

Olde Mill & Grain House Restaurant, Two Whimsical Places To Spend The Holidays

By Melissa Krenek



If it's a winter wonderland you seek this holiday season, look no further than the Olde Mill Inn in Basking Ridge. Their establishment is local and filled with history dating back to 1768. It is now owned by The Bocina Group, and is more alive than ever. They are a safe haven for those looking to stay in the holiday spirit, whether for holiday parties, fundraisers, or weddings. Marketing Director Sheila Palka breaks down the

holiday calendar, and anticipates a busy season. They served approximately 1500 guests for their annual Thanksgiving dinner held in the Grain House Restaurant, which is part of the historical property also.

Don't be fooled by the history, neither establishment looks old or outdated. The Inn and Grain House feature new

carpeting, and there is new furniture in several rooms at the Inn. Sure they kept the original beams and frames, but inside is a mix of modern elegance with that old fashioned charm.

Their holiday calendar is filled to the brim with annual, family oriented activities. The Grain House will be hosting a Gingerbread Brunch, a Caroler Brunch, and a Santa Brunch. The Gingerbread Brunch is always a big hit with the youngsters, since they can come in and decorate their own cookies! The Caroler Brunch is perfect for music lovers, especially since the door-to-door version is seldom seen these days. If you enjoy those holiday tunes that come on the radio but yearn for the live version, you are in luck! Lastly there's the Santa Brunch, where children can meet the big man himself. If you aren't able to attend any of the festive brunches, don't worry, they host weekly Sunday brunch from 10-2! They also offer a Christmas Eve buffet as well as a New Year's Eve Dinner.

Whether you are a guest of the Inn or simply a hungry passerby, go try some of the Grain House's famous dishes, including the Chili. This hearty meal is the perfect remedy for the cold winter blues. It is just one of the many savory dishes, including Chicken and Spinach Quesadillas, Grilled Pressed Paninis, and Whole Wheat Mozzarella Ravioli with fresh Peas.

Believe it or not, the holiday season is also wedding season! Winter weddings are a popular trend recently, due to both cost and atmosphere. A few years back, summer weddings were all the rage. Brides yearned for sand between their toes and a cool breeze through their hair. Then the fall wedding took over, loaded with cakes adorned with autumn leaves and bouquets filled with orange and green flowers. The obvious next successor was the winter wedding. Instead of the cool summer breeze, you have that crisp, winter one. When looking at the company website, Sheila pointed out that most of the winter brides still

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choose to wear strapless dresses even for their outdoor photos! The holiday decorations found inside and outside the Inn and Restaurant double as magnificent wedding decorations. Brides and their guests are greeted by two exquisite trees in the lobby of the inn, paired with beautiful garland wrapped around the staircase. Sheila also mentions that another big trend has been New Year's Eve weddings.

They can do several weddings a weekend because there are two wedding venues on the property. When asked what are the most popular rooms used for these events, Sheila said it's relative to the size of the wedding. Smaller, intimate wedding receptions are best held in the Hunt Room at the Grain House. The Fox & Hounds' open spaces and adjacent deck that looks at the lawn, garden, and river make for the quintessential wedding cocktail hour experience. The Hunt Room has its own bar, and the large stone-wall fireplace



will feel like a cozy cabin in the woods. It also features a wall of glass, draped in gold that opens into a seasonal tented terrace, garden, and gazebo. This garden leads out to a private entrance paired with a cobble

stone pathway. For a larger wedding, there is the Olde Mill Inn Washington Ballroom. If you are looking for a glamorous venue, complete

The Olde Mill Inn The Grain House Restaurant



Holiday Events 2013

Reservations Recommended:
908-221-1150



Gingerbread Brunch

Sunday, December 8th (10 AM-2 PM)

Caroler Brunch

Sunday, December 15th (10 AM-2 PM)

Holiday Lunch Buffet

December 16th - December 20th (11:30 AM-2:30 PM)

Santa Brunch

Sunday, December 22nd (10 AM-2 PM)

Christmas Eve Buffet

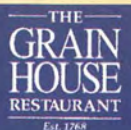
December 24th (4:00 PM-8:00 PM)

New Year's Eve Dinner

December 31st (5:00 PM-10:00 PM)



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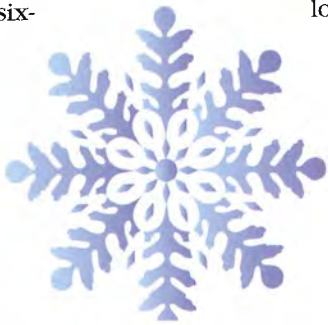


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with French doors, crystal chandeliers, and antique mirrors, the ballroom is for you.

These rooms aren't just designated to weddings, but are used for all sorts of occasions. During the holiday season they host fundraisers and holiday parties as well as bar/bat mitzvahs, baby showers, bridal showers, quinceañeras, sweet sixteen's, anniversary parties, you name it, they can handle it!

The Olde Mill Inn and Grain House Restaurant also take steps to keep a healthy, eco-friendly environment. The Inn provides a number of "PURE Rooms," which are allergy-friendly by using sanitized air purifiers that provide clean, crisp air throughout the room. Each bathroom is equipped with char-



coal-filter shower heads to filter out the impurities from the water. The Inn also uses ozone equipment for laundry, which is a biodegradable, eco-friendly way to clean the linens and towels using cold water, which conserves energy. The ozone loosens the dirt in the fibers and sanitizes the wash. The restaurant is doing its fair share as well, making sure to get fresh, local produce when the season allows it. They even have their own organic garden, complete with a picturesque white picket fence!

The Inn has energy efficient lighting, and they are working on installing energy efficient windows. They also use glass cups instead of Styrofoam. Sheila said staying green is a continuous process, and each year they try to find new ways to help the environment by minimizing their carbon footprint.

In terms of accommodations, the Olde Mill Inn in is on the cutting edge of modern conveniences. Each room includes HD TV, Wifi, even your own personal Keurig! You also have access to the 24 hour fitness center, and a room service menu from the Grain House. There is a hot breakfast buffet every weekday, which is included in the price of the room. When speaking about packages, Sheila mentions the Romance Package. This is the best in terms of price, comes complete with a voucher for the restaurant, champagne, and luscious chocolate covered strawberries.

Both establishments act as generational milestones for countless members of the community. Many customers have mentioned that multiple events for their families have occurred within the walls of the Inn and restaurant. As a staple of the community, they



also host many charity events; one mentioned was the "Taste of Bernardsville," which took place in October. Here people were able to visit various taste stations sponsored by many local restaurants. All proceeds went to fire fighters and senior citizens in the area. If interested in making a reservation or simply an inquiry, call 908-696-2315, or 908-221-1150 for the Grain House.

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