



the
Lark®

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A Shore Dinner. Michigan has 3,100+ miles of Great Lakes shoreline, more than the combined Atlantic shorelines of Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. The rather diminutive shores of the New England states are noted for their shore dinners. We dare to guild the lily with creative touches. Summer is a golden moment, so don your shore attire and join us on Monday & Tuesday, July 28th & 29th at 7:00 pm.

The Menu

Authentic Bucket of Steamed Wellfleet Oysters and Littleneck Clams with
Rosemary-Fennel Broth, Bacon & Scallion Butter

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Crisp Maryland Soft-Shell Crab with Buttermilk Aioli
Tantré Farms Radish Slaw

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Brochette of Wood Grilled Wild Shrimp with Cherry-Balsamic Glaze
Red & Yellow Watermelon Salad
Mile-High Herb Biscuits

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Pan-Seared Halibut with Sea Salt-Dusted Dumplings
Lemon-Tarragon Sauce

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Roast Maine Lobster with Native Sweet Corn & Red Bliss Potatoes
Hollandaise & Drawn Butter Sauces

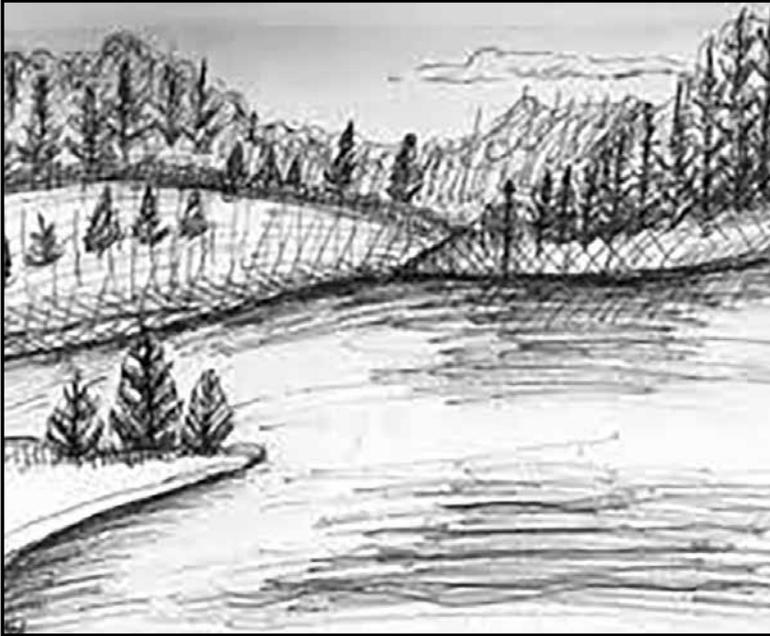
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Warm Organic Blackberry & Preserved Lemon Crumble with
House-Made Honey Ice Cream
Saltwater Taffy & Sea Salt Milk Chocolate Caramels

The cost of this exceptional dinner is only \$97 per person, not including tax and gratuity. A superb wine bouquet will be available at an attractive price. The last date for cancellation or reduction of reservations without charge is July 22nd.

Our next **Wine Tasting** will be on **Monday, August 11th**. To make your reservations for any of these events please inform your waiter, email bookings@thelark.com or call Cathy at (248)661-4466.

Memories Past & Present of Up North. Oddly enough, when I was very young, my family's northern vacation destination was not even in Michigan but in Ontario, Canada. My much older sister Marian had purchased part of an island near Perry Sound in the eastern area of Georgian Bay, which bulges out to the east from Lake Huron. The land cost \$500 and the local "Indians" were paid \$700 to build a log cabin using on-site rocks for its foundation and fireplace,



and on-site trees for logs. Crystal clear wonderful water was pumped from the Bay; heat was by the fireplace; cooking on a kerosene stove; light by kerosene lanterns and restroom facilities were an outhouse. My brother Larry & I and our dog, who could run free, loved it. My mother was a good sport. We ate a lot of fish; Larry and I were always able to catch all the perch our mother ordered from our dock. There was no "drag" on fishing reels back then so landing a larger fish could become a tug-of-war. I once hooked a huge Muskie and it was winning the war, about to pull me off the dock when Larry arrived, wrapped

his arms around me to even the battle and then the line parted. Saved. The only nearby neighbors were the Proctor & Gamble folks across from our waterfront on "Wynonna" Island. WWII ended trips to Georgian Bay and so each summer for years, mother rented a cottage on Burt Lake, roughly in the center of the northern-most area of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. We had no car and arrived at nearby Topinabee Station by passenger train from Detroit.

Working our way through college followed by Larry's service in the Marines & Army and mine in the Navy caused a long break from trips Up North. My trips began anew after marriage with Mary and our first sojourns in the Traverse City/Leelanau area. Next we decided to venture further north, renting condos and cottages in the Petoskey and Harbor Springs coastal areas. Then, longtime bird-hunting partner Tom Leavitt, who had semi-retired with wife Linda to that locale, informed me that he had come upon a fine home for sale on M119, the famous Tunnel of Trees stretching north along the Lake Michigan coast from Harbor Springs and past Cross Village. We bought it...a ranch with semi-detached large garage; great room with fireplace, dining area and kitchen; four bedrooms including master suite with fireplace & bath, and the three additional bedrooms with two full baths. Our perfect lodge for up North living, one of only four homes in the middle of nowhere, one of which is that of an Indian Chief who actually hosts pow-wows on his property. Cool!

What do we do Up North? I formerly hunted turkey, grouse and woodcock, but not lately. Mary and I have waded the Maple River which I've fished for trout. Being hunter-gatherers, we seek morels in May/June, not doing well without kids to help but doing much better finding golden chanterelles

in late July and “ramps” or wild leeks all spring. August is a great time for wild blackberry picking. Such activities get us into the woods which are great. We visit the finest beaches in the country, which our dogs love. And we read a lot and perhaps most enjoyable for we foodies, dine at favorite restaurants. Down below restaurants open and close often. One broad study concluded that the average life of independent restaurants was only 18 months. Up North the pace of change is much slower and almost all of our favorites survive.

Summer Wine Tasting. Our last Wine Tasting of the summer will be held on **Monday, August 11th** from 6-8 pm. (\$60/person). As always, there will be an array of wines for you to enjoy and food will be plentiful, including Salt Baked Shrimp, Lamb Genghis Khan, Lobster & Vegetable Tempura and more! The atmosphere will be festive, with entertainment in our garden, and the chef out cooking at our grill if weather permits. Don't delay, email us at bookings@thelark.com or call (248)661-4466 today to reserve your space.



The Portuguese Connection. Mary and I love Portugal and the many expressions of its culture we've come to know. In creating The Lark, one goal was to replicate the magical ambience of fine Portuguese country inns, which we had come to know on our trips to Portugal. On coming to The Lark, its sign states Country Inn Restaurant, which is then confirmed by its exterior of rustic brick & roof and a whimsical round tower. Colorful wall tiles proclaim its name and address.

In our spacious entry hall an entire wall of tiles is from the four-hundred-year-old Portuguese tile house of Fábrica Sant'Anna (Factory of St. Anne) whose tiles we had previously used to decorate the kitchen in our home. This tile wall features a display of a variety of wild African animals of Portugal's former colonies such as Angola and Cape Verde. The restaurant's café consists of two spacious leather booths and a service bar whose two barstools are only used in the rare event when patrons might wish to sit while waiting a few minutes for their table. The café also boasts a fully tiled wall by Fábrica Sant'Anna. This one is a map of West Bloomfield reproducing a map-drawing by Mary of the Township as it existed in 1981 including our home on West Bloomfield Lake, the sheep then resident at the southeast corner of Orchard and Walnut Lakes Roads, and The Lark's building. Both the dining room and the café have impressive wood-burning fireplaces although gas logs are used in the living room.

Other than those which are tiled, the restaurant's walls are muted-clay-colored rough plaster on which are mounted a variety of Portuguese plates, platters and chargers including rare antique plates above the booth closest to the garden. Both restrooms carry out the country inn theme by tiled vanity/sinks with matching bowls and tiled floors. Our entry hall shares the same natural clay-colored tile floor from Saltillo, Mexico complete with dog footprints impressed by Saltillo's dogs when the still-soft tiles were laid out in the town square to dry. Our tile layer was going to throw



them out but I instructed him to install those tiles in prominent view. Look in the lobby and in front of the dining room fireplace for the paw prints!

All of this decor lends credence to the country inn theme but where is the country? The locale is not in the country so the country had to be created. That was accomplished by a full wall of dining room windows and even glass doors displaying a walled country scene created by a very large garden of trees, grapes and other vines, bushes, flowers and herbs, complete with a spouting lion's head fountain & pool, and an elaborate wood-burning grill. It perfectly

fulfills its two goals: country ambience and refreshing outdoor seating whenever weather permits. The Lark's success and stature confirm our goal was achieved.

Having set the scene, what have we to say about Portuguese cuisine? We love it: straightforward; well seasoned but not overly so; featuring seafood. Like other western European nations, the discovery of the great codfish catches easily netted off America's northeast coast seemed a gift from heaven. Preserved by salt, cod preparations became ubiquitous in Portugal, Spain and France. However, what intrigued us was the Cataplana: a clam-shaped upper and lower copper bowl holding seafood, sausage and the makings of a sauce such as red peppers, garlic, olive oil, salt, onions and herbs. The cataplana is clamped shut, placed over a burner to liquefy and blend the sauce, and vaporizing to cook the seafood and sausage. Opened at the table, it releases a cloud of appetizing aroma--show business. The copper cooking bowl is Moorish in origin. By now you have probably remembered that a Cataplana is a 33-year standard main course on The Lark's menu and you may also recall that a copper cataplana is displayed on the wall to the left of the dining room's fireplace.

Mary and I cooked cataplana dishes at home long before founding The Lark. It's fun, especially if you are having guests to dinner. A 12" copper cataplana is available at **Sur La Table** for \$100. As to a recipe, Jean Anderson's **The Food of Portugal** has a detailed, rather wordy recipe, too long to reprint here, but call if you'd like a copy.

New Menu and Wine List. July marks the beginning of our Summer menu and wine list. It's a great season for Maine lobster, served with fresh corn cut off-the-cob and orange aioli. John's Veal Rib Chop is the best around, served with red onion jam and fingerling potato pommes frites. Our Chinese Oven Roasted Duck features Michigan cherry sauce and Sous Chef Ryan's handmade spaetzle, and on Wednesdays we offer the world's best soft-shell crab!

While our extensive wine list is too long and fluid to put on-line, you can find our menu on our web site, www.thelark.com. We hope to see you soon!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Lark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

