

EPICUREAN TRAVELER

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Go Locally Sourced at The Cookery in Door County, Wisconsin

by Jan Ross | Food, Food blog | 0 comments



Beautiful Door County, Wisconsin, located on a peninsula of land which extends into clear and gorgeous Lake Michigan on one side and several lovely bays on the other, has plenty of great dining choices.

Locally caught whitefish, along with fried cheese curds, and the delicious local cherries are special favorites and you can find them in most of the local restaurants. But for one of the best gourmet dining experiences in the area, stop in [The Cookery](#).

Located in the charming coastal town of Fish Creek, one of many delightful villages which dot the Cape Cod-like area of Door County, The Cookery not only provides one of the best dining choices in the area, this family owned and family run restaurant prides itself on using locally sourced products as much as possible on their menu.

Back in May of 1977, Dick and Carole Skare honeymooned in Door County and proceeded to fall in love with the place, as many visitors do. But they were unique as they were aspiring restaurateurs

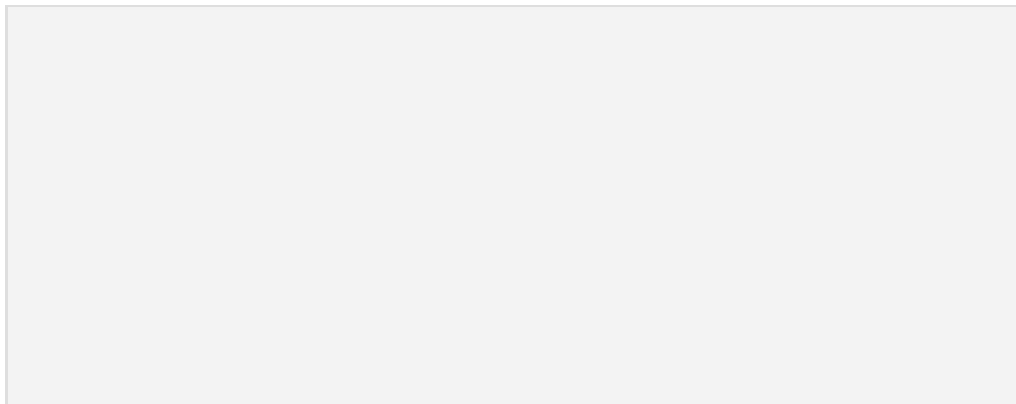
who met a local shopkeeper named Hazel Elliot. Hazel realized she had future Door County residents and took the time to show them a small, twenty seat restaurant in downtown Fish Creek, right on the main street overlooking the bay.

Just two months later, The Cookery opened for business.



The original restaurant building.

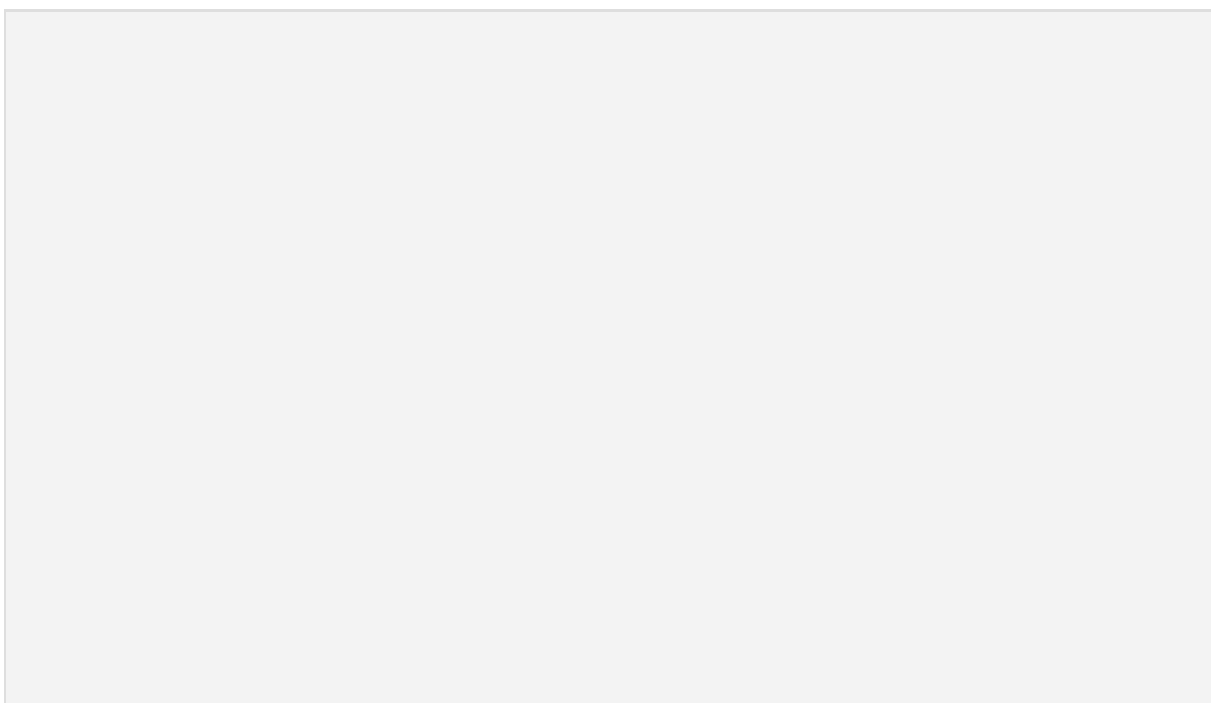
Their goal for the restaurant was to create a welcoming, casual environment where customers could enjoy the great food they would prepare in the restaurant's kitchen using local ingredients. Dairy products, produce, meats, coffee and tea, along with other local products, appear on the menus daily. Carol had been raised on a rural family farm in Minnesota and expanded on recipes learned from her mother to create unique and delicious [menu items](#) which keep visitors and local alike returning again and again. They even make their own ice cream – and it is to die for!





The restaurant today. Photo courtesy of The Cookery.

Gradually, the restaurant expanded to 85 seats, and the family also offers some lodging options, along with a full line of jams, sauces, and salad dressings sold in the restaurant, and they even have a wonderful little bakery of items.





Take it all home!



One of each, please!

In the spring of 2008, The Cookery suffered a fire which forced the restaurant to close its doors but resulted in expanded seating, and a new second floor water view wine bar. The second floor includes a full bar with some local, Wisconsin brews that the guys in our group particularly enjoyed.



Second floor dining.



Nice view from the second floor dining area.



The best view in the restaurant!

Dick and Carol are proud that both of their daughters, Courtney and Karin, are involved with running the restaurant and take just as much pride in it as their parents.



Courtney and her dad, carrying on the family tradition.

They even have a small kitchen garden behind the restaurant with a variety of herbs and vegetables.



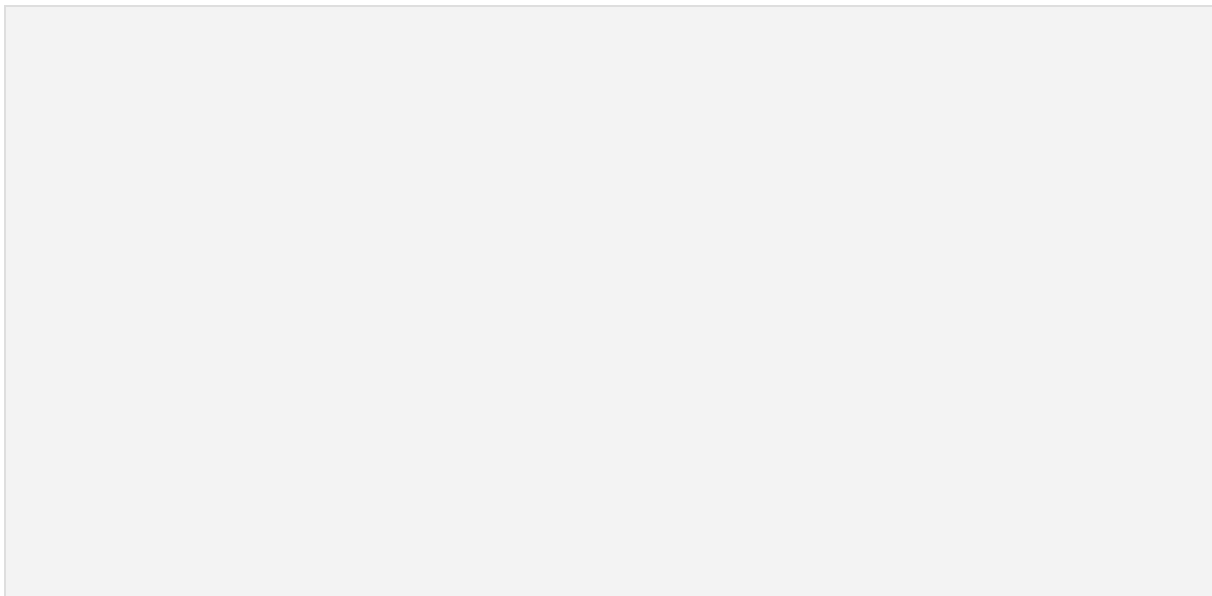
Can't get any fresher than herbs picked in the back yard!

We visited The Cookery last summer and, when we returned recently with more family members in tow, we knew we had to return for one of their sumptuous meals.

We were seated upstairs on this visit and really enjoyed the open, airy location with a view of the bay. The guys decided to check out the local Door County Brewing County offering.



The last time we dined there, I had an amazing Four Berry Baked Brie which was in this luscious pastry crust.





Four Berry Baked Brie.

This time, I sampled the crab cakes and we also tried the scallops. Both were equally delicious.

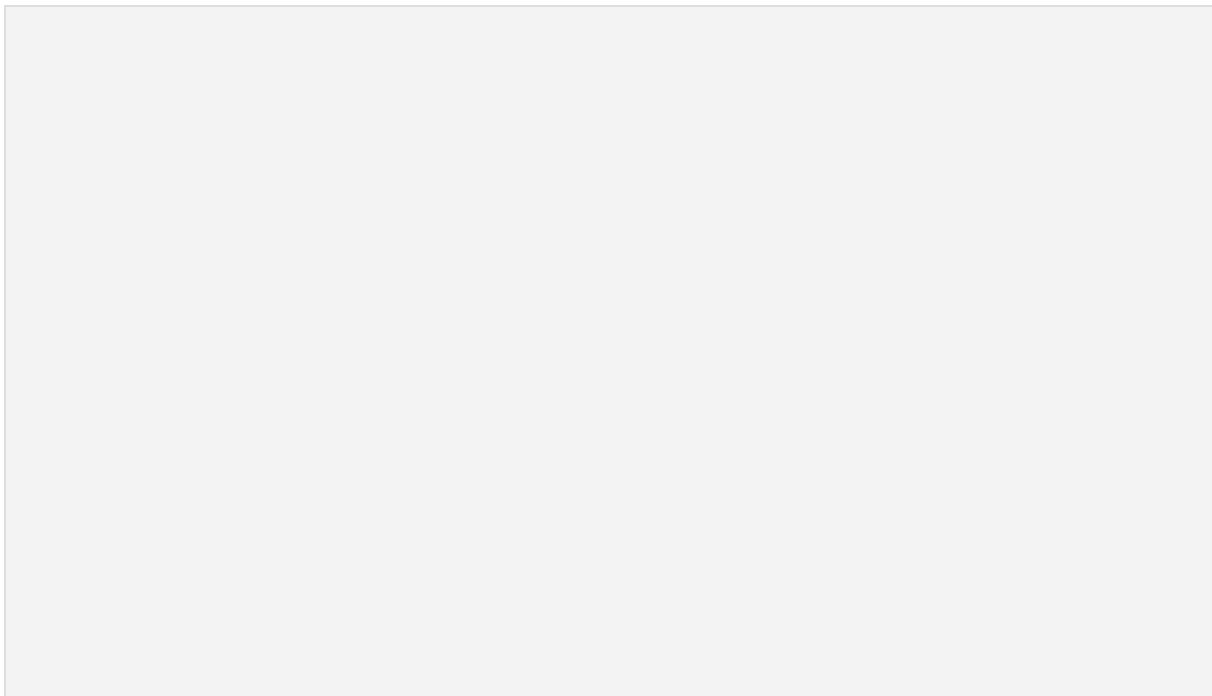


Crab cakes.



Scallops.

For dinner the last time, I had a delicious steak but decided to go with the interesting smoked pork chop, which was a great choice. We also sampled the salmon which was moist, flaky, and perfectly cooked.





Fabulous steak.



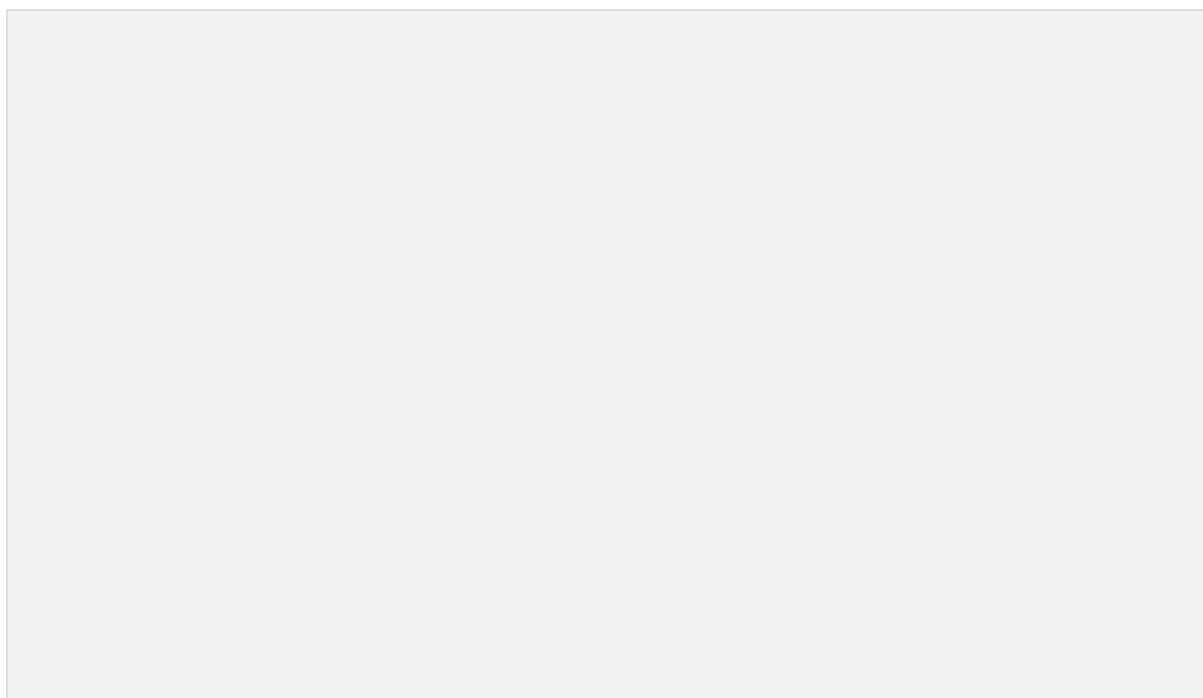
Smoked porch chop.



Tasty salmon.

Dessert was truly a difficult decision as every single thing on the menu and in the bakery case looked amazing. But after our waiter told us the salted caramel ice cream was fabulous, we had to get the chocolate cake with ice cream and we were not sorry one tiny bit.

Well, maybe one tiny regret that we couldn't sample every single dessert!





What a way to finish a meal!

When you make your travel plans to visit Door County, be sure to stop in The Cookery for breakfast, lunch, or dinner. You will be so very happy that you did!

Now, here's a wonderful salad that you can possibly make yourself although I suggest you just visit The Cookery and indulge!

The Cookery's Door County Cherry and Apple Salad

- 2 T white wine vinegar
- 1 T red wine vinegar
- ½ t Dijon mustard
- 1 T sugar
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1/8 t salt
- 1/8 t pepper
- 2 T fresh tarragon
- 2 T extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup walnuts
- 2 T honey
- 1 T water
- 1 head red leaf lettuce, torn into bite size pieces



The Cookery Cherry and Apple Salad

2 apples, preferably Door County apples, thinly sliced
½ cup crumbled gorgonzola
¼ cup dried Door County tart cherries

To make the vinaigrette: combine vinegars, mustard, sugar, shallot, salt, pepper and tarragon. Whisk oil into vinegar mixture.*

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Combine the honey and water in a bowl, add the walnuts and toss to coat. Place the nuts in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake five to ten minutes or until golden brown. Stir the nuts halfway through the baking time.

Remove the pan and allow nuts to cool.

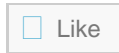
In a serving bowl, combine lettuce, apples, gorgonzola and dried cherries. Toss with the vinaigrette. Top with toasted walnuts.

*The red wine tarragon vinaigrette is available for sale in The Cookery's lobby

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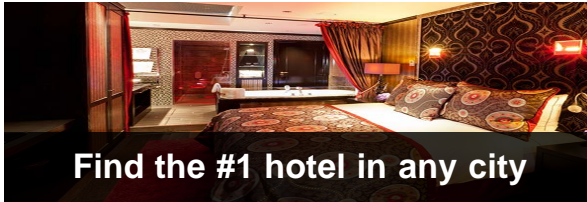
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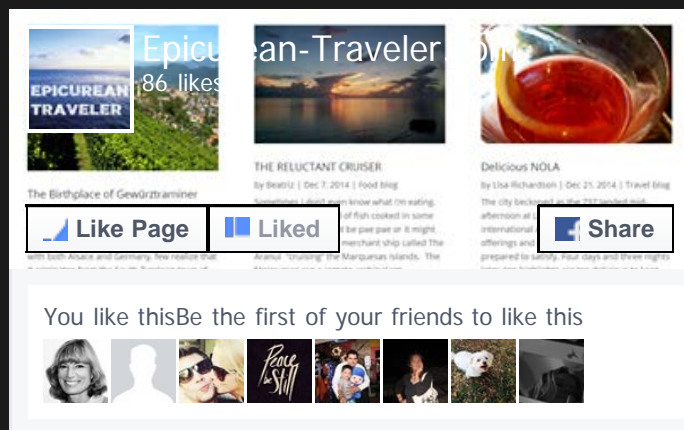
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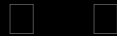
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