

*Cupola*

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coffees, two orders of juice and an order of meaty sausage patties, our bill approached \$50. The Cupola Room (526-8932) is at 340 State St., Harbor Springs. It serves breakfast only, 7:30 to 11 a.m. daily except Tuesday until Labor Day, then on weekends only until mid-October.

When you are on a budget, but want something special, try Taqueria Margarita, where desayuno — breakfast — is available whenever they're open for about five bucks. The place is famous in Traverse City for its authentic Mexican fare. The breakfast menu always offers huevos rancheros and chilaquiles, consisting of tortilla strips sautéed with mild chiles, cheese and chorizo. At \$7.50, it is the Taqueria's most expensive dish, but worth it — and it comes with your choice of meat or eggs. Taqueria Margarita, at 1319 W. South Airport Road (935-3712), is open daily.

One of our favorite breakfast occasions is part of a good morning's bike ride, and two of our favorites are the trails from Charlevoix to Petoskey and Frankfort to Beulah. The Charlevoix-Bay Harbor segment of the former is just enough to work up an appetite for the Original Pancake House in Bay Harbor's Marina District, another spot where you often find a waiting line. Yes, it's part of a national chain of 90-odd outlets, but they are very serious about hearty breakfast omelets, crepes, waffles and pancakes.

In Beulah, about a hour's ride from Frankfort, the Phoenix Café has some of



Record-Eagle/Lara Neel

**Vick Benetti, chef and co-owner of the Cupola Room, plates up breakfast dishes in the kitchen. The menu changes daily to showcase seasonal and local foods.**

the region's finest coffees (from Traverse City's Great Northern Roasting Company) to go with an array of muffins, scones and buttermilk pancakes you can stoke up on before heading back down the trail. The top of the line

here is a "Strata Frittata," of baked egg, cheese, herbs and veggies, but whatever you do, don't leave without the house-specialty ginger scone. The Phoenix (882-2005) is downtown at 245 S. Benzie.

Once in a while, we like

going to breakfast by water. Mornings on extended cruises might find us at Beaver Island, where there is nothing quite like breakfast on the porch at Dalwhinnies, overlooking St. James Harbor. This popular breakfast spot is much favored by boaters and islanders alike for its home-baked bread and pastries, hearty blueberry pancakes and homemade sausage, and glorious, double cappuccinos in oversized coffee cups.

On less adventuresome days, we might launch our little boat at Bingham early in the morning and cruise up Lower Lake Leelanau, through the misty narrows and on to Leland.

We can dock along the river and stroll for some coffee and scones at the Stone House Café (407 S. Main St.). They start at 6 o'clock, so we know they'll be open, and with luck, we can use the little slip right behind the café.

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