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MICHIGAN

The Flavor of Michigan

From plucking ripe cherries right from the tree to indulging in culinary delights, Michigan is truly a locavore's paradise. Here are just a few of the many places to sip, savor and celebrate what "the mitten" has to offer.

BY LAURA WATILO BLAKE

Mackinac Island

Foodie Fact: *The largest lake whitefish on record weighed a whopping 42.67 pounds and was caught in Lake Superior in 1918.*

Grilled Canadian salmon

SIP: Mackinac Island is well-known for its historic French lilacs that were planted during the Colonial era. Instead of just enjoying their smell, Mission Point Resort found a way to capture their essence for use in seasonal mixed drinks, such as the Madame La Framboise, made with Hendricks gin, Champagne, chambord, house-made lilac syrup and lemon. After all, when life gives you lilacs, make something alcoholic with them.

The same goes for other flowers, herbs and edible plants in the resort's new Cocktail Garden. As blooming cycles come and go, the cocktail list changes in tune with Mother Nature's calendar. Among the variety of herbs and flora selected for this season's garden are lavender, rose-scented geraniums, nasturtiums, lemon verbena, golden lemon thyme and a variety of mints.

Mackinac Margarita

How to Make Lilac Simple Syrup

Take a bouquet of lilacs — about two handfuls with the stems taken off — and boil those in water. Once that process is completed, take one part lilac water and one part sugar, then boil until it thickens into a simple syrup.

SAVOR: Whitefish is to Mackinac Island what perch is to Lake Erie. Many restaurants source the fish from local Native American fisheries for use in their signature dishes, whether it's caviar and smoked whitefish dip at Mission Point Resort, the whitefish cakes at the Hotel Iroquois (*877-794-1078, iroquoishotel.com*) or a blackened fish sandwich at the legendary Grand Hotel (*800-334-7263 grandhotel.com*).

SELECT: You can't go to Mackinac Island without sampling its famous fudge. If you time your visit during Fudge Festival (Aug. 21-23), you could win a vacation by stopping at one of the designated shops to buy a package of fudge that just might contain the golden ticket. *mackinacisland.org*

STAY: Mission Point Resort is in the midst of a three-year master plan that includes an expansion of the spa and pool complex to go along with already upgraded guest rooms. Rooms start at $189. *906-847-3000, missionpoint.com*