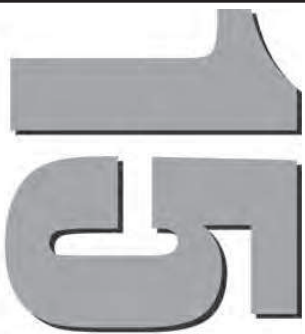


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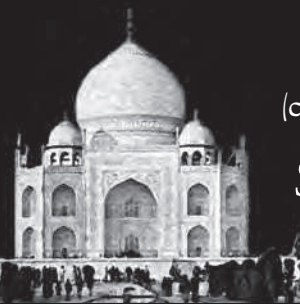
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steak or salmon in the elegance of the Covered Bridge Restaurant or have a yummy potato at the Cottage (we love the ahi potato; who knew fish and sun-dried tomatoes belonged on a spud?) while you ponder the funky solar and water barrel-based system that heats the building.

BEST RESTAURANT ON THE COAST

1. Mo's Restaurants

1436 Bay St., Florence. 541-997-2185.

2. Waterfront Depot

1252 Bay St., Florence. 541-902-9100.

3. The Drift Inn

124 Highway 101 N., Yachats. 541-547-4477.

When we go to the coast and immediately crave clam chowder, there's a reason. And that reason is Mo's Restaurant, founded in 1944 in Newport by Mo Niemi. Over the years, Mo's clam chowder has taken on a near-mythical quality. Franchises up and down the coast — in Cannon Beach, Lincoln City, Florence and Otter Rock — mean you get many chances to dip your toes into the chowder with fresh, local clams. After a long hike on the wind-whipped coast, a stop at Mo's, with its homey décor, friendly service and long-standing tradition, is just what the doctor ordered.

BEST RESTAURANT: Café Soriah



BEST RESTAURANT

1. Café Soriah

384 W. 13th Ave. 342-4410.

2. Marché Restaurant

296 E. 5th Ave. 342-3612.

3. Café Lucky Noodle

207 E. 5th Ave. 484-4777.

This year's best restaurant, Café Soriah, is long loved by Eugeneans, who have showered the restaurant with awards for years. Owner Ibrahim "Ib" Hamide should continue to be proud of his solid menu that balances classic tastes with new specialties. Where else can you get flambé, charming outdoor dining and sambosik?

Dinners at Soriah are an intimate affair. The acoustics enable romantic murmurs and job interviews to take place with no one the wiser. Although the restaurant is located on a quiet stretch of 13th Avenue, the interior feels like a cozy dining room at a chic friend's place, especially if your chic friend has a long wooden bar and a gracious waitstaff.

We find ourselves longing for the baby mazzah for two, a mixed appetizer plate of creamy hummus, gently drizzled in olive oil, accompanied by a smoky baba ganooj eggplant dip plus olives, pickled vegetables and a couple of lemony dolmas stuffed with seasoned rice and pine nuts. One surely cannot go wrong ordering chicken confit and caramelized pecan salad, either. Entrées include Middle Eastern inflections, such as the sweet pepper and lamb ragu over fettuccini and the creamy chicken Jerusalem with artichokes, mushrooms and spinach, as well as other creative fare inspired by India, China and Italy.

The full bar features a well-chosen wine list and a full range of cocktails. Check out the "savory martinis" flavored with saffron, basil or tarragon. Desserts and bread are housemade, and not to be missed.

The late-night menu is a rare bird in Eugene, and we're grateful Soriah offers such lovely food for those of us that are peckish after concerts. The menu, which is served after 10 pm on weekdays and 11 on weekends, features Lebanese hummus, the most exciting thing since chick peas: sumac- and mint-seasoned lamb, thinly sliced, atop a bed of the creamy legumes. If you can tear yourself away, don't forget to try the above-mentioned sambosik pastry, spiced ground lamb wrapped in phyllo and served with spicy salsa and tahini sauce. Yum.

Taste the Wild & Unusual at the Fisherman's Market

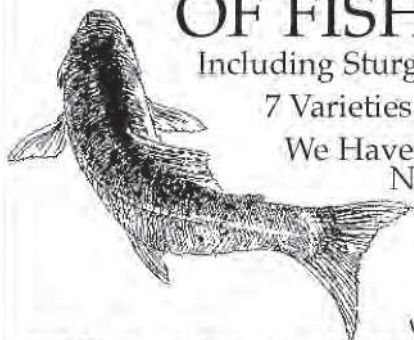
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