



News Release

Cape May County, New Jersey

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Dining at the Jersey Cape

What's the capital of New Jersey? For those who enjoy eclectic menus, superb service and trendy ambiance from sophisticated elegance to shabby chic, Cape May is definitely the culinary capital of the Garden State.

Much of Cape May's renaissance in the late 1970s is attributable to the culinary revolution that helped Cape May morph from a sleepy, little beach town to a Victorian seashore resort filled with restored, turn of the century mansions and new restaurants that favored exotic fish, good wines and exciting desserts.

Now, however, there's plenty of competition. The restaurant renaissance that started years ago in Cape May has spilled into the Wildwoods and north to Stone Harbor, Avalon and Ocean City with an ever-increasing number of gourmet restaurants.

Stop by Fishermen's Wharf at the Lobster House - Cape May is one of the largest fishing ports on the East Coast – and watch your dinner being unloaded when some of the area's largest boats dock after a day, weeks or longer at sea. And, Jersey Fresh produce – corn, tomatoes, berries, melons and more – much of it grown right here in Cape May County, is the perfect complement to any meal.

Outdoor dining, usually overlooking the ocean, the bay or the inland waterway, is one way to have it all: cool breezes, a great view and probably some good music thrown in. The decor is courtesy of Mother Nature as sailboats glide along, sightseeing boats or a

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paddle-wheeler passes by as the sun sinks slowly toward the horizon. Several restaurants in Cape May, the Wildwoods and Strathmere offer dock facilities for patrons who prefer to arrive by boat to enjoy a leisurely dinner or raw bar specialties as fresh as you can get anywhere.

Ethnic menus – popular Italian variations, Japanese sushi, Mexican fajitas, Thai, Asian, Greek gyros, Key West-style conch chowder - add more choices to mealtime. New restaurants are added each season, it seems, plus there are always the perennial favorites, ones that have been around literally for decades, in virtually every town in the county. Of course, there are always those fries, hoagies, cheese steaks, funnel cake, hot dogs and other summer choices on the boardwalks in shore communities – just watch out for those pesky seagulls who are always looking for their next meal!

Several county towns are dry: West Cape May (but that might change in the next year or so), Wildwood Crest which has a couple of great restaurants that are actually in Lower Township so liquor is sold, and Ocean City where there is no liquor, not even BYOB. Except for Ocean City, customers can bring in their choice of beverages to restaurants without a liquor license and several of those restaurants even have a selection of wines from local vineyards available for purchase with dinner.

For early birds or anyone who thinks breakfast is the most important meal of the day, there are plenty of choices from pancake houses, diners or Boardwalk concession stands – a great place for anyone who enjoys a morning bike ride or run.

Many restaurants cater to families and are kid-friendly with special children's menus, crayons, or other activities to keep the little ones happy.

At the other end of the day, early bird specials or prix fixe dinners add value; a few restaurants offer dessert service until around midnight, perhaps with a cappuccino or after dinner drink.

From the fun and funky to the upscale and elegant, the casual and family friendly, to eat in or take out, no one ever leaves Cape May County hungry!