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north shore—family, community and you

Jun 2014 | By Meghan Streit | [Comments](#)

15 Places to Dine in Michigan's Harbor Country

Located just over an hour from Chicago, Michigan's Harbor Country is an ideal spot for a weekend getaway or a fun-filled week for the whole family.

The quaint string of lakeside towns from Benton Harbor to St. Joe features miles of pristine beaches, charming wineries, art galleries and enough antique shops to occupy the most insatiable treasure hunters for days. And, there's no shortage of delicious food in this picturesque region.

From sophisticated farm-to-table bistros that seem plucked from Chicago's trendiest neighborhoods to kitschy beach town burger joints, our handy dining guide makes it easy for you to decide where to eat on the other side of the lake.

[Redamak's](#)

You know you've arrived in Harbor Country when you hit Redamak's, one of the area's best-known restaurants. Stop at the lively burger joint to refuel as you head into town. Prepare for a wait during high season and ditch your diet—you're on vacation now. You can get just about anything deep-fried at Redamak's, from green beans to ravioli to mini tacos. Then sink your teeth into a juicy burger. The house cheese is (no joke) Velveeta, but you can upgrade with cheddar, Swiss or pepper jack. *616 E. Buffalo St., New Buffalo, 269-469-4522*



[Greenbush Brewing Co.](#)

If you've developed a taste for Greenbush Brewing's craft beers, available at several Chicago restaurants and bars and sold locally at [Evanston First Liquors](#) and [Binny's](#), then you'll want to check out the place where the popular brews are made. Greenbush Brewing Co. is a small and bustling space, so resign yourself to a wait on summer weekends. You'll be rewarded with cold seasonal microbrews and tempting eats like braised pork belly with fried polenta and mac and cheese topped with a cheddar-biscuit crunch. 5885 Sawyer Road, Sawyer, 269-405-1076

[Tabor Hill Winery & Restaurant](#)

Tabor Hill's lush green vineyard is one of Harbor Country's most picturesque spots for cocktail hour. Grab a chilled glass of the dry Traminette and take a stroll through rows of grape-studded vines. The restaurant at Tabor Hill is a prime spot for an elegant dinner, with lots of summery choices like asparagus salad with asiago and salmon poached in Tabor Hill's own Chardonnay. The crispy polenta fries with white truffle aioli and red pepper "catsup" make a tasty starter or side dish. 185 Mount Tabor Road, Buchanan, 800-283-3363



[Viola Café](#)

Charming, sunny and serving up some of the best breakfast food on this side of the lake, Viola Café is well worth the 15-minute drive inland to Three Oaks. Do not leave without sampling (or devouring) the Swedish pancakes. They are ridiculously light and buttery, improved only by the tart lignonberry jam that accompanies them. *102 N. Elm St., Three Oaks, 269-756-9420*

[Fitzgerald's](#)

Grab a seat on the cute patio and enjoy classic tavern fare like fish and chips and steak frites at Fitzgerald's. The calamari is a stand out appetizer. Instead of being battered and deep-fried, it's tossed in seasoned bread crumbs and oven roasted. *5875 Sawyer Road, Sawyer, 269-426-3489*

[Tosi's Restaurant](#)

Located off the beaten path in Stevensville, Tosi's is where locals and in-the-know tourists head for hearty Italian meals. Tosi's has a wide selection of old-school Italian classics that will stick to your ribs. Think chicken piccata and spaghetti with meatballs. But, far and away, the best dish is Tosi's famous malfatti. The spinach dumplings have the pillowy consistency of gnocchi and are slathered in both creamy béchamel and hearty Bolognese. *4337 Ridge Road, Stevensville, 269-429-3689*



[Round Barn](#)

With a winery, vineyard, distillery, brewery, restaurant and live musical performances, there's a heck of a lot going on at Round Barn. After a wine tasting, grab a glass of your favorite varietal and find a spot under a tree. While simple fare at the Round Barn Grille (hot dogs, chicken sandwiches) isn't spectacular, it will certainly suffice for an impromptu picnic at one of the most scenic stops on the Michigan wine trail. *10983 Hills Road, Baroda, 800-716-9463*

[The Stray Dog Bar & Grill](#)

The Stray Dog is the Midwestern equivalent of Martha Vineyard's famous [Black Dog Tavern](#), and it's equally worthy of a visit. It's perfect for families because the menu has something for everyone. Fish tacos, pulled pork sandwiches, Chinese chicken salads, even fresh-baked pizzas are available—and for such a varied menu, all of the food is done exceptionally well. Plus, Stray Dog serves dinner until midnight, making it one of the few places in Harbor Country where you can get a meal if you want to stay at the beach until sunset (nearly 10 p.m. in late summer!). *245 N. Whittaker St., New Buffalo, 269-469-2727*



[Bentwood Tavern](#)

For all of its stunning beaches, Harbor Country has precious few waterfront dining options. Bentwood Tavern is one place where you can get a table by the lake. We're not talking toes-in-the-sand, but there's a lovely view of the marina. Start with a glass of Veuve Cliquot and the tuna tartar (so fresh you might start to think you're sitting near an ocean rather than a lake). For dinner, the chimichurri flat-iron steak with poblano potatoes is an excellent choice. *600 West Water St., New Buffalo, 877-945-8600*

[Milda's Corner Market](#)

At first glance, Milda's appears to be part disheveled coffee shop and part convenience store. So, you might be surprised to discover all the tasty stuff coming off of the grill. The burgers are well seasoned, thick and juicy. *9901 Townline Road, Union Pier, 269-469-9880*

[Luisa's Café](#)

Luisa's Café is a cozy spot to wake up with a hot cup of coffee and the newspaper. Breakfast scrambles are elevated with ingredients like crimini mushrooms, asiago cheese and kalamata olives. Satisfy a salty-sweet craving with the carrot-cake waffle breakfast sandwich. Chicken sausage, an over-hard egg and smoked Gouda are stuffed between two slightly sweet carrot-cake waffles, for an inventive take on chicken and waffles. *13698 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, 269-469-9037*



[Villa Nova Pizzeria](#)

Villa Nova Pizzeria is a no-frills joint, but the thin-crust pizza hits the spot. The surprisingly good chef salad and Italian beef sandwiches are also worth a try. Hosting at your summer home? Villa Nova also offers catering. *134 E. Buffalo St., New Buffalo, 269-469-0200*

[Red Arrow Road House](#)

After a long day in the sun, Red Arrow Road House is a great place to relax with a cold beer and upscale pub grub. Order the tiny cheeseburgers as an appetizer to share or as a meal. Pair them with the blue-cheese potato chips, a decadent basket of home-made potato chips topped with melted blue cheese, sour cream and fresh scallions. Don't miss the rib mac, a glorious caldron of pasta swimming in a creamy mixture of four cheeses and topped with rib meat slathered in a smoky sweet barbecue sauce. *15710 Red Arrow Highway, Union Pier, 269-469-3939*



[Oink's Ice Cream and Yogurt](#)

Delight your inner child (and your actual children) with a trip to Oink's for old-fashioned ice cream. Taste Michigan's local flavors with a scoop of Mackinac Island Fudge or Marion County Blackberry. 227 W. Buffalo St., New Buffalo, 269-469-3535

[Harbert Swedish Bakery](#)

If you want to relax with breakfast on your own screened porch or stretch of private beach, swing by Harbert Swedish Bakery to pick up some fresh baked croissants and kolachkies. 13698 Red Arrow Highway, Harbert, 269-469-1777



Top photo: Tabor Hill Winery & Restaurant. Photos courtesy of each restaurant.