

SUMMER 2024

Food & Travel

MAGAZINE

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

LEGENDARY CHEF

NOEL MCMEEL

THE SEXIEST CHEF ALIVE:

HARRY HAMLIN

SUMMER'S
PLAYGROUND

NORTH LAKE TAHOE

SO MUCH.SO CLOSE.SO NEVADA.

The sun is shining on your next getaway! There are so many outdoor activities to choose from including pristine bike paths, hiking trails, golf courses, paddleboards and kayaking. With thousands of restaurant options from fine dining to fine BBQ, a view of the mountains, or the bright lights of Las Vegas. Henderson has so many choices to customize your experience. See all that Henderson has to offer.





Food & Travel MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2024

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Food & Travel

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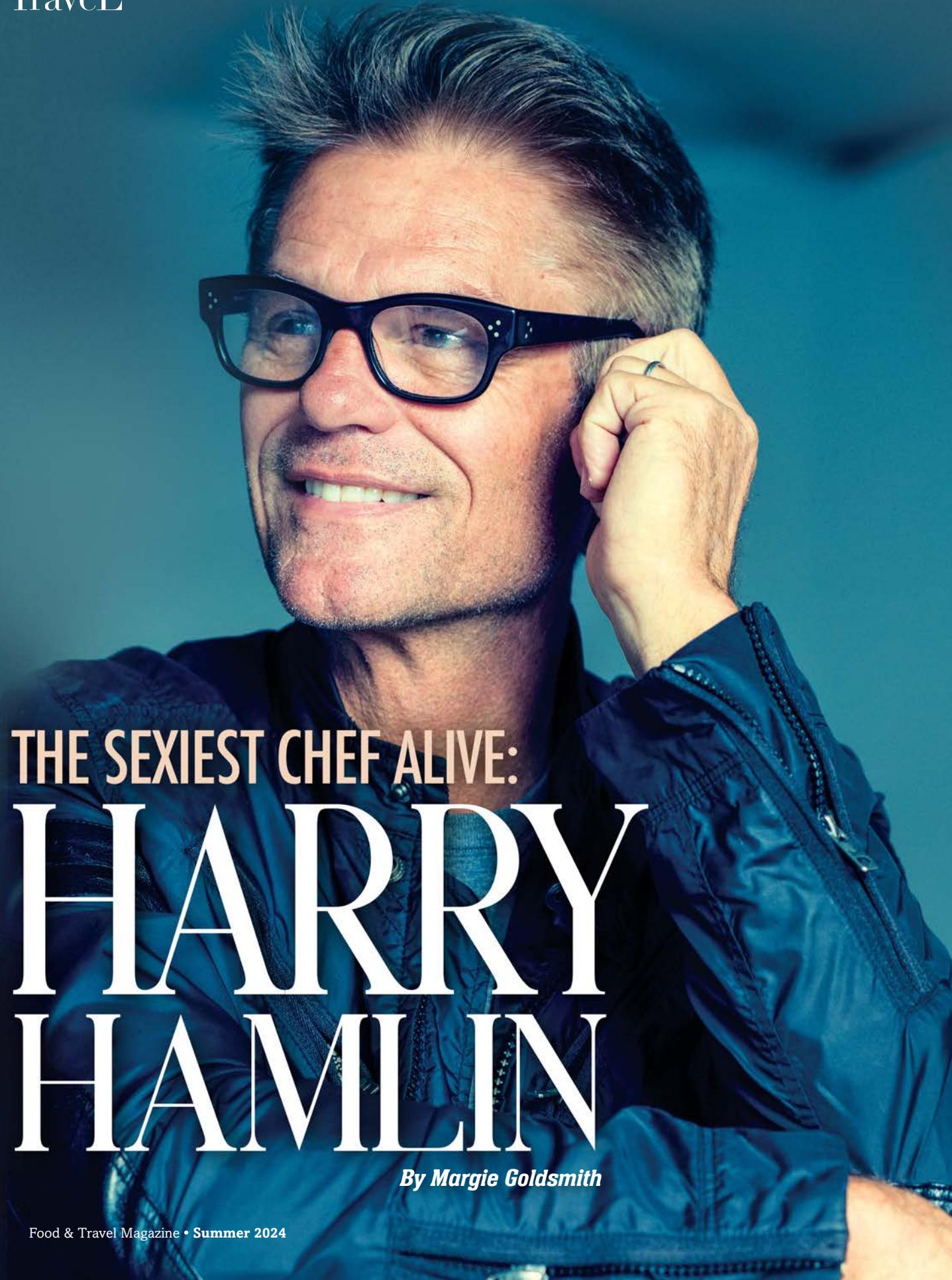
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THE SEXIEST CHEF ALIVE

**HARRY
HAMLIN**

By Margie Goldsmith





THE SEXIEST CHEF ALIVE:
**HARRY
HAMLIN**

By Margie Goldsmith



Summer COVER STORY

Voted by People Magazine in 1987 as the "Sexiest Man Alive," actor, author, and entrepreneur Harry Hamlin has been working in TV, film, and on stage for over four decades. He is presently the star of a new 30-minute AMC show, *In the Kitchen with Harry Hamlin*, which will be available on AMC+ in July. The five-episode show is a combination of cooking, dinner party, and documentary complete with VIP guests, humor, and real recipes. Hamlin is also shooting the second season of Anne Rice's *Mayfair Witches*, in which he plays Cortland Mayfair.

Originally known for his role in the TV series, *L.A. Law* (for which he received three Golden Globe nominations), Hamlin also earned a Primetime Emmy nomination for *Mad Men*. Among his countless other roles, he starred as Perseus in the fantasy film, *Clash of the Titans*.

A Yale University graduate, Hamlin next earned a Master of Fine Arts from the American Conservatory Theater. He is also the author of *Full Frontal Nudity: The Making of an Accidental Actor*, a memoir of his early years. In addition, Hamlin is an advocate for fusion power and is co-founder of TAE Technologies (formerly known as Tri Alpha Energy), a company developing a clean, non-radioactive fusion power generator.

He and his actress wife, Lisa Rinna (*The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*), have two adult daughters and Hamlin has an older son with actress Ursula Andress. We caught up with the sexiest man alive at his home in Los Angeles.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Let's talk about cooking. Did your mother or father cook?

Yes. I was raised right after World War II, so they were used to rationing. My father would cook exotic things like beef tongue, then the next week, pickled beef tongue, then oxtails, which is just a cow's tail, then the next week, pickled ox tails. We had lots of interesting food when I was growing up.

If you've ever read *Ulysses* by James Joyce, Leopold Bloom is described for the first time as a man who "ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowl." My father was the same way, in that he liked inner organs. So, he was always picking up kidneys or beef hearts or brains. For example, every Christmas morning, before we could open the presents, you had to eat his brains with burned butter; that was a Christmas tradition. Over the years, we had to develop a taste for his brains.

When did you become interested in cooking?

We have a cabin in Canada that's been in my family for 102 years. Back in the day, it was very remote. There were no restaurants, so if you wanted to eat, you had to cook. And that's when I started to cook, in my late teens.

How did you learn? Were you watching your father?

Trial and error, really. To this day, I've never seen a cooking show where they're in a competition. It doesn't interest me in the least.

And your wife doesn't cook. I understand on your first date, you cooked for her.

Yes.

So how did this show, *In the Kitchen with Harry Hamlin*, come to be?

AMC asked me to do a cooking show and I said, "Are you kidding me? Why would you want me to do a cooking show?" I guess it was because I cooked lunch one time for Lisa's castmates on *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*. A few years before that, I cooked some Bolognese for them, and they loved the food and it kind of got out into the zeitgeist that I was a cook. So, then some executive's wife who'd seen the show said, "You've got to have Harry Hamlin do a cooking show for AMC." They came to me out of the blue. If anybody had come to me two years ago and said I'd be doing a cooking show, I'd say they were insane. I told them I'd only do it if my niece, classically trained Chef Renee Guilbault, would be my wing person to keep me honest.

Your niece has said she's only there as your security blanket. Is that true?

No, she's there because she's an expert chef. With her by my side, I can't make too many mistakes.

Because of *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*, you became known as the King of Bolognese. How did that happen?

When I cooked lunch for Lisa and her castmates, I decided to cook Bolognese because I thought that would be easy and tasty. They loved it, and then it became a thing on the show. I went on *Watch What Happens Live With Andy Cohen* and on *The Today Show*. They both tasted it live and loved it. Now I'm in the process of actually getting it out. Hopefully, we'll have a batch ready to go soon because stores like Whole Foods do their taste test for the following year. To get it in stores for 2025, we have to have it ready now.

I understand Julia Child once pinched your butt. How did that happen?

I didn't know it at the time, but it turned out she was a fan of mine. She'd asked my manager for me to present her an award at an awards ceremony. She's quite tall. At this point, she was using a cane and asked me to help her to the podium. Halfway out, she stopped, reached out, and pinched my butt. She told me she'd been wanting to pinch it. It was kind of funny.



HARRY HAWKIN



Can you explain what *In the Kitchen with Harry Hamlin* is?

I'm not sure exactly what it is. I don't know if it's a relationship show between me and my niece or a show about our guests who come to dinner and share the food that we've cooked. It's kind of an amalgamation of all those things. Renee and I spend the first 10 or 15 minutes preparing food and cooking and then the remainder of the time is usually with the guests who have come to have dinner with us, and hopefully they liked the food.

You ask your guests many questions. Who are these guests?

Bobby Moynihan (*Saturday Night Live*), Ted Danson (*Curb Your Enthusiasm*), Mary Steenburgen (*Book Club*), Dean Norris (*Breaking Bad*), Tongayi Chirisa (*Anne Rice's Mayfair Witches*) and Ed Begley Jr. (*Better Call Saul*), among others.

What is the conversation with the guests like?

These people are all very successful, so I might ask how they got their first break in the business. We've all been around for a long time, and people don't know that we all started hungry, living in a garret somewhere on food stamps. It's always fun to find out how somebody got their first break.

What's the format of the show?

We go through each recipe, so you come away with the recipe and how to prepare it. There's no one right way. We've made homemade spaghetti, which I had never done before, so you learn how to do that. You get a lot of little kitchen hacks. Renee taught me how to cut an onion. I've been cutting an onion wrong for 40 years.

Is there a theme for each show?

I don't know if it's theme based. It's based on trying to investigate how to make dishes that I make and seem to work for my family, but I don't use a recipe. I just throw stuff in.

What do you think is the most important take-away from this show? Is it your presence? Your conversations with the guests? The recipes?

All of the above. It's everything.

Not related, I know you're a huge fan of nuclear fusion energy. Tell me about that.

I'm a founder of a company I brought into existence 26 years ago. We're a startup, but we've raised over a million relevant dollars and, hopefully, we're on the path of clean energy for the planet. This has been my passion for at least 40 years. Like Kennedy said, we don't do stuff because it's easy. Nuclear fusion is really hard to do. But if anybody can do it, this particular group of nuclear physicists and engineers are going to be the ones to do so. They always say that fusion is 30 years away. It's probably going to be a few more years before we get to actually be able to put power into the grid. Most scientists deal with energy, and electrons, and nuclear energy, and know that fusion is really the Holy Grail. That's going to be the answer, how human beings will get our energy for the next million years. But it's going to take a lot of research and development, a lot of money, a lot of engineering, a lot of brain power, and a lot of trial and error to get there. It's a big challenge.

Will you see it in your lifetime?

I hope so. I mean, I didn't think 26 years ago that it would take 26 years or more. But as we went along, we realized that what we're trying to do is so huge. We're trying to basically create a microscopic sun in the laboratory suspended by magnetic fields. And to do that is very, very, delicate work.

You've done so much over four decades.**What do you want your legacy to be?**

I think the greatest legacy that anyone can leave is their children. Our kids are great; they're professionals and successful. I'm very proud of them. They've got great heads on their shoulders, and they're very grounded. As far as being a cook, I don't think that should be my legacy. •

HAMLIN TO LAUNCH FAMOUS SAUCE

No stranger to Emmy nominations or San Diego Comic-Con, *Mayfair Witches* star Harry Hamlin grounds himself from such distractions by embracing his passion for cooking as demonstrated by the success of his *In the Kitchen* series which, like his scripted vehicle, will return for a second season in the New Year.

In the show, he shares screen time and counterspace with his chef/entrepreneur niece, Renee Guilbault, with whom he just launched the women-owned and led family business - The Open Food Company - creating products with only kitchen-found ingredients that are fully transparent (in recipe and cooking method) and that are simultaneously delicious and nutritious.

Come mid-September, Harry's Famous Sauce: Rosemary Red Wine will be the first product to pre-launch. Official launch will follow a month later. Additionally, they'll commit half of the net profits to support different social impact opportunities ala hunger-relief in an effort to drive awareness.

The \$12 product will be inclusive of a downloadable recipe along with demonstrational videos that share ingredients and show how to make the recipes from scratch if preferable to heating from the jar. No additives. No stabilizers. No preservatives. No added flavors.

WHO
Harry's Famous Sauce

WHAT
A mouth-watering, unforgettable rosemary red wine sauce - with an appetite for change.

HOW
Real and simple, kitchen-found ingredients.

WHY
To make real food more transparent and accessible for all.

Like his better-half's show, which initially shed light on Harry's famous sauce, the product will soon become a reality and available to housewives and households everywhere. •



DISCOVER DAWSONVILLE

Georgia





As summer's warmth envelops Dawsonville, Georgia, and leaves rustle in anticipation, our scenic haven awaits – a place where adventure thrives and memories bloom. Nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, with an abundance of outdoor activities and breathtaking scenery, there's no shortage of things to do for a memory-making adventure. Topping the list year-round is Amicalola Falls State Park and Lodge, which is home to the tallest cascading waterfall in Georgia! The park offers multiple hiking trails (with ADA options) throughout the 800+ acre park, including the notable 7-mile Approach Trail that takes you to the Southern Terminus of the Appalachian Trail. Atop the mountain sits a resort-style 57-room lodge with an onsite restaurant, Cascades, featuring views from every table, a campground, cabin rentals, along with luxury glamping sites. The more adventurous can soar through the mountains with Screaming Eagle Aerial Adventures.

Another must visit is Georgia's only backcountry lodge, the Len Foote Hike Inn. Accessible via a 5-mile moderate trail that begins at the top of Amicalola Falls. The Inn is perched in a relaxed and beautiful setting in the midst of the Chattahoochee National Forest. Focusing on conservation and sustainability while offering a peaceful retreat for families and friends to disconnect and enjoy nature together. And don't forget the breathtaking sunrise that greets you at Starbase.

-Photo Courtesy of John Seibel

If you're looking for something more festive, look no further than Dawsonville's assortment of seasonal family farms opening in September, including Burt's Pumpkin Farm, Fausett Farms Sunflowers and Uncle Shuck's Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch. Burt's has been serving families for more than 50 years. The farm has many activities for families, including hayrides, a country store, thousands of pumpkins and delicious homemade pies and pumpkin rolls. A few miles from Burt's sits Fausett Farms Sunflowers. The farm plants more than a million sunflowers covering around 10 acres. Making it easy to see why it was named one of the 10 most Instagrammed spots in the state. And finally, head over to Uncle Shuck's and get lost in a 15-acre corn maze, kiddy maze, goat walks, tire mountain, jumping pads, corn cannons and more! On weekends in October, the corn comes to life with their nail-biting Dark Rows haunted maze.

When it's time to take a break from outdoor adventure, Dawsonville is a premier shopping destination with the North Georgia Premium Outlets, featuring 140+ luxury and named brand stores like Gucci, Versace, Ferragamo, Tory Burch, Pottery Barn and many more. Along with your favorite outdoor brands like Orvis, Columbia, North Face, Huk, Carhartt, to name a few. For a more unique spin, transform your spaces with a one-of-a-kind piece of art from one of the South's largest folk art galleries at Around Back at Rocky's Place, featuring work from over 250 artists.



Want to plan a trip around one of our annual events? On the 4th weekend of October, you can witness Dawsonville's largest annual event, the 57th Annual Mountain Moonshine Festival & Car Show in Downtown Dawsonville at Main Street Park and the Georgia Racing Hall of Fame. The event features live music, a race car parade, and hundreds of craft vendors and show cars. Want to stretch your legs amidst thousands of sunflowers? Join us October 12th for the 4th Annual Fausett Farms Sunflower 5k & Fun Run. Looking to get in the holiday spirit early? Dawsonville kicks off their annual Christmas in Dawsonville event on November 18th in Downtown with a Christmas Parade, Jingle Market and Tree Lighting at Dawsonville City Hall and Farmers Market Pavilion.

Join us in Dawsonville, Georgia, today! Request your free visitors guide at DestinationDawsonville.com or call 1-877-302-9271. •





CREATE YOUR OWN *Adventure*



Amicalola Falls State Park & Lodge

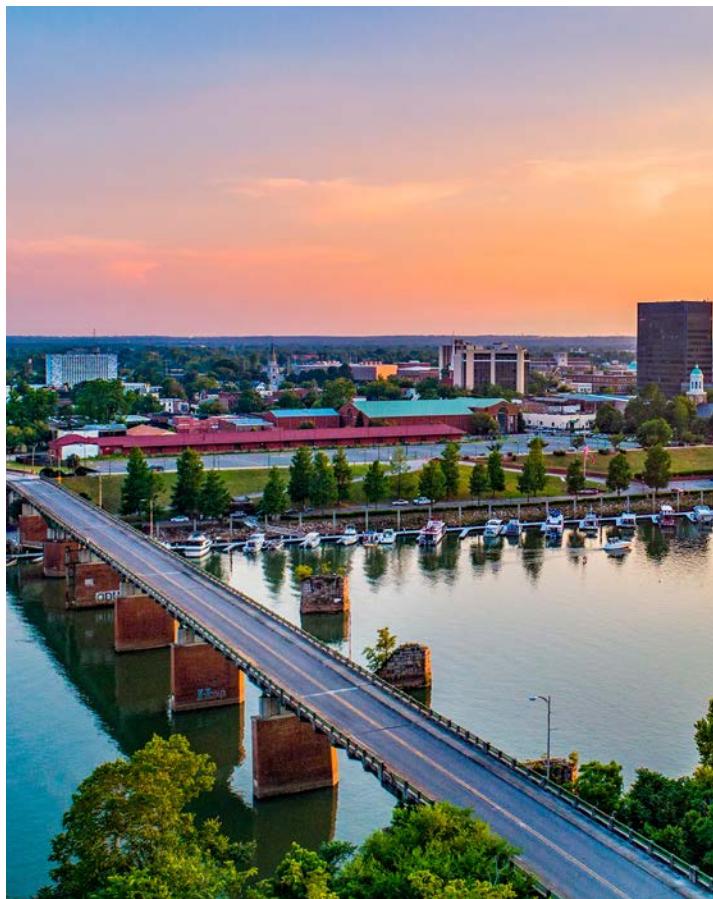
Georgia's Tallest Cascading Waterfall | Appalachian Trail Approach | Ziplining | Glamping
Len Foote Hike Inn - Georgia's Only Backcountry Lodge

Get your FREE visitors guide at DestinationDawsonville.com or call 1-877-302-9271
#Dawsonville | Photo: Chris Greer Photography

Heart & Soul Flow Through AUGUSTA GEORGIA

We are soulful, funky, artistic, and historic. We are Augusta, Georgia, a destination adorned with natural beauty that beckons you to come and explore. A mosaic of cultures alongside legendary Southern hospitality blend to create authentic experiences. Whether you're a museum enthusiast or trail trekker, music lover or foodie, our thriving community welcomes you to discover unforgettable memories.

Augusta is a patchwork of neighborhoods, each with its own character and vibe. Dig deeper into our history in the Downtown and Summerville neighborhoods and catch the new energy of North Augusta and West Augusta, packed with family fun and restaurants. Fort Eisenhower is more than a military installation; it's a community teeming with activities, culture and events. Flying into Augusta Regional Airport? Linger for a while in South Augusta and take in its natural beauty from the golf course or at Phinizy Center and Nature Park.





OF COURSE, WE HAVE GOLF

In Augusta, it's not officially spring until the Masters Golf Tournament. Millions of people from around the world watch this renowned annual event on television, but far fewer have entered the gates of Augusta National Golf Club. Finding a tee time in Augusta's River Region is a breeze as there are many public and semi-private golf courses for all skill levels, including a local favorite: the Jim Fazio-designed River Golf Club along the banks of the Savannah River.



SAVANNAH RIVER: THE HEART OF AUGUSTA

Whether you find your bliss on a golf course, a trail, or a riverbank, you're sure to find it here. Augusta is both an urban playground and a natural oasis, offering endless opportunities for outdoor exploration. From the Savannah River, you can watch the sunset over the city's skyline or watch wildlife at play – all from a paddle board, kayak or Jet Ski. Or soak in the riverscape from the Fifth Street Freedom Bridge. It's the combination of urban style and natural splendor that makes getting outdoors such a treat in Augusta.



DOWNTOWN: THE SOUL OF AUGUSTA

A birthplace of funk and soul music legends, the city brings history, music, and culture together through its many museums, entertainment venues, and public artworks.

Stroll through Olde Towne, Augusta's first neighborhood, to find gorgeous 19th century homes. History buffs can explore Magnolia Cemetery and the Augusta Canal National Heritage Area. The Augusta Canal and the Savannah River run alongside downtown where you'll find a variety of restaurants and the Savannah River Brewing Co. Soak in nature with a stroll down the Riverwalk or the Mill Village Trailhead. Black history is at the heart of Augusta; learn all about it at the Lucy Craft Lane Museum of Black History and the Golden Blocks Walking Tour.



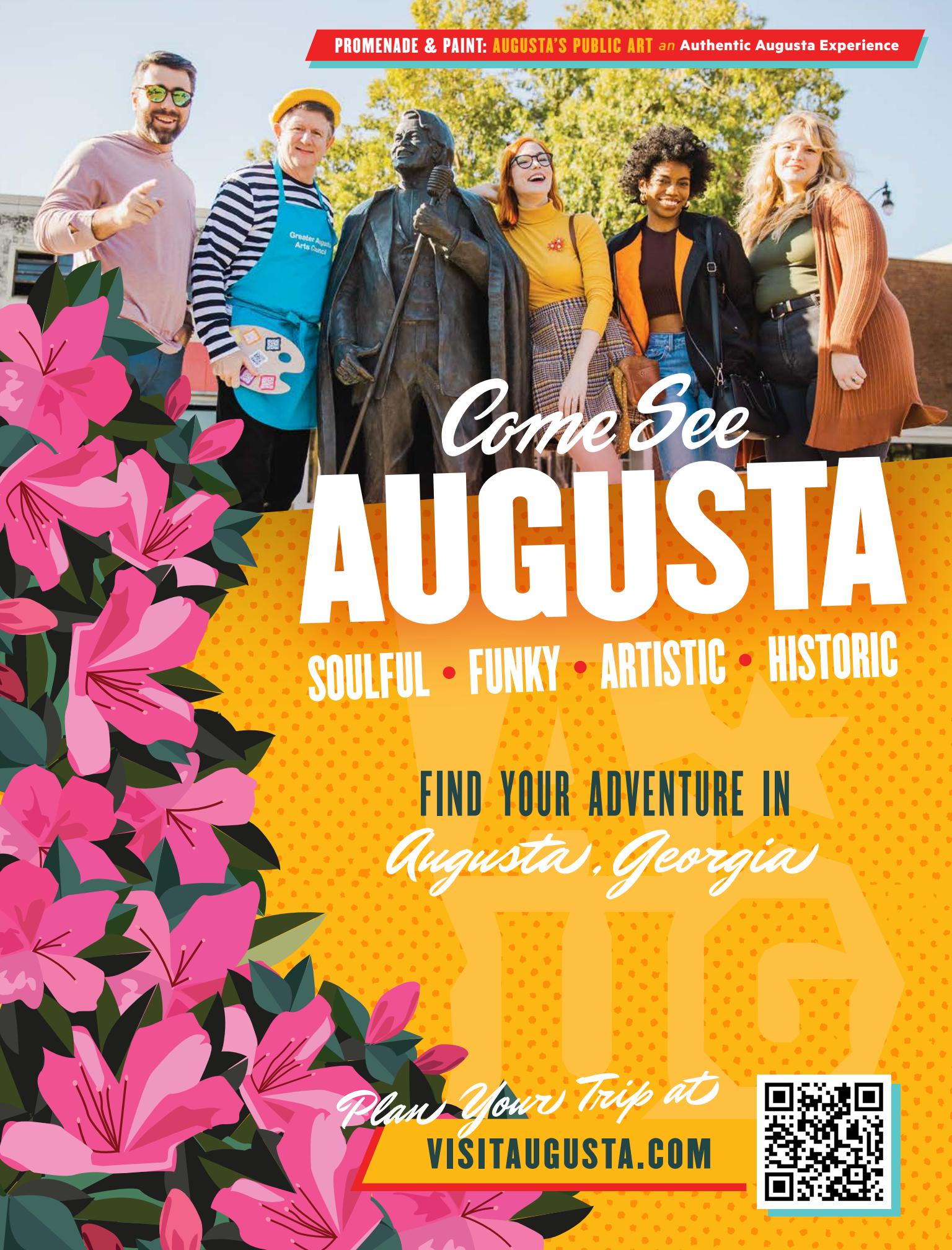
FEEL GOOD IN AUGUSTA

The Godfather of Soul, James Brown, called Augusta home and his legendary sound still “feels good” throughout the city. Get to know the “Hardest Working Man in Show Business” with the James Brown Family Tour that highlights landmarks from Brown’s early life. Take a selfie with the life-sized statue of James Brown on Broad Street, then walk up the block for a cocktail and live music at The Soul Bar.

Augusta Regional Airport has terminals for Delta and American Airlines, with direct flights from Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, and Washington, D.C. Augusta is about 140 miles east of Atlanta, just west of the South Carolina border, and is accessible to most of the Southeast via Interstate 20.

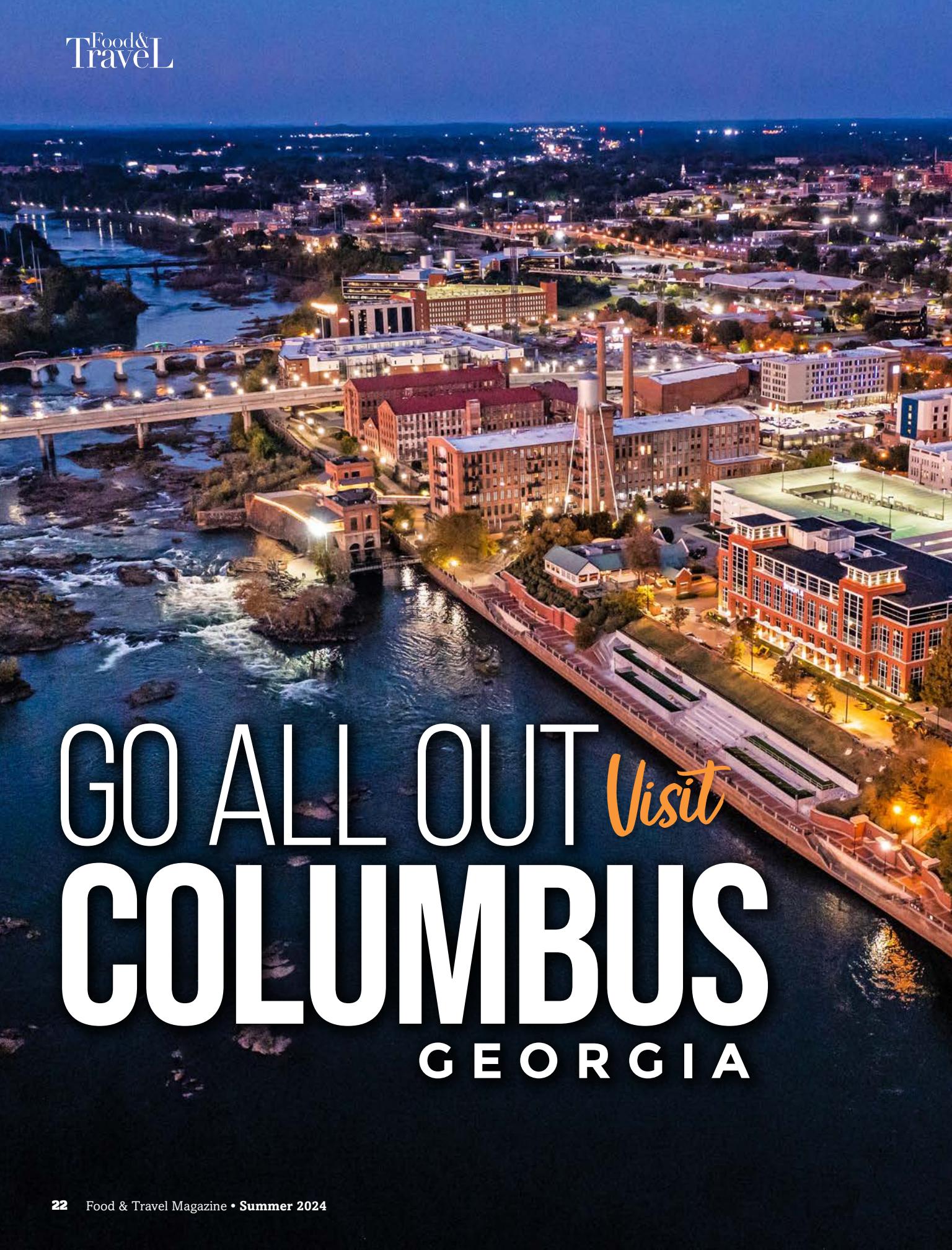
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GO ALL OUT *Visit*
COLUMBUS
GEORGIA

Photo by Stephen Poff



-Photo Courtesy of Stephen Poff



Georgia's second-largest city is a dynamic and diverse destination located in west-central Georgia on the banks of the Chattahoochee River – and it's the perfect place to put on your travel bucket list. A chef-driven local restaurant scene, a thriving arts community, and endless opportunities for outdoor adventure await travelers of all ages! Columbus is a great place to discover the wonders of nature AND delve into the city's unique culture.

Uptown Columbus (what locals call "downtown") is the heart of the city. Positioned along the Chattahoochee River, Uptown is a great stop on the 15-mile RiverWalk and home to a collection of some of the newest, hippest hotels; a local restaurant scene that rivals that of much larger cities; Market Days on Broadway, which is a Saturday-morning street market with more than 200 vendors selling art items, local produce, baked goods, and countless cool local finds; a free concert series where you can bring your chair and unwind to the sounds of a wide variety of musical entertainment; local boutique shopping; exciting public art and sculpture displays; and much more!

Columbus offers epic outdoor adventure steps away from the ultra-cool Uptown. Adventure seekers can enjoy 2.5 miles of whitewater rafting and kayaking on the longest natural urban whitewater course in the world! For those who want a milder adventure, you can also tube and paddle board on the river. Another one-of-a-kind attraction is the zip line that sends you from Columbus over the Chattahoochee River to Alabama – and back! Those who enjoy even more leisurely pursuits can stroll or bike along the RiverWalk, which winds past historical monuments and sites like the National Civil War Naval Museum and the experiential National Infantry Museum.



Columbus is an epicenter for cultural experiences. Founded in 1953, The Columbus Museum is the second-largest museum in the southeast and is being reimagined and fashioned as the region's cultural gathering place with newly designed galleries and gardens. The Columbus Collective Museums is home to the famous Lunch Box Museum (with the world's largest collection of vintage lunchboxes) plus six more dazzling museums that showcase the area's local industrial heritage and culture. The Coca-Cola Space Science Center features simulators, film screenings, and observation events appropriate for all ages. The Ma Rainey Home & Museum is a historical Columbus landmark honoring the legendary "Mother of Blues," Ma Rainey. And The Bo Bartlett Center is an 18,500-square-foot interactive gallery in the Uptown campus of Columbus State University.



-Photo Courtesy of Robert Weems



-Photo Courtesy of Stephen Poff

From ballet to Broadway, Columbus offers inspired performances and show-stopping events. RiverCenter for the Performing Arts is home to the Columbus Symphony Orchestra hosting Broadway shows as well as world-renowned performers and popular entertainers such as Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, The Moscow Boys Choir, and David Copperfield. The Springer Opera House is Georgia's State Theater, the region's premier professional theater, and annually produces over a dozen shows with talent from Los Angeles to New York.

Come and enjoy the vibrant artsy energy, the rich local history, epic outdoor adventures, and a thriving food scene (not to mention incredible photo opportunities for Insta!). It's no wonder Columbus was named "Georgia's Cool Cat City" by Forbes and one of the Best Trips of the Year by Explore Georgia. Couples, singles, and families alike will find what they need to plan an authentic, one-of-a-kind getaway by heading to VisitColumbusGA.com.

With a zip line across the river, the longest natural urban whitewater course in the world, inspiring cuisine, and a creative spirit—a Columbus getaway is perfect for adventurers, foodies, and families alike. No wonder we were named one of the **Best Trips of the Year** by Explore Georgia.

ALL OUT **Exciting.** ALL OUT **Inviting.**



 Visit**ColumbusGA** Go All Out

VisitColumbusGA.com  

THIS IS AUBURN OPELIKA

Nestled in the heart of Alabama, the Auburn-Opelika region is a vibrant fusion of modern Southern hospitality and a burgeoning culinary scene. Anchored by the prestigious Auburn University, the area has evolved into a dynamic destination that seamlessly blends tradition with innovation, capturing the essence of the South while embracing the changing culture of today.

At the core of Auburn-Opelika's allure is its commitment to warm hospitality, creating an inviting atmosphere in historic downtown areas that resonate with charm and welcoming vibes. Auburn University, one of the South's largest educational institutions, plays a pivotal role in shaping the region's cultural tapestry. This beacon of academic excellence combines a traditional blend of arts and applied science, ensuring a commitment to cherished traditions while adapting to the evolving landscape of contemporary education.

A culinary haven for discerning food enthusiasts, Auburn-Opelika's diverse culinary landscape is an array of eateries that caters to a spectrum of tastes and budgets. The region's calendar is full of family-friendly events, adding to its identity as a community where food serves as a unifying force, fostering cherished memories for all.









Legendary restaurants and talented chefs have become the pride of the community, boasting James Beard recognition and gracing the pages of prestigious publications such as Garden & Gun, Southern Living, and Wine Spectator. Acre, an esteemed downtown tradition led by Chef David Bancroft, is a shining example of Auburn-Opelika's dedication to an authentic and memorable dining experience. From fried green tomatoes topped with crab meat and pimento cheese to an elevated chicken-fried-chicken, Acre encapsulates the essence of Southern cuisine, crafting a symphony of flavors that lingers on the palate.

Café 123, housed in a historic drugstore building, seamlessly marries the charm of a '50s soda fountain with modern culinary flair. Offering hand-cut ribeyes, sushi-grade tuna, and more, Café 123 is a testament to the region's ability to blend tradition with contemporary culinary artistry.

Botanic, a culinary gem that transcends traditional dining experiences, is an unparalleled fusion of creativity and artistry. Beyond being a restaurant or event space, Botanic boasts sprawling areas, each with its own distinctive character and purpose. This exceptional venue invites patrons to meander through its spaces, fostering moments of connection with friends, providing live entertainment accompanied by the presence of both music and chickens, allowing children to play freely, drawing inspiration from nature, and satisfying both the culinary and soulful appetites.





-Photo Courtesy of Chris Granger



The Tony & Libba Rane Culinary Science Center, home to 1856 – Culinary Residence, is a pinnacle of gastronomic refinement that pays homage to Auburn University's founding year. Guided by a rotating Chef in Residence, students curate both à la carte lunches and sophisticated tasting menus, fostering an ever-evolving epicurean journey. This collaborative space propels students into culinary excellence, aligning theoretical brilliance with practical artistry.

Opelika, a proud component of Auburn-Opelika's cultural scene, is synonymous with craft spirits and innovative brewing. John Emerald Distilling Company stands as a pioneer in the craft spirits scene, offering a range of fine liquors. Joined by Red Clay Brewing Company in 2015 and Resting Pulse Brewery in 2019, these venues, situated in the hip arts district of historic downtown Opelika, have become cultural hubs featuring live music and a year-round calendar of special events.



-Photo Courtesy of Mohammad Azarifar

As historic rail lines and scenic drives wind through live oaks, dogwoods, and azaleas, Auburn-Opelika unveils itself as a destination defined by warm hospitality and a surprising mix of activities. This immersive journey into the heart of modern Southern hospitality is punctuated by authentic culinary experiences that linger, creating an enduring connection to a town that embeds itself in your soul. Auburn-Opelika isn't merely a place to visit; it's a nostalgic adventure where the flavors persist long after the last bite, forging an indelible connection to a town that becomes a part of who you are. In Auburn-Opelika, the South's rich traditions and its culinary future converge, creating a unique destination that invites exploration, celebration, and a lasting connection to the heart of Alabama. •

This is your introduction.

THIS IS
AUBURN
OPELIKA



FRIED GREEN TOMATOES AT ACRE | AUBURN, AL

Meet the coolest college town in the South. And his hip older sister.

aotourism.com

OLD DOGS —WITH— NEW TRICKS



As one of the oldest cities on the Gulf Coast, Mobile boasts more than 300 years of rich history and cherished memories. They embrace the new faces and places that emerge in their city with the passage of time but still hold their nearest and dearest essentials close. This mix of old and new creates a unique blend that invites visitors to explore its timeless charm. Join them in contrasting their long-standing local staples with new, must-experience stops, showcasing how Mobile marries its past with its innovative present and future.



DEW DROP INN AND LE MOYNE'S

The walls of Dew Drop Inn are covered in nostalgia. As Mobile's oldest restaurant, this diner has been serving chili cheeseburgers, po-boys and other diner bites since 1924. The dining experience would not be complete without indulging in the "World Famous Dew Drop Inn Hot Dog," which is covered in sauerkraut, chili, mustard, ketchup and a pickle.

Slated to debut in summer 2024, Le Moyne's Chophouse may not have a centuries-long reputation to uphold, but their exquisite style and cuisine already has people talking. With a menu that features a Mobile-inspired take on chophouse delights like the Oyster Louis and A5 wagyu, Le Moyne's opening is greatly anticipated by both locals and visitors.

USS ALABAMA AND NMMGM

USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park is a testament to Mobile's naval history. Commissioned in 1942, the USS ALABAMA valiantly served in World War II. Once decommissioned in 1947, the battleship was destined for the scrapyard until Alabamians rallied to have it preserved. Today, the park also houses the USS DRUM, a WWII-era submarine, and a vast collection of military aircraft and vehicles. With ample exhibits and views of Mobile Bay, the USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park is a landmark that honors the past while educating future generations.

The newly reimagined National Maritime Museum of the Gulf of Mexico celebrates the traditions of the Gulf and its lasting global impact. This museum offers over 80 immersive and hands-on exhibits that explore the maritime industry, Gulf Coast history and the region's cultural influence. Designed to resemble a life-sized container ship, the National Maritime Museum of the Gulf of Mexico showcases Mobile's vital role in shipping history and modern industry.



MOBILE CARNIVAL MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL AVENUE CULTURAL CENTER

Intricate court regalia and larger-than-life parade floats are iconic and recognizable symbols of Mardi Gras globally, but the holiday's roots have been tied to Mobile since 1703. To understand the origins of Mardi Gras in its hometown and its long-standing reputation of bringing communities together, a visit to the Mobile Carnival Museum is a must. This expansive museum offers 14 galleries, a theater and walls dedicated to memorabilia, costumes and the Mardi Gras experience. The histories of the Order of Myths, Mobile Area Mardi Gras Association and other parading societies are detailed through videos, pictorial exhibits and more.

The Historic Avenue Cultural Center's debut cultural heritage exhibit, "Remembering the Avenue," highlights the stories and memories of Davis Avenue, a thriving African American community that was erased by urban renewal in the 1970s. During the 1950s and 1960s, Davis Avenue, now known as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, was teeming with Black-owned businesses, schools and residents that sought to encourage each other despite the segregation laws that restricted them. At the Historic Avenue Cultural Center, visitors can immerse themselves in an oral history digest of Davis Avenue residents' recollections of life on the Avenue and how they yearn for the community's redevelopment.

Whether you're looking for historical charm or exciting new sights, Mobile has something waiting for you. •

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DISCOVER FORT SMITH

Choose Your Own Adventure

Experience a vibrant blend of modern South and historic Wild West in Fort Smith as you mix and match art, nature, history, food, and more to create an unforgettable adventure.

Which adventure will you choose?

-Photo Courtesy of Troy Jarrell



THE OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

The natural beauty of the Fort Smith area is one reason so many have settled here throughout history. And its location makes it the perfect hub for a Northwest Arkansas outdoor adventure! Camp downtown at the beautiful Fort Smith Riverfront RV Resort and visit multiple local and state parks all in one trip—no need to pack up and move!

- **Fort Smith Riverfront RV Resort** | 5 mins. from Downtown | fortsmithriverfrontrvresort.com
- **Ben Geren Regional Park** | 15 mins. from Downtown sebastiancountyark.gov/Parks-Rec/Ben-Geren-Park
- **Lake Fort Smith State Park** | 40 mins. from Downtown arkansasstateparks.com/parks
- **Devil's Den State Park** | 48 mins. from Downtown arkansasstateparks.com/parks
- **Mount Magazine State Park** | 1 hour 21 mins. from Downtown | arkansasstateparks.com/parks



THE FOODIE ADVENTURE

Fort Smith used to be the “last stop” for travelers heading west. So, people from all over the world have made Fort Smith home over time. Today, this merging of cultures is reflected in the diverse restaurant options around town. If you’re a foodie, you’ll have the best time discovering your new favorite dish in Fort Smith. Here are a few of our favorite spots:

- **AJ's Oyster House (Seafood)**
facebook.com/AjsOysterHouse
- **Calico County (Southern Home Cookin')**
calicocounty.net
- **Fort Smith Coffee Company (Cafe)**
fortsmithcoffeeeco.com
- **Fuji Japanese Steakhouse (Japanese)**
fujifortsmith.com
- **Harvest Moon Bakery (Artisan Bakery)**
fortsmithbread.com
- **Rolando's Restaurante (Central & South American)**
rolandosrestaurant.com
- **Vinnie's Pies (Pizza)**
facebook.com/vinniespies



THE CREATIVE ADVENTURE

If you're into the arts, Fort Smith offers you some true local, regional, national, and international inspiration. The city itself has become a vibrant tapestry of art, with even the buildings painted to reflect rich Western, Native American, and cultural history and heritage. But not only that—live music beats through the heart of the city, bringing locals and travelers together. Here's just a sample of things to explore:

- **Fort Smith Regional Art Museum** | fsram.org | Fort Smith's award-winning fine arts museum offering state-of-the-art exhibits and programming.
- **The Unexpected Project** | facebook.com/UnexpectedFS | A revitalization project that transformed Downtown Fort Smith into a collection of outdoor art.
- **Peacemaker Music Festival** | October 11-12, 2024 | peacemakerfest.com | An annual nonprofit music festival blending live Country, Rock, Blues, Red Dirt, and Americana music.
- **Fort Smith International Film Festival** | August 22-23, 2024 | fortsmithfilm.com | An annual nonprofit film festival that brings together a vibrant international film culture.
- **Temple Live** | templelive.com | A former Masonic temple turned large event venue that hosts a variety of events, concerts, and shows.



THE HISTORY BUFF ADVENTURE

Fort Smith provides a lot of opportunity for all the history buffs out there. Explore the stories of outlaws, cowboys, and bandits. Discover Fort Smith's military heritage and role in westward expansion. Uncover the area's Native American history. And, gain a deeper understanding of the city's significance in shaping American history overall. Here's a few examples of sites you need to see:

- **Cherokee Heritage Center** | cherokeerelatives.org
- **U.S. Marshals Museum** | marshalsmuseum.org
- **Fort Smith National Historic Site** | nps.gov/fosm
- **Chaffee Crossing Historic District** | chaffeecrossing.com/chaffeecrossinghistoricdistrict
- **Fort Smith Museum of History** | fstm.org

Find more information on Fort Smith food, art, nature, and history to explore, and start planning your adventure, at DiscoverFortSmith.com. #DiscoverFortSmith •

MAKE MEMORIES HERE

Fort Smith is an interesting paradox. A mix of old and new. A blend of charm and grit. It's got deep roots in the Old Wild West. But today's Fort Smith pays homage to history with thoughtful art, diverse cuisine, interactive exhibits, and outdoor adventures. It's a memorable destination for visitors like you. Ready for a trip? The new frontier awaits.



📍 Park at West End



📍 Downtown Fort Smith



📍 U.S. Marshals Museum



📍 Aj's Oyster House



📍 Lake Fort Smith



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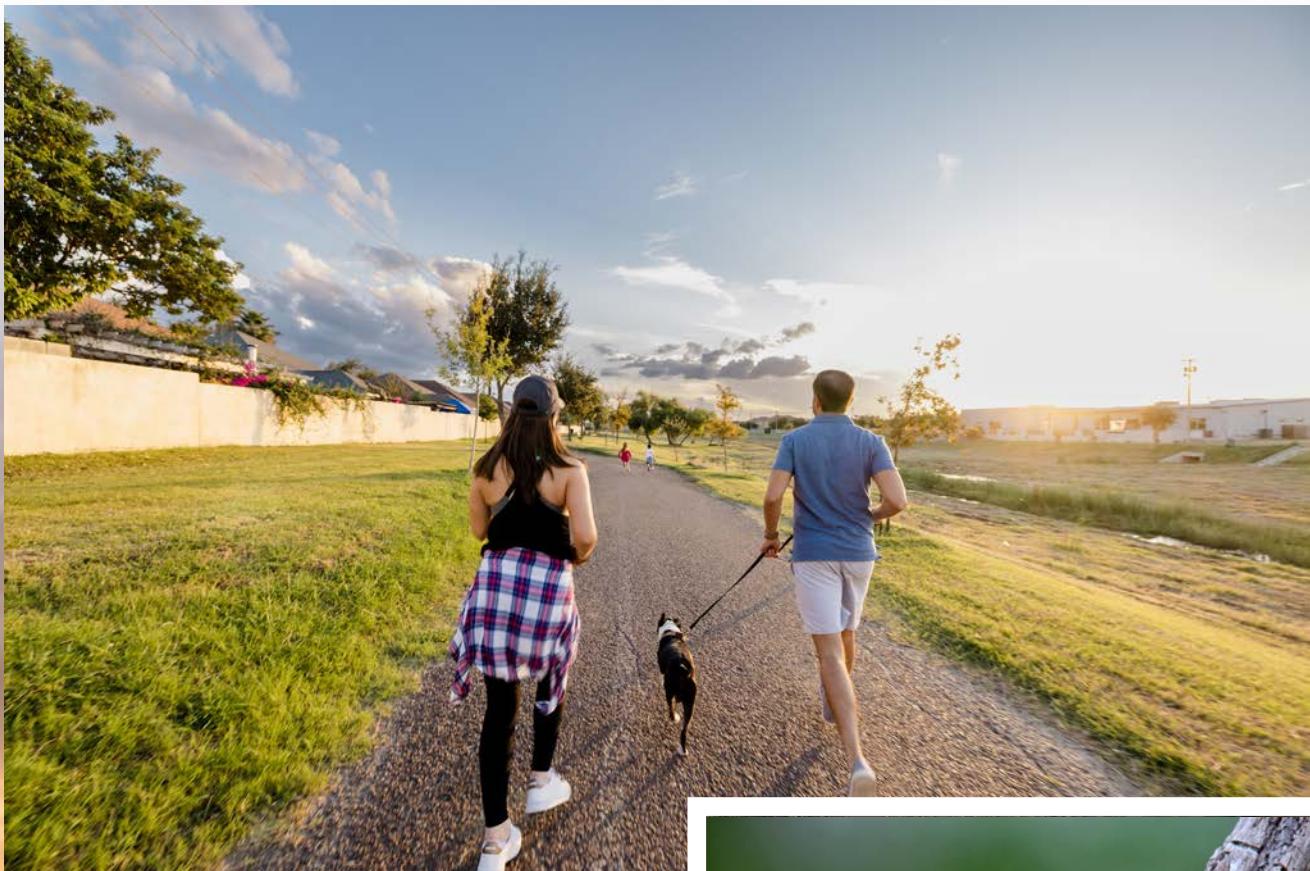


LAREDO

The Cultural Jewel of South Texas



Welcome to Laredo, Texas, where the streets are immortalized in song, paved with history and lead to adventure around every corner. Set along on the banks of the Rio Grande, Laredo is a vibrant city brimming with culture, charm, and coffee.



The adventure begins with the Historic Laredo Walking Tour. Step into 268 years of rich history, with stories whispered in both English and Spanish. Marvel at the architectural beauty of the San Agustin Cathedral. Lose yourself in the tales of the Republic of the Rio Grande Museum and Villa Antigua Border Heritage Museum. Soak in the colors as you stroll through San Agustin Plaza.

But Laredo's soul doesn't just dwell in its past. The streets speak through stunning murals with modern tales of heritage and hope. And for those brave souls who fancy a sprinkle of mystery, the Haunted Heritage San Agustin Ghost Walk will have you exploring the eerie side of downtown, guided by the glow of your smartphone.

Steeped in flavor, The Laredo Coffee Tour is your passport to the finest artisanal brews on the border. Sip on coffee, collect stamps, and earn yourself a special souvenir to remember your journey by.



Photo: © Todd Steele
Land: Butter Ranch

From the Chacon Creek Trail to the lush habitats of Lake Casa Blanca International State Park, and everywhere in between, Laredo is a haven for hundreds of species of local and migratory birds. For birding enthusiasts, Laredo is the place to immerse themselves in the avian wonders of South Texas all year round. Bird lovers and hikers alike can explore Laredo's riverfront, creek systems, nature trails, and private ranchlands, some offering never-before-birded sites.



VisitLaredo.com

When sports are your goal, Laredo scores big time! Laredo is home to Los Tecos Baseball Team, the two-nation organization and five-time winners of the Mexican Baseball league. They'll play 90 adrenalized games this year. The action continues with the Laredo Heat, champions of the Lone Star Conference Championship. Catch the excitement of a match at Texas A&M International University and feel the heart-pumping excitement of Laredo's sporting spirit.

Around here, all roads lead back to la cocina, no reservations required. In Laredo, the essence of "Mex-Tex" cuisine comes alive in every bite. Here, you don't need to cross the border to enjoy authentic Mexican flavors or hearty American fare. Laredo kitchens have more than 200 years perfecting the fusion of two distinct cultures into dishes that define Laredo's "Mex-Tex" flavor. From sizzling fajitas, tasty tacos, to carne asada and more.

From traditional dishes to global gastronomy, Laredo's culinary landscape is as diverse as its heritage. Choose between Thai, Italian or Japanese, and of course, the Lone Star State's famous BBQ and steakhouses. After a hearty meal, treat yourself to the sweet delights of local confectioners, offering everything from fresh doughnuts to tres leches.



From table tops to the mountain tops, our dual culture is everywhere. In colors, textures and flavors that surround you. Here is where two become something new, and totally Laredo.

Come sunset, toast your adventure with an ice-cold IPA or cocktail. Catch the game at a sports bar or dance the night away. Laredo nights make unwinding the day easy.

Whether you're a history buff, an art lover, just passing through, or simply in search of a new adventure, Laredo caters to all. From the cobblestone alleys to the bustling markets of San Bernardo Avenue, from serene riverbanks to artisanal coffee shops, every moment here is a discovery. So, pack your bags and set your sights on Laredo, where every visit is a journey through the heart of Mex-Tex culture. •

WELCOME TO

THE HEART OF MEX-TEX CUISINE



Laredo, Texas, isn't just a city on the border of two countries. We live at the nexus of two distinct cultures fusing together to create something brand new. Where authentic Mexican dishes are not only served next to hearty American fare, they also come together to form a unique cuisine we like to call "Mex-Tex." Learn more about this delicious melding of cultures at VisitLaredo.com.



#[HolaLaredo](#) | visitlaredo.com | 1.800.361.3360

Discover BANDERA *Texas*

Arriving in Bandera, Texas, the Cowboy Capital of the World®, expect a kaleidoscope of experiences that are authentic-real, encompassing its historic culture blended with all the modern conveniences we have come to expect.

It will soon be apparent that in Bandera, Texas, the Cowboy Capital of the World®, no AI article or VR experience can do justice to its history, culture, nature, and friendliness of the locals. The air is cleaner, the stars are brighter, the Hill Country beckons to be explored, and the music is alive and thriving.

Bandera lives its history every day and so can you. Its guest or dude ranches first opened their doors nearly 90 years ago and are as popular as ever. Riding horses, checking out the Texas longhorn cattle, learning to throw a rope, learning to pen cattle, and telling tall tales around an evening campfire are all ways to immerse yourself in the cowboy lifestyle. If you prefer not to stay at a dude ranch, outfitters can arrange custom rides in the hills or even take a historical ride in downtown Bandera. Bandera even has accommodations for your horse!

Four-legged horsepower is not the only horsepower you will see in Bandera. Motorcyclists have discovered the beauty of the Texas Hill Country and come from all parts of the U.S. and even internationally to ride the famed Twisted Sisters or Three Sisters (Hwys. 335, 336, & 337). These roads are part of the Texas 8 and are also ideal for putting the top down and letting the wind blow through your hair. Spend the day enjoying the scenic majesty of the countryside. You will not regret it.





For those that prefer two-legged horsepower, the Hill Country State Natural Area and Lost Maples State Natural Area provide ample trails for hiking, bird-watching, and backpacking. Bring your binoculars for the best possible chance to add to your own bird list or stare up at the starry skies.

Set aside some time to explore Bandera's shops, with names such as Spirits of Texas, Hyo Silver, Gone Quiltin', Texas Salt Company, Bandera General Store, and Western Trails Antiques and Marketplace. Strike up a conversation with the shopkeeper to learn firsthand what makes Bandera special.

After spending a day exploring, Bandera will not disappoint you with its eateries. You will not find any big-name chefs, fancy restaurants, or even a Starbucks. What you will find is Texas regional food, chicken fried steak, great burgers, steaks, BBQ, and Tex-Mex cooked to perfection in locally owned eateries frequented by locals and visitors alike. There is no need to experience withdrawals from barista-style coffee; Bandera offers three such establishments to enjoy with the locals.

And as the sun goes down, dust off your boots and dance the night away at local honky-tonks. There is music every night of the week here in Bandera, from local bands performing to touring national performers.

As your stay ends, you will find it hard to set aside authentic reality to return to the world of AI and VR. You will be planning your return trip to visit the new friends you have made. •

-Photo Courtesy of J. Griffis Smith



WELCOME TO **FOX HILL** RESTAURANT & GARDENS

WICHITA FALLS, TX



Perched upon a hilltop in Wichita Falls, once known as Bluebonnet Hill, Fox Hill Restaurant & Gardens is a sanctuary where time slows down and the beauty of nature intertwines with culinary craftsmanship. Housed in a meticulously-restored, century-old home sitting upon eight acres of cultivated grounds and gardens, the restaurant exudes an air of timeless elegance and serenity.

Rooted in the passion of owner John Hirschi, Fox Hill represents more than just a culinary venture; it's a manifestation of a lifelong commitment to gardening and sustainability. Raised on a farm, Hirschi has long held a deep reverence for the land and a profound understanding of the importance of mindful food practices. His outlook towards food and nourishment forms the cornerstone of Fox Hill's culinary philosophy built upon the principles of farm-to-fork and fork-to-soul dining.

Nearly every ingredient that graces the plate is grown onsite, nurtured without the use of pesticides or herbicides, from the accompaniments to entree dishes, and verbal daily specials to the mint and jalapeños in the signature cocktails. From locally-sourced, grass-fed, and hormone-free beef and poultry to sustainably-sourced, wild-caught seafood, every dish at Fox Hill is a testament to the restaurant's unwavering commitment to quality and sustainability.



-Photo Courtesy of Justin Goode



The enchantment of Fox Hill extends far beyond its culinary offerings—it begins the moment guests step onto the serene restaurant grounds. The enchanting gardens that surround the restaurant feature meandering pathways lined with vibrant blooms, lush foliage and terraced beds, each bursting with an abundance of seasonal herbs, vegetables, and flowers. The original house, lovingly restored to its former glory, serves as the centerpiece of this idyllic oasis, its historic charm and timeless elegance serving as a fitting backdrop for the culinary delights that await within.

As guests step through the door, they are greeted by a warm and inviting ambiance, courtesy of soft, ambient lighting that gently illuminates the original hardwood floors and crown molding. Every detail is thoughtfully curated to evoke a sense of peace and tranquility, from the elegant black tablecloths to the fresh-cut floral arrangements. The staff at Fox Hill is renowned for their warmth and expertise, eager to provide recommendations and serve as culinary guides. Many regular patrons forego the menu altogether, placing their trust in the chef's capable hands to design the perfect dining experience. Fox Hill aspires to be a place where one can relax and allow someone else to make the choices on one's behalf without fear of disappointment.

Able to make even the humblest of vegetables sing, Chef Anand Chaturvedula's culinary creations are a testament to his passion for seasonal ingredients and innovative flavors. One of his standout dishes is the pakoras, a delightful medley of seasonal vegetables lightly battered in chickpea batter and served atop a mother's black mustard seed tomato chutney. For dessert, guests are treated to the signature campfire—a whimsical creation featuring house-made marshmallow ice cream, ample chocolate ganache, and crumbled graham crackers, served tableside in a smoking cloche that evokes memories of summer evenings gathered around a crackling fire.

Fox Hill is more than just a restaurant—it's an invitation to slow down, savor the moment, and relish the simple pleasures of life. Amidst the tranquil beauty of nature, amidst the warm embrace of hospitality, Fox Hill is a sanctuary where guests can escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life and reconnect with what truly matters. Surrounded by the beauty of the gardens and the elegance of the dining room, guests can savor the joys of good food, good company, and the timeless beauty of nature—a sanctuary for the soul in a world that often moves too fast. •





WICHITA FALLS TEXAS
SMALL TOWN CHARM
BIG TIME FLAVOR!

Wichita Falls, Texas

For an unforgettable vacation!
website: discoverwichitafalls.com | download app: Visit Wichita Falls TX

Discover HENDERSON Nevada



River Mountain Loop Trail

Nestled in the heart of Southern Nevada and just minutes from the world-famous Las Vegas Strip, Henderson is a picturesque City that offers a myriad of attractions for travelers. Breathtaking outdoor trails, scenic day trips, and world-renowned golf courses are just a few of the activities that visitors can indulge in while enjoying the endless sunlit skies and organic beauty of the majestic Southern Nevada landscape.

Here, recreation is more than an outing, it's an adventure with incomparable beauty. Hikers and bikers can trek more than 180 miles of spectacular outdoor trails, golfers enjoy their pick of champion courses, and recreational options abound—with scenic day trips to the picturesque Zion National Park, Red Rock Canyon State Park and its historic rock formations, and last but not least, Lake Mead, home to the iconic Hoover Dam.







Begin your recreational feast with nine courses—golf courses, that is—which include the Jack Nicklaus-designed gem at Lake Las Vegas. An alluring backdrop for golf, the lake's brilliant blue waters also offer a refreshing plunge into kayaking, stand-up paddleboarding, flyboarding, and even yacht cruises. Back on land, hiking and biking trails stretch out across the City, ribbons of exploration threading through suburban streetscapes and through dramatic mountain and desert vistas. Take your pick from easy, intermediate, challenging and even equestrian trails.

The same is true for dining. In a City where food is a passion and every meal a celebration, diners enjoy a bountiful array of choices, from acclaimed chefs throughout Henderson and the City's Water Street District – a historic street lined with breweries, retail and restaurants specializing in flaming fajitas to flavor-packed steaks, from robust and upscale Italian flavors to sports bar fare elevated to an art. You won't want to miss the many picture-worthy and locally inspired murals while strolling Henderson's original downtown.

A tasting tour of the Ethel M chocolate factory is another sweet treat, and in the aptly named Artisan Booze District, where spirits are indeed both an art and a craft, you can sip and savor your way through a brilliant lineup: Original brews in



pubs like Crafthaus Brewing as well as handcrafted, small-batch wines at Vegas Valley Winery, where tours and a tasting room are special draws.

When you're ready to relax, Henderson is home to many premier hotels such as the M Resort and Spa, Green Valley Ranch Resort Spa and Casino and lakeside hotels surrounding Lake Las Vegas, including Hilton Lake Las Vegas Resort and Spa and The Westin Lake Las Vegas Resort & Spa.

With diverse recreational options, exceptional dining experiences, and comfortable accommodations, visitors can custom tailor their visit to suit their needs and preferences. Whether you're a family seeking a fun-filled getaway or a business traveler in need of a restful retreat, Henderson is the ideal destination for you. •



SO MUCH.SO CLOSE.SO NEVADA.

The sun is shining on your next vacation! There are so many outdoor activities to choose from including pristine bike paths, hiking trails, golf courses, tennis courts, and landmarks. With Henderson's warm weather, there's no better time to have a barbecue or a picnic under the stars. See all that Henderson has to offer and choose to customize your experience. See all that Henderson has to offer.

HENDERSON
cityofhenderson.com



**CHECK OUT OUR AD ON THE
INSIDE FRONT COVER OF THIS MAGAZINE!!!**

Photo by Jonathan Rouse

THE OUTDOORS & CULINARY
EXPERIENCE PAIR PERFECTLY IN

TUOLUMNE COUNTY

CALIFORNIA

Nature, culture, and culinary enthusiasts can embrace a unique fusion of outdoor recreation, culinary delights, and beverage experiences during a memorable getaway to Tuolumne County in Northern California's Sierra Nevada. Gold Country, Yosemite National Park, and the High Sierra, just 2½ hours east of the San Francisco Bay Area, provide the year-round backdrop for a culinary scene that invites visitors to unwind and indulge in locally-inspired and sourced mountain fare, modern 5-star dining, and everything in between.



-Photo Courtesy of Max Whittaker



Photo Courtesy of Kim Carroll

GOLD COUNTRY

Tuolumne County's Gold Country offers authentic Gold Rush experiences in its rich and lively historic towns such as Jamestown and Sonora, where local-favorite cafés and restaurants line the streets, and crafters at boutique wineries, microbreweries, and a hard apple cider distillery enthusiastically share their creations in distinctive locations. Treats and treasures wait to be discovered in specialty shops, fine art galleries, and at seasonal farmers markets, while gritty gold panning adventures (with actual gold miners) give visitors a chance to unearth their own riches.

Two California State Historic Parks transport visitors to a past era when the West was bustling with those searching for gold or a new way of life.

Railtown 1897 State Historic Park, located just a few blocks from Main Street in Jamestown, is a must-see with steam locomotives, railroad cars, equipment of the historic Sierra Railway and one of the few remaining working railroad roundhouses in the US. The highlight of the park is truly a movie star—Sierra No. 3®, has been seen in hundreds of movies, including Back to the Future III, television shows, and commercials. Ride the rails on a vintage train on weekends from April through September.

In Columbia State Historic Park visitors stroll along wooden sidewalks, ride an authentic stagecoach, pan for gold, and chat with knowledgeable and friendly townspeople dressed in period attire. Within the largest collection of Gold Rush-era brick buildings in California, a working blacksmith shop, an old-fashioned bowling alley, a historic theatre, a historic schoolhouse and shops add to the town's ambiance. Enjoy classic American cuisine in a beautifully restored 19th-century hotel or unwind at tea time with light fare at the town's tea shop.



HIGH SIERRA

No matter one's definition of adventure—it's revealed in Tuolumne County's High Country along Highway 108 (Sonora Pass). Magnificent vistas, trails, lakes, rivers, and streams create endless opportunities for every outdoor enthusiast.

The mountain paradise of towering pines doesn't fall short of culinary excellence. In the quaint town of Twain Harte, renowned gourmet dining options and fantastic casual fare provide for spectacular nights out or fuel-ups after a hike or trip to the lake. "Up the hill," more gastronomic satisfactions await at historic resorts and roadside cafes.

YOSEMITE & GROVELAND AREA

Over half of Yosemite National Park is in Tuolumne County, and it's the least crowded half. Walk amongst ancient giant sequoias in the Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias, catch a breath of alpine air in the incomparable scenery of Tuolumne Meadows, or hike to spectacular waterfalls at Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, the water source for much of San Francisco.

The Highway 120 corridor is the most direct route into Yosemite from the San Francisco Bay Area and features recreation, history, culture, and indulgences for all. The town of Groveland and the surrounding area's dining scene blends historic charm with culinary diversity, whether it's a Yosemite-inspired craft brew, a buffalo burger at California's longest operating saloon, or gourmet ice cream, tastebuds are rejuvenated.

A variety of lodging options to suit any budget, ranging from modern hotels, resorts, and charming B&Bs to RV parks and glamping opportunities are found throughout Tuolumne County.

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SET YOUR COMPASS TO *Wander*

visit
TUOLUMNE
county
★ CALIFORNIA ★

Natural beauty, cultural richness, and unforgettable moments all come together in Tuolumne County, California. Iconic Yosemite National Park, authentic Gold Country towns, and the spectacular High Sierra offer endless adventure for every outdoor enthusiast that pairs perfectly with locally inspired culinary delights and beverage creations.

There are lodging options for every budget. Discover Tuolumne County and book your stay today.

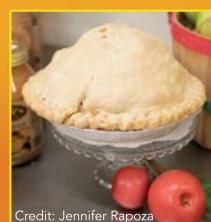
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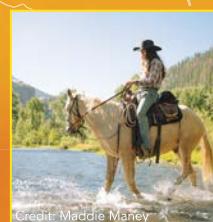
Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias,
Yosemite National Park



Credit: Visit California
Wells Fargo Building,
Columbia



Credit: Jennifer Rapoza
Cover's Apple Ranch,
Tuolumne



Credit: Maddie Maney
Kennedy Meadows



HIGH SIERRA ----- GOLD COUNTRY ----- YOSEMITE

FRESNO COUNTY

A Different Kind of California Experience





-Photo Courtesy of Hayley Salazar



FESTIVALS, THE FRESNO COUNTY WAY

Folks in Fresno County are always down for a good time. Late summer and early fall is a great time to visit to take part in the events loved by locals. Get ready to say “Opai!” at Fresno Greek Fest, where the city’s Greek community spends a weekend celebrating their heritage with music and food. Try gyros, souvlaki, loukoumades, and a variety of baklava all while dancing the night away to authentic Greek music. See hot air balloons lift off at ClovisFest, Clovis’s annual festival that bids farewell to summer and welcomes the fall. Colorful balloons take off just after sunrise. The festival spans 12 blocks of Old Town Clovis and features local businesses, food vendors, and live music. Fresno Reel Pride is one of the oldest and largest LGBTQ+ film festivals in the United States, bringing filmmakers from all over to Fresno’s Tower District.

The beginning of fall brings another one of Fresno’s biggest food festivals, the annual Taco Truck Throwdown. Taco trucks from across California go taco to taco to compete for the championship. The event includes live music, wrestling matches, michelada competitions, and plenty of tacos. Get ready for big fun at the Big Fresno Fair. From traditional fair foods and concerts to carnival rides and horseracing, it is a great stop for the family. Visitors can also explore historical exhibits, the kids’ zone, and livestock showcases.

THE REAL AND RAW CALIFORNIA

If you're looking for a different kind of California vacation, Fresno County gives you access to the real and raw heart of the state. Start your trip wandering through the Forestiere Underground Gardens, a home carved by hand beneath Fresno's surface. Inspired by the catacombs in Sicily, tour through the winding tunnels and see 100-year-old hybrid citrus plants. In the summer, the gardens have their own microclimate, making the tunnels 10-20 degrees colder than the surface level. Make a splash with your family at Wild Water Adventure Park in Clovis or Island Water Park in Fresno. Hike through Kings Canyon National Park, where giant sequoias, rushing waterfalls, and clear blue lakes sit within the deepest canyon in the United States. The park is quieter than neighboring national parks in the state, but the views are just as incredible. National park lovers can also see Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks just a short drive from Fresno.

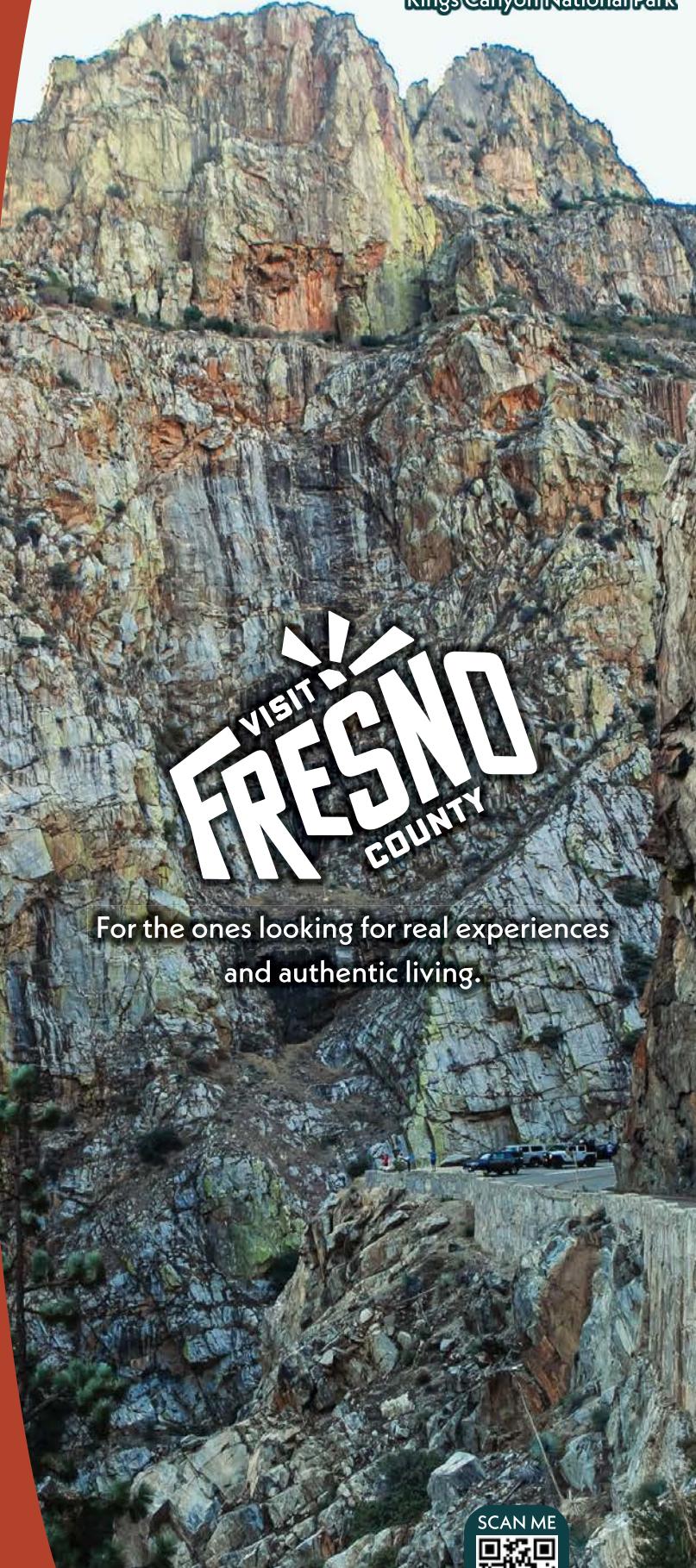
As one of the most culturally diverse destinations in the United States, Fresno County's food scene is unparalleled. Enjoy a luxury meal at Trelio Food & Wine in Clovis, where the chef uses local ingredients to create Italian dishes with a California twist. Enjoy a hand-crafted cocktail and Spanish cuisine, including tapas and paella, at Mochuelo in Fresno. Stop in Fresno's Brewery District for great hops and a variety of food trucks. Sip your way through Fresno County's wineries—California's underground wine country. The county produces a large sum of the state's wine grapes. Try the Evasion Rosé at Solitary Cellars Winery or the Cabernet at Ziveli Winery. •



ClovisFest



Kings Canyon National Park



We're for real.

Taco Truck Throwdown



Big Fresno Fair



Fresno Chaffee Zoo



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INDULGE IN SUMMER'S OFFICIAL PLAYGROUND



north lake tahoe



DISCOVER YOUR SUMMER PLAYGROUND IN NORTH LAKE TAHOE

North Lake Tahoe is the perfect mix of lakeside adventure and on-mountain activities with experiences meant to refresh, recharge and reinvigorate your soul. From a scenic paddle to a picturesque hike, and from lounging on the beach to enjoying the local dining scene, there's so much to do. North Lake Tahoe welcomes you to Summer's Official Playground.

MESMERIZING VIEWS WITH MENUS WORTHY OF THE SCENERY

From lake views to mountain backdrops, North Lake Tahoe is home to some of the most enticing dining options in Northern California and Nevada. Take in a Tahoe sunset at Lone Eagle Grill in Incline Village, featuring upscale seasonal ingredients and dishes. The restaurant is steps away from a private beach, too. Speaking of amazing lakefront views, Gar Woods Grill and Pier in Carnelian Bay highlights classic Californian cuisine and unique cocktails. Enjoy both on their extraordinary deck.

For a relaxing time with the family, head to Za's Lakefront Restaurant in Tahoe City where you can dine on elevated comfort food. Whitecaps Pizza in Kings Beach also features handcrafted pizzas along with great beer and cocktails. Wherever you land, the dining options in North Lake Tahoe are plentiful.



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-Photo Courtesy of Shea Evans



DINE AT THE SHORE

We can think of no better place to enjoy local food than with a view of the North Lake Tahoe shoreline. Adventurers can find public docks, benches, picnic tables and more to take in the sights and sounds of the tranquil, sapphire lake. You're welcome to dine-in at any of their restaurants or, if you'd like to stroll along the shore, consider getting takeout. Options range from approachable grab-and-go meals to dazzling epicurean delights, but please make sure you throw away your to-go trash properly to keep the splendors of Lake Tahoe pristine.

-Photo Courtesy of Ryan Salm



HEAD TO THE MOUNTAIN

In North Lake Tahoe you can experience its sweeping meadows and breathtaking views with a winning variety of food choices ranging from barbecue platters and pizza slices to craft beers and wine. Choosing may prove difficult, but you'll have a stunning mountain view wherever you go. Stroll across the cobble walkways in resort Villages, soak in that alpine air and nosh on tasty bites from cafés along the way or visit a pub to sample a local brew. You may also enjoy roaming among the many charming shops with friends.

SO MANY OPTIONS. SO MUCH TO PLAN.

The variety of foodie havens in North Lake Tahoe offers visitors a wealth of unforgettable adventures that will delight all types of palates. Explore the mouthwatering world of North Lake Tahoe dining by choosing from over 150 restaurants and find your new favorite indulgence at GoTahoeNorth.com/Dine



TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY

The magic of Lake Tahoe lies in the culture of its communities and the natural beauty that surrounds it. When visiting North Lake Tahoe, we encourage you to make a clear difference by traveling responsibly. Summer tips include:

- Please ensure you are adhering to posted signage and park legally.
- Respect the environment by disposing of any trash in trash receptacles.
- Ride a bike or use public transportation like TART to help get you to and from activities. TART Connect hosts special extended summer hours starting June 30th.
- Pack responsibly by bringing a hat, sunscreen and a reusable water bottle.
- Sign up for county and state alerts for the latest on travel advisories, including potential wildfire activity.
- Be “Bear Aware” by removing any food from your car.
- Be fire safe by following proper burning guidelines.

Additionally, fireworks are prohibited in the Tahoe Basin.

-Photo Courtesy of Ryan Salm

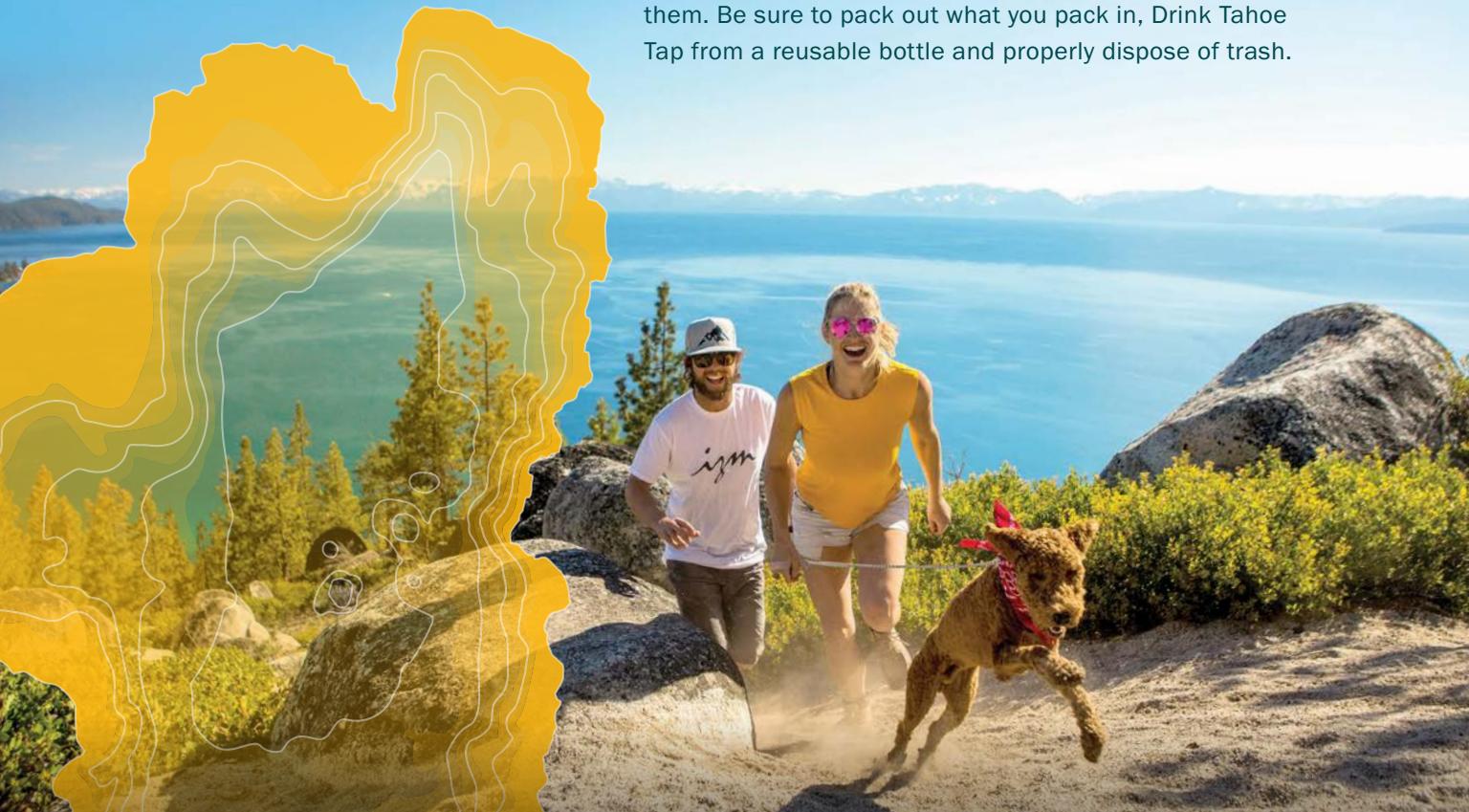


With so much for your tastebuds to explore and activities to experience in between, make sure to extend your stay through the week so that you can enjoy more open space and everything the region has to offer. Find the lodging perfect for you at GoTahoeNorth.com/lodging/ •

DISCOVER

EXQUISITE NATURAL BEAUTY IS WELL WORTH PRESERVING

North Lake Tahoe's alpine blue waters and majestic mountain peaks have drawn visitors and locals for generations. With your commitment, we can protect and preserve the natural wonders we all love for future generations. Make a clear difference by preserving our treasured spaces and leaving them better than you found them. Be sure to pack out what you pack in, Drink Tahoe Tap from a reusable bottle and properly dispose of trash.



Learn more about traveling responsibly
at GoTahoeNorth.com/FoodTravel



north lake tahoe
it's human nature



NORTHERN IRISH CUISINE'S LEGENDARY CHEF

NOEL MCMEEL

By Margie Goldsmith

Chef Noel McMeel, Culinary Director of the new Ebrington Hotel in Derry, Ireland, is known as the "King of Modern Irish Cuisine" because he is the pioneer of using seasonal, local, fresh Irish ingredients. He is also the author of the third-best cookbook in the world, *Irish Pantry*, and is a famous Irish TV broadcaster.

Chef Noel grew up on his family's farm inspired by his mother's traditional home cooking; but long before he became a chef, he was the all-Ireland traditional Irish dance champion from ages 14 through 17. He could have continued to dance, but cooking was his passion. McMeel received a scholarship to the prestigious Johnson & Wales University and went on to work in some of America's most famous restaurants, including Le Cirque, Chez Panisse, and Jean-Louis Palladin at the Watergate, where he met the Clintons. McMeel – that's his real name – was once told by an American agent to go to McDonald's and sell his name as a "Big McMeal." McMeel laughed it off.

For this interview, I flew to Ireland and drove to his home in the beautiful countryside of Northern Island. Here, Chef Noel McMeel lives with his partner, Dessie; dog, Bailey; cat, Tittles, and twenty-one chickens.







EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

What brought you to cooking?

I always wanted to be a good cook. I loved food. For us, food was very much a thank-you, made from my mother's and my family's hands: the jam, the bread, the cakes. The ham came from the pigs, the milk from the cows; the trifle was the cream skimmed off the milk which we kept to whip it up. Getting ready for a meal at my home was like getting ready for royalty because you used the best plates and best glasses. There were roses that you'd picked yourself, and the scent coming through the house was amazing. The celebration of food was so important to us.

What were the core values of your home?

Giving was massive. My parents gave every child in our home a toolbox of love, sharing, respect, and decency. As we grew older, they kept piling in more and more tools. I still use these tools every day.

You are now Culinary Director at the Ebrington Hotel in Derry, Northern Island. What is a culinary director?

A culinary director is a visionary of where we are today and what we could be. It's about getting the right direction for that establishment. How do you create a foundation you can build upon? My job is to build something that is of great heritage but of great comfort to the guests and, most of all, a great experience.

You were at Lough Erne Resort in Ireland for 17 years before your present position at the Ebrington Hotel in Northern Ireland. Were you also serving high-end cuisine at Lough Erne?

There were seven different eating areas within that resort, which included a fine-dining restaurant. The execution had to be top notch, especially by world standards. It doesn't just take two or three years to build a team. Some people that come just never buy into the concept; for them, it's just a job. My job was to create great people who believed in my vision and wanted to do something that was different from any other hotel.



What was your vision?

My vision was, number one, when people came, they would get an experience of Northern Ireland that was unlike anywhere else, with traditional breads served with local butter, beautifully displayed. Welcoming the guests to the hotel was the biggest thing. It's all about the welcome. When you go out for food, it's always about the company. Company is number one. Some people would say food is the first thing, but it's not. Once you have good food and you've got the great company, your day will just be enhanced dramatically.

The gifts were the goods from the garden, whether it was the rhubarb crumble or rhubarb tarts or blackberry or blueberry jam. Goodies were always given back because they were powered by the heart. I think everything I was taught as a child – love and care and respect – is what you should do with people. Respecting and being kind to people reflects very much into the cooking, because your cooking is all about what you put on a plate. You don't need to meet the chef, because he shows who he is by everything he puts on the plate: whether the ingredients are fresh or not and the design of the actual plate itself. You can nearly tell what kind of a kitchen it is: the meat is beautifully sliced and cooked meticulously.

How do you describe your cuisine?

Modern Irish cuisine. I worked in France and dealt with what modern French was; I worked with some great British chefs, I worked in America, but what is cuisine? I live here. I buy local butter. I buy flour from Belfast. The salt is Irish Sea Salt, the sugar is from Dublin. The beef is local. I bring all these ingredients to my kitchen. What I do is modern Irish food with the great skills that I've learned over the years from all the amazing chefs with whom I've worked.

What does it mean to be a great chef?

You need a clean kitchen to begin with, the same way an Irish dancer needs a clean floor on which to dance. You need to fill empty fridges with fresh food. Fresh produce always shines above something that is old.

Why did you leave Lough Erne and come to Ebrington?

During COVID I got a taste of what it was to be off for the first time in my life and have time with my partner, time with nature, time with the garden. I'd spent all my life working. I planned to semi-retire when I turned 55 and when I did turn 55, it was time. I had employed great people and eventually moved them up the ranks so there would be no big difference when I left. And the establishment has moved on to bigger and better things of which I am just so proud. I am a firm believer of giving as much as you can to everyone. Don't be a taker. It's a gift to give. And it's a great thing for your soul to be able to give as much as possible, because you will eventually go on to bigger and better things yourself. The secret is to give, but not expect it back.

What is the best meal you've ever had?

I've had many great experiences of incredible meals, but my best was a meal that influenced me because of the people around me; that was with Alice Waters, because it made me understand what simplicity of food was all about. Before I left, Alice treated me to dinner. She's an iconic person not because she's famous, but because she's such a humanist, a person of great vision, greatness to do with the quality of food, but, most of all, of the journey of what you should do to get to something of greatness. She was willing to share that, and I just soaked it in like a sponge. I remember writing in my diary, "It has taken me 10 years to find out what simplicity really means. Taking the best of local ingredients, cooking it as little as possible, and serving it with great skill."

What was the difference between the other chefs you worked for in America and Alice Waters?

At the very beginning, as I was trying to learn, I wanted to cook fancy food, to see how much more I could put onto the plate. When I worked with Jean-Louis Palladin, it was very fancy and he was a very hard taskmaster. Then, he got me my position at Le Cirque in New York. It was quite incredible. One day we were doing lunch, and one of the waiters said, "Come quick!" He pulled the curtain slightly and said, "Do you see who's at that table? I was a very naive Irishman and said, "Who?" He told me there were three former American presidents having lunch. I knew I was cooking for great people.

Then when I went to San Francisco. Julia Child had influenced me to go and speak to Alice Waters and try to get a position. I had already tried and had been refused. It was thanks to the power of Julia Child that I was able to get in. I went from Le Cirque, with all the chandeliers and gold, to a place with a picket fence where everything was made of wood. I loved everything about it. And I was privileged because I had the skills rather than having no skills and wanting to be there. I could work well and execute well.

What is your advice for aspiring chefs?

To be the best, you must work with the best because they will influence you to be the best that you can be.

You used to be a champion dancer, and you've said that dancing is similar to cooking. How?

Irish dancing taught me precision. When the curtains open, it's no different than food: it's about performance, execution. You've done your homework and your preparation. Your uniform is immaculate. In dance, each tap is so important. It's precision, just like food. Each item has to be so hot, and it all has to work together. The same is true with dancing. It's all about the beat, how you move every second.

What do you want your legacy to be?

That I was a good person, and I spent my time well on this earth, and that I was a giver.

Margie Goldsmith filled her heart with Ireland with thanks to www.Ireland.com •





DeKalb County BOLD SPIRITS

Just 60 minutes west of Chicago's Loop, the urban and suburban landscape gives way to bucolic prairie and farmland almost as far as the eye can see. The soil in these parts is among the best on the planet, and from these fertile fields are harvested the finest ingredients to produce award-winning wines and hard spirits. The creators of these bold flavors are Bold Spirits of DeKalb County makers, and their award-winning wines and hard spirits produce bold flavors that are enjoyed by visitors from around the globe.



mong these Midwest makers is Whiskey Acres Distilling Company in DeKalb. The distillery was started by fifth-generation farmers, and every ounce of corn, rye, barley, and wheat used to make the spirits under the Whiskey Acres label is grown on the family farm. "If we don't grow it, we don't make it," says Whiskey Acres founder and partner, Jamie Walter. This philosophy gives the distillery its edge in a crowded craft spirits marketplace. Controlling the crops used in their spirits allows these makers to produce flavors unlike those found anywhere else. Several of the distillery's bourbon and rye whiskey products recently received top honors at prestigious whiskey tasting competitions, standing strong alongside some of the biggest and most well-known distilleries in the world. Fans of fine spirits can take a distillery tour and then enjoy Whiskey Acres' products and a variety of cocktails in its 4,200 square foot visitors center.

DeKalb County is also home to two wineries – Genoa's Prairie State Winery, and Waterman Winery in Waterman. Each venue is known for its award-winning wine, with Waterman Winery producing its vintage from grapes grown in its vineyard on the property – a farm, of course. From its vineyard, to fermentation, to bottling, Waterman's winemaking is done on-site, by hand, with attention to detail. Small batch wines of unique flavor using organically grown grapes await wine-lovers of all ages.



Prairie State Winery may not grow their own grapes, but its outdoor patio garden, live music, full-service kitchen offering seasonal menus, and more all complement Prairie State's award-winning wines. The tasting room offers two complimentary samples consecutively to narrow down your options, or a seven-sample 1oz tasting flight for \$8. Prairie State also sells wine by the bottle and features a re-corking machine, so guests can bring home their leftovers. The winery is also a distillery producing high-quality brandy and gin.

A trip to DeKalb County is not complete until a visit to Malta's Jonamac Orchard. Visitors enjoy the orchard's incredible variety of apples, cider, baked goods, and other family-centered activities. Haunted corn mazes, pony rides, and traditional u-pick apples have been a staple of this third-generation farm for 40 years. Jonamac also produces its own hard cider and partners with nearby Prairie State Winery to create a delicious variety of apple wines. Jonamac's Cider House is the place to visit to sample the orchard's spectrum of tastes. Ideal for the individual traveler or for group tours, the Cider House offers up country hospitality, bold flavors, and an ideal way to spend a few hours on a lazy autumn weekend.



From its earliest days, DeKalb County has fostered makers - industrious innovators who dreamed big and created inventions that changed the world. This legacy of makers is alive and well today in the county's local wine producers and craft distillers, and their farm-to-table experiences has visitors returning to the prairie again and again. •



Experience

DeKalb County

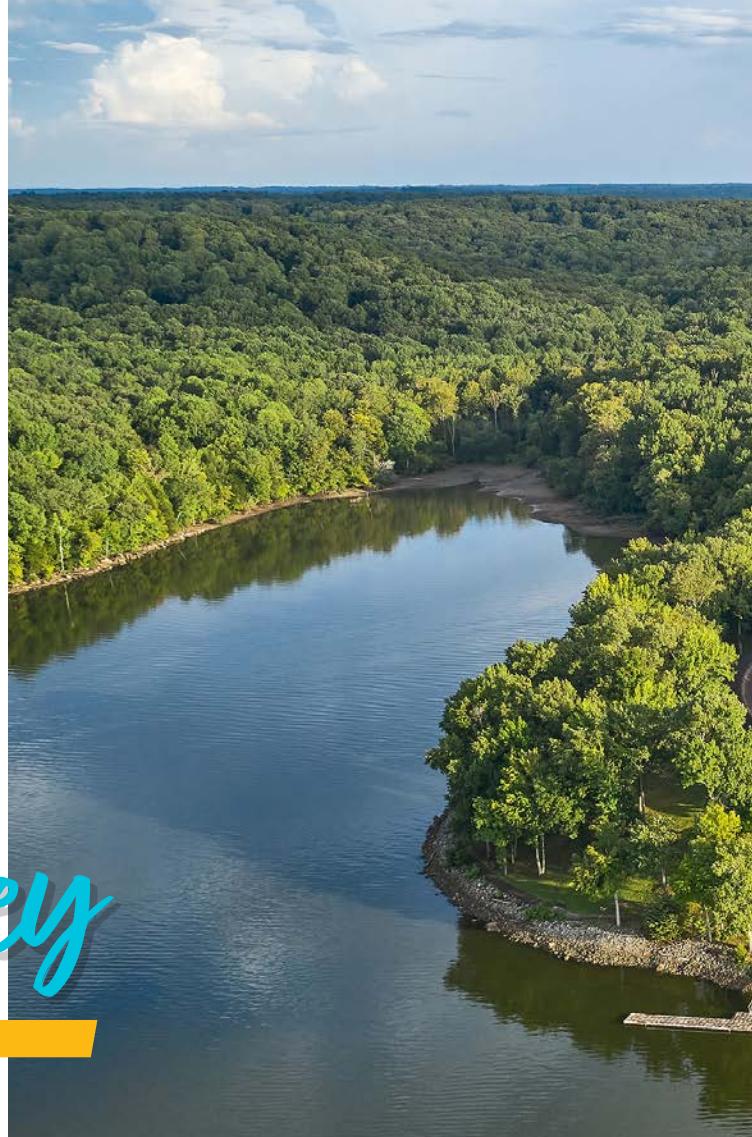


DeKalb County, IL
is a seed-to-spirit
experience that has
visitors returning
to the prairie again
and again.



COOL DOWN

at Lake Barkley



As summer temperatures warm, days stretch out, and boats are brought out of their winter storage, it is time, once again, to consider the many activities offered by our beloved Land Between the Lakes area, known locally as simply the "LBL." Here in Cadiz—the small town that also serves as the gateway to the famous Lake Barkley—you can enjoy one of the nation's most significant fishing locales as well as a body of water beloved by boating enthusiasts worldwide. Camping is also always in season in the LBL, and there are several campgrounds and cabins to choose from, including the Wranglers Campground, Turkey Bay (mentioned in more detail below), Hurricane Creek, and Energy Lake, just to name a few.

 GoCADIZ.com



ABOUT THE STAR: LAKE BARKLEY

As the star of the LBL area, Lake Barkley is worth mentioning all on its own. This stunning body of water makes up over 57,900 acres of water and stretches 118 miles long, making it an extremely “tall” lake. The more than 1,000 miles of shorelines surrounding the lake provide ample opportunities for fishing and boating for water enthusiasts of all types to enjoy. Taking a satellite view and looking down at the Earth, Lake Barkley serves as the easternmost border of the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area. This “water playground,” also known as Lake Barkley, features sandy beaches and more, making it an ideal spot for summer visitors. Water skiers, wave-makers, jet skiers, wave boarders, and even water tubers enjoy this spacious body of water.



NON-WATER APPEAL, HIT THE TRAILS

While the LBL is admittedly water-focused when it comes to sports and fun activities, as its name would suggest, that isn't to say there isn't anything available for those of you who prefer to keep your feet dry. There are countless trails and loops to explore in the region which allow you to either bike or hike to your heart's content. These beautiful trails wind in and out of forested landscape and even feature some options with gentle grades and shoreline views of Lake Barkley. The Fort Henry Trail System, encompassing 26 miles and 10 different trails, is considered the best trail system in the entire area. For an even greater challenge, try the North South Trail, known as the grand tour, with a length of 65 miles. You can access portions from The Trace, which means you can pick out a section to hike and enjoy without committing to the entire length.



Photo Courtesy of Clay Cook



DON'T FORGET ABOUT TURKEY BAY, GO OFF-ROADING

If you want to branch out even more and want to try something adventurous, visit the Tukey Bay OHV Area, featuring more than 100 miles of Jeep and ATV trails. These super-fun off-highway vehicles are an adrenaline junkie's dream. However, even if you have never before ridden such a vehicle, there are still options for you, thanks to the OHV trails for beginners. These less advanced trails offer families the opportunity to ride together and explore the LBL as a group. In fact, the Youth Trot Trail, which is a half-mile kids' riding and learning trail, is where inexperienced riders learn basic techniques and is ideal for beginners.

DINING IN THE LBL

With all the many activities the Land Between the Lakes offers, it's likely you will work up a healthy appetite when staying here. That's no problem because there are many dining options, such as fun, themed eateries and independently-owned restaurants. Here, in this one destination—Cadiz, Kentucky—foodies of all shapes and sizes will find plenty to enjoy, including authentic Mexican locations, Southern downhome cookin' establishments, juicy rib-eyes, gourmet food, BBQ, and even generational burger joints. All of these and more are within close proximity when you jump off the freeway to see what Cadiz has to offer.

GO CADIZ

Suffice it to say that there is plenty to explore, enjoy, eat and more, all in and around the LBL, Cadiz, Kentucky, area in Trigg County. If you love beautiful scenery, fabulous eateries, fun activities, and comfortable furnishings, you will love this destination! •

 **GoCADIZ**.com.

CADIZ-TRIGG COUNTY
KENTUCKY
Lake Barkley & Land Between the Lakes



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FRESH AIR & PATIO VIBES

DINING AL FRESCO IN SHORES & ISLANDS, OHIO

The weather is heating up and that means one important thing on Ohio's north coast – patio season! All the best restaurants with patio, deck, or porch dining areas are brushing off their umbrellas, extending their awnings, and putting up the string lights to welcome in the season of eating outdoors.

Enjoy as we run down several local favorite patios.





On the Islands

The Backyard at the Frosty Bar, Put-in-Bay – The Backyard is an outdoor venue which offers fresh-fruit margaritas and specialty cocktails along with Frosty's famous pizza. The Backyard also offers Big Man's Burrito Stand, an outdoor concession offering burritos, tacos, and nachos all made with fresh ingredients.

The Boardwalk, Put-in-Bay – At The Boardwalk's Main Deck and Rita's Cantina, there is a variety of concession dining with tons of seating on a huge outdoor deck overlooking the bay with views of Gibraltar Island and Perry's Victory & International Peace Memorial. With a variety of concessions, there's something for everyone, including The Boardwalk's famous lobster bisque.

Chicken Patio, Put-in-Bay – The fragrant aroma of chicken grilling wafts through the island air as you're walking downtown. That delicious smell? The grill-masters cooking at Chicken Patio, famous for their wine-basted BBQ chicken. With "patio" in its name, the venue in front of the Historic Park Hotel and adjacent to the world-famous Round House Bar has been serving dinners made from a secret recipe for more than 65 years.

The Goat, Soup and Whiskey, Put-in-Bay – This small chain (with additional locations in Colorado and St. Croix) offers farm-to-table recipes on a lovely covered porch overlooking the restaurant's herb garden. Or, you can choose to enjoy a brew at the outdoor biergarten.

Hazard's Microbrewery & Restaurant, Middle Bass Island

Bass Island – Located at the St. Hazard's Resort, this secluded favorite eatery features nautical décor with a Caribbean vibe. Porch seating includes a hand-carved tiki bar made in Bali. Enjoy burgers, wings, and pizza just steps from the resort pool.

Kelley's Island Wine Company, Kelleys Island

This boutique winery located on a country farm (yes, there is a country farm on an island!) features plenty of outdoor seating, both on the wrap-around porch and throughout the expansive property. Enjoy fresh pizzas and small plates from the winery or grab some southwestern fare from the adjacent KI Cantina. Kids can enjoy the farm animals and the onsite playground.

The Keys, Put-in-Bay – This waterfront favorite offers bright colors, fire pits, and signature frozen cocktails. The menu offers Caribbean and South Florida favorites including Conch Fritters, Peel & Eat Shrimp, additional seafood, sandwiches, and burgers. Plus, this patio prides itself in being pet-friendly!

West Bay Inn, Kelleys Island – Known as the place to be for the nightly sunset viewing and cannon salute, West Bay Inn offers a huge patio with amazing views, outdoor games, and live entertainment. The huge menu features entrees, salads, flatbreads, sandwiches, and kabobs. Transient boat docks are available for “dock & dine.”





In the North Shores

Ciao Bella Ristorante Italiano, Port Clinton – This restaurant's surprising location, in the Harbor Light shopping center off SR 53, is made even more surprising by its lovely atmosphere and inviting outdoor patio. Enjoy delectable Italian cuisine overlooking a man-made lake. The lunch and dinner menu include classic Italian pasta favorites as well as other specialties.

Gideon Owen Wine Company, Catawba – This 150-year-old winery has stood the test of time as a premier destination for both oenophiles and diners alike. Formerly Mon Ami, this winery offers a full-service eatery as well as a tasting room. The outdoor space includes a large, secluded backyard patio, along with comfortable fire pits and an outdoor deck bar.

Hidden Beach Bar, Marblehead – The Hidden Beach Bar is exactly as it sounds...hidden (definitely off the beaten path, located at Shrock's Marina), beach (located at a marina, but offers a sandy shore), bar (serves some of the region's yummiest boat drinks). Enjoy a delicious perch sandwich, or other specialty, when you visit by boat or car.

Orchard Bar & Table, Catawba – This farm-to-table eatery features fresh seasonal ingredients from its gardens and surrounding vineyards and orchards. The amazing food can be enjoyed on a beautiful patio that overlooks one of Catawba's oldest apple orchards. For more casual fare, don't miss out on the adjacent Orchard Farm Stand, which features wood-fired pizza and sandwiches as well as another lovely outdoor patio space.

In the Central Shores

Bait House Brewery, Sandusky – Sandusky's first hometown microbrewery, located in a former bait shop, has expanded over the years to include a full kitchen and expansive outdoor, pet-friendly patio. Sip craft brews while enjoying a pub burger, lake walleye sandwich, or the "Spicy Sandusky" – their take on Nashville's hot chicken.

Bay Harbor Waterfront Dining, Sandusky – Sandusky's casually elegant eatery is a mainstay on the Cedar Point peninsula, located at the marina. Bay Harbor features fresh seafood, prime rib, and spectacular wine list. An outdoor patio allows you to enjoy your meal while watching boats come in and out of the marina or the sunset over Sandusky Bay.

Crush Wine Bar, Sandusky – Another local favorite, Crush features small plates, pizzas, and pastas in a casual environment. There are seats for dining along the adjacent alley way and a wine garden filled with comfy outdoor sofa seating out back. A great place to spend an afternoon or evening!

Dockside Café, Sandusky – Dockside is an outdoor concession with a huge patio and plenty of lakeside seating located at the city-owned Paper District Marina. Enjoy uninterrupted sunset and bay views while enjoying a seasonal menu – popular items include their burgers and perch tacos.

J Bistro, Sandusky – This fine-dining restaurant features steak, seafood, and pasta along with a large wine selection and daily specials. The outdoor patio is popular, especially in the evenings under the twinkle lights while being entertained by live musicians.

OH Taco, Sandusky – Looking for authentic Mexican street tacos, served with signature margaritas, that you can enjoy while overlooking the beautiful Jackson Street Pier? OH Taco also offers aerial views of Moseley's Rooftop Bar.

The Original Margaritaville, Sandusky – A definite local favorite, this relaxed, fun restaurant offers house-smoked barbecue, frozen drinks, and a 10,000 sq. ft. deck which overlooks a waterfall on Cold Creek.



In the East Shores

Chez Francois/Touche Wine & Martini Bar, Vermilion

– This upscale French restaurant features fine dining along the Vermilion River. The outdoor Chez Riverfront Café features a new brick patio, glass sliding doors to enclose in the case of inclement weather, a more informal and relaxed dress code, and the same menu as the indoor dining room with a few added lighter options. Dock-and-dine is available with the adjacent Vermilion Public Boat Docks.

Old Fish House, Huron – Along the Huron River sits Lake Erie's tiniest bar, but the deck area has plenty of room for diners to enjoy Lake Erie Yellow Perch baskets and sandwiches, as well as burgers and appetizers. This patio offers dockside dining and is pet-friendly. Don't miss the Bloody Mary Bar on Sundays.

Pier Pub, Huron – Neighbor to the Old Fish House, the Pier Pub also sits alongside the Huron River, near the Huron Lighthouse. Enjoy watching the boats float in and out of the lake. The menu includes smashed burgers and lobster rolls, along with walleye tacos and fresh salads.

Where are you dining "OUT" this season??

Click here for ALL available restaurants in Shores & Islands

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Fall in Love with the Trails of
**JEFFERSON
COUNTY**
WEST VIRGINIA

-Photo Courtesy of Joshua Lykins

-Photo Courtesy of Chris Weisler



Fall brings perfect weather and incredible colors and beauty to the historic Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. Just a short drive from major urban centers, Jefferson County, WV, is full of famous and unique trails that will lead you on hiking, tasting, sipping, and other delightful adventures.

Jefferson County features walkable downtowns and famous hiking trails all interconnected for easy access. There are plenty of opportunities for hikers to go for a short stroll or an invigorating multi-mile trek. The legendary Appalachian Trail runs right through Harpers Ferry, near the headquarters and visitor center of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Pick up a guidebook or chat about your hiking plans at the conservancy's visitor center, then get underway: Nearby, a blaze leads to a footbridge over the Potomac River and continues to the historic C&O Canal. From the C&O, long-distance hikers can connect to the Great Allegheny Passage, a rails-to-trails route that spans 150 miles from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C.



-Photo Courtesy of Joshua Lykins

If you prefer to sip your way through the county, try some of these local favorites. Located within the Bavarian Inn Resort, Bavarian Brothers Brewing makes on-site brews that “Remember our European Roots, and Embrace our West Virginia Location.”

In the heart of downtown Charles Town since 2017, Abolitionist Ale Works specializes in creating unique and flavorful craft beer. Their emphasis is on unique IPA, Sour Ales, Wild Ales, Saisons, Strong Ales and Stouts.

Devil’s Due Distillery focuses on local provenance, sourcing from within 100 miles of their facility. The Bourbon is sweet and smokey - aged to perfection. The Rye is spicy and ready for sipping. The Maple Whiskey will have you looking around for a stack of hotcakes. And the Vodka is pure heaven.

The Jefferson County Libations Trail features all the best places to enjoy a cold beer, unique cocktails, and delicious wines. Lilah in Shepherdstown is a go-to for an incredible selection of amazing cocktails. Snallygaster’s Cafe & Wine Bar in Bolivar is the perfect spot for a post-hike glass of wine. Grab a cold brew at Glory Days Sports Bar in Ranson. Or take some wine back to your room from Pour Choices Wine in Charles Town.

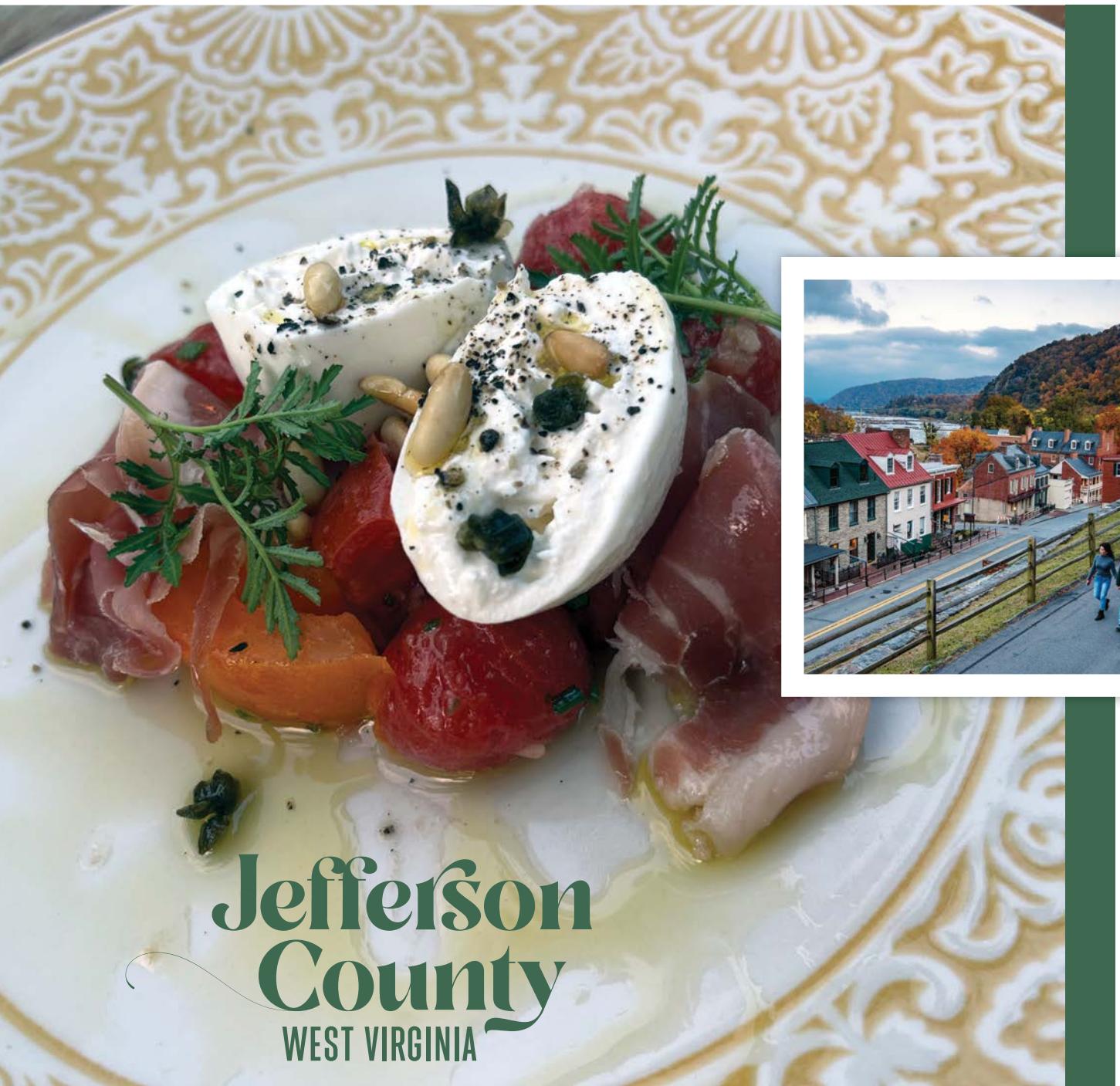


Jefferson County has long been known for a metropolitan dining scene in our historic and eclectic small towns of Shepherdstown, Charles Town, Ranson, Bolivar, and Harpers Ferry. Jefferson County is also a great place to enjoy a morning cup of your favorite coffee and to delight your sweet tooth. Check out our favorite coffee shops, sweet shops, candy stores, ice cream shops and bakeries on our Sweets Trail.

After a full day of following your trail, relax at one of our local hotels all conveniently located close to all the action. Choose from the Bavarian Inn, Clarion Inn, Inn at Charles Town, Turf Motel, Hampton Inn, Quality Inn, Home2 Suites, Wyndham, and Holiday Inn Express. View all Lodging Options.

Find all of our trails on our Themed Trails page of our website and plan your fall escape to Jefferson County, WV. •

WHERE ALMOST HEAVEN BEGINS™



Jefferson County

WEST VIRGINIA

Harpers Ferry Bolivar Ranson Charles Town Shepherdstown

In Jefferson County, historic trails lead you along majestic rivers, through a national park, and to endless outdoor adventures. Our welcoming towns make you feel at home and sometimes a voice from the past will echo in the breeze. Jefferson County is your first step to exploring West Virginia. Take it and you will quickly realize this is Where Almost Heaven Begins.



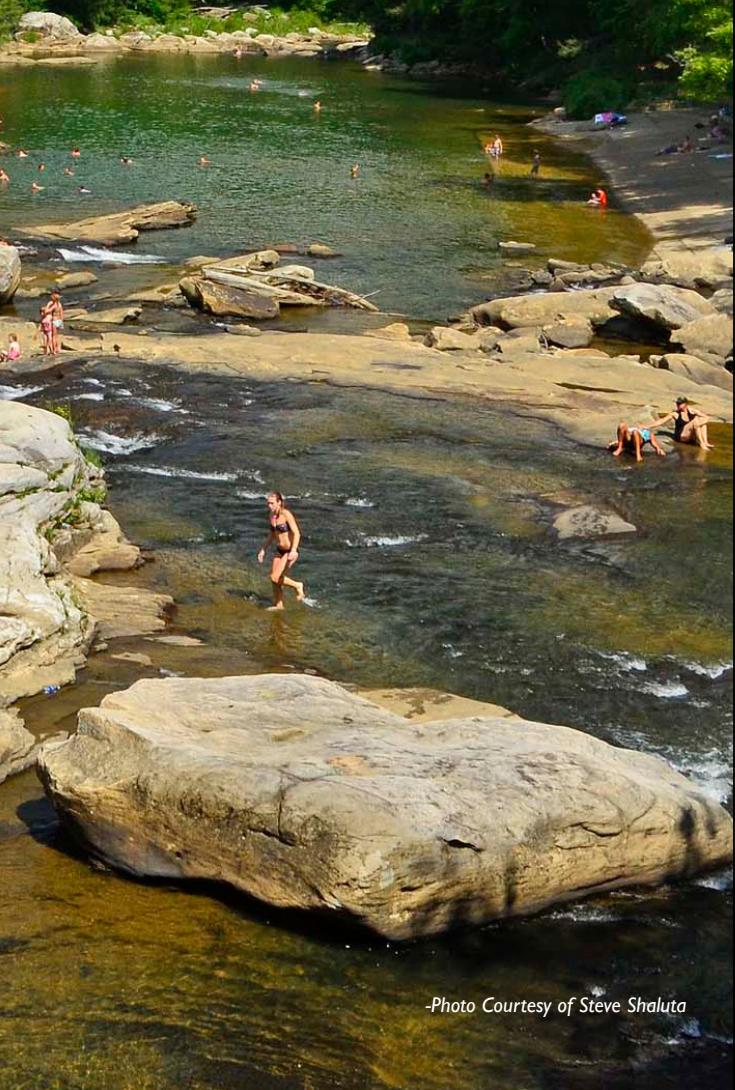
WATCH OUR VIDEO

WhereAlmostHeavenBegins.com

Discover the Charm of
**UPSHUR
COUNTY**
WEST VIRGINIA



Upshur County, a hidden gem in central West Virginia, offers a perfect blend of natural beauty, historical sites, and vibrant community events, especially during the summer months. Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast, a history buff, or someone looking to enjoy small-town charm, Upshur County has something for everyone.



-Photo Courtesy of Steve Shaluta

-Photo Courtesy of Steve Shaluta



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

For those who love the great outdoors, Upshur County is a paradise. The crown jewel of the county's natural attractions is the West Virginia Wildlife Center. This wildlife center is home to native wildlife species in naturalistic habitats, offering visitors a chance to see animals like black bears, bobcats, and elk up close. The 1.25-mile interpretive trail that winds through the center is perfect for a leisurely walk while learning about the region's fauna.

Another must-visit location is Audra State Park. Known for its scenic beauty and recreational opportunities, the park features the Middle Fork River, which is ideal for swimming, fishing, and tubing. The Alum Cave Trail is a popular hiking trail within the park that takes visitors along a sandstone overhang and through lush forests, offering breathtaking views and a serene environment for a hike.

For water enthusiasts, the Buckhannon River is a great spot for kayaking, canoeing, and fishing. The calm waters and picturesque surroundings make it a favorite for both locals and tourists. The nearby Stonecoal Lake is another excellent destination for boating and fishing, providing a tranquil setting with stunning natural beauty.



-Photo Courtesy of Jenna Vaught

FESTIVALS AND EVENTS

Summertime in Upshur County is filled with lively festivals and community events that showcase the area's culture and hospitality. The West Virginia Strawberry Festival, held annually in May, is a highlight of the summer season. This week-long celebration features parades, live music, a carnival and, of course, plenty of delicious strawberry-themed treats. It's a fantastic way to experience the local culture and enjoy some family-friendly fun.

The Buckhannon Riverfest is another popular summer event, celebrating the county's beautiful waterways. The festival includes activities like river races, a duck derby, live music, and food vendors. It's a great way to spend a day enjoying the scenic river while participating in fun activities.

LOCAL CULTURE AND DINING

Upshur County offers a taste of authentic Appalachian culture, with its friendly residents and vibrant arts scene. The Buckhannon Opera House regularly hosts performances ranging from local theater productions to live music concerts, providing entertainment for all ages.

When it comes to dining, Upshur County doesn't disappoint. The downtown area of Buckhannon is home to a variety of restaurants and cafés that offer everything from classic American fare to international cuisine. The Daily Grind is a local favorite for coffee and pastries, while C.J. Maggie's serves up hearty meals in a cozy, rustic setting.

HISTORICAL SITES

Upshur County is rich in history, and there are several sites that offer a glimpse into the past. The Historic Upshur County Courthouse, built in 1899, is an architectural marvel and a significant landmark in the county. Its Romanesque Revival style and beautiful stained-glass windows make it a must-see for history and architecture enthusiasts. Upshur County is also home to five locations mapped on the official Civil War Trail.

SHOPPING AND ART

For those who enjoy shopping, the local boutiques and artisan shops in Buckhannon are a delight. The Appalachian Arts Gallery features works by local artists, including paintings, pottery, and handmade crafts. It's a great place to find unique souvenirs and support local talent.

Upshur County, West Virginia, is a destination that offers something for everyone. Its natural beauty, rich history, vibrant community events, and welcoming atmosphere make it a perfect place to visit, especially in the summer. Whether you're looking to explore the great outdoors, immerse yourself in local culture, or simply relax and enjoy the charm of a small town, Upshur County has it all. Plan your visit today and discover the many treasures this hidden gem has to offer. •



Small Town
Getaway
BIG TIME CHARM

LET YOUR CARES DRIFT AWAY IN

UPSHUR COUNTY

Photographed by JBPhoto @ Fidler's Mill

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Tucked away under the scenic beauty of central West Virginia, Upshur County offers a haven for outdoor enthusiasts seeking adventure and serenity alike. From lush forests to rolling hills, this picturesque destination beckons visitors to explore its natural wonders and embrace the thrill of outdoor recreation.

Embark on a journey through the sprawling landscapes of Upshur County and discover a wealth of activities to delight every adventurer. Hike along tranquil trails that wind through our vast woodlands. Immerse yourself in the peacefulness of nature as you cast your line into Buckhannon and Middle Fork rivers, teeming with trout, or paddle across Stone Coal Lake as it reflects the vibrant hues of the surrounding foliage.

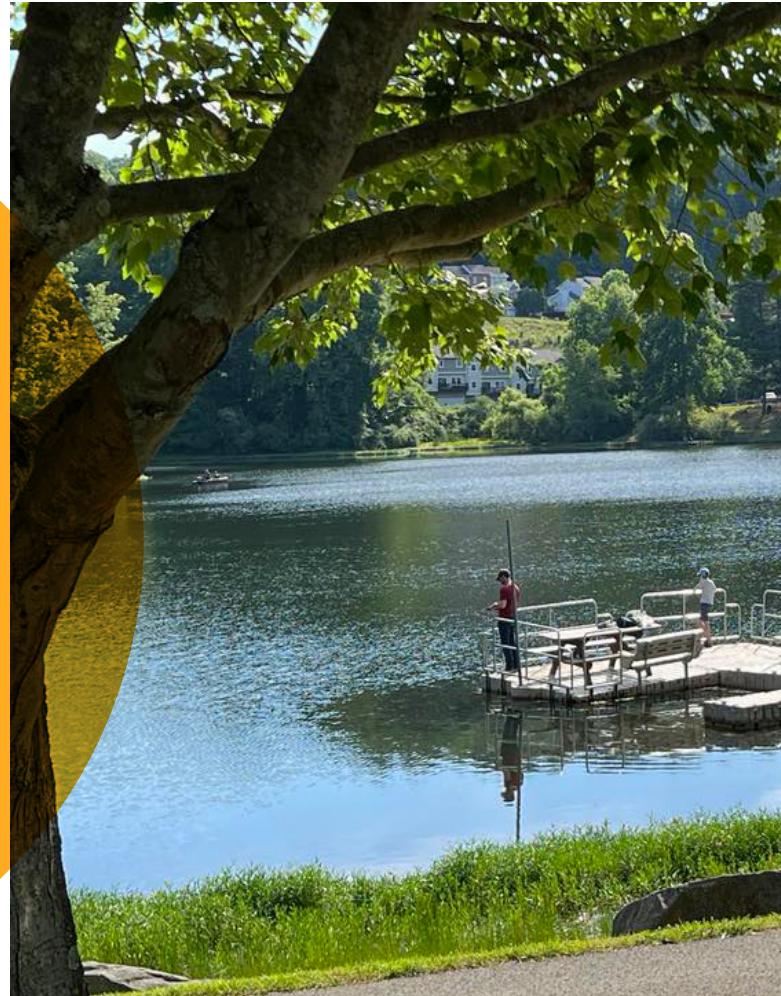
For those craving an adrenaline rush, Upshur County delivers exhilarating opportunities for mountain biking and off-roading adventures. Traverse rugged terrain all while soaking in panoramic views that stretch as far as the eye can see.

After a day of exploration, unwind in the charming communities that dot the county, where warm hospitality and local charm await. Whether you're seeking a rustic cabin retreat or a cozy Airbnb, Upshur County offers accommodations to suit every taste and budget.

Experience the magic of outdoor recreation in Upshur County, where every trail leads to new discoveries and unforgettable memories. Plan your adventure today and let the beauty of West Virginia captivate your heart. Come experience what a small-town getaway with big time charm is truly all about!

BRIDGEPORT, WV

OPPORTUNITY LIVES HERE



Whether you visit Bridgeport for holiday festivities, outdoor recreation, autumn foliage, or exceptional cuisine, there is reason to be wowed.

The 10.65-square-mile North Central West Virginia city is known for its passion to celebrate in a big way. December Light Up Night and June Summer Kickoff & Food Truck Festival bring locals to Main Street to mingle, enjoy activities, listen to live music and, of course, sample area fare.

Cuisine reflecting the area's Italian heritage is plentiful at privately owned eateries where generations have passionately served. Among popular entrees at Oliverio's Ristorante are Mushroom Sacchetti and a Sicilian Trio of lasagna, stuffed shells, and baked penne. Twin Oaks Restaurant is another staple, offering one of the area's most popular pizzas and the famous Mom Ielapi's Lasagna. Then, there is Mia Margherita's Coal Fired Pizzeria, which, in addition to its artisan pizzas, features everything from Bruschetta to Shrimp Linguine. Each restaurant offers spirits and a full wine list with selections to complement any entrée.





But pastas and pizza are not the only foods for which Bridgeport is known. There are culinary selections to suit every palate, including those offered at Meagher's Irish Pub, Hello Vietnam, and China One. Della's Deli's made-to-order sandwiches and homemade pepperoni rolls as well as T&L Hot Dogs oldies diner are other solid choices. Visitors often praise Cody's for its unique selections inspired by world travel and farm-to-table process. Another hot spot is Winnie's Café, where sandwiches, salads, and its famous Egg-in-a-Hole are among signature treats. Almost Heaven Desserts and Coffee Shop features homemade desserts and an on-site barista to whip up espressos, lattes and other specialties. Stonewall Coffee, Great Harvest Bakery and Stone Tower Brews draw patrons for coffee, pastries, and sandwiches, the latter also featuring a variety of craft beer. Mountain State Brewing Co. is a microbrewery and tap room that offers a full menu.

Bridgeport is steeped in exceptional food choices, and the same holds true for shopping. Locally owned boutiques and artisan shops offer everything from art to home décor and head-to-toe attire. Another must visit is Bridgeport Farmers Market, open Sunday, May through October. Produce, flowers, artisan wares, brunch options and live music combine to make it a popular gathering spot.

During summer months, Hinkle and Deegan Lakes are plentiful with anglers and kayakers, as well as those picnicking or strolling the trail. The city trail system stretches across town, winding through wooded areas where archery targets and even doggie fountains are located.



Bridgeport City Pool and Spray Ground is a respite from the summer heat. The grounds also feature basketball and tennis courts; the latter transformed into a synthetic ice-skating rink during winter months. Nearby Alligator Park is one of several playgrounds in Bridgeport.

One of the city's newest amenities, The Bridge Sports Complex, is heavily populated year-round for its outdoor fields – including multiple soccer fields and a baseball fourplex utilized for various levels of play. Inside the state-of-the art City Net Center are basketball, volleyball and pickle ball courts, an indoor turf, walking track, swimming pools and colorful climbing wall. The campus will soon be home to Medbrook Children's Charity All-Inclusive Playground. Financed by the community, the recreation venue will be a place where all kids can play together, regardless of disabilities.

Anchored by Boscov's, Meadowbrook Mall draws shopping traffic from throughout much of the state. Popping up regularly in recently developed White Oaks and Charles Pointe are a variety of businesses, including nationally known favorites such as Menards, Buffalo Wild Wings, and IHOP. Six of the city's 11 hotels are in the area. With regular flight service to and from Orlando, Destin, and Myrtle Beach, North Central West Virginia Airport offers top-notch transportation.

Bridgeport's slogan is "Opportunity Lives Here," and that holds true in all seasons. •





West Virginia Plays Here!

Centrally located in the heart of West Virginia, Bridgeport is a hub for meetings, youth sports, championship golf, shopping and dining. Home to **The Bridge Sports Complex**, the premier sports and recreation destination for North Central West Virginia.



Bridgeport
WEST VIRGINIA

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WHERE TASTES MEETS TRAILS



When one imagines a West Virginia hiking and biking system, the image that comes to mind is likely one in the more remote and rugged regions of the state. But right between West Virginia's two largest cities, Huntington and Charleston, lies more than 30 miles of hand-built trails for hiking, running, and mountain biking.



Brandon Doerner, president of the Meeks Mountain Trail Alliance (MMTA) nonprofit, is an avid mountain biker who designed the Meeks Mountain Trail System. Having experienced trail systems across the U.S., Doerner's perspective and expertise helped when laying out trails that would accommodate everyone, not just fellow bikers, and was designed with flow in mind. "The flow works extremely well, not only for a mountain bike, but for a hiker and runner," Doerner says.

Meeks Mountain Trails is drawing visitors from all over the country, which is impressive considering the trails didn't even exist just six years ago. The Meeks Mountain Trail System was built entirely by the community, with more than 500 people contributing 23,000 volunteer hours on donated land over the course of five years. "This has all been developed by volunteers; by a family that was willing to allow us to study and build this thing; a city that supports it; and the companies throughout the community that have gathered around it to help promote it," Doerner says.

The trail system is home to various educational hikes throughout the year with topics such as foraging and wildlife identification, and is home to several races, including the Hurricane 100K trail race.

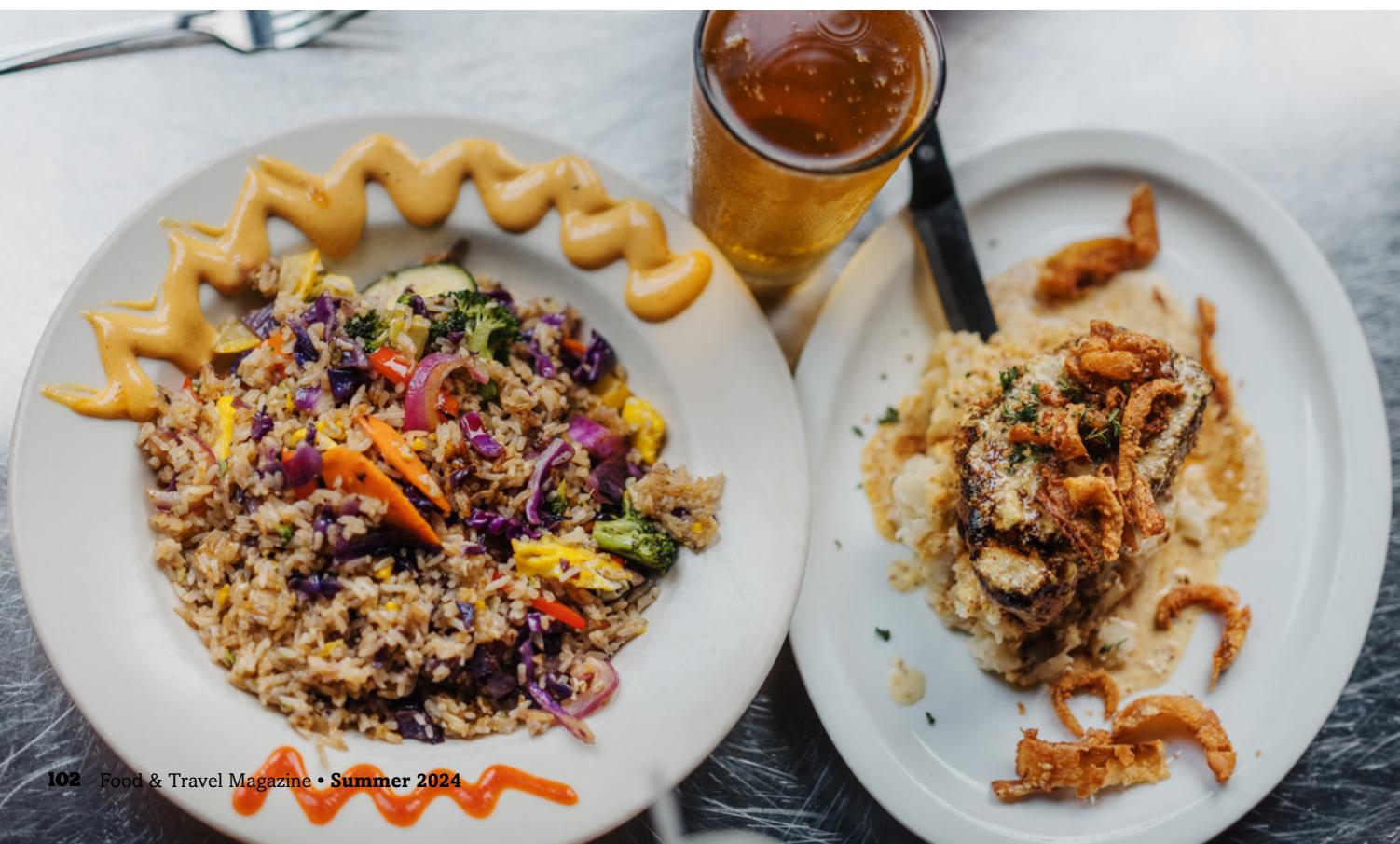
With a name like Teays Valley, visitors might expect a large, wide flatland compared to other areas of the state. However, Meeks Mountain Trails showcases rock formations, hills, and other scenic nuggets the area has to offer. "There are some hills that are very challenging," Doerner says. "As soon as you enter the trail system, you're climbing to get to the mass number of trails that are out there." Meeks network is a deliberate mix of easy, moderate, and ambitious trail options. However, there's a lesson to be learned in choosing a more challenging trail option, Doerner says. "When this was designed, we really wanted to create a space for a family to be able to go out and do a half mile to a mile hike or ride," he says. "But when they get out there, they realize how difficult and challenging it is. "Theoretically, the reason why it's designed the way it is, is because it's not easy getting to the top, and the trails represent that. You can lay in the valleys all your life, and that's fine. But if you want to get to the top, you've got to work for it."

At least a half million trail combination possibilities give people the freedom to experience the trails at their leisure. The system features a network of trails ranging in difficulty from easy



to expert, and in length from one to ten miles. The trail system can be a challenge if users want, or they can be just a nice walk in the woods—an escape into nature.

Best of all, the trailhead is just across the street from Wheelbilly Bikes for all your trail gear, repairs, and rentals. You can also find a juice bar and other locally owned restaurants featuring bold and authentic flavors just steps from the trails. A local favorite, Bridge Cafe & Bistro, offers farm to table ingredients in a laid back environment, and is open for brunch on weekends. Visitors can find these and a list of local restaurants at VisitPutnamWV.com •





FUEL YOUR MOUNTAIN MILES



From the heart of West Virginia, Putnam Co. offers a unique blend of adventure and flavor. Before you hit the trails, fuel up with authentic Appalachian cuisine. Enjoy hearty, freshly made dishes — the perfect boost for your trek. Experience the charm of the mountains, taste local flavors, and make every mile count in Putnam Co., where

TASTES MEETS TRAILS



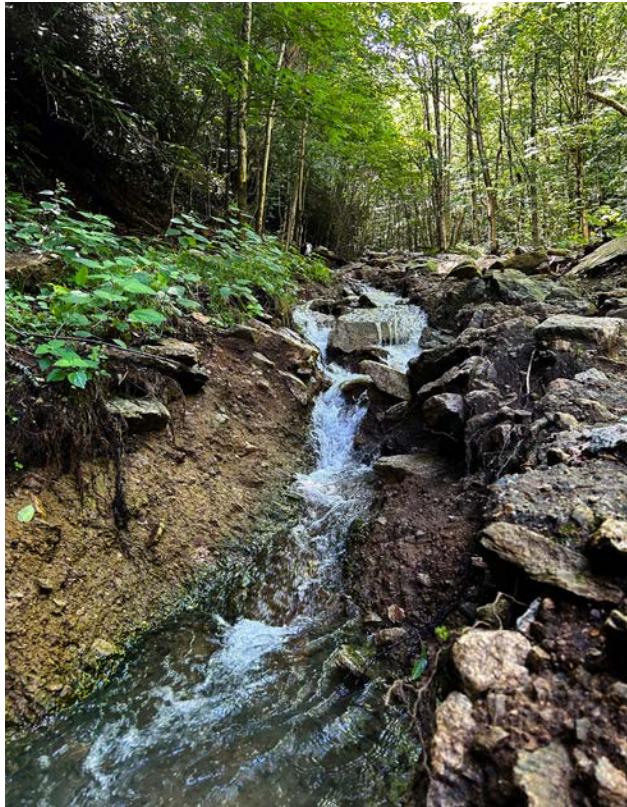
VisitPutnamWV.com

BEECH MOUNTAIN

DISCOVER YOUR COOL SUMMER RETREAT

BEAT THE HEAT

Are you dreaming of escaping the sweltering summer heat? Look no further than Beech Mountain, North Carolina—your serene sanctuary at just over 5,500 feet in elevation. Here, the air is crisp, the views are breathtaking, and the temperatures rarely climb above the high 70s. Let's explore why Beech Mountain should be your ultimate summer getaway.



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES AWAIT

Are you an outdoor enthusiast? Beech Mountain offers outdoor recreation for all ages.

Hiking and mountain biking over 27 miles of trails, each catering to different skill levels. From serene forest walks to invigorating climbs and jumps, there's a trail for everyone. The Beech Mountain Resort's lift-assisted downhill mountain biking park offers beginner-friendly to technical terrain and soaring views from 5506'. Scenic lift rides are also available for non-bikers that want to experience the breathtaking views.

Is fishing more your sport? Beech Mountain is a fishing paradise. Buckeye Lake, Lake Coffey, and Pond Creek are the favorite fishing spots with the locals. Lake Coffey, designated as delayed harvest trout waters, receives an annual infusion of brown, rainbow, and brook trout. Buckeye Lake is designated hatchery supported; Buckeye Lake also receives regular stockings of trout. Visit Fred's General Mercantile Store on Beech Mountain to pick up your fishing license.

The Buckeye Recreation Center has tennis, pickleball and basketball courts, a workout facility, playgrounds, hiking trails and lake access including a free kayak loaner program. Visitors can get a day pass to the indoor recreation center for a small fee.



SUMMERTIME IS FAMILY TIME

Looking for something to keep the kids busy this summer? The Mountaineer Adventure Tower located beside the Brick Oven Pizzeria features a 3-story ropes course and thrilling 25-foot slide. The town of Beech Mountain also has three playgrounds – Fireman's Park, Bark Park Playground, and Buckeye Playground – to exhaust your little ones. For your four-legged children, the Beech Mountain Bark Park is an off-leash dog park with two separate areas for large and small dogs.



DINING WITH A VIEW

Whether you are looking for a quick post-workout lunch with your friends, a convenient child-friendly dinner, or a unique bar to catch the sunset and listen to live music, Beech Mountain has a variety of restaurants. Authentic Mexican, Southern barbecue, and hand-crafted pizzas are just a sample of the culinary creations that await you at Beech Mountain. Outdoor and indoor seating are available at most restaurants.

DREAMING OF THE CLOUDS

Check into a short-term rental home with a hot tub or a condo with a pool for a good night's sleep after your long day of exploring the outdoors. Sleeping with the windows open is optional, but the breeze and wildlife sounds are sure to help you sleep if you do. Many of the rentals on Beech Mountain have fire pits, full kitchens, and multiple beds for your summer adventures. Staying connected is easy with Wi-Fi available on Beech Mountain for digital nomads or just posting all your Beech vacation photos. Call 828-387-9283 or visit BeechMTN.com for more information. •



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