

TOWN & COUNTRY

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EARTH ANGELS

A French Heiress and an American Trailblazer's Groundbreaking Plan to End World Hunger

FALL'S NEW LOOK

GOOD BREEDING, BAD BEHAVIOR

IS YOUR JEWELRY A GOLD MINE?

The Controversy Roiling the Waters of the AMERICA'S CUP

PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME GO!

A Back to Boarding School Memoir

Claire Courtin-Clarins
& Lauren Bush Lauren





GOLDEN PHEASANT INN
Ebensburg, Pennsylvania



TOPPING ROSE HOUSE
Bridgehampton, New York



INN WITH THE NEW

It's out with the old, as two great American roadhouses are reborn.

By MARK ROZZO

IN THE SLEEPY CORNER OF PENNSYLVANIA WHERE I GREW UP—a place where it seemed as if a local ordinance prescribed a Wyrth print above every fireplace and where a stately old oak would occasionally be found growing smack in the middle of an intersection—fine dining meant one thing: country inns. And country inns meant candlelit rooms, Windsor chairs, a menu tilted heavily in the direction of lobster thermidor and steak Diane, and a wine list as fusty as it was overpriced. The preciousness bordered on kitsch; the ye-oldehood, as the years went by, came to seem like a parody. These old stone piles—with their dining rooms full of dusty chairs, peon-dates, and local subs—were invariably places where Washington had slept. And they'd been more or less comatose ever since.

Now, with the rise of farm-to-table and destination dining, country inns have been waking up, refreshing their menus and, if they still offer beds for the night, their accommodations. The Bull's Head Inn, at the corner of Montauk Highway and Sag Harbor Turnpike in Bridgehampton, New York, was always an East End landmark, a hulking Greek Revival manse that could never escape your attention as you crawled past in summer traffic. Last year it reopened as the **Topping Rose House** (Judge Abraham Topping Rose being the eminence who built it, in 1842), with a full-on culinary reinvention cast by Tom Colicchio. The atmosphere throughout is as classic as it is sleek, with Windsor chairs sharing territory with Saarinen tables and pieces by the great local artist Peter Dayton. With a crackling fireplace and dining rooms full of thankful patrons, the Topping Rose House—which just opened a new wing of lodgings designed by Roger Ferris—remains a boisterous roadside tavern, as chef de cuisine Ty Kota, late of Tabla, transforms comfort dishes into small miracles, particularly the excellent roasted chicken with chestnut spätzle.

The Topping Rose House's co-owner, Simon Critchell (who may greet you at the door with a glass of cabernet in his hand), describes the makeover as "a labor of love." The same could be said of another outpost within striking distance of New York City, the **Golden Pheasant Inn**, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Sisters Briar Faure Mewbourne, Brittany Faure Ross, and Blake Faure grew up in this handsome fieldstone inn, formerly run by their parents and wedged between the Delaware River and the Delaware Canal along a stretch of River Road that breaks the charm-o-meter. Last fall they unveiled a gorgeous restoration of the 1857 building (itself a reconstruction of the original 1811 tavern), spiffed up the four guest rooms, and ramped up the food program. "Our father is French," Briar says, "so farm-to-table is nothing new here; we've always sourced local." But, thanks to an explosion of purveyors in the area, local is better than ever. In 1776 the original owner of the property helped Washington cross the Delaware; modern-day weekenders might never want to leave.