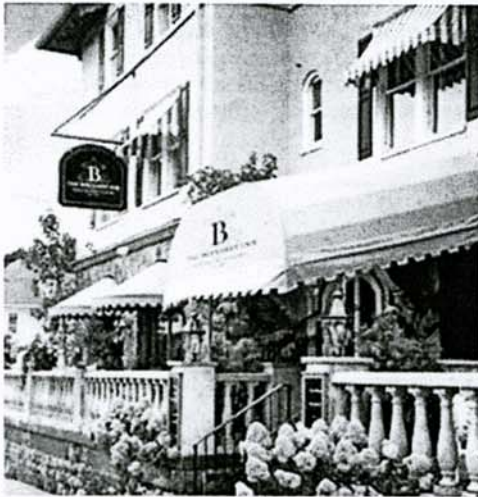


ON THE MENU: The Bernards Inn

Bernardsville, N.J.

By STEPHEN SHUCK



Over the past 100 years, the Bernards Inn in Bernardsville, N.J., has doubled as an auditorium, bowling alley, billiards hall, speakeasy, town offices and even a jail.

that will allow us to reflect on the history of The Bernards Inn, while preparing for the future by restoring the inn to its original grandeur," says Harold Imperatore, proprietor of The Bernards Inn.

In keeping with the centennial mood, executive chef Corey W. Heyer has modernized some classic turn-of-the-century dishes for the summer menu. At dinner he offers chilled potato and leek soup made with marinated oysters, American caviar and chive oil. For lunch, patrons may order a lobster and duck eggs Benedict prepared with tarragon and served on a made-from-scratch English muffin, Heyer says.

The menu also includes a lavender-glazed Long Island duck, served with warm honey-marinated peaches, crispy confit and ricotta gnocchi, priced at \$36, and an organic Scottish salmon, with green and white asparagus, lemon scented quinoa, and roasted porcini mushrooms, for \$34.

Heyer obtains many of his ingredients from local farmers. For example, his fresh smoked salmon and chickens come from Perona Farms of Sparta, N.J., and Griggstown Farm of Griggstown, N.J., respectively. He gets fresh herbs and vegetables from John Hanson, one of the Inn's property owners, whose wife is an avid gardener.

"My inspiration has always remained with the seasonal ingredients I obtain from local purveyors, along with the satisfaction of creating the most enjoyable guest experience," he says.

(Sep. 17) Silent-film star Mary Pickford once graced the halls of The Bernards Inn, as did other silver-screen personalities of that era, such as sisters Norma and Constance Talmadge, Irish-born silent star Tom Moore, and screen legend Stuart Holmes.

The eclectic grouping of thespians seems appropriate for The Bernards Inn, currently celebrating its 100-year anniversary, because the restaurant's own dramatic history seems ripe for the silver screen.

Based in Bernardsville, N.J., and originally twice its current size, the inn often doubled as an auditorium, bowling alley and billiards hall. During the lean times of the Prohibition, the inn also served as a grocery, butcher shop, pharmacy, post office, speakeasy, town offices and jail. Its use as a detention center led to its current reduction in size, when the cigarette from an inmate sparked a massive fire to sections of the inn, which have never been rebuilt.

The Bernards Inn has seen its share of changes over the past 100 years, with renovations done in the 1940s and 1950s. And even as the centennial spurs thoughts of the past, current renovations by designer Jeffrey Haines of Butler's of Far Hills, N.J., have the management looking into the inn's future.

"This is a milestone



The Bernards Inn currently is undergoing renovations to restore its original grandeur, says proprietor Harold Imperatore.

AT A GLANCE

Additionally, wine director and sommelier Terri A. Baldwin has a vast selection of vintage wines in stock. The restaurant keeps approximately 12,500 bottles in its cellars, and currently features more than 1,500 selections. By the glass, these wines can range in price from \$6 to \$135, the latter for vintage Madeira wines going back to 1834.

For the centennial celebration, Baldwin added a 100-year-old Madeira, a 1907 D'Oliveira Malvasia Malmsey.

Accompanying the Inn's extensive wine list and full-service bar is a modest, scaled back bar menu, designed by chef Heyer. This menu features classic lounge dishes such as jumbo shrimp cocktail, priced at \$3 each, and Maryland-style crab cakes with cabbage salad, whole-grain mustard and tomato oil for \$18. For large parties, the kitchen offers a chilled seafood platter for two to four guests priced between \$35 and \$70, featuring littleneck clams, oysters, shrimp cocktail, chilled lobster, tuna tartare and seaweed salad.

Location: Bernardsville, N.J.
Website: www.bernardsinn.com
Concept: contemporary American
Capacity: 120, dining rooms; 24, outdoor seating
Average nightly covers: 150, weekends; 50-75, weekdays
Average dinner check: \$100
Customer demographics: primarily businessmen
Best-selling items: lobster bisque, roasted rack of lamb, organic Scottish salmon and venison
Owners: Hampshire Destination Properties
Executive chef: Corey W. Heyer
Wine director/sommelier: Terri A. Baldwin

THE BERNARDS INN: Menu



APPETIZERS

- Marinated Blue Point Oysters 23
American caviar, chilled potato soup, frizzled leeks
- Ravioli of Braised Rabbit 15
English Peas, oven-roasted grape tomatoes, fennel pollen
- Seared Foie Gras 21
toasted-almond scone, white port-poached Rainier cherries
- Himachi Sashimi 17
honeydew melon and jicama salad, scallion, ginger vinaigrette

ENTRÉES

- Roasted Rack of Lamb 44
chickpea fries, red Swiss chard, savory jus

Grilled **Prime Rib-Eye** 40
*roasted corn and piquillo pepper salsa, beerbattered **Vidalia** onion rings*

Lavender-Glazed Long Island Duck 36
warm honey-marinated peaches, crispy confit, ricotta gnocchi

Prime Tenderloin of Beef 40
crème fraîche potato purée trio of sweet carrots, Syrah and shallot sauce

Butter Poached Nova Scotia Lobster 44
chanterelle mushrooms, fava bean ravioli, aromatic tarragon nage

Sesame Crusted Yellowfin Tuna 34
edamame succotash, parsley root purée, balsamic pickled cipollini onions

Organic Scottish Salmon 34
green and white asparagus, lemon scented quinoa, roasted porcini mushrooms

BAR MENU

Chilled Seafood Platter
littleneck clams, oysters, shrimp cocktail, chilled lobster, tuna tartare, seaweed salad, assorted sauces
 For two 35
 For four 70

Baby Rack of Lamb 23
roasted garlic potato purée, spinach, rosemary jus

Maryland Crab Cake 18
cabbage salad, whole-grain mustard, tomato oil

Lobster Ravioli 21
pea shoots, lemon fines herbes sauce

The Bernards Burger 17
caramelized Vidalia onion, bacon, choice of Vermont white cheddar, American or Gruyère cheese