

I Love to Eat on the North Fork Updated 11/25/15  
By Jim Dreeben of Peconic Paddler (In business over 50 years.)

Eating on the North Fork is a double treat. The food is excellent in most restaurants, and, the ride out east is beautiful, driving either on the south side (Peconic Bay Blvd. and New Suffolk Blvd.) or the north side (Sound Ave., Rt.48 and Rt.25). You catch many glimpses of water: the L.I. Sound and Peconic Bay.

**Briermere Farms**, makes pies, cakes and cookies to die for. My favorite is **Blueberry Cream Pie**. Specs: 5.5" high, about 10 pounds. I slice it into 4 wedges and eat 1 a day (like vitamins). I have it for breakfast or as dessert for dinner and I never share it, well, maybe, one fork-full. 4414 Sound Ave., Riverhead. 631-722-3931.

**The Elbow Room** in Jamesport has (unquestionably) the **best steaks** on Long Island. My favorite meal: marinated porterhouse steak (medium rare), baked potato, baked clams appetizer, blue cheese on the salad and a Beefeater martini w/3 olives (never 4). They also make great lobster tails and shrimp scampi.

**Jamesport Manor Inn** on Manor Lane in Jamesport is in a beautiful, restored old farm house. I love their beet salad, mushroom ravioli and Crescent Farms Duck Breast. They have Crooked Ladder Beer on tap and local wines from Martha Clara, Macari, Paumanok, Lenz Estate, Laural Lakes and Rafael Estate.

**The Village Cheese Shop** on Love Lane in Mattituck sells some delicious **stinky cheese** (and some not so stinky). My favorites: Limburger, Pont L'Eveque, Brie de Maux and Camembert de Normandy. They offer free cheese tasting and they sell a variety of olive oils, vinegar and other unique quality foods.

**Noah's** in Greenport is like a trendy N.Y.C restaurant. Noah's has an amazing raw bar with tuna tartare shrimp, lobster, clams and oysters, fresh from the sea. Mouth watering entrees: lobster roll, duck confit and Kobe beef burgers are my favorites. Noah's has an extensive wine list and great beer on tap.

**Greenport Harbor Brewing Co's.** tasting room in Peconic is so big it reminds me of the *Hofbrauhaus in Munich sans hefty Damen carrying 5 mugs in each hand. My favorites: 4.7% ABV Black Duck Porter and 5.3 % ABV Harbor Ale. They have stronger beers also, up to 9.5% ABV, but how would I drive to Noah's?*

**Hellenic Snack Bar.** I love their **chicken souvlaki** entrée and scordalia and saganaki appetizers and baklava, and, to wash it down, Hellenik is famous for their foamy, frothy **lemonade**. 631-477-0138. Rt.25 in East Marion.

**Orient by the Sea** is at the eastern tip of the North Fork. I love their Orient Clam Chowder and Ferry Hopper's Salad. They have a lobster special on Fridays and Greenport Harbor Beer on tap. 631-323-2424.

**Touch of Venice** in Cutchogue (28350 Man Rd.) makes delicious calamari and mussels appetizers. For entrees, I love the chittari and tagliatelli. Thursday night special: salad and entrée for only 20 bucks.

**a Mano Restaurant** in Mattituck has Tuscan style wood fired pizza and, two of my favorites: charred octopus and tuna tartare. I like a Mano's whole roasted branzino and house made ricotta gnocchi w/mushrooms. a Mano has over 100 wines from Italy and from the North Fork of Long Island. I think you will love a Mano. 13550 Main Road.

**\*Disclaimer:** Tastiness of lobster, shrimp and crabs is hearsay from friends because I am allergic to them; if I eat them I could die. I have tasted the other foods that are mentioned as well as some of the wines and draft beer.

**Condensed: foods to die for, not to be missed, last meal before execution:** Elbow Room steaks, Noah's clams and oysters, Jamesport Merlot, GHB Black Duck Porter, a Mano Octopus, VCS Limberger Cheese, Tweed's Bison.

**Please don't drink/drive on the North Fork. Southold police can smell alcohol before radar can clock your speed.**

## Little Peconic Bay and Great Peconic Bay

To enjoy the North Fork and Peconic Bays from a different perspective, **paddle a kayak from Orient Point to Riverhead**. It is 32 miles and takes only 8 ½ hours (of steady paddling) if you time the tides right. My wife and I did it a couple of years ago. We parked at Narrow River Marina in Orient and paddled south for a short distance then turned right (west) and our journey started.

It is important to carry lots of water, trail mix and apples for energy. Don't forget to drink water often. Other supplies aside from the kayaks, paddles and PFDs: spare paddles, tow rope (in case I get tired), spray skirts, toilet paper, compass, binoculars, hats and paddle floats. We also had a nautical chart to show us the most direct route. Due west and straight ahead is a shorter distance than following the shore line, although we did paddle to shore a couple of times to have a snack and go swimming.

You don't realize how big the bays are until you are in the middle in a narrow, 22" wide, kayak. You are **"a speck on the sea"**. The only company we had were a few leaping fish, some turtles poking their heads up and lots of 8" diameter (bell) lion's mane jellyfish (a.k.a. hair jelly). I have read they have long, sticky tentacles but we could not see them. I would not want to go swimming with lion's mane jelly fish.

We started out at low tide; the first 5 hours was easy paddling with the incoming tide. Then it got a little harder but we had only 12 miles to go. Piece of pie (Briermere's)! By the time we got to Riverhead, we were totally fatigued, spent of all energy, and, we still had to drive to Orient to pick up my truck.

After a great day on the water, we dined at Hellenic Snack Bar: delicious lemonade, souvlaki, baklava for dessert and coffee for the ride home. I have never been as tired as after paddling 8 ½ hours from Orient to Riverhead. It was fun and I would do it again.

**(An aside: Peconic Paddler will give a \$100.00 gift certificate to anyone who replicates the above trip.)**

Please call or e-mail for "I Love to Eat in Riverhead", "I Love to Eat in Hampton Bays" and "Paddle to Eat (or eat to Paddle)". 631-727-9895 or jim@peconicpaddler.com.