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Mushrooms meat 414 restaurants in 45 states

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Five restaurants have received top honors in the James Beard Foundation's 2017 Blended Burger Project, which challenged chefs to make their burgers more delicious, nutritious and sustainable by blending chopped mushrooms with meat.



From Memorial Day through July 31, 414 restaurants in 45 states menued their own take on the

blended burger in the third annual competition, encouraging patrons to vote online for their favorite. More than 400,000 consumer votes were cast, and the five restaurants that earned the most will be cooking their burgers at the historic James Beard House in New York City in early 2018.

“The Blended Burger Project is a phenomenal opportunity for chefs to make their dishes more plant forward and for patrons to discover how their favorite foods can be made healthier and more sustainably, simply by substituting 25 to 50 percent of the burger’s protein with mushrooms,” Kristopher Moon, vice president of the James Beard Foundation, said in a press release. “Chains, diners, white table cloth bistros, upscale eateries in the heart of cities, the suburbs and small towns developed thoughtful and creative blended burgers. We congratulate and appreciate all those who took part.”

Throughout the challenge, customers were encouraged to vote for their favorite burgers at jamesbeard.org/blendedburgerproject. The five winning restaurants are:

- Bareburger, New York City — The Porchetta Burger is a 50-50 mushroom and wild boar blend, topped with a black-garlic aioli, broccoli rabe, oven-roasted tomatoes, and aged provolone cheese on a ciabatta bun.
- The Bistro at Topsail, Surf City, NC — The Goomba Burger, comprising local grass-fed Mills Family Farm beef blended with confit oyster and portobella mushrooms, topped with havarti, shiitake, bacon lemongrass aioli, heirloom tomato, baby arugula on a house baked bun.
- Cedar’s Café, Melbourne, FL — Brevard’s Taste of Summer Burger features blended mushrooms and lamb on an apricot and liquid smoke glazed bun, sour cherry mustard, basil, brie cheese, and an herb lemon caper walnut relish.
- Houston Yacht Club, La Porte, TX — The Greeklisn Burger consists of a beef chuck, cremini mushroom, and caper patty on a brioche bun and basil aioli with feta melted over the patty, topped with a mini greek salad and paprika oil.
- VINTAGE Kitchen, Norfolk, VA — The Backyard Burger includes a grass-fed beef blended with confit oyster mushrooms, aged double cheddar and cracklin’, charred ramp mayo, bacon rust, cab franc molasses, crispy hayman potato straws, coffee salt, demi-pain perdu, and brown butter mornay cooked in a cast iron skillet.

For ideas and inspiration for making The Blend at home, visit www.Blenditarian.com.

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