



# News Release

*Cape May County, New Jersey*

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## **Right this way – your table is waiting!**

Trivia question: What's the capital of New Jersey? For those who enjoy eclectic menus, superb service and trendy ambiance that ranges from sophisticated elegance to shabby chic, Cape May is definitely the culinary capital of the Garden State.

Part of Cape May's renaissance in the late 1970s is attributable to the restaurateurs who were willing to gamble on the restoration efforts. Several of them threw their chefs' hats into the mix to help Cape May move from a sleepy, little beach town to a Victorian seashore resort filled with restored turn of the century mansions and new restaurants that favor exotic fish, good wines and exciting desserts.

Enter Harry Kulkowitz, a Philadelphia art dealer, who was playing poker on the porch of the Carroll Villa on Jackson Street in 1974. Kulkowitz bought the Villa just a half block from the ocean and opened one of Cape May's first fun and funky restaurants, The Mad Batter. He gave up his art career but his artistic connections in the city served him well as he hired people eager to be on the cutting edge of the town's culinary revolution.

The Batter, with its colorful interior and porch with the familiar striped yellow awning, never fell out of favor and, no surprise, it's still one of the most popular stops in this town of great places to eat. Breakfast on the porch is THE best way to begin a Cape May kind of day! Often the works of local artists are on display adding to the seashore

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ambiance and a sign on the porch admonishes guests that “Life is uncertain; eat dessert first.” Great advice!

But the Batter isn’t alone – there are a dozen or more restaurants vying for your culinary attention. Louisa’s, another early entry into the Cape May restaurant renaissance, is a tiny café-style place just off the Washington Street Mall where everything about it smacks of fun. The daily menu is on a blackboard with selections erased as they run out, and the seating is up close and personal, practically forcing diners to talk to strangers which is definitely one of the Louisa’s charms. This is another place where people often reserve their favorite dessert before deciding on a dinner choice just to be sure they’re not disappointed. Is there really a Louisa? – stop by and find out!

For that romantic evening in Cape May, begin with dinner at the Peter Shields Inn or Union Park, both ooze romance, fabulous food and impeccable service. In town, enjoy an after dinner drink at the Ebbitt Room in the Virginia Hotel and listen to great music with the resident pianist. In winter there’s a crackling fire in the library; in summer the sun rooms and verandah are delightful with just a hint of southern charm and hospitality.

Plenty of restaurants are within walking distance of local hotels and bed and breakfast inns. Cucina Rosa, Fresco’s and 410 Bank Street, A Ca Mia and other restaurants on or near the Mall are always bustling and always good. The Washington Inn with its fully stocked wine cellar is a perennial favorite—the food, wine and service are also top notch.

Cape May is one of the largest fishing ports on the East Coast – stop by Fishermen’s Wharf at the Lobster House and watch your dinner being unloaded when some of the area’s largest boats dock after a day, weeks or longer at sea. Have a taste of really fresh seafood at the Raw Bar right on the pier or catch the afternoon sun aboard the Schooner America nearby and enjoy a summer cocktail and appetizers.

Tiny, fun cafés and elegant romantic dining rooms throughout Cape May are often listed in “The Best of” ratings in regional magazines, metropolitan newspapers and food critics’ columns.

Bon Appetit! Right this way; your table is waiting.