

BEST EATS 2009

Presenting the food headliners that are making this year so delicious.

TEXT BY EMILY BETZ TYRA PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD ZAWISTOWSKI



Pear-adise salad

This salad has it all: crunchy red cabbage with tender greens, slivers of red onion and cucumbers, creamy goat cheese, char-grilled chicken, tart dried cranberries, sweet sliced red pears and honey-coated almonds. To dress it all: homemade pesto ranch. **CENTRE STREET CAFÉ**, 1125 CENTRE ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-946-5872

Moka Walnut Bars

Cathy Peterson's buttery shortbread would be so good on its own, but it's even better as a perch for smooth caramel and fresh, crunchy walnuts. **MOKA**, 102 S. BRIDGE LANE BELLAIRE, 231-533-6262



3| CRAB CAKE BENEDICT

A sweet, meaty Maryland crab cake stands in for Canadian bacon on this classic Benedict topped with fresh basil and from-scratch Hollandaise sauce. **GOOD HARBOR GRILL**, 6584 WESTERN AVE., GLEN ARBOR, 231-334-3555
★ ★ ★

4| CHEDDAR, ONION AND APPLE OMELET

Each bite is a masterful sweet-savory contrast, heightened all the more by a side of crispy bacon. **ART'S TAVERN**, 6487 WESTERN AVE., GLEN ARBOR, 231-334-3754
★ ★ ★

5| CRÈME BRÛLÉE OATMEAL

Silky custard poured over steel cut oats then sugared and brûléed to create dessert for breakfast. **CUPPA JOE WAREHOUSE LOUNGE**, 221 GARLAND, SUITE D, TRAVERSE CITY, 231-421-1945
★ ★ ★

6| PULLED PORK

Most of The Cooks' House showstoppers are made with five ingredients or fewer, but the chefs break tradition with this luxurious sandwich: after brining a pork shoulder overnight, they rub it with sugar, molasses, star anise, fennel seed, garam masala, coriander, black pepper and chili paste. Nine hours in a low oven later, the spicy meat is pulled and dressed with a caramely-vinegary sauce laced with lime zest. Eat it on a grilled ciabatta roll with Lamont white cheddar and crunchy Tokyo bekana cabbage. **THE COOKS' HOUSE**, 439 E. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-946-8700
★ ★ ★

7| BATIDOS

If it feels like the rest of the North is somewhere south, make your own mini spring break by sipping on a sunshine-y papaya milkshake. **CAFE HABANA**, 423 S. UNION ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-929-4150
★ ★ ★

8| KALAMATA OLIVE SPREAD

Cyndi Ogan created a cream-cheese based dip with olives, fresh garlic, roasted red peppers and spices for the holidays, and it hasn't had a break from the Oryana deli case since. **ORYANA NATURAL FOODS MARKET**, 260 E. 10TH ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-947-0191
★ ★ ★

9| HEARTH BAKED APPLE PIE

Temps soaring at 500°F in Pleasanton Bakery's wood-fired brick oven give the lattice crust lots of lofty, buttery crackle. The crust cradles thin-sliced organic apples from Brown's Orchard in Bear Lake, fragrant with cloves and other cozy spices. Friday is pie day, or call to special order. **PLEASANTON BRICK OVEN BAKERY**, 812 COTTAGE VIEW DR., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-941-1964
★ ★ ★

10| CHORIZO

Sonny Szejbach's piquant Mexican sausage is great in breakfast casseroles or sizzled up and stirred into white queso dip. **SONNY'S TORCH LAKE MARKET**, 2786 U.S. 31 N., TORCH LAKE VILLAGE, 231-599-2357
★ ★ ★

11| PUMPKIN CURRY SOUP

Lusty and elegant with lots of cream, a hint of foam and the subtlest Indian spice. **PATISSERIE AMIE**, 237 LAKE AVE., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-922-9645
★ ★ ★

12| ASIAGO DIP

Fifteen years after developing his highly addictive Zagolli's Feta Dip, Elk Rapids' Scott Zagers has unleashed the Asiago. The original is fab, as is the pesto and wasabi. FIND IT UP NORTH AT TOM'S AND OLESON'S GROCERY STORES AND IN MANY DOWNSTATE FOOD MARKETS.
★ ★ ★

Baked Jumbo Lump Crab

A baby casserole of sublimely fresh lump crab gets caramelized in the oven with white cheddar and sherry cream. **SIREN HALL**, 151 RIVER ST., ELK RAPIDS, 231-264-6062

Coconut Cupcakes

Buttercream-and-coconut cloaked snowballs with a surprise dollop of lemon curd inside. **MARTHA'S LEELANAU TABLE**, 413 N. ST. JOSEPH'S, SUTTONS BAY, 231-271-2344



Find our favorite queso recipe on page 50.

VOTE ✓
for your favorite food in Best Eats 2009 at MyNorth.com/links.



And may we take a moment to salute the Up North favorites that have endured, deliciously, for years.

CLASSIC EATS

15| MURDICK'S FUDGE

Why is it so hard to put that little plastic knife down? **MURDICK'S FUDGE**, HURON ST., MACKINAC ISLAND, 906-847-3530

★ ★ ★

◀ Side Door Saloon Burger

An Up North tradition since 1969. Frank says to get it with olives, bacon and mushrooms. **SIDE DOOR SALOON**, 1200 N. U.S. 31, PETOSKEY, 231-347-9291

★ ★ ★

17| THE GOBBLER

That crunchy scattering of sea salt on the bread keeps us coming back. **MARY'S KITCHEN PORT**, 539 W. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-941-0525

★ ★ ★

18| SMELT BASKET

Just a whisper of breading make these pop-in-your-mouth fishies the best around. **THE BLUEBIRD**, 102 RIVER ST., LELAND, 231-256-9081

★ ★ ★

19| COCONUT CREAM PIE

This 1903 downtown diner was a hangout of Ernest Hemingway, and we have to wonder if he loved their billowy meringue-lidded coconut pie as much as we do. **JESPERSON'S**, 312 HOWARD ST., PETOSKEY, 231-347-3601

★ ★ ★

20| THURSDAY PIEROGIES

Farmers cheese, egg, onion or mashed potato-and-cheddar pierogies are sautéed in butter and onion and served with kraut cabbage, pork ribs and polish sausage. Verna Bartnik has made them from her Polish grandmother's recipe for the Thursday special for more than 20 years. **OLD MISSION TAVERN**, 17015 CENTER RD., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-223-7280

★ ★ ★

21| FUNGUS AMONGUS

They've been sending people out the door with butcher paper-wrapped marvels for 30 years, but number 25 on their famous sandwich board still gets our vote: sliced London broil, imported Asiago, fresh portabella mushrooms and onions are grilled and topped with lettuce and Donna Folgarelli's mom Marge's Italian dressing on homemade rosemary ciabatta. **FOLGARELLI'S ITALIAN IMPORT MARKET**, 424 W. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-941-7651

★ ★ ★

Did we miss your favorite? Tell us about it at MyNorth.com/links.

22| BLUE CHEESE DRESSING

This cool and dreamy sour cream, black pepper and blue cheese-laced indulgence induces nostalgic oohs and ahhs when poured over a crisp iceberg wedge. **MODE'S BUM STEER**, 125 E. STATE ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-947-9832

★ ★ ★

23| CLASSIC BORSCHT

The bar got a little reputation revamp, the soup did not: it's still the delicious burger-laced beet potage it always was. **THE CABBAGE SHED**, 198 FRANKFORT AVE., ELBERTA, 231-352-9843

★ ★ ★

Sour Cream Doughnuts ▶

These golden-rich puppies are fried longer than regular doughnuts for that caramelized crunch on the outside. **JOHAN'S PASTRY SHOP**, 565 W. MITCHELL ST. PETOSKEY, 231-347-3815

★ ★ ★

25| PRIME RIB

Tourists and locals alike come for the big portions of slow roasted rib. Go red-blooded or turf it up with shrimp, perch, snow crab or lobster. **BOONE'S LONG LAKE INN**, 7208 SECOR RD., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-946-3991

★ ★ ★



26

Tacos de Pescado

Let's see—green chile sour cream, shredded cabbage, pico de gallo, guacamole and grilled mahimahi tucked in warm corn tortillas. What else can take a cool day in March straight to beach season? **SCOTT'S HARBOR GRILL**, 12719 SW BAY SHORE DR., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-922-2114



27| VANILLA KIRSCH CAKE

A European sponge cake is bathed in Kirsch liqueur, filled and frosted with vanilla buttercream and pressed with toasted almonds. Try it by the slice and find out why Gopher's cake decorator Gemma Martello is having it for her own wedding cake. **GOPHER'S CAFÉ**, 910 N. 3RD ST., MARQUETTE, 906-226-0900 ★★★

28| APPLE BUTTER BARBECUE SAUCE

Made with Friske Orchards' homemade apple butter, this luscious tomato-y sauce gets depth from molasses, vinegar, anchovies and tamarind but no gratuitous smoke flavor. Souse it over pulled pork from the crockpot—amazing. **FRISKE ORCHARDS**, 10743 N. U.S. 31, ELLSWORTH, 231-599-2604 ★★★

29| STUFFED CROISSANTS

Golden croissants stuffed with salty feta, tender spinach and golden pine nuts make the best morning (or afternoon) snack. **SYMONS GENERAL STORE**, 401 E. LAKE ST., PETOSKEY, 231-347-2438 ★★★

30| BEER CHEESE SOUP

This brawny soup recipe from our friends across the lake, chock-full of light beer and smoked sausage, kicks off every weekend in Petoskey: look for it Fridays in the classic black crock. **FLATIRON DELI**, 313 HOWARD ST., PETOSKEY, 231-347-5190 ★★★

31| SAKE GLAZED SEA BASS

Mirin, sake and soy give a delicious sheen to a mild fillet served up simply yet stunningly with cucumber salad, Thai jasmine rice and black sesame seeds. **RED GINGER**, 237 E. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-944-1733 ★★★

32| BOURBON BLUEBERRY BREAD PUDDING

Bourbon factors deliciously into many of this chic steakhouse's dishes, including dessert, where dried blueberries are simmered in bourbon and brown sugar, then spooned over a warm bourbon-soaked bread pudding with homemade vanilla ice cream. **BOURBONS 72**, TURTLE CREEK CASINO, 7741 M-72 E., WILLIAMSBURG, 231-534-8700 ★★★

33| ORANGE PECAN SCONES

A barely sweet butter-milk scone dough is folded over a filling of homemade caramel, zesty marmalade and gently salted roasted pecans. **TRUFFLES BAKERY**, 208 BRIDGE ST., CHARLEVOIX, 231-237-9480 ★★★

34| 14K SAUCE

Made in small batches in Traverse City, this sauce of butter, cinnamon and citrus juices is ambrosial goodness over ice cream. AT **MAXBAUER'S**, 407 S. UNION ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-947-7698 AND **CRYSTAL CRATE AND CARGO**, 262 S. BENZIE BLVD., BEULAH, 231-882-5294 ★★★

35| SANDWICH OF YOUR DREAMS

There's something to the name. Our art associate Kelly Nogoski still rhapsodizes about the cabin fever cure she found last February: a walk on the Frankfort beach and this delicious turkey sandwich. It's warm and toasty with sautéed mushrooms and onions, melted provolone, shredded lettuce, tomato, banana peppers and a li'l mayo. **DINGHY'S**, 415 MAIN ST., FRANKFORT, 231-352-4702 ★★★

36| DERBY BARS

Baker and former Kentuckian Bob Korten tweaked the classic Derby pie into a dense brownie amalgam with chocolate chips, pecans and a glossy bourbon caramel. **CRESCENT BAKERY**, 404 MAIN ST., FRANKFORT, 231-352-4611 ★★★

37| EURODOG

A clever little portable lunch—a locally made hot dog is slipped in a toasted baguette with chili, cheese, onions and a creamy, lightly spiced Euro sauce. **EUROSTOP**, 620 RAILROAD PLACE, TRAVERSE CITY, 231-421-1168 ★★★

38| VEGETABLE EMPANADAS

Sweet smoky vegetables in a rich pastry pocket balance with the fresh bite of poblano pepper salsa and refreshing greens. **EL DORADO**, 149 E. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-421-3228 ★★★

39| VEGETARIAN NACHOS

Healthy comfort food: a TVP nacho "meat" on crunchy corn chips with sharp cheddar. And all the fixins? Ripe, crunchy and organic. **PLAZA CAFÉ**, 110 N JAMES ST., LUDINGTON, 231-845-7600 ★★★

40| BUFFALO MEATLOAF

Chef Dino achieves moist and marvelous with his grilled version of the Midwestern classic and serves it with a rich garlic demi glace. **OLD STATE ROADHOUSE**, BOYNE CITY 273 OLD STATE RD., BOYNE CITY, 231-582-7702 ★★★

41| NUTS AND BERRIES

A two-bite sconette made with T.C. cherries and Grape-Nuts is a modestly delicious pick-me-up, especially when paired with an impeccably steamed cappuccino. **MORSELS**, 104 CASS ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-421-1353 ★★★

42| GABRIEL PIZZA

Yes, their craft beer rules. So, too, their craft pizza. Jalapeños add a devilish edge to the smoky-sweet ham and pineapple pie. **SHORT'S BREWING COMPANY**, 121 N. BRIDGE ST., BELLAIRE, 231-533-6622 ★★★

For more of our absolute favorite pizzas turn to page 49.

43| LEPRECHAUN BALLS

Bar food at its best: fried, unassuming and conversation starting. Feel a twinge of irreverent heat biting into these deep fried jalapeño peppers stuffed with spicy chicken and creamy cheese. **KILKENNY'S IRISH PUBLIC HOUSE**, 400½ W. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-941-7527 ★★★

44| SMOKING GREENS

A melty smoked cheddar sandwich with avocado, sunflower seeds, spinach, paper-thin red onion and matcha green tea-infused mayonnaise. Simple, healthy and delightful. **SERENITY TEA BAR AND CAFÉ**, 232 E. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-421-1564 ★★★

45| SOUR CHERRY PATCHES

Not often does a candy make this list, but we're smitten with this chewy-soft gelee with tangy tart real cherry flavor. **CHERRY REPUBLIC**, 6026 LAKE ST., GLEN ARBOR, 800-206-6949 ★★★

46| BEEF TENDERLOIN

Two robust, rich medallions of beef tenderloin with a petit gorgonzola cheese-stuffed pastry and mushroom bordelaise sauce, are amazingly only \$12 on the small plate menu, and ½ off on Thursdays. Consider yourself in the know. **FIREFLY**, 310 S. CASS ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-932-1310 ★★★

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