



*Kimmy brings our water. Busy!by Will Gottlieb  
Coastal Journal staff*

CAMDEN — Cappy's Chowder House is located at 1 Main St. in Camden, just as Route 1 takes a left to run parallel to the harbor. They are accessible via the telephone system (236-2254) and the Internet ([www.cappyschowder.com](http://www.cappyschowder.com)) – and yes, they have WiFi, should you need to learn more while you're there.

The interior of the place is festooned with fishing and hunting regalia, various and heads and stuffed fish, bar signs and sight gags, knick-knacks and gewgaws. It's a bit overwhelming at first, but they're nice people and it's a welcoming place, which counts for much in this day and age. Yes, it's a little small, but yes, we could see ourselves eating there on a regular basis.

We were seated against a window more or less in the middle of the room, more or less looking away from the street, more or less comfortable, though seated on a bench. After hearing the specials from Kimmy, our server, we ordered Sea Food Pie, described as "an old favorite from our original menu from 1979. Fresh scallops, Maine shrimp, clams and veggies in our own wine and cream sauce, baked with a puff pastry top. Served with a side salad" (\$13.99). Our companion ordered Turkey Hot Pie, described as "Old fashioned turkey is baked with crumb crust and served with Spruce Mountain Cranberry Chutney and a salad" (\$11.99). We had the presence of mind to note that this was the first time the description of our entrée had a higher word count than the description of our companion's entrée; we hoped this was a good sign.

We also ordered a pint of the local brew, Andrews English Pale Ale, described as "a crisp and highly hopped dark amber ale from our neighbors in Lincolnville, Andy and Ben Hazen" (\$4). We enjoyed the first one very much, and the second, and the third. (Not to worry; we were on foot, and staying at the Towne Motel a short walk up Route 1.) Our companion ordered a gin & tonic, accepted Tanqueray as the gin in question, and paid \$7.



Foreground: Sea Food Pie. Note the crazy puff pastry hat. The seating was a little tight, and so we got to know our neighbors a little as they came and went – rescued someone's birthday present, which had been left at a table; exchanged pleasantries with some very nice ladies at the adjacent table; sang the birthday song a couple of times; and were enormously entertained by a couple with two very young and sweet children. Very much a family restaurant, with plenty of kid stuff to distract the younger set until the food arrives.

The salads arrived first, and were fresh and beautifully garnished, what we would do for ourselves on a special evening: dried cranberries and sunflower seeds, walnuts and red peppers, over fresh, green-leaf (as opposed to iceberg) lettuce. The house vinaigrette was the only dressing in the house, and pretty damned good. The food arrived fairly quickly for such a busy night – there were people waiting for tables most of the time we were there, which should tell you something about the quality of the food and service – and we set to work.

The Sea Food Pie seemed to us to be an homage to the Cat in the Hat initially, as the Puff Pastry Top was about double the height of the bowl, and looked very much like the hat in the story. We ate a bit of the pastry and were quite taken with its light and savory qualities, might have been content with just that. The "sea food" in the dish was chunky and delicious, a very deceptively sized entrée that was not too rich and so very delicious.

We had every intention of trying our companion's entrée, but Sea Food Pie is quite a load, when accompanied by a salad and three pints of Andrews, and so we failed. But we were assured that Turkey Hot Pie is a fine dish, highly recommended – which by the way is how we felt about the entire experience: One dines well at Cappy's; you must go.