



## *The Journal*



# Oakland's California food-and-drink startups are flourishing



Oscartek Casework Designs complementing Oakland's expansion - Firebrand Bakery

May, 1, 2016 Oakland California;  
 Newcomers are flooding into the city, many of them driven there by escalating rents in San Francisco. Chefs are also leaving San Francisco to open restaurants in the East Bay where commercial rents are more affordable, parking's less insane, and the crowds are traditionally more chill. The city is also offering small businesses the support they need as they set up shop, while visitor bureaus add their marketing muscle to the effort. So it seems that the stars are aligned these days for Oakland's social scene, crowding into brewpubs, cool eateries, wineries and other venues that are collectively changing Oakland's cultural landscape. Just to mention a few; longtime San Francisco-based legendary sandwich shop Pal's Takeaway has recently moved to Oakland and is teaming up with Firebrand at a space in The Hive on Oakland's old auto row at 2335 Broadway. The Hive also houses Numi Tea, Calavera restaurant and Drake's Brewery.

Ordinaire Wine Shop & Wine Bar Stylishly minimalist wine bar/shop specializing in naturally made wines from Italy, France and elsewhere 3354 Grand Ave. Oakland Ca

Also The Punchdown at 1737 Broadway also offers natural wines.

Barlovento Chocolates 638 Second St. Oakland, Calif.

Made in the company's kitchen near Jack London Square, its house-made chocolates, candies and boxed truffles are available at several East Bay farmers markets. Bills itself as "an artisan chocolatier with a Farmers' Market ethic."

Peter's Kettle Corn

Gourmet kettle corn made on the premises, coming in a handful of surprising flavors.

4139 MacArthur Blvd. Oakland. Ca

That Takes the Cake

Amazing cakes and cupcakes coming out of this hole-in-the-wall bakery in East Oakland

5855 MacArthur Blvd. Oakland. Ca

Fist of Flour Doughjo

Basic takeout counter without seats or tables serving up what fans call some of the best wood-fired specialty pizzas in the city. 4166

MacArthur Blvd. Oakland. Ca

Bicycle Coffee

The pitch: "We roast quality coffee, grown by sustainable farms, and deliver it by bicycle."

364 Second St. Oakland. Ca

Abura-ya

Japanese style fried chicken, Izakaya plates and more. 380 15th St. Oakland. Ca

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## A Historical Refrigeration Study:

The inaugural article will begin with something we can't live without and most of us genuinely take for granted. "I love having a refrigerator, it allows me to have refreshingly cold drinks, preserve my food for longer, and allow me to heat my leftovers the next day. Fridges are great!" said no one ever.

It is also one of those pieces of technology that most of us don't understand how it works. What is the exact process that allows us a grand luxury? To have a device that we forget exists unless it's humming in the middle of the night or we lose power? Well you can add that aspect to the list that includes cars (for most of us), radio, TV, microwaves, phones and many more.

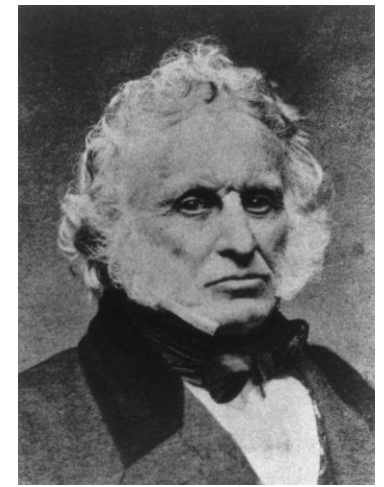
Regardless, it's not important to understand the exact process to appreciate it. The effect of refrigeration on civilization was and is a massive one. Speaking locally or domestically, waterways were the first thing explorers, conquistadors, and settlers looked for. A water source provided sustenance, energy, water for smithing and livestock, etc. Typically food would have to be eaten soon after it was captured.



Refrigeration allowed us to be able to move into isolated areas when it came to settling. One no longer had to live near a waterway to sustain living. One could stockpile enough food that live off of for days or weeks without need to head to the developing areas to re-supply or head back towards a waterway to fish or hunt.

The first known historical reference to refrigeration comes from ancient China's Shih King period, who referred to "ice cellars."

Subsequently, refrigeration is mentioned in Jewish scripture, by the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and the Indus Valley. In the 19th century refrigeration was a booming industry, especially here in New England. In fact, ice harvesting as a commercial business had its start right here in New England. In the start of the 19th century, few people utilized refrigeration because there simply wasn't a service in place. There were no storehouses to supply the ice, no supply chain, and no personnel to deliver it. It had isolated use by few individuals and certainly wasn't commonplace.



*Frederic Tudor, the Ice King who started a multi-million dollar industry in the 19th century.*

How the ice harvesting industry got to its booming stage, was by Bostonian Frederic Tudor (1783-1864) also known as the "Ice King." Tudor was the right man at the right time to kick-start the ice harvesting industry. He was born of a wealthy Boston lawyer and could afford to accrue the initial losses that were certain to come from a new venture.

On a visit to the Caribbean – it's not known if it was for business or pleasure – he got the bright idea to bring ice to the tropical isles. There was certainly a need for it. He thought back to the many ice ponds back home. In 1806 at the age of 23, he utilized his brig *Favorite* to take ice from his father's pond in Saugus, to Martinique. For four years, Tudor was in the red and did not turn a profit. In 1810 he made his first profit and the ice industry began to pick up steam.

Within a few short years he would add Cuba and a number of southern states. As technology advanced and he learned to preserve and cut better, he expanded into Europe and even India and was estimated to be worth \$220 million in today's money. People loved his "crystal blocks of Yankee coldness." Ice harvesting was a pretty darn dangerous business from harvesting to icebox. Men would venture out onto frozen ponds with saws, gaffs, tongs and picks and methodically cut and drag blocks. Falling into the water was dangerous



enough, but the sharp tools were responsible for the majority of the injuries. Manipulating these heavy blocks of ice came with its own hazards, as did shipping them.

The process of harvesting, would take dozens of men up to a month. First they would scrape all the snow, leaves and debris off the top. The men would then score a large section called a cutting grid. The cutting grid encompassed that day's section to be harvested. Then, further score marks of smaller sections would be made and these were called "rafts." These were rows that ran the length of the cutting grid. The men would then cut into the rats of two feet thick ice and pull the ice cakes out, often with the help of horses. A typical ice cake would be 22" x 32" to 44". These were then pulled along with gaffs and floated to the pond's edge. These ice cakes, would then go up a chute into the nearby storehouse where more men were waiting to cut them into even smaller sections, depending on existing or expected orders. While the waited delivery the ice cakes would be insulated with saw dust and/or hay. As you can see, a lot of work (and danger) went into bringing ice to iceboxes in homes across America. One could genuinely appreciate that "simple" ice cake that was brought to your home. I'd imagine that the average person was quite aware of the harvesting process in that day. If they didn't appreciate because of the labor and risk, the expense of the product and delivery would certainly grab you. Of course, the cost would go down as the demand went up and technology made the harvesting safer and easier. Today the entire industry has virtually been replaced with the refrigerator. I say, virtually and not entirely, since ice harvesting still takes place in a few areas of the world. In isolated parts of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire and parts of Canada the ice harvest is a communal event.

The precursor to the refrigerator, the icebox is something that my *Nonno* and even my mom recalled as a child growing up in the 1950s. Certainly there are some readers that recall using an icebox. We would love to hear your stories! Refrigeration is a modern convenience that we just can't live without and certainly one that I take for granted...or took for granted until I wrote this! Now when I go to my refrigerator, I think of Frederic Tudor's foresight and the thousands of unnamed men who harvested the ice and started an industry.

By: Joe Silvia, New Bedford Guide



*Andreoly Ice House of New Bedford in 1920.  
(Spinner Publications)*

