

BIZ BIO: 2nd Street Bistro

201 E. Main St.

715/682-6444

www.bistro54806.com

Over a decade of dining excellence

Patrons love Bistro for its amazing food, pleasing ambience



2nd Street Bistro's vibrant mural was painted by Madeline Island artist Bob Holton, who also created the mural for Sixth Street Market.

Looking for a delicious, locally-sourced meal served in a relaxing atmosphere? You'll find both at 2nd Street Bistro where owners Paul Levelius and Jere Schroeder Levelius are committed to quality food and exceptional service. They both come from long careers in the food service industry. Paul used to manage Mama Gets in Bayfield where part of his job was to book the musical acts. Jere ran the dietary kitchen at a local hospital for 20 years before deciding to branch out and try something new. She worked as a line cook at Wild Rice and ended up as the high-end Bayfield restaurant's pastry chef.

These days she puts those baking and cooking skills to good use in the kitchen at 2nd Street while Paul manages the front of the bistro. In addition to her tasty made-from-scratch soups, sauces and marinades, Jere specializes in homemade desserts. Her delectable berry crisps are created using berries from Blue Vista Farm in Bayfield and her crème brulee with lemongrass and ginger is to die for.

Paul and Jere pride themselves on using locally-sourced ingredients, including mushrooms from Madeline Island, berries and fruits from Bayfield, and super-fresh Lake Superior whitefish. "By mid-July, 90% of the stuff on your plate here is locally-sourced," notes Paul. All of their meats and breads come from local suppliers, and for most of the year they serve only locally caught fish. (In the winter, they have fresh fish flown in from Alaska and Nova Scotia.) Other signature menu items include Bistro Crab Cakes and Smoked Pulled Pork BBQ. For the latter, Paul smokes the meat himself using cherry wood. Then he cooks it in microbrewery beer and Jere adds the spices. They also serve an awesome 1/3-pound Sixth Street Market Burger on a toasted bakery bun!

Established in January 2006 and located on East Main Street, the restaurant is housed in the former Dutch Inn building. "The Dutch Inn was a soda fountain," explains Paul. "All of the old-timers remember it. Later, it was a book store called Browsers. And it was also a beauty shop at one time." Paul and Jere did a lot of work to get the building ready for their business, including removal of a dropped ceiling to reveal the original, ornate 12-foot ceiling underneath. 2nd Street Bistro derives its moniker from the street's former name dating back to when Lake Shore Drive was called Front Street and Main Street was 2nd Street.

2nd Street Bistro now serves a full cocktail menu along with their boutique wines and microbrews. The restaurant offers live music every Friday from 6-9 p.m. from a variety of area performers, including harpist Glen Walker Johnson, jazz trio Alone Together and Acoustic Relapse. In addition, the works of local artists are featured on the walls. The gorgeous local landscape photography of Mike DeWitt is currently being showcased. With space for up to 60 people, the Bistro is a great place for small weddings, receptions, showers and professional groups. Summer hours are 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

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Above, the Grilled Chicken and Candied Pecan salad is a popular menu item at 2nd Street Bistro. Below, bistro owners Paul Levelius and Jere Schroeder Levelius pose in front of their restaurant on a recent sunny day

