

Fine Dining at *The 51 House* by Claude Milot

Published August 14th , 2018

Rose Tummarello has a very successful accounting and consulting practice in New York. When Bertie County's Scotch Hall Preserve became one of her clients, she came to North Carolina in the role of Chief Financial Officer. The golf resort is on the southern shore of Albemarle Sound, but while serving this account she chose to stay not at Scotch Hall but in Edenton, directly across the Sound. She had fallen in love with Edenton, its history, and its people who respect and preserve that history.

She fell in love with another place, too. Crossing the Chowan River Bridge on her short commute back home every day, she would see the "For Sale" sign on a lovely building standing by the water next to a small marina—it had been quiet for three years after a succession of restaurant disappointments. But it wasn't long before Rose was convinced that with a new name and a new vision it could be revived and transformed into a thriving enterprise.

Two years ago the vision became a reality as a new kind of restaurant with a theme inspired by Edenton's colonial history. Its new name was **The 51 House**, recalling the 51 Edenton women known as the Edenton Tea Party. Led by Penelope Barker and meeting in her house in 1774, they signed a document pledging to boycott English goods in protest of the British monarch's unjust rule.



Today the vision comes to life in the restaurant's décor and in its food. Mannequins in period costumes greet visitors at the door and point them to a welcoming interior with rich, dark woodwork. A series of rooms, all open to views of Albemarle Sound, are decorated with pewter mugs and pots, candles in every window, lanterns on every table, period chairs deliberately unmatched, elegant colonial drapery, porcelain china, and an atmosphere redolent of history.



The list of beverages announces libations to match the atmosphere, with cocktails like the Lady of Edenton made with gin, lillet, grapefruit juice, elderflower liqueur, and garnished with an edible flower. The menu takes it one step further, featuring such appetizers as Oysters Rocky Balboa, classic Oyster Rockefeller flavored with Sambuca. Then there are entrees like bacon-wrapped scallops, the signature slow-roasted prime rib, and, for seafood lovers, Fish N' Chips with a choice of flounder, haddock, or lobster. The list goes on with offerings that are making first-time visitors come back again and again.

To build up an appetite, visitors can stroll the grounds or follow a path of knock-out roses leading to a lovely gazebo and cypress trees circled with oleander. Or they can sip an after-dinner drink on the porch under hanging baskets of flowering mandevilla vines swaying in the breeze.

Inside or outdoors, visitors to **The 51 House** can let their imaginations run free with visions of Edenton's Tea Party, while experiencing dining reminiscent of the 1700s in a waterside setting unsurpassed anywhere on Albemarle Sound.



See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VHtgFsDSnc&feature=youtu.be> for more photos of the 51 House.

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Additional Notes:

Local knowledge for approach to 51 House Marina can be found at
<https://albemarleloop.com/docs/51%20chart%20updated%207.3.2017.pdf> .

As you proceed towards the Chowan River Bridge, the 51 House can be seen just south and east of the bridge. Deep water of 6.00 feet or more can be found from the center of the sound to the entrance of the marina. Heading towards the marina, just south of the restaurant, the entrance can be clearly seen just south of a mangrove of trees. See <https://albemarleloop.com/docs/51%20chart%20updated%207.3.2017.pdf> for information on the entrance and the soundings in the area. Stay slightly to the right of the centerline the entrance to avoid a possible shoal of 5.5 feet at what is considered mean water level. The breakwater entrance is narrow and requires care in entering the basin, boats of more than 14 feet should enter only in calm weather with extreme care. The basin is protected and offers vessel up to 45 feet room to turn around. Longer vessels may need to back out of the basin.