

# Dining

## Blue Pelican Inn

Love is a crispy crab cake for two, shared on the gracious wraparound porch at Central Lake's Blue Pelican Inn. The 1924 brick inn is a stately Northern Michigan landmark, but the vibe here is warmly Southern, the cuisine freshly East Coast.

For the lady, perhaps the delicate seared scallops or crab-stuffed, herb-crusted walleye? Side it with green beans and a sweet potato or tangy slaw and fries. And, if your guy is a meat-and-potatoes man, the seasoned Delmonico steak—but for sure have him cut you a bite. Linger in a best-of-both-worlds mood on the heat-lamp-lit porch, where, with the fans also purring, it still feels just like summer. More on where to take your love on a late summer dinner date—turn the page.

BY EMILY BETZ TYRA

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September

87

Date Night

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Recipe: Sweet  
Corn Spoonbread

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# Date Night

BY EMILY  
BETZ TYRA

## On the Town

THE NEWEST NIGHTSPOTS TRAVERSE CITY IS TALKING ABOUT

### PHIL'S ON FRONT

Sip sleek, smooth drinkable desserts or dine from a daily-written menu in a comfy-chic downtown bistro and chocolate lounge. Each of the 28 stylishly named martinis sounds more delicious than the next—indulge in the chocolate heaven martini (a milkshake for a momma) or a fruitful raspberry martini with a fresh berry puree. Happy hour is daily from four to six; no need to get fancy—the cocktails take care of that. Nightly entertainment, too. 236 E. FRONT ST., TRAVERSE CITY, 231-929-1710, PHILSONFRONT.COM.

### STEVEN'S PLACE

A classy, 40's-style nightclub inspired by fresh fine dining. The chef creates a menu of healthy decadence—Champagne-soaked salmon, filet mignon of buffalo, honey-lavender crème brûlée and coconut key lime cake. Dance the night away to live entertainment on Steven's professional dance floor, or take lessons offered Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 7 p.m. 738 S. GARFIELD, TRAVERSE CITY, 231-929-8945, STEVENSPACENIGHTCLUB.COM.—Lauren Marmion



### FOODIE FILE

## Chris and Merrie Corbett

OWNERS OF THE BLUE PELICAN INN, CENTRAL LAKE

Chris and Merrie Corbett craved the cuisine of the East Coast and decided to bring a taste of the sea—crab corn chowder, jumbo seared scallops, lemon-steamed jumbo shrimp and wine-bathed mussels—to their adopted home of Central Lake. After their beachy Blue Pelican restaurant on Old State Road burned down, Chris and Merrie decided, to the joy of Central Lake residents worried about the fate of the long-on-the-market Lamplight Inn, to make the historic anchor of Main Street their newest labor of love. The couple completely revamped the inn, flanking the walkway to the dreamy, covered wraparound porch with two namesake, big-billed statues. It's that lazy porch that makes the Blue Pelican Inn such a romantic date-night destination. (Or maybe it's the seven guest rooms upstairs starting at \$95 a night.) 2535 N. MAIN ST., CENTRAL LAKE, 231-544-2583.



### SPLURGE WORTHY

## Andante

For that really transcendent last summer dinner with your sweetie, go somewhere with a view, smart service and food that makes your toes curl under the table with happiness. Andante delivers on all. From your table perched on the high bluff overlooking Little Traverse Bay, chef-owner Bob Stark begins your escape with a playful amuse-bouche (on our visit, a wee walleye sushi roll with spicy aioli and smoked sea salt). Then front of the house maven Lori Stark (and Chef Stark's own

true love—they were married 10 years ago this September) and her staff keep the little gifts coming one after the other: the crackly crisp shallots on your charred, tandoori-spiced shrimp, a balsamic roasted pear nested in your baby heirloom greens, the exquisite fermented black bean sauce under your walleye fillet (pictured). For dessert, a refreshing sunset on the beach; for your planning purposes, know it slips into the lake about 8 p.m. this time of year. 321 BAY ST., PETOSKEY, 231-348-3321.