creating workable growing spaces,” says Schiff. “Basically, the only instruction I was given was to create the best, nicest farm on Cape Cod.”

Now in its fifth year of production, the farm yields well over 100,000 pounds and 125 varieties of vegetables—a colorful array of peppers, carrots, beets, cabbages, onions, eggplants and salad greens, with the bulk of the crop delivered to Chatham Bars Inn and featured in the cuisine at its restaurants and catered events. “I’m lucky to work with Chef Cole,” says Schiff, referring to Anthony Cole, the executive chef at CBI for more than 12 years. “From the very beginning, our visions have aligned.” At the end of each growing season, Schiff and Cole spend hours reflecting on the harvest and carefully planning the next year’s crop. There are more than five acres under cultivation and a little under an acre in greenhouse space—a large portion of which is used to grow the flavorful varieties of hybrid and heirloom tomatoes highly favored by the chef. “Chef Cole has a voracious appetite for tomatoes,” says Schiff, “sometimes using over 2,000 pounds a week.” Recently, the Town of Brewster approved permits to allow the farm to host events and programs such as the popular farm-to-table dinners piloted late last summer. “We’ll also be doing more classes and workshops for our hotel guests and corporate groups,” says Schiff. “And we hope to expand to offer programs to the public as well.” One such activity is “Farm, Forage & Feast,” a two-hour guided tour with participants who pick vegetables that are then prepared by CBI chefs and served in a farm-to-table feast. Team-building programs include “Pick for a Cause,” where the team that picks, processes and packs the most vegetables wins—and so does the local food pantry, with the winning team presenting their harvest to the director of the pantry. Plans for the next phase of development include building a demonstration kitchen on site for cooking classes and other hands-on culinary programs, such as canning and preserving.

Ready to take home some of the bounty? New this year—a farm stand at Chatham Bars Inn Farm will be open to the public late May through October, offering the freshest produce available on Cape Cod. “We’re hoping to be unique,” says Schiff. “Unlike some farm stands that sell a lot of other items, we’re focusing on veggies.” Now that will keep them down on the farm.

Chatham Bars Inn Farm, 3034 Main Street/Route 6A, Brewster, 508-896-2800
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