

## Dining by boat

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run we'll tackle in almost any weather is to Leland, where the venerable Riverside Inn and Bluebird Restaurant are both right on the river and have dock space in back.

We like to launch our boat in Lower Lake Leelanau at Bingham and enjoy a slow cruise through the narrows en route to dinner.

You'll find both restaurants on the right bank as you descend the river (the Riverside on the outside of the bend opposite the public library and the Bluebird a bit farther along, just above the highway bridge).

The Bluebird's casual bar offers the prototype Up North whitefish platter with fries and slaw, and the dining room overlooking the river is only a tad dressier.

The Riverside Inn is a local treasure, with dining inside and out and a menu of contemporary American

cuisine that always sends us away happy.

If you want to make it an overnight cruise, the inn even has guest rooms upstairs.

In Traverse City, the best dock-and-dine opportunity is at the Holiday Inn on West Bay just east of the Boardman River.

Its pier is used by two sizable excursion boats, but any other dock space is yours for the taking. Low water levels require caution in large vessels, of course, and the pier is so long-legged that small-craft skippers might consider anchoring near shore and wading in, or even beaching.

Call ahead on your cell (947-3700) and they'll deliver dinner right to your boat from CW's Bluewater Bistro.

Two other Traverse City spots are worth considering: Scott's Harbor Grill at Harbor West Marina has friendly service, casual style and excellent seafood, pizza, chicken fingers, nachos and quesadillas. There's no dock, but



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### Many restaurants are easily accessible by boat.

the marina next door (VHF Ch. 9) often has transient space available.

Apache Trout Grill, about a mile northwest of Clinch Park municipal marina, has a dock, although the water is very shoal in that whole area of the bay.

Remember, too, that there are many more fine

places, not on the water but within an easy walk of the public marinas, in towns like Boyne City, Elk Rapids, Charlevoix and Petoskey, where you can almost always find a few hours' mooring along the "shoppers' dock" that many towns provide free or at a small fee. So enjoy

yourself, go safely ... and eat well.

*Sherri and Graydon DeCamp are authors of "The Connoisseur Up North," a best-selling restaurant guide and cookbook. Previous columns can be viewed by visiting their Web site, [www.bayshorebooks.com](http://www.bayshorebooks.com).*

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