

# North Shore Inn focuses on fine food, friendliness

**By Joan Neeno**

**Special to the Gazette**

If you're a born and bred Sconnie, an old-school supper club probably feels like part of your culinary DNA.

When you find the real deal untouched by time, it's a pretty special thing.

I'm probably about 50 years late to the party, but we recently discovered Maasz's North Shore Inn on Lake Koshkonong near Fort Atkinson.

Just walking in the door, it's apparent this is a spot loved by regulars, staff and its owners. One of the regulars gave us an enthusiastic greeting before we even got to the front door, saying we were about to have a wonderful meal.

He was right.

The North Shore Inn website proudly proclaims it as "the friendliest place around," and the owners seem to take that pledge seriously. This is not a place you walk into and get the stink-eye if you're not a regular. People treat you as if they've known you their entire lives. It's downright charming.

We had a group of seven friends, so we waited at the outdoor tables that look out over the lake. There's a small parking lot between the restaurant and the lake, but the view was lovely.

It was a bit chilly, but the hostess and the other people waiting outside were so much fun that the time passed quickly.

Bar prices were reasonable, and the brandy Old Fashioned was tasty. None of the appetizers are homemade, but whoever operates the deep fryer knows what he or she is doing. There's an assortment of cheese curds and other breaded and fried veggies, if you're in the mood.

The menu is huge, and the prices are amazingly reasonable. Pasta, seafood, pork, chicken, steak, burgers and hot dogs all were included. Not surprisingly, vegetarian options are quite limited.

Many restaurants can't handle turning out consistently good food when they're cooking from a large menu, but everyone at our table felt he or she had a good meal at North Shore Inn.

My husband, Richard, ordered baked scallops (\$16.95), which came with soup or salad and a choice of potato. The menu didn't lie; there were seven large scallops baked to a mild perfection. The potato pancakes also received an enthusiastic thumbs-up.

I ordered the 8-ounce butterfly-cut filet mignon with two stuffed shrimp (\$22). The steak was cooked to a proper medium rare and was decently seasoned. The

breaded, stuffed shrimp were plump with cheese and were perfectly fried. Salads come to the table with a choice of three dressings. Everything tasted fresh.

Jim ordered a 14-ounce Tbone steak (\$20.75), and Robyn ordered the 8-ounce filet mignon (\$19). They had the same experience as I did—a good supper club steak at a great price.

Nancy ordered the Friday fish fry, which comes in three sizes from small to large (\$7, \$9.25 and \$10.75). The twofilet portion was generous, and Nancy approved of the lightly breaded cod.

A proper supper club has to have a good fish fry, right? North Shore Inn delivers the goods. If you don't like cod, it has lobster, scallop, shrimp and salmon specials from \$12-\$20.

Shawn didn't want to be limited to just one choice, so she ordered the seafood platter (\$12.50), which included a crab cake, two fantail shrimp, three scallops, a stuffed shrimp and a breaded cod filet. Most of it was battered and fried, but it was all nicely cooked and tender.

Dan ordered the other Friday night special, the baked salmon filet (\$13.50). Like most of the menu, the salmon was predictably and traditionally prepared.

There's nothing wrong with predictable and traditional if it's done well. In fact, that's probably what keeps the regulars coming back for decades. It's about good food, great value and friendly staff who know what you mean when you order "the usual."

North Shore Inn looks and feels like it hasn't changed a bit since about 1966 (including the prices). Sometimes that's a very good thing.

Joan Neeno is a freelance writer who reviews regional restaurants for The Gazette.

## Maasz's North Shore Inn

**Address:** N1835 North Shore Road, Fort Atkinson.

**Phone:** 920-563-2083

**Website:** [letseat.at/northshoreinn](http://letseat.at/northshoreinn)

**Hours:** Bar and dining start at 4 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. Closed Monday.

**Reservations:** Yes

**Credit cards:** Yes

**Wheelchair access:** Yes

**Vegetarian items:** Yes

**Menu:** Oven-roasted lobster tails (\$20), sea and steak (\$10.40), pork chops (\$9.50), half chicken (\$10.50), chicken Alfredo (\$9).

### Ratings

**Food:** 

**Service:** 

**Cost:** \$3.50-\$36

**Value:** 

5 plates—Outstanding

4 plates—Above average

3 plates—Average

2 plates—Below average

1 plate—Poor