

7 RESTAURANTS  
THAT WILL NEVER GO  
OUT OF STYLE

MIKIE VS. JACK:  
MEET OUR CANDIDATES  
FOR GOVERNOR

SHHHH! HERE'S  
HOW TO FIND NJ'S  
SECRET DINING SCENE

# New Jersey

MONTHLY

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day  
trips*

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# Timeless Tastes

In Jersey's ever-changing dining landscape, these restaurant hall of famers have consistently proven their culinary mettle.



**ROOM WITH A VIEW** Dining at Restaurant Latour is enhanced by the mountain views. Above, caramelle pasta with wild fennel and nordic shrimp; below, a huckleberry tart.



**I**n our annual Top 40 restaurants issue in August, we introduced our new category of Classics—restaurants that we think are tried-and-true. The experience at these stalwarts is so consistently excellent in cuisine, service, decor and more, we've dubbed them New Jersey culinary hall of famers. Here, we give a deeper dive into why these longtime customer favorites have repeatedly scored spots on our best restaurants list.

## RESTAURANT LATOUR

### Hamburg

Dining at Restaurant Latour, located at Crystal Springs Resort in Sussex County, is an unforgettable experience. Start with the dining room's gorgeous views of the Kittatinny Mountains; if you time it right, you can even watch the sunset from your table. The service here is impeccable; the staff is knowledgeable, friendly and attentive. Watching the wait staff remove dishes from the table in perfect harmony during a recent meal was akin to seeing ballet dancers perform. Dinner options here include the chef's table, where the chef chooses a five-course tasting menu, as well as three- and seven-course tasting menus (with options for diners). The cuisine is exceptional; executive chef Aishling Stevens's approach to cooking is to showcase seasonal ingredients, with many of them gathered locally by the resort's foraging team. Every meal is complemented by the resort's legendary wine cellar, and the sommelier has a deep understanding of pairing wine to elevate every bite.

—Jacqueline Mroz

**FOOD:**

Fine dining, with three- to seven-course menus

**AMBIENCE:**

Upscale with beautiful views

**SERVICE:** Flawless and polished

**DRINKS:** Impressive wine list and pairings

## IL CAPRICCIO

### Whippany

A rundown of our favorite classic Jersey restaurants wouldn't be complete without an Italian joint or two; after all, there are more Italian restaurants in New Jersey than any other cuisine. And it doesn't get any better than Il Capriccio. Open since 1984, this establishment takes its food, service and even dress code seriously, but it dishes everything out in a welcoming environment that immediately makes you feel like one of its loyal regulars. The food, from chef Antonio Grande, is authentic Italian fare done absolutely right. Portions are generous but not oversized, allowing diners to try a variety of flavors, including an appetizer, homemade pasta course and entrée (the fish options are outstanding), without getting stuffed. Much of the produce comes from Grande's own farm, and he's passionate about serving his patrons fresh, healthy fare. Desserts, like the can't-skip cannoli (not fried and made from almonds), are crafted in house by executive pastry chef Teresa Grande (Antonio's daughter). The service is impeccable—attentive and knowledgeable, without overstepping—and includes feats like deboning and filleting a whole branzino tableside, then heating it on a portable stove right in front of the table, so that it's piping hot upon serving.

**FOOD:**

Farm-to-table Italian

**AMBIENCE:**

Classic and sophisticated, with a piano player for dinner

**SERVICE:** Attentive and knowledgeable, but not overbearing

**DRINKS:** Full bar, with a vast wine list

—Julie Gordon



**PROTEIN & GREENS**

River Palm Terrace's tableside salad preparations are theatrical treats.

## RIVER PALM TERRACE

### Edgewater

Be it a family gathering, a girls' night out or just a Tuesday, this bustling steak house has you covered. For 40 years, this restaurant has been offering prime meats and virtually everything else. The menu reads like a throwback diner's and is as hefty as one. Generous portions make most of the starters shareable, and even carnivores may want to explore the plentiful seafood options or tableside salad. Steaks are dry-aged prime cuts, and there's an array of other proteins, including hard-to-find beef liver. All the steak house favorite sides are present and expertly executed. But this eatery never rests on its laurels and is not afraid of making change sometimes. Rest assured, things change, but the quality and commitment at River Palm Terrace stay the same. —Deborah P. Carter

**FOOD:**

Steak, seafood and sushi

**AMBIENCE:**

Traditional, with leather banquettes, and a who's-who photo wall

**SERVICE:** Well trained and efficient

**DRINKS:**

You name it, they make it. Mocktails, too.