

THE 53 BEST THINGS WE ATE THIS YEAR

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Gourmet Live and Epicurious staff and contributors name their most savory, succulent, sweet, and all-around stellar meals of 2012

35 of 53

← PREVIOUS NEXT →



Pineneedle Pork, Basement Bistro Earlton, New York

My favorite dish of the year was the Pineneedle Pork from Damon Baehrel at the [Basement Bistro](#) in upstate Earlton, New York. The Tamworth feet and shank are brined in a combination of pine needle powder, pine needle juice, and fresh pine needles, then cooked for 7 to 8 hours in concentrated hickory sap, and then "compressed." The sauce is a wild golden burdock root cooked in "The Soil It Was Grown In." There is also an essence of Chantenay carrot powder and wild vegetable with early wild lamb's quarters cooked in Damon's pressed grapeseed oil seasoned with apple bark "pepper" and hickory sap "glaze."

—[Michael Chernow](#), co-owner and general manager of the Meatball Shop and coauthor of *The Meatball Shop Cookbook*

35 of 53

← PREVIOUS NEXT →