

West Coast of Wisconsin Foodie Trail

The 10 Must Stops along Lake Pepin for Extraordinary Foodie Experiences

The Great River Road along Lake Pepin has been known for its scenic drives, soaring bluffs and quaint villages. The stretch from Bay City to Pepin is lovingly referred to as “The West Coast of Wisconsin”, with its majestic vistas and charming, almost maritime feel of its villages. There has long been a few well-known dining stops along the beautiful roadway, but it has now become a serious foodie destination with world class, award winning spots that make the trip worth a few days of gastronomic exploration. Start at the top of Lake Pepin and work your way down for truly exquisite foodie experiences. The start of the trail is approx. 60 miles from Minneapolis on one of the most beautiful stretches of the Mississippi River along the shores of Lake Pepin.

Bay City WI.

The gateway to Lake Pepin the village of Bay City is a quaint, quiet spot with a stunning location on the Great River with the first trail destination.

1. Chef Shack



Tucked off WI Hwy 35 in Bay City you will find Chef Shack. Carrie Summer and Lisa Carlson crafted this delightful “Ranch Rustic Country French” inspired weekend dining spot to entertain guests with exquisite food, influenced by their travels, but always based in extraordinary French based technique. The wine list is top notch, as are the cocktails. And do not miss the desserts, all handcrafted in house by Chef Carrie. Chef Lisa has been a multi-year Semifinalist for the James Beard Award. Chef Shack has been named one of the 50 best Minneapolis restaurants by Mpls. St Paul Magazine and is a Travel and Leisure favorite. 6379 Main St, Bay City, WI 54723
(715) 594-3060

Maiden Rock WI.

Down river from Bay city is the Village of Maiden Rock. Barely two streets wide, it clings to the bluffs on the shores of the lake. Best known for its bars and bakery it has become alive with new shops and galleries and the 2nd trail destination.

2. Smiling Pelican Bake Shop



Next on the trail is the Village of Maiden Rock, home of The Smiling Pelican Bake Shop. Sandra Thielman's Smiling Pelican is a small but immensely popular bakery. Their made from scratch treats are crafted with care in small batches, are well known throughout the area. They have a devoted following that you can find lined up at the door, anticipating the delights about to be consumed. The bread is world class. The Lavender Ginger cookies are things to dream of and the fine pastries are stellar. Best to check their Facebook page for up-to-date listings of hours. W3556 WI-35, Maiden Rock, WI 54750 (715) 448-3807

Stockholm WI.

Six miles past Maiden Rock you will find yourself in Stockholm, a tiny village of 66 permanent residents but packs a huge amount into its two streets of shops and eateries and is well known as a famous day trip destination, a Midwest Living "Best of" and includes 4 spectacular trail destinations.

3. Stockholm Pie & General Store



On the main corner of the Great River Road and Spring Street in this extremely popular destination village you will find the famous and deeply loved Stockholm Pie. The shop is known for its made from scratch, just like grandma made food, especially the pie... lots of pie, really good pie. Typically, you will find 20+ different handmade pies on the menu. In addition to the pie the shop is loved for its delicious food – sandwiches, salads, and savory pies. River Travel Magazine named Stockholm Pie and General Store Best Café, Best Dessert, Best Foodie Hidden Gem, and Best Pie on the Mississippi River. USA Today named it one of the 18 legendary pie shops in the US. RoadFood Guide called it one of the 100 best places to eat in America. Awarded with numerous nods as best pie in Wisconsin and one of the best in the country, and the pot pie has been lauded by Splendid Table. Lines can be sizable on weekends but oh so worth the wait. Best to call ahead and pre order whole pies and if you have your heart set on a particular slice. Beautiful garden seating in addition to

inside the classic building. Open year around but check Facebook for hours. N2030 Spring St, Stockholm WI 54769. (715) 442-2266

4. Humble Moon Saloon



Humble Moon is new to the trail this year. Set in an artistic treat of a building – an old Texaco station just across the street from the pie shop. The Saloon is a classy yet casual, family friendly environment where people gather from all walks of life for drinks, music, and dining. They are cooking up some rustic, home style food made from scratch, using ingredients from local farmers as much as they are able. They offer items such as eggs & cabbage with thick slab bacon, homemade biscuits & stew, smoked ribs, and charbroiled burgers built your way. Thursday nights they host a special dinner served family style and Sunday is nothing but breakfast- morning, noon and night! Check Facebook for hours. W12132 WI-35, Stockholm, WI 54769. (715) 456-1063

5. The Palate



The Palate is best known as a charming French inspired kitchen store and cooking school where you will find delectable house baked goodies. They have recently added delightful outdoor seating in the back garden and sidewalk café style seating in the front gardens and are featuring a truly exceptional selection of repast in the form of beautifully curated cheese platters with selections of world class wines from the store. Open into the

evening, it is a gentle, lovely way to end your visit to Stockholm. W12102 WI-35, Stockholm, WI 54769 (715) 442-6400. Check Facebook for hours.

6. Hop, Dish and Vine



Brand new to the foodie scene on the West Coast of Wisconsin, tucked in a beautiful courtyard garden. The menu will be lighthearted fun seasonal menu based loosely on street food fare (hand cut fries, street tacos, falafel, poutine, Vegan and GF options), with a few more substantial options based on locally grown produce whenever possible to support the burgeoning young growers in the area along with grab and go items. All this in a chill gastro beer garden vibe including regional beer, fine wines, and live music. N2047 Spring St. Stockholm, WI. Check Facebook for hours.

Pepin WI.

Six more miles downriver is the Village of Pepin. Pepin is the largest of the 4 villages on the lake with almost 900 folks! Known for its beautiful marina, and as the birthplace of Laura Ingalls Wilder, it is even better known now for its foodie destinations.

7. Harbor View Café



Harbor View Café is the grand dame of the foodie destinations along the trail. Now in its 41st year, the iconic café has long set the standard in the Midwest for destination dining. Classically inspired dishes with that Harbor View twist – and the famous house made bread that comes with every meal. The most famous dish is

probably the Halibut with Black Butter Caper Sauce, followed by the Sautéed Chicken Breasts with roasted garlic chipotle sauce, to name just a few. The café sources locally and has a highly regarded wine cellar. As suggested by the name, the café sits on the beautiful marina in Pepin – a stunning place to watch the sailboats and sunsets. The café does not take reservations and the wait can be substantial on busy summer weekends, but get a glass of wine, sit outside, listen to music and watch the Great River meander by. Bring a cooler for leftovers as the portions are as famous as the food. Seasonal, so make sure to check Facebook for hours. 314 1st St, Pepin, WI 54759 (715) 442-3893

8. **Homemade Café**



Charming does not begin to capture it. It is one of those places that makes you feel like you might be one of the locals of the sweet little village it sits in – always friendly and comforting. The classic roadside café is famous for its delicious breakfasts and lunches. The owner, Patty, never fails to charm with her simple, beautifully crafted food and delightful baked goods. Then there is the Friday fish fry. Friday fish fries are a staple in small town Wisconsin, but this one stands out. Fried or sautéed with Patty's signature tartar sauce, it can't be beat. Open year around, Check Facebook for hours. 809 3rd St, Pepin, WI 54759 [\(715\) 941-1164](https://www.facebook.com/homemadecafepepin)

9. **Villa Bellezza**



Villa Bellezza is best known for its award-winning wines and its breathtaking Italian village like campus – it really does feel like you have escaped to Italy without the flight. Even the chef is a true Italian original. Antonio Cecconi leads the kitchen at the winery’s Country Italian restaurant, Il Forno. Wood fired pizza, pasta and panini make up the menu. Their cheese and meat plates are heavenly and pair so beautifully from the large range of truly exquisite wines from their own cellars. All of this is best experienced on “La Piazza Bellezza”, it’s like a small Italian town. It is a great place to watch people while enjoying your wine and food. In summer al fresco dining lasts into the evening under café lights above. In winter, al fresco dining is under heated porticos with chairs covered in furs to help stay warm. Quite the delicious experience. You may also want to explore their cooking school La Scuola, a participation cooking school taught by chef Antonio Cecconi. This year you will be able to experience their new outdoor kitchens for the school and dining. Open year around, check Facebook for hours. 1420 3rd St, Pepin, WI 54759. (715) 442-2424

Detour: Durand Wi.

Durand Wisconsin is the county seat of the smallest county in Wisconsin – Pepin County, in which most of our trail locations reside. Not typically known for its culinary locations, a new spot has made it a detour off the beaten path of the West Coast of Wisconsin Foodie Trail.

10. Kingfisher



Kingfisher is the lovechild of chef Rebecca Boulger, a Harborview alum. They have taken an old bar and restaurant and breathed new life into it with an almost supper clubby kind of feel but with big city new American food. The bar, with its creative craft cocktails, upon entering is a step back in time and the dining room is unpretentious but with beautiful views of the Chippewa River. The small, carefully crafted menu is what makes it worth the trip. Don't miss the Pork Belly, just don't.... and the Honey Chili Brussels...but all of the items are delectable and don't skip dessert. Seasonal. Check Facebook for hours. 214 w Main Street Durand, WI 54736 (715) 672-321