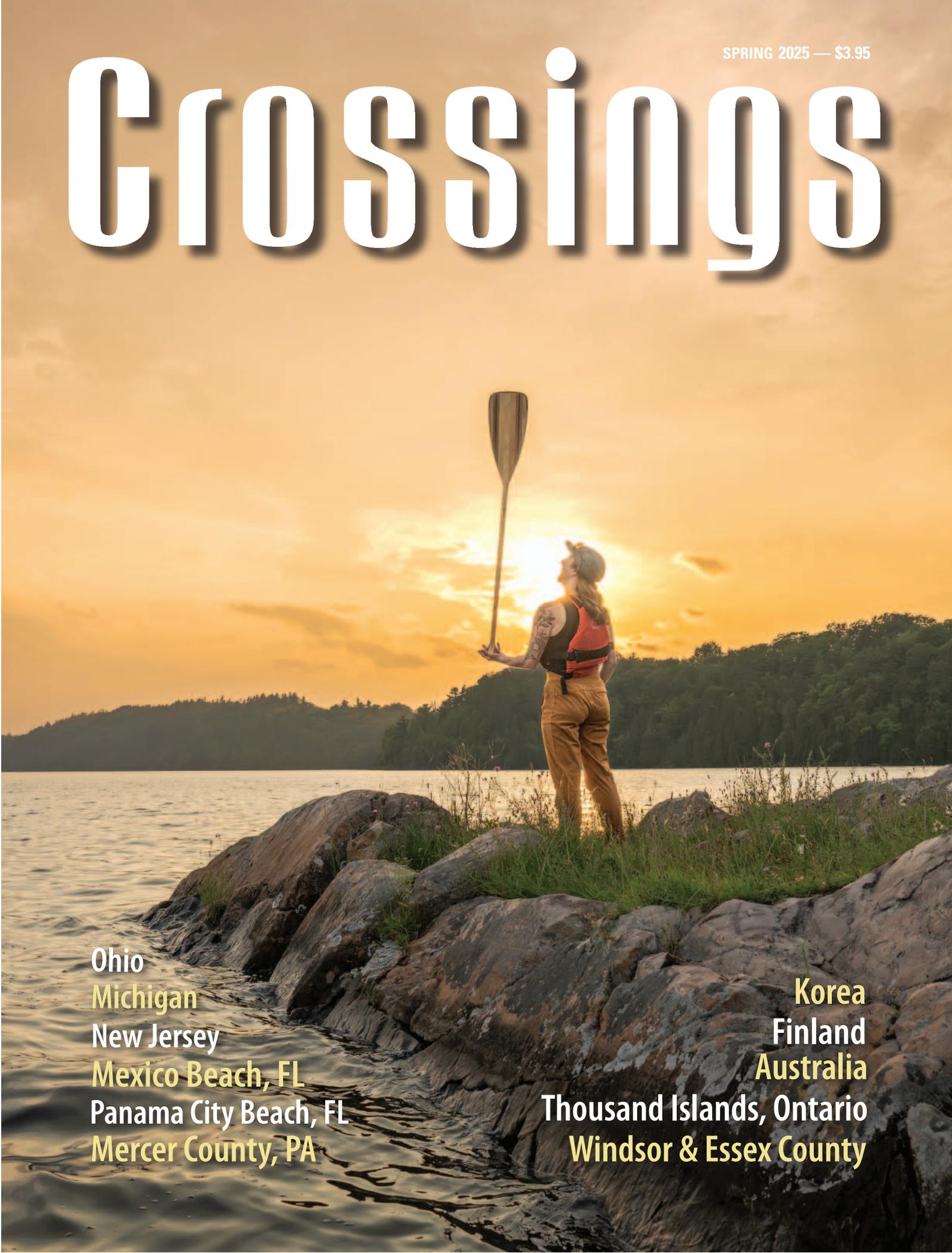


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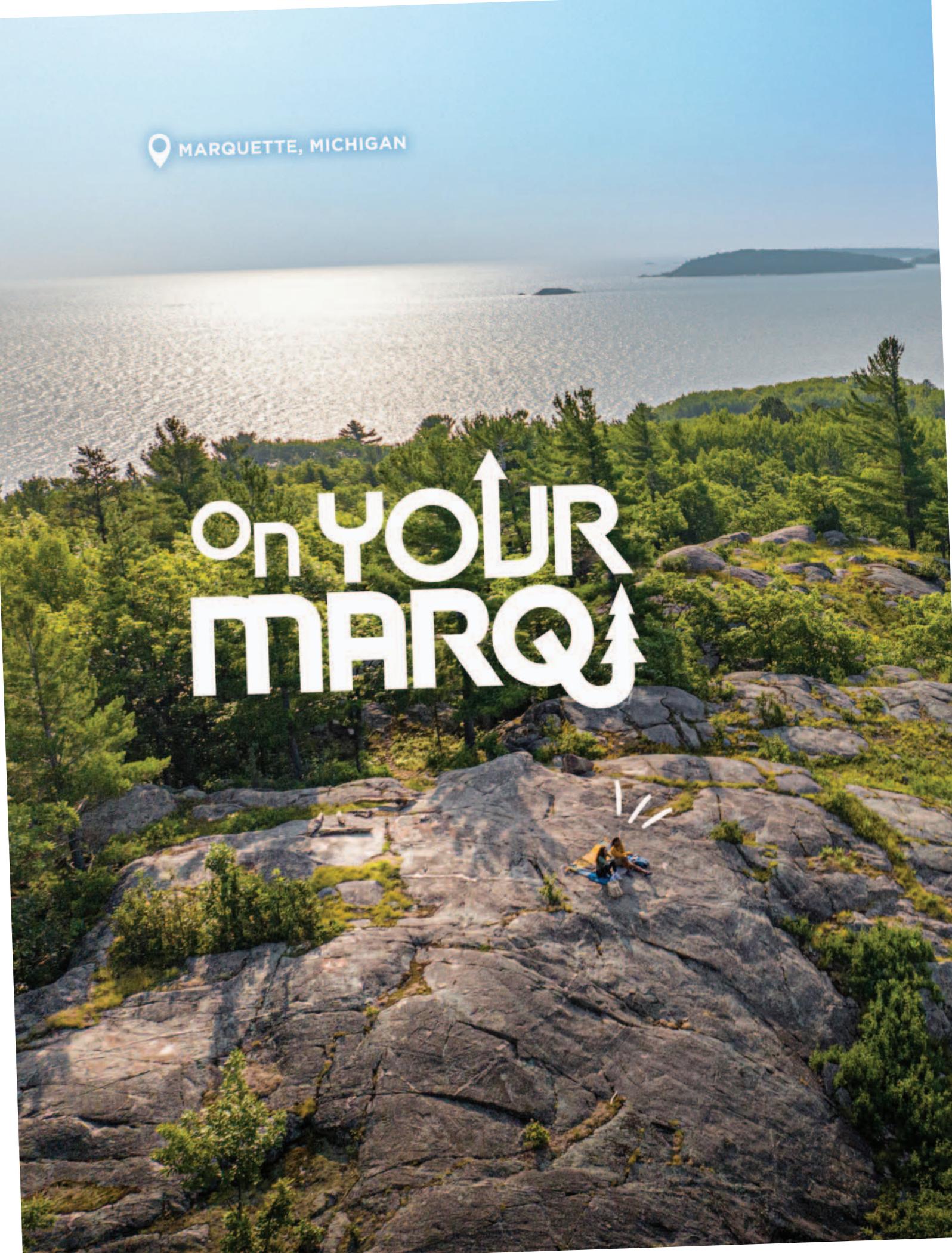


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Volume 25, Number 1, Spring 2025

Life & Style

18

TEEING OFF IN LANSING

Enjoy a wealth of great golf.

19

THE HALL OF HEROES

Sloan Museum of Discovery.

20

WEST BRANCH

See Michigan's great outdoors.

21

GRAND HAVEN

Michigan's best beach town.

48

THESE HILLS ARE CALLING YOU

Revel in Ohio's Hocking Hills.

50

WANDER IN WAYNE COUNTY

Small town charm in Ohio.

Free Wheeling

34

THE MEADOWLANDS

Jersey's big attractions are here.

36

SUSSEX SKYLANDS

Four seasons of adventure.

38

HUDSON COUNTY NJ

Gateway to America.

40

THE WILDWOODS

Relaxing on Jersey Shore.

42

MONMOUTH COUNTY

Stunning coastal views.

44

THE HOLLAND HOTEL

Just minutes from Manhattan.

8

MARVELLOUS MARQUETTE

Relax and play in Marquette County's tranquil wilderness paradise.

12

COLDWATER COUNTRY

Spring is inspirational and irresistible in Coldwater Country.

16

A CHANGE OF SEASONS IN FLINT

Enjoy golf, stars and all that jazz in Flint and Genesee County

22

ON THE BEACH

Sun, sand and surf are just the beginning in Panama City Beach.

24

THE UNFORGETTABLE COAST

Start living the barefoot life in Florida's Mexico Beach.

28

FINDING FOSSILS IN SOUTH JERSEY

The amazing Edelman Fossil Park & Museum opens in March.

32

NEWARK IS IN THE PINK

You won't want to miss cherry blossom time and more in Newark.

46

MUST DO'S IN MERCER COUNTY PA

Come for the tax free shopping, stay for the adventure.

52

ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Medina is breathtaking in the spring.

53

MEET BIGFOOT

Greater Gand Lake welcomes you with Nelson the Sasquatch.

55

LIGHT UP THE SKIES

Rossford Balloon and Fireworks Fest is not to be missed!

56

HOME GROWN GREAT

Enjoy water and nature in Miami County.

57

THE HISTORY OF CHILLICOTHE

Travellers can expect to relax, recharge and unwind.

58

EXPERIENCE SHELBY COUNTY

Known for its history, unique attractions and friendly atmosphere.

59

A PLACE TO FIND YOUR PACE

Fulton County offers a unique prospective on their heritage.

60

A THOUSAND SPLENDID ISLANDS

There are a million different ways to enjoy the Thousand Islands.

62

A HEART FULL OF SEOUL

Korea is a fascinating blend of ancient traditions, culture and modernity.

64

DAUGHTER OF THE BALTIC

See why Finland is known as the Happiest Place on Earth.

66

THE SURF'S UP IN SYDNEY

Take a dive into Sydney's iconic sights, attractions and beaches.

68

EVERYTHING YOU NEED AND MORE

Make Windsor and Amherstburg your one stop for shopping and dining.

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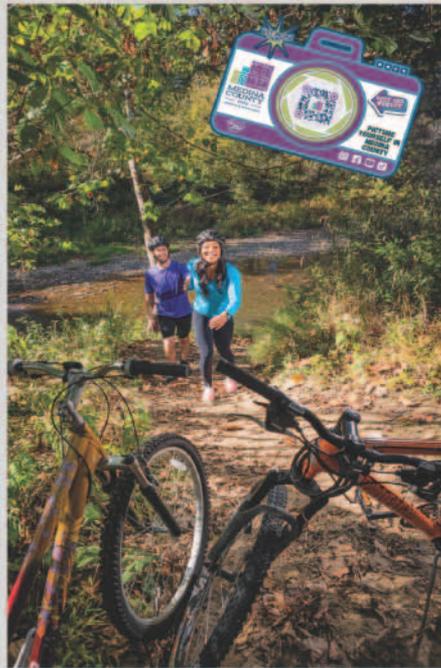


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TIMELESS CHARM WITH A VIBRANT SPIRIT

Never miss a moment of fun in Medina County! Come see the timeless charm where our county's historic past mixes with our lively, energetic present. In 2025, Medina County Park District will proudly celebrate 60 years of enhancing the quality of all life through education, conservation, and the protection of natural resources. Established 1965, the park district has become a beloved community resource, offering residents and visitors access to more than 22 park sites, over 50 miles of trails, and a variety of educational programs that inspire people of all ages to connect with nature. Over the decades, the park district has emerged as a leader in conservation, successfully acquiring and managing nearly 9,000 acres of protected land.



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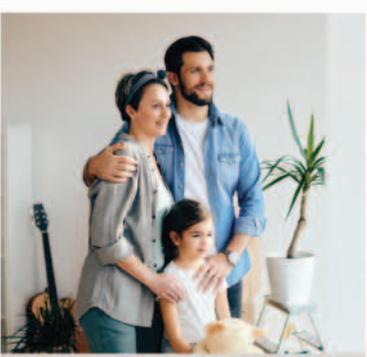


Dr. Sapna Saggar

Clinical and Counselling Psychotherapist

Dr. Saggar is a qualified BA, MD, MACP, and RP (Qualifying). Member of OMAHP. Blue Angel Psychotherapy & Support Services is a testament to her lifelong passion for mental health and dedication to helping those in need. As a medical doctor and the sole founder, she witnessed firsthand the struggles of patients with mental health concerns and the limitations of conventional medical approaches in addressing these issues. This observation, coupled with her intrinsic passion for mental health nurtured since high school, propelled her to pursue a master's in psychotherapy and follow a path of dedicating her life to the aid of others. *Services are offered in person or online. Call today for your free 15 mins consultation.*

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Historic Downtown Marquette

BY RENU SAGGAR

Marquette County's tranquil wilderness.

With 83 miles of shoreline, 150 streams and over 300 lakes, Marquette County's waterways are perfect for enjoying the warm weather. Visitors can relax on the sandy shores of *McCarty's Cove*, kayak the peaceful *Greenwood Reservoir*, swim in the calm waters of Lake Independence or paddleboard across Marquette Bay. There is no shortage of ways to connect with the water.

Birdwatching enthusiasts will find Marquette County to be a premier destination, with over 399 native bird species. Key spots like *Presque Isle Park*, known for its scenic beauty and diverse bird population, offer opportunities to see everything from soaring eagles to delicate songbirds. The *Little Presque Isle Songbird Trail* takes visitors through dense woods, where sparrows, woodpeckers and warblers are commonly spotted. For a more immersive

Spring is in the Air in Marquette Michigan

Located along the pristine shores of Lake Superior, Marquette County, Michigan is a vibrant destination where the natural beauty of Michigan's Upper Peninsula takes center stage. From rugged cliffs and cascading waterfalls to lush forests and serene vistas, this region offers the perfect setting for springtime adventures. Whether hiking, biking, kayaking or simply exploring the great outdoors, Marquette County provides endless opportunities to reconnect with nature.

For those who love to explore on foot, Marquette County boasts a variety of scenic hiking trails that offer family-friendly fun and incredible views of the surrounding area. Iconic peaks such as *Thomas Rock Scenic Overlook* offer a bird's-eye view of the stunning landscape, while the moderate *Mount Marquette* hike, provides sweeping views of Lake Superior and the city of Marquette. In addition to well-maintained trails, the county is home to several natural waterfalls, including *Yellow Dog Falls* and *Warner Falls*. Tucked away in the woods, these serene falls offer a peaceful retreat into



birdwatching experience, the *Chocolay Bayou Nature Preserve* offers a sanctuary for migratory birds like herons, osprey and bald eagles.

For golfers, Marquette County offers a range of courses set against breathtaking natural backdrops. The *Marquette Golf Club*, with its award-winning 36-hole facility, features two courses — *Greywalls* and *Heritage*. These courses are an incredible showcase of the area's beauty, with exceptional views of Lake Superior, rolling greens and dramatic elevation changes.

An urban counterpart to the outdoor adventures, Marquette's historic downtown features a flourishing culinary and brewery scene with countless options for visitors to indulge in after a day of exploring. With an array of coffee shops, food trucks and restaurants, there are ample places to tempt the palate. Breweries like Ore Dock Brewing Company, Barrel + Beam and Drifa Brewing Company are local favorites, while an array of restaurants and food trucks offer everything from fresh seafood to international flavors. Each venue provides warmth and community, embodying the town's friendly spirit.

Photos: Aaron Peterson

Visitors can stroll through downtown shops and galleries to discover the work of local artisans. Inspired by the area's natural beauty, the art ranges from paintings and pottery to unique wearables. The *Lake Superior Photo Art Gallery* showcases stunning landscape photography from Michigan's Upper Peninsula, including iconic shots of the Mighty Mac and Isle Royale. For those eager to learn, private photography workshops are available, offering the opportunity to capture the essence of Marquette through the lens.

Beyond the city of Marquette, nearby communities such as Ishpeming, Negaunee, Harvey, Gwinn and Michigamme Township offer their own distinct charm and local history. Each town adds its own flavor to the Marquette County experience, making it easy to explore the region's diverse offerings. Whether wandering through quaint main streets, exploring local galleries or enjoying a quiet walk on a nature trail, these neighboring communities complement the adventure-filled heart of Marquette County.

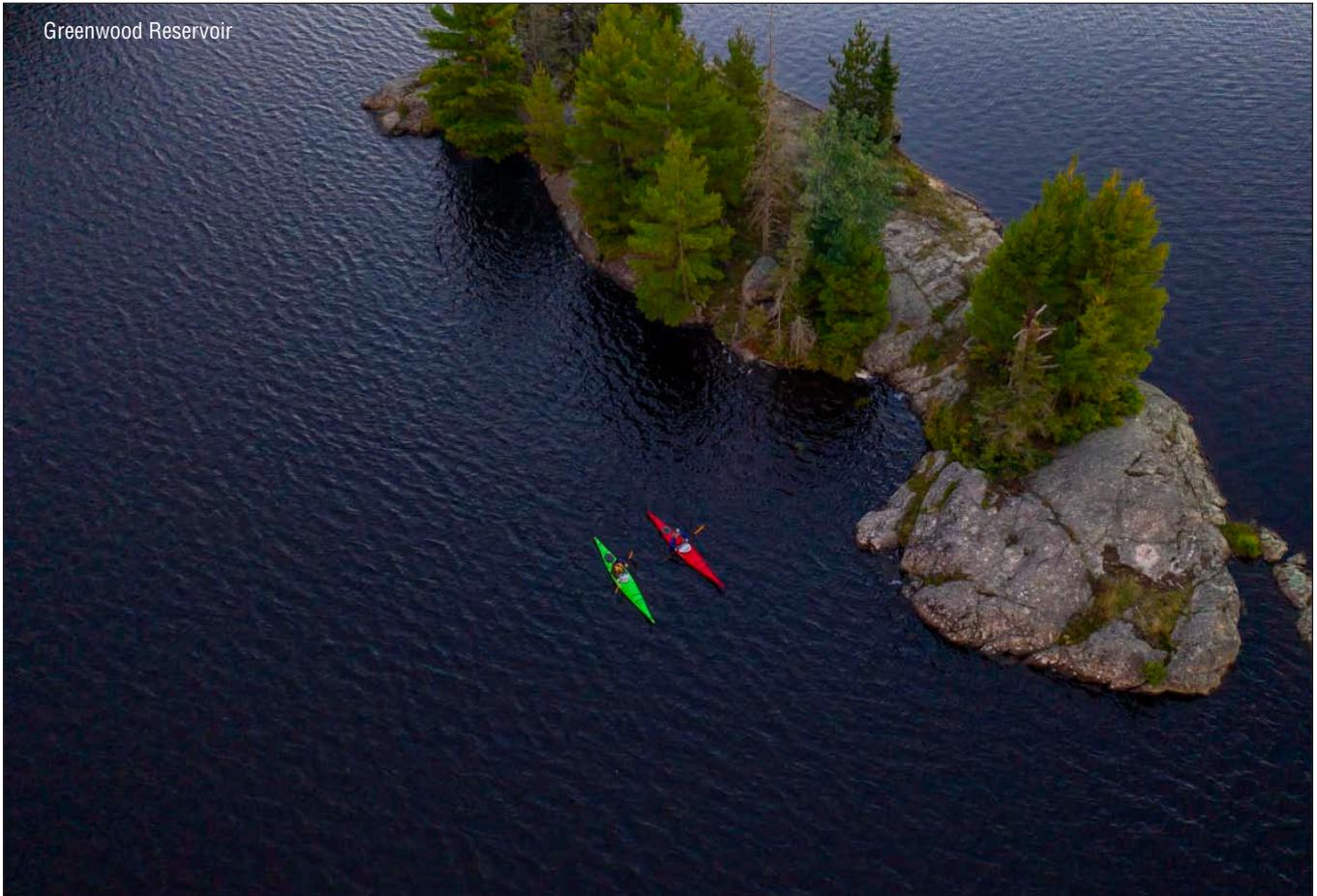
Spring in Marquette County also brings an exciting lineup of events starting with Downtown Marquette Restaurant Week. This week-long celebration showcases

the region's culinary talent with creative menus. Marquette Mountain Resort also hosts its annual Spring Carnival in March, marking the arrival of the season.

Spring in Marquette County means adventure at every turn. Hike or bike the Iron Ore Heritage Trail, chase waterfalls to life, making it the perfect time to explore rushing cascades and scenic trails. Hunt for the Northern Lights under crisp night skies. As night falls, look up! The Northern skies set the stage for stargazing and aurora chasing. Whether you catch the exclusive Northern Lights or a sky full of stars, Marquette offers a stellar way to end the day.

Marquette County offers a selection of accommodations. With options to stay in historic downtown Marquette or amidst nature, the possibilities are endless with options ranging from hotel and motel lodging to quaint country inns.

From breathtaking natural landscapes and thrilling outdoor activities to rich culinary offerings and lively community events, Marquette County is the perfect destination to embrace adventure and create lasting memories this spring. TravelMarquette.com for more information. 🍷





Michigan's COLDWATER COUNTRY

Discover year-round adventures in the charming communities of **Michigan's Coldwater Country**, where relaxation meets excitement!

Situated along the historic US-12 Heritage Trail, in south-central Michigan, the area is home to more than 100 lakes including two chains of lakes, perfect for boating, kayaking, and fishing. Paddle the water trail that commemorates 28 sites of riverfront history on the Union City Water Heritage Trail.

Step back in time with a ride aboard the 110-year-old Little River Railroad steam engine train or while exploring timeless Victorian downtowns and countless antique shops.

Learn the tricks of the trade in the Magic Capital of the World. Take in a performance at Tibbits Opera House or a double-feature at the All-American Capri Drive-In.

With annual festivals and hometown events, every season is an opportunity to create more memories in Coldwater Country. Find out more, including things to see and do, and where to stay, at COLDWATERCOUNTRY.COM.



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BY RENU SAGGAR

rentals are available on both chains and many boat launches are accessible throughout the area lakes.

For those who prefer exploring on two wheels or on foot, the county's scenic trails provide excellent options. The Coldwater Country website coldwatercountry.com, offers a variety of walking trails and biking trail maps. Travel through the picturesque countryside, past historic landmarks and along peaceful waters. The *Union City Heritage Water Trail* is another fantastic option, allowing visitors to kayak or canoe along the Coldwater and St. Joseph rivers while taking in the riverfront history and the fresh spring scenery.

Coldwater Country also boasts an impressive array of golf courses that cater to diverse preferences and skill levels. Home to nearly two dozen golf courses, including several one-of-a-kind experiences. Tee off on an island, along the lakeside or on a nature preserve.

For a glimpse into the region's past, the *Branch County Historical Society Museum* is a fascinating stop. Located in a charming Victorian home, the museum

Springtime in Michigan's Coldwater Country

Conveniently located along the scenic US-12 Heritage Route, midway between Detroit and Chicago, Michigan's Coldwater Country welcomes you with its charming communities and endless opportunities for relaxation. With more than 100 lakes, premier golf courses and a wealth of family activities, it's a haven for those seeking both adventure and tranquility. As winter fades and nature awakens, the region transforms to a destination filled with outdoor adventure, cultural experiences and local flavors.

Whether you're a nature lover, history buff, or foodie, spring in Coldwater Country offers something special for everyone. Here are some ideas of things to see and do in Michigan's Coldwater Country area during the spring months.

With over 100 lakes in the area, outdoor adventures like fishing and boating are top activities for spring visitors. Coldwater Lake, Marble Lake and the Chain of Lakes provide excellent fishing opportunities for bass, pike and walleye. If you don't have your own boat, consider renting one from a local marina to explore the interconnected lakes, enjoying the crisp spring air and tranquil waters.

Take advantage of the opportunity to escape and relax on the water. Travel from one lake to another in the area through the chain of lakes. Coldwater Country is home to not only one chain of lakes but two – North Chain of Lake and South Chain of Lakes. Boat, kayak and pontoon



showcases artifacts, photographs and exhibits that highlight the county's rich history, from its early settlers to its role in the railroad industry.

One of the beloved cultural landmarks in Michigan's Coldwater Country is the historic *Tibbits Opera House* in Coldwater. As one of Michigan's oldest theaters, this beautifully restored venue offers a range of performances, including plays, concerts and comedy shows throughout the spring season. Even if you're not catching a show, a tour of the opera house is a must for history and architecture enthusiasts.

Spring is a wonderful time to experience a nostalgic ride on the *Little River Railroad*, a historic steam train that offers scenic excursions through the countryside. The ride is perfect for families, history lovers and train enthusiasts looking for a unique way to explore the county's landscapes.

A fun afternoon for kid and kids at heart, can be found at the *Adventure Zone*. From go-carts to mini golf, lazer tag, a virtual reality lounge, duck pin bowling and a redemption arcade, along with tasty treats everyone will have fun. Enjoy nature with a visit to the *Critchlow Alligator Sanctuary*. Observe amazing animals and their tropical habitat during guided tours and animal interactions. Walk through the swamp and feed the alligators or just watch them bask and swim at this reptile paradise.

Shop 'til you drop at the many unique boutiques and shops throughout the area. Treasure the local antiques, enjoy homemade baked goods, one-of-a-kind accents and jewelry. Coldwater Country is also home to *Michigan's Antique Capital – Allen*, with the largest concentration of antique dealers in the Midwest. The area is home to five stately antique malls including the *Allen Antique Barn*, boasting two floors of more than 25,000



Children's Museum of Branch County

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square feet of treasures.

For a magic experience head to *Colon* to learn the secrets of magic and how to entertain a crowd using magic. Home to magic manufacturing and shops, countless activities and events, it's no wonder they call *Colon* the *Magic Capital of the World!*

A sure sign of spring is the opening of the *Capri Drive-In*. This 1,000 car, twin screen drive-in movie theater offers a unique and often nostalgic, All-American drive-in experience.

Grab a bite to eat at one of Coldwater Country's locally owned diners, restaurants or pubs. Enjoy the flavors, local scene, and hospitality of the area's many destination restaurants. At the end of your fun-filled day and exciting night on the town, check into one of the many hotels to rest and relax. The hotels are just minutes from all the excitement and attractions.

Coldwater Country also knows how to celebrate! Make sure to plan your getaway around the fun festivals and hometown events including the culinary grilling competition the *Magic City Grill Fest*, the annual *Strawberry Festival* and a whole lot more!

Whether you're exploring scenic trails, indulging in local flavors or immersing yourself in history and culture, Coldwater Country has something to offer every visitor in the spring. With a blend of outdoor beauty, family-friendly activities and rich traditions, it's the perfect destination for a refreshing seasonal escape. Pack your bags, embrace the spring sunshine and discover all that Michigan's Coldwater Country has to offer! For more information on these and many other things to see and do in Coldwater Country, visit ColdwaterCountry.com or download the Coldwater Country app. 

Unwind, Explore, Indulge





Explore the vibrant experiences
Flint and Genesee County,
Michigan has to offer this spring!



Explore Now



ExploreFlintandGenesee.org



Fenton Farms Golf Club

A Spring Thaw in Flint & Genesee

Any golf enthusiast will tell you that when the snow melts off the green, it's time to hit the links.

And that is no different in Flint & Genesee. Golf lovers from around the state – and even across the border – head to Genesee County each year to golf on one of their 20 private and public courses, for good reasons, too! Flint & Genesee has beautiful courses that are both challenging and easy to maneuver – perfect for golf pros and budding amateurs.

A fixture in the community since the 1950s when the Buick Open dominated the golf world's attention from 1958-2009. It has since returned to Warwick Hill Golf and Country Club in Grand Blanc, with the *Ally Challenge presented by McLaren*, a PGA Tour Champions event, held at the end of August. The family-friendly event lets spectators see some of their favorite golf champions hit the green. Fans can also enjoy two concerts, concessions and other spectator events. Ticket tiers include Pro-Am, day, weekend or all-access clubhouse passes. Learn more at TheAllyChallenge.com.

For those who would rather hit the links themselves, there are over 20 courses around Genesee County. Travelers can choose from various easily accessible golf courses and unique lodging options to

build a customized, affordable package that fits their needs. Genesee County is conveniently located at the intersection of I-69, I-75 and US-23 and is home to Bishop International Airport, so it's easy to get to an amazing golf destination.

Some local favorites include *The Captain's Club Golf & Event Center* (Grand Blanc), *Coyote Preserve Golf Club* (Fenton), *Fenton Farms Golf Club* and *Sugarbush Golf Club* (Davison), each offering different levels of difficulty and incredible views. In between trips to the course, golf enthusiasts can practice their swing at a local golf simulator like *The Sand Trap Indoor Golf* in Linden or *Cobblestone Indoor Golf* in Grand Blanc.

For those looking to book an experience, Explore Flint & Genesee – the region's convention and visitors bureau – is happy to assist in putting together unique, discounted travel packages for any budget.

Experience the great outdoors in Genesee County, with Michigan's largest county parks system. Over 11,000 acres of wood, water and fun are waiting to be explored. *For-Mar Nature Preserve & Arboretum* (Burton) has a Level II Accredited Arboretum, according to ArbNet, and contains 1,800 woody specimens representing 157 species. The park also

BY RENU SAGGAR

includes a visitor's center that provides hands-on experience with live animals and exhibitions where people can learn how flora and fauna coexist in a healthy ecosystem. Another key feature is the preserve's barrier-free treehouse built by *Nelson Treehouse* – the company behind Animal Planet's "Treehouse Masters."

The *Mounds ORV Park* is another unique find in the Genesee County Parks system. Open all year, the Mounds has 370 acres of trails and off-road vehicles, including trucks, Jeeps, ATVs, UTVs and dirt bikes. The facility also has an 8-acre scramble area with climbs and jumps.

Rough it while staying at *Wolverine Campground* (Columbiaville) on the Holloway Reservoir. The campsite has access to an all-sports lake and boat launch and campers can also rent kayaks. Wolverine has natural hiking and walking trails, premier fishing sites and plenty of recreation activities – and it's also dog-friendly.

One of the most interesting facets of the Genesee County Parks is *Crossroads Village & Huckleberry Railroad*. This recreation of a Great Lakes town at the turn of the last century features 34 historic structures, including the oldest operating gristmill and an authentic blacksmith shop. The village is also home to the Huckleberry Railroad, featuring a rebuilt diesel, a coal-fired locomotive, 11 original and replica wooden coaches and a classic red wooden caboose. The park also has one of the fastest carousels in the state.

Flint & Genesee may be a place for golf, but that's not the only sport to put on the books. During the spring and summer, soccer takes hold in Flint & Genesee when the *Flint City Bucks*, the USL League Two home team, play at Kettering University's historic *Atwood Stadium*. Famous for its sports stars, rock stars and more, Atwood Stadium opened in 1929 and has since seen President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Heisman Trophy winner Mark Ingram, Jr., and even rock band The Who.

Now, the stadium sees games from local colleges, high school gridirons and the 2024 Great Lakes Division Champions: The Flint City Bucks. Visitors can catch a Bucks game on weekend nights May-Aug. The team puts on a lively game filled with people from all over the region and

country – even some over the border. The Buck’s supporter group, *The River Rats*, meets before each game at *Soggy Bottom Bar* down the road to pre-game before marching the half mile to Atwood Stadium. It’s a sight to see!

For those more into arts and culture, the *Flint Cultural Center* is an institution that’s not to be missed. Patrons can spend a whole day or a night out with multiple institutions on one campus.

Applewood is the historic estate of automotive pioneer Charles Stewart Mott and his family. It opens to the public in May hosting tours and events throughout the season. The Jacobean Revival style house features 11 bedrooms and a basement with a built-in bowling alley. The stunning gardens include a small orchard with 71 trees representing 29 heirloom varieties.

The recently renovated *Sloan Museum of Discovery* is an excel-



lent place for the entire family. With interactive STEM exhibits, a child-sized neighborhood, a local history museum, a vehicle gallery, and two rotating galleries, there is plenty of fun at the Sloan. Nearby, *Longway Planetarium* is Michigan’s largest and most digitally advanced planetarium, with astrological shows, programming for children and laser light shows on the weekends.

The *Flint Institute of Arts Museum + Art School* is Michigan’s second-largest fine arts museum. It has several galleries and rotating exhibits with art in various styles from various eras. Thanks to Huntington, the museum is free on Saturdays for those traveling on weekends.

For some entertainment, there are several options in the area. The *Flint Institute of Music*, or the FIM, hosts several institutions with touring bands and musicians, plays and musicals, comedic acts and the Flint Symphony Orchestra. In the spring, see bands Better Than Ezra or ZZ Top, or comedians Eddie Griffin or Tom Papa at the *FIM Capitol Theatre*, see “Dragons & Mythical Beasts” or “iLuminate” at the *FIM Whiting Auditorium*, see “James and the Giant Peach” performed by the Flint Youth Theatre at *MacArthur Recital Hall*, or see “Carrie: The Musical” performed by the *Flint Repertory Theatre*.

Around the corner is the *New McCree Theatre*, an African-centered focused theatre presenting the African American Story in the African American Voice. Closing out its 2024-2025 season, the theatre will perform “Those Gorgeous Glamorous

Girl Groups” from May 8-31.

There are plenty of places throughout the community to shop and dine. In the southernmost part of the county, *Fenton* provides a beautiful place for shopping and dining. The downtown shopping district, known locally as *Dibbleville*, has plenty of places to browse. *Yesterday’s Treasures* has a wide variety of antique finds, including furniture, artwork and jewelry and *Seasons on Main* is a fun shop where you can find a gift for a friend.

For dining options, Fenton favorites include the Union Joint’s restaurant *Fenton Fire Hall*, known for its award-winning Mac & Cheese and *The Laundry*, which has been an institution for over 25 years.

In *Flushing*, you’ll find a family-friendly community boasting dining, shopping and fun activities. Notable shops include *Main Street Treasures*, located downtown, selling Michigan-made produce and goods and *Just Julie’s*, selling hand-painted garments with beautiful designs. For dining options, check out *Kathy’s 126*, located downtown or *Sorrentos Food & Spirits*, a local fan favorite.

On the east side of the county sits Grand Blanc. The town has excellent restaurants, including Da Edoardo, which is an upscale Italian restaurant, the Grafted Root Eatery boasts real, simple, fresh food, Taboon Middle Eastern Restaurant, and Bangkok Peppers, featuring traditional Thai food.

The summer is festival season in Flint & Genesee. For music lovers, *Flint Alley Fest* overtakes downtown Flint in early July, *Flint Jazz Fest* takes over Riverbank Park in late July and *Flint Drop Fest* is in August. The summer is capped off with the *Crim Festival of Races*, a 10-mile race through Flint that features runners from around the world.

Other amazing events in Flint & Genesee include the *Tattoo City Tattoo Convention* held at the Dort Financial Center in August each year and the *Really Cool Comic Con*, Michigan’s largest summer comic con. 📖

No matter your style – sports, shopping, arts and culture, or golf – there is something to enjoy in Flint & Genesee. For more information, please visit ExploreFlintandGenesee.org.



Tee Off In Lansing for Great Golf

Warmer weather means that golf season is here. It's time to pack your clubs and hit the links! If you're looking for an exceptional golf experience that's easy on the wallet, then look no further than Lansing Michigan, a region with excellent courses with multiple layouts and challenging holes. Choose Lansing for your next golf getaway and count on affordable golf that's closer than you think. Take a shot at these Lansing courses.



Lansing has great golf courses for players of every level

men's and women's golf teams. Rated by Zagat as among the top collegiate golf courses in America.

Timber Ridge Golf Club
The championship layout at Timber Ridge Golf Club boasts spectacular views and inspiring design that allowed nature and the contour of the land to suggest the placement of holes and flow of the course. 18 championship holes with an abundant variety of trees, a hilly terrain and marshland

Eagle Eye Golf Club—Magnificent shot values and challenges from each of the four sets of tees makes this course a favorite. And you don't want to miss the signature 17th Island Green (modeled after TPC Sawgrass). Rated #53 in America.

Hawk Hollow Championship Golf Course — Find 27 holes of Championship Golf — rated 4 1/2 out of 5 stars by Golf Digest and listed among the top 200 "Places to Play." This 500-acre track will provide you the opportunity to use every club in your bag.

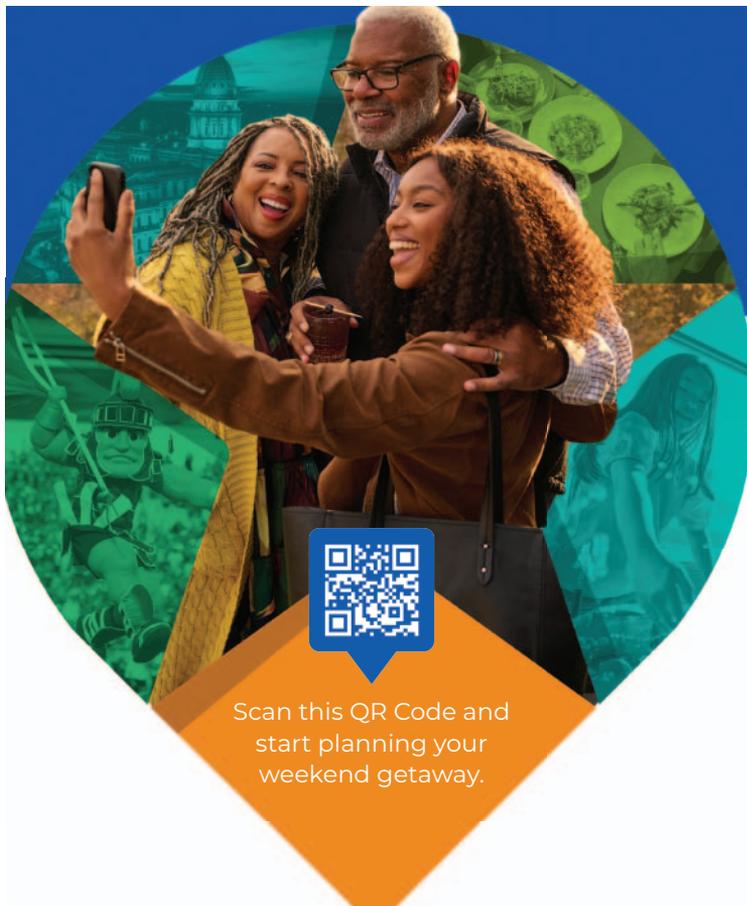
Forest Akers Forest Akers East & Forest Akers West — Adjacent courses located on the campus of Michigan State University in East Lansing. The west course is the home course for Spartan

give an up-north feel to this course.

Groesbeck Golf Course — Lansing's hidden gem municipal course is close to the heart of downtown Lansing. It offers 18 holes that are challenging, yet playable. This course is ranked among the top city-run courses in Michigan.

Round out a long weekend in Lansing with some great local dining or check out the local craft beer and distillery scene. With over 20 locations, you're sure to find a favorite. Don't forget to add in some great entertainment options like high-speed go-karts, axe throwing and a whole lot more! 🍷

Choose Lansing and plan on a Greater golf getaway! Visit them at Lansing.org for more information.



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Heroes at the Sloan Museum of Discovery

Sloan Museum of Discovery in Flint will debut a new special traveling exhibit, *Hall of Heroes*, on May 24, 2025, following the winter/spring exhibit, *2theXtreme-Math Alive!*

Hall of Heroes brings guests into the world of superheroes, crime-fighters, gadgets and spies through an immersive experience. Visitors will immediately find themselves in the thick of the action as they begin their journey through several themed environments

where they will learn how “superheroes” are created (both the comic book fantasy types and real-life every day heroes). Guests will discover the ideals that heroes uphold and push the boundaries as to what it truly means to be heroic.

The exhibit features a full-scale “half” replica of Barris Customs’ 1960’s *Batmobile*, as well as other movie props, replicas and rare artifacts from past and present major motion pictures and television shows. Interactive display cases will take guests through a history of heroes and how people relate to them, from radio to pop culture, including everything from blockbuster films to large-scale comic conventions. The Hall of Heroes exhibit was designed by Stage Nine Exhibitions as a place to



Iron Man at the Hall of Heroes

“discover Your superpowers.”

Exhibit visitors will also be able to interact with a variety of displays and exhibits that show how the arts and popular culture have influenced the introduction and evolution of superheroes over the past 70 years.

The Hall of Heroes interactive exhibit runs through September 7, 2025, inside Sloan Museum of Discovery’s 5000 square foot FUN Gallery. Sloan Museum of Discovery opened in 2022 as a world-

class, hands-on interactive museum with four primary hands-on galleries that take visitors young and old through a learning journey of science and history. The Hall of Heroes exhibit is a \$5 add-on to Sloan’s General Admission, which includes access to the entire 107,000 square feet museum and maker space. Sloan Museum is located on the Flint Cultural Center campus at 1221 East Kearsley Street within walking distance of Longway Planetarium, Flint Institute of Arts, Whiting Auditorium, Applewood Estates and more! Discounted combo-tickets are available for a same-day visit to *Longway Planetarium* plus Sloan Museum if visitors want to make it a full day of discovery. 📍

Learn more and buy tickets in advance at SloanLongway.org/Heroes.

HALL OF HEROES
 NEW TRAVELING EXHIBIT AT SLOAN MUSEUM
MAY 24 - SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

\$5
 add-on
 per person
 after General
 Admission*

*General Admission to Sloan Museum is free for Genesee County residents. To receive these benefits, individuals must show a valid ID for proof of residency.
 *Hall of Heroes entry is FREE for members of Sloan and Longway.

SLOAN
 MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY

1221 E. Kearsley Street
 Flint, MI 48503



MORE INFORMATION AT:
SloanLongway.org/Heroes

Explore Michigan Outdoors in West Branch

Nestled in the heart of Michigan's picturesque northern landscape, West Branch is an outdoor enthusiast's dream. Whether you're an avid golfer, passionate angler or adrenaline-seeking adventurer, this charming town is brimming with world-class opportunities for outdoor recreation.

For golfers, West Branch is home to two championship-caliber golf courses—*Dream* and *Nightmare*. These meticulously designed courses offer a range of challenges for players of all levels. *Dream* offers a serene and strategic layout perfect for those seeking a peaceful round surrounded by natural beauty. *Nightmare* challenges even the most seasoned golfers with its dramatic terrain and undulating greens. Both courses are known for their impeccable conditions and stunning vistas, making them a must-visit for any golf enthusiast.

Fishing lovers will find themselves in paradise in West Branch. The area boasts over 200 Master Angler awards, a testament to the abundance and variety of fish found in its many lakes and rivers. Whether you prefer casting from the shore or navigating the waters by boat, the local waters are teeming with prized



The Dream golf course in West Branch Michigan

species such as trophy walleye, bass and northern pike. West Branch is widely recognized as a premier fishing destination, offering both seasoned anglers and beginners an unforgettable experience on the water.

For those who crave adventure off the water, West Branch is home to an award-winning trail system, ideal for side-by-sides and snowmobiles. Whether you're looking to explore the rugged terrain in the summer months or cruise

through pristine snow-covered paths during winter, the area's trails are designed for maximum enjoyment and thrills. These well-maintained routes offer scenic views and diverse terrain, ensuring an exciting ride for all levels of adventurers. The expansive network of trails makes it easy to experience all that this stunning region has to offer, no matter the season!

Whether you're teeing off on championship courses, reeling in the catch of a lifetime or racing across snow-covered trails, West Branch delivers the best of Michigan's outdoor recreation. Embrace the adventure, relax in nature and make memories that will last a lifetime in West Branch—the ultimate destination for those who live for the outdoors. Visit WestBranch.com for more information. 🏡

GOLF WEST BRANCH

Make 2025 Bogie Free!

West Branch is a haven for golfers! Our area is home to several beautiful golf courses, including the West Branch Country Club, The Nightmare Golf Course, and The Dream Golf Course. Each of these courses offer challenging and well-maintained fairways, greens, and hazards, as well as stunning views of the surrounding forests and lakes. Golfers of all skill levels can enjoy a day on the links, with options for 9 or 18-hole rounds, as well as driving ranges and putting greens for practice. Beginners and professionals alike can take advantage of lessons, clinics, and other events throughout the season. Many of our local hotels and resorts even offer complete golf and stay packages!

West Branch
VISITORS BUREAU

Visit our Website to Learn More!
www.visitwestbranch.com

Have a Heavenly Vacation in Grand Haven

Looking for a perfect spring and summer getaway? Get ready to fall in love with the Grand Haven Area! Explore their beautiful inland communities and then plan a visit to their charming beach town of Grand Haven - it's a slice of paradise on Lake Michigan. This laid-back coastal gem has been drawing sun-seekers and adventure lovers for generations and once you visit, you'll totally get why!

Spring is full of seasonal beauty and great explorations, but summer-time is where it's at for this beach town! Let's start with the star of the show: *Grand Haven State Park*. Picture this — a mile of pristine sandy beach where you can work on your tan, take refreshing dips in Lake Michigan's crystal-clear waters or just chill with a good book. The beach scene here is Instagram-worthy, especially with those famous West Michigan sunsets.

Speaking of photo ops, don't miss the *Grand Haven Lighthouse and Pier*. This iconic red lighthouse is basically the town's mascot, and taking a sunset stroll along the pier is pretty much mandatory. Pro tip: grab an ice cream cone from one of the nearby shops first - trust me, it makes the experience even better!



Grand Haven Beach Image: Janelle Darnell

Want to mix things up? *The Musical Fountain*: every summer night, this awesome water feature puts on a synchronized light and water show set to music. It's like Vegas meets small-town charm, and it's completely free! Grab a spot on the boardwalk or at the waterfront stadium.

Downtown Grand Haven is exactly what you want in a beach town - cute boutiques, friendly local restaurants and zero pretension. Pop into the

family-owned shops, grab a fresh perch sandwich or just window shop. The whole vibe is super chill and welcoming.

For the active crowd, you've got options for days. Rent a kayak and paddle the Grand River, hit up the bike trails or try your luck fishing with a local charter boat. If boating is your thing, you're in the right place - welcome to "Coast Guard City, USA"!

Whether you're planning a weekend escape or a week-long retreat, vacations here are a cherished tradition. It's got that perfect mix of beach town charm and modern amenities, without the overwhelming crowds you'll find at bigger destinations. Plus, it's just a quick drive from Chicago or Detroit, making it the ideal spot for your next adventure. VisitGrandHaven.com and start planning your visit today! 🌊



Shaded trails and sunny beaches. Patio drinks while boats parade past. Colored skies framing stoic lighthouses. Boardwalks dotted with shops and eateries. Live music and famous festivals. **#VisitGrandHavenArea**



In the Grand Haven Area, it's all here, and it's only natural. VisitGrandHaven.com





BY RENU SAGGAR

sign. Meanwhile, *Legacy Golf Club* offers a semi-private layout with a variety of holes that cater to different skill levels, along with a par-3 course ideal for a quick round before hitting the beach or a few quiet morning holes with your best golfing buddies. Work up an appetite after your time on the links? Grab a bite or a brew at Bay Point Golf Club's local favorite, *Neons Bar 72*.

While golf may be the highlight of your spring vacation, Panama City Beach has so much more to offer for excitement enthusiasts of all kinds. After a morning round on our courses, take a dip in the crystal-clear waters of the Gulf Coast or set sail on a crowd-pleasing dolphin cruise. Adventure seekers can try parasailing high above the shoreline, diving among vibrant marine life or paddleboarding through the serene waters of *St. Andrews Bay*.

Beyond the beach, explore the natural beauty of Panama City Beach by hiking

Spring Into Fun & Tee Off In Panama City Beach

There's no better time than now to plan your perfect spring getaway to Panama City Beach. Whether you're seeking the thrill of adventure, the relaxation of a coastal retreat or the challenge of a round of golf, in Panama City Beach, you can make it your Real. FUN. Beach vacation!

For those looking for a fun spring retreat, Panama City Beach offers the perfect blend of relaxation and recreation. With countless locations to walk, run, swim, explore or best of all, relax and unwind, the only challenge will be choosing what to do first. Stroll along our 27 miles of white-sand beaches, unwind at beachfront accommodations and enjoy a leisurely round of golf at one of the area's premier courses.

Outdoor activities here usually revolve around two things: sand and surf. Naturally, the world's most beautiful beaches beckon travelers and for good reason. But the area features a treasure trove of activities, sights and places to explore that don't require a beach towel—like golf!

Panama City Beach is home to a selection of golf courses that offer a mix of challenge and enjoyment, all set against a beautiful coastal backdrop. Whether you're a seasoned golfer or just looking for a casual round, you'll find options among our expansive stretches of pristine green grass to suit your game. Want to kick your game up a notch in golf paradise? Spend an hour or a day – getting pointers from the pros at Dewswepers Golf Instruction, available for all ages and skill levels.

The *Nicklaus Course* at Bay Point Golf Club, the only Nicklaus Design course in Northwest Florida, provides a scenic and engaging round, featuring marshland views and carefully placed hazards for a picturesque challenge. Golfers looking for a more laid-back experience can visit *Signal Hill Golf Course*, known for its welcoming atmosphere and player-friendly de-



Nicklaus Course at Bay Point Golf Club

through *Conservation Park*, biking along scenic trails or taking an airboat tour. *St. Andrews State Park* is another must-visit destination, offering opportunities for birdwatching, kayaking and fishing along its picturesque shoreline. The park's diverse ecosystems, from coastal dunes to lush pine forests, make it a haven for nature lovers and explorers of all types of terrain.

There's never a bad time to visit PCB, but spring is the perfect season to embrace the best of the Real. FUN. Beach. Whether you're teeing off under clear blue skies, strolling along sugar-white sands or exploring the natural beauty and wildlife of our parks and trails, every moment in Panama City Beach is designed for relaxation and adventure. Enjoy a sunrise over the Gulf, chase thrills on the water or simply soak up the laid-back coastal vibe that makes PCB a one-of-a-kind destination where your ideal getaway can be just that – yours. 🌊

Start planning your ultimate spring escape today—because here, fun isn't just an activity, it's a way of life. Make it yours at the Real. FUN. Beach! VisitPanamaCityBeach.com.

IT'S YOUR VACATION

WHERE YOU CAN BE YOU

27 MILES OF WHITE SAND, GORGEOUS TURQUOISE WATERS AND SUNSETS YOU'LL NEVER FORGET.

MAKE IT YOURS.



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REAL BEACH
FUN
PANAMA CITY BEACH



shipwreck sites teem with marine life, offering divers a glimpse into the Gulf's vibrant underwater world. And if fishing is your passion, charter captains are eager to guide you on unforgettable excursions to reel in the catch of a lifetime.

Food, Shopping & Events

Hungry? Mexico Beach's culinary offerings cater to every palate. Indulge in fresh, locally sourced seafood from the seafood market at the *Shell Shack*. Savor a meal and catch the big game at *Mango Marley's* or try the award-winning menu at *Killer Seafood*. Prefer to keep things casual? Open-air cafés dish up everything from hibachi to gourmet pizza. Start your mornings right with a visit to *Caribbean Coffee & Café* for a perfectly brewed cup of coffee and don't pass on the cinnamon roll!

Shopping enthusiasts will adore the

Mexico Beach, Florida ~ The Unforgettable Coast

Not all beaches are created equal, and Mexico Beach, Florida, is living proof. Nestled along the Gulf of Mexico with five miles of pristine sugar-white sand, this tranquil, unassuming coastal gem stands out as a slice of paradise. For years, families, friends and wanderers alike have flocked to its shores to create memories that last a lifetime. Visit once and you'll understand why Mexico Beach isn't just another stop on the map; it's a destination that stays in your heart.

Here, time takes a backseat to serenity. There are no towering high-rises to obstruct your view of the beach, no blaring horns at traffic lights to disrupt your thoughts—because there are no traffic lights. Since its founding in 1946, Mexico Beach has proudly preserved its small-town charm, offering an escape from the hurried pace of modern life.

Despite its quaint size, Mexico Beach doesn't skimp on modern comforts. Whether you're craving local seafood, a shopping spree or a day of pickleball, you'll find it here. The town features public parks, fishing charters, vibrant restaurants and even Wi-Fi—because they know you'll want to share those postcard-perfect photos in real-time. Whether you're planning a leisurely retreat or an adventure-packed getaway, this is a vacation destination for everyone.



What sets Mexico Beach apart from the rest? Unlike most beaches worldwide, where sand consists of a mixture of materials, their powdery white sand is composed almost entirely of evenly sized quartz crystals. This rare, dazzling quartz sand—formed from the Appalachian Mountains millions of years ago—retains its purity due to the absence of silt-bearing rivers in the area. When you sink your toes into these pristine shores, you're stepping into something exceptional.

An Adventurer's Playground

The Gulf of Mexico serves as a playground for adventurers of all ages. From swimming and snorkeling to kayaking and fishing, there's no shortage of ways to explore the temperate waters, which stay invitingly warm year-round with temperatures ranging from the low 70s to high 80s.

For thrill-seekers, Mexico Beach is a haven for scuba diving and spearfishing. Natural reefs, artificial reefs and historic

vibrant shops, all accessible via the scenic sidewalk that runs the length of town. From unique gifts and artisan finds to beach-day essentials at *Mexico Beach Marina & Outfitters*, you'll discover treasures to take home as a memento of your visit.

And don't miss the robust events calendar, which keeps the spirit of Mexico Beach alive throughout the year. Highlights include the lively *Gumbo Cook-off*, the *Unforgettable Vow Renewal Ceremony*, the Thanksgiving 5K *Turkey Trot* and the Mexico Beach Artificial Reef Association's *Kingfish Tournament*. There's always something happening in Mexico Beach and everyone is invited to join in the fun!

Plan Your Visit

Are you ready to experience The Unforgettable Coast for yourself? Make Mexico Beach, Florida, your next destination and discover what makes this coastal haven so special. From relaxing on our warm sandy beaches to savoring fresh seafood, exploring vibrant events and soaking in sunsets that rival paintings, Mexico Beach offers an unmatched blend of tranquility and excitement.

Don't just take our word for it. Pack your bags and come see why Mexico Beach, Florida is more than just a destination, it's an unforgettable memory waiting to be made. 📸

Plan your visit today at www.MexicoBeach.com.

step away & relax

Gather your favorite people and escape to Mexico Beach, FL, where white-sandy shores and turquoise waters set the scene for the perfect getaway. Come stroll local boutiques, enjoy fresh Gulf seafood, or simply soak up the sun on our pristine beaches.

The best trips aren't just taken - they're treasured!



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Edelman Fossil Park & Museum

efm.org

Inspiring visitors with the thrill of scientific discovery as they develop a new appreciation for the preciousness of life that sustains our world today. Opening March 2025



Revolutionary History

South Jersey is getting ready to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of our Nation, with plenty of history and stories to share with visitors.



Battleship New Jersey

battleshipnewjersey.org

Visit the most decorated American war ship along with Adventure Aquarium on the Camden Waterfront across from Philadelphia.



Fossil Museum exhibit



BY RENU SAGGAR

20 minutes from EFM. In 1866, the world's first discovered tyrannosaur, *Dryptosaurus*, was unearthed just a mile from the fossil park. Although dinosaurs were first recognized from fragmentary remains in England, southern New Jersey can rightfully claim its place as the cradle of dinosaur paleontology.

The Thrill Of Discovery

Hands-on, authentic discovery is at the core of EFM's experience. In the quarry, visitors can experience paleontology for themselves by digging for real fossils, unearthing clues to the ancient past and getting closer

Digging for Dinosaur Fossils in South Jersey

Opening in March 2025, the 44,000 square-foot *Edelman Fossil Park & Museum* (EFM) of Rowan University is a world-class cultural institution and tourist destination that brings awe and wonder to explorers of all ages. The sustainably built Edelman Fossil Park & Museum will transform lives by providing a unique opportunity to explore a remarkable site of scientific significance. Visitors embark on a personal voyage of discovery in an extraordinary setting that bears witness to one of the most momentous events in our planet's history.

Travel 66 million years back to the time when dinosaurs ruled New Jersey. Immerse yourself in the Cretaceous period as you walk through our one-of-a-kind galleries featuring full-scale dinosaurs, live animal encounters and an interactive fossil scavenger hunt. For even more adventure, they offer free-roaming virtual reality and a unique fossil-digging experience in their active research quarry. Savor freshly roasted coffee at their *Quarry Grounds* cafe, uncover treasures at the *Darwin & Co.* museum store and let your little ones' imaginations soar at their paleontology-themed playground: Pterosaur Pterrace. At EFM, there's a discovery awaiting every member of the family.

A Rich Heritage

66 million years ago, an asteroid struck the Earth, wiping out the dinosaurs and 75% of species. Now, EFM is offering visitors from around the globe the best view ever into this pivotal, calamitous event that ended an Earth era, paving the way for the modern world as we know it!

Surprising to many, southern New Jersey has long been known as a globally important region for paleontology. In 1858, a duck-billed dinosaur, *Hadrosaurus*, was the world's first discovered nearly complete dinosaur and was found just

than ever to the time when dinosaurs ruled. The park's four-acre fossil quarry, nestled within 123 acres of restored forest and wetlands, offers scientists and guests unparalleled insights into the earth's deep past.

Everyone who visits the quarry and is willing to get their hands dirty, can find a 66-million-year-old fossil that they get to take home. Discoveries at the site include fossils of bus-length mosasaurs, marine crocodiles, sea turtles, bony fish, shark teeth, brachiopods, marine snails and more!

When you make a personal connection with deep time, you never again see the world in quite the same way. The shark



Digging for Fossils

tooth or ancient clam you may dig up is a real discovery. At that moment, you become a citizen scientist—an experience that can set you on a new path to explore and protect the world.

A Message Of Sustainability

While forging a connection to earth's past, EFM also focuses on the twin crises facing our own age: threats to biodiversity and the climate. The dinosaur's extinction offers a stark reminder of the fragility of the ecosystems that support all life. Visitors will see the evidence of the emergencies posed by the warming planet and ongoing extinctions - and discover ways they can help protect the earth's future - all in a museum building that is powered by renewable energy and carbon-emissions free.

Much More To See And Do

Travelers looking for an appealing mix of history, culture and nature will find it in South Jersey. Located right across the river from Philadelphia, South Jersey comprises Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem counties. It's full of special events, shopping, hotels & restaurants, wineries and outdoor adventure.

Visit the *Camden Waterfront* to enjoy views of the Delaware River. The waterfront is perfect for families of all ages, offering a variety of restaurants, shops and entertainment venues.

Highlights include the *Mortgage Freedom Pavilion*, which hosts major Live Nation concerts and events throughout the year.

Families will love *Adventure Aquarium* in Camden. The only aquarium in the world to exhibit hippos, the aquarium features one-of-a-kind exhibits with more than 15,000 aquatic species including the largest collection of sharks on the East Coast. The latest addition, the *Stingray Beach Club*, allows visitors to touch and hand-feed an array of stingrays.

The *Battleship New Jersey* is permanently moored on the Delaware River at the Camden Waterfront. At nearly 900 feet long and 11 stories high, America's most decorated Battleship is an awesome sight to behold. Now a floating museum the ship offers tours, historical exhibits and special events throughout the year. Sit in Admiral Halsey's chair or stretch out on the bunks where the sailors slept.

Haddonfield is a picturesque town often likened to the idealized "Main Street USA". A long stretch of Kings Highway, is filled with locally owned boutiques and excellent restaurants, set among well maintained colonial-era architecture. Haddonfield is also notable as the childhood home of director *Steven Spielberg* and features a monument to the *Hadrosaurus*.

Any trip to South Jersey must include a visit to one of the many international award winning wineries and vineyards. The Outer Coastal Plain AVA is famous for *Coeur d'Est*, a proprietary red wine blend found exclusively in South Jersey. Enjoy a relaxing day of wine tasting, live music and farm-to-table dining amidst the beautiful spring scenery. Or experience a true piece of Americana at the *Cowtown Rodeo* in Pilesgrove, the oldest weekly rodeo in the country.

Plan Your Visit

Edelman Fossil Park & Museum is easily-accessible, located in Sewell (Mantua Township), NJ, just twenty minutes from Philadelphia and under two hours from New York City and Washington, DC. No matter where you're coming from, it's an ideal spot for group tours, a family outing or a day of exploration. 📍

Visitors of all ages are invited to "Discover the Past and Protect the Future." Plan your visit at visitsouthjersey.com.





There's nothing like
NEWARK
in the Springtime!

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Happening





Cherry Blossoms in Branch Brook Park

BY RENU SAGGAR

Downtown District, offering a backdrop of restaurants, cafes and retail to complement the annual event. Performances, a flag raising and a parade round out the fun of this celebrated event.

Newark's *African American Heritage Parade & Festival* dates back to 1966 and celebrates black culture, achievements and contributions. It remains one of the oldest and most significant black parades in the United States.

Afrobeat Fest is the largest festival of its kind in the entire tri-state area! See-

Spring & Summer Festivals & Adventures in Newark New Jersey

Spring is upon us and with warmer temperatures comes outdoor festivities in Newark! Cultural events and activities are abundant as spring and summer are the city's peak seasons. Its festivals bring together people from all walks of life to celebrate its rich tapestry of cultures. Visitors can experience Newark like a local and enjoy this true melting pot which offers an array of cuisines, shopping and activities with broad appeal.

Must Attend Festivals

The *Essex County Cherry Blossom Festival* is one of Newark's most celebrated events. Each year, it offers family-friendly programming including children's activities, a bike race, a 5k run and more! Thousands travel to Branch Brook Park to see the beauty of its Japanese Flowering Cherry Blossom Trees, the largest and most diverse collection in North America even more than DC.

Visitors will want to visit during peak bloom to see the trees in all their glory. While there, be sure to check out Essex County's stunning Cherry Blossom Welcome Center to learn more about the offerings of the county and take advantage of its 45-minute walking tour to learn more about the history of the park and its cherry blossoms.

Halsey Street takes center stage as the background for *Halsey Fest*, a very popular festival among families and college students, which takes place during late summer/early fall. With a large number of vendors to choose from, in areas ranging from apparel to accessories to fine art, food trucks, live performances and more, ensure attendees experience the best that Halsey Street has to offer.

The *Portugal Day Festival* is one of the largest, bringing nearly 300,000 visitors to Newark's Ironbound District each year. The *Ironbound*, which has more than 200 restaurants in its neighborhood, is known for its large Portuguese and Brazilian population and delicious ethnic cuisine.

Ferry Street is to the Ironbound what Halsey Street is to the

ing International artists like Gyakie, Nelson Freitas and Yemi Alade, is a regular occurrence at this cultural celebration of the African Diaspora each July. Vendors of all sorts round out the activities of this annual festival.

Horizon Foundations presents *Sounds of the City* at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center annually. This free weekly concert series hosts a variety of musical acts each Thursday over the summer with past performers including Jon, Rakim, Bilal, and more. The event is complete with giveaways and activations. Dine at one of the food trucks onsite, at the venue's restaurant, Nico's Kitchen + Bar, or nearby Kenyan eatery, Swahili Village which is a hit with the locals.

The *Newark LGBTQ Pride Festival* takes place every July during Newark Pride Week. Love is love in Newark and with a host of events, such as the annual Newark Pride Parade and LGBTQ-friendly establishments to support all year 'round, it's become one of Newark's most colorful festivals. Attendees can also look forward to events like The Legacy Ball and Pride in the Park.

The *Newark Black Film Festival* is the longest-running black film festival in the U.S. and Newark International Film Festival (NewarkIFF) showcases global independent films, drawing industry professionals and film lovers alike.

Newark Under The Stars is a vibrant outdoor dining and entertainment experience that transforms the city's streets into an open-air celebration of food, music and community. The event location is the best kept a secret, giving attendees someplace new to explore in Newark each time.

Outdoor Adventures & Scenic Spots

Branch Brook Park isn't the only park in Newark worth visiting. There are many outdoor spaces for visitors and locals alike to enjoy. *Newark Riverfront Park* is one of the city's premier spring and summer locations to frequent, as it has beautiful trails for taking a stroll and plenty of programming, including Capoeira, outdoor movie nights and dance parties for all ages. It also offers boat tours and stunning views of the Manhattan skyline,

as it is situated on the Passaic River. Visitors will also want to take a selfie in front of its famous orange sticks.

Weequahic Park is a 311-acre county park, known for housing the first public golf course in New Jersey. Grab a bite to eat at nearby *Dayton Steakhouse*, then swing by and work those calories off with a few rounds of golf with friends.

Military Park is located in the heart of downtown Newark and is a central location of many of the city's festivals and happenings such as the annual Afrobeat Festival, Newark LGBTQ Pride Festival, and more on its great lawn. It's also kid-friendly, housing a historic carousel right in the middle of the park!

After all the activity, you're bound to work up an appetite but you won't have to go far because Military Park is also home to *The Yard*, a popular restaurant with offerings inspired by the African Diaspora. Also located inside the park, be sure to stop by and ask for local favorite, the oxtail burger.

Visitors will love *Mulberry Commons*. In the winter, it's home to *Newark Winter Village*, but in the spring and summer, it transforms into a dancing destination. The park hosts frequent cultural and after-work dance parties, such as *Vybz Inna Park*, attracting the young and young at heart. It is located directly across the street from the *Prudential Center* and is great for pairing with a show. *Mulberry Commons* is another kid-friendly park, offering plenty of space and a jungle gym, complete with a slide.

Harriet Tubman Square is a historic park, located near and activated by *Audible*, an Amazon company. It hosts many community-focused, outdoor events at the park, many of which include fun-friendly activities and food trucks. The park is perhaps most significant for its namesake, Harriet Tubman, who was a driving force behind the Underground Railroad. Its

central focus is a stunning monument crafted by local artist, Nina John Cooke, in 2023.

The *Newark Museum of Art* is the largest in the state of New Jersey. In the spring and summer, you'll want to take advantage of its beautiful court yards which are home to its wonderful *Jazz in the Garden* series.

Plan Your Spring Getaway to Newark

Whether a day or weekend trip, vacation or staycation, Newark is your next spring/summer destination. As an international transportation hub, it's just 8 miles from Manhattan, with easy access to and from Newark Liberty International Airport, with various options through New Jersey Transit. 🚆

Ready to plan your trip? Visit www.newarkhappening.com for more information.



Dancing at the Portugal Day Festival



Newark Skyline



DreamWorks Water Park

BY RENU SAGGAR

York City skyline as well as the wetlands and waterways. With 3.5 miles of walking paths, people can catch a glimpse of some of the region's 260+ unique species of residential and migratory waterfowl – including 25 that are on New Jersey's endangered or threatened species list.

Birding walks are offered at no charge, guided by the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority and the Bergen County Audubon Society.

The *Hackensack Riverkeeper* is available by appointment to captain pontoon rides and eco-cruises. Being on the river offers exclusive views of the wetlands, nesting sites, and other native species not accessible from the mainland - visit www.HackensackRiverkeeper.org.

Looking for Something Different? – Visit the Meadowlands

Fun is on tap daily in New Jersey's Greater Meadowlands Region, with more things to do, places to go and restaurants to try than ever before!

The Stars Come Out at MetLife Stadium

MetLife Stadium is known as the home to two NFL teams – the Giants and the Jets – but this summer and next – it's all about the other football. Starting on June 15th – the FIFA Club World Cup™ is coming to the Meadowlands. The stadium hosts nine total matches including the final. And the world's biggest sporting event comes to New Jersey next year – MetLife hosts eight FIFA World Cup 2026™ matches, also including the final!

But its not just soccer at the center of MetLife – starting this spring action packed stadium entertainment includes the Supercross Championship, Monster Jam, Kendrick Lamar, Shakira, Zach Bryan, WWE SummerSlam, Billy Joel and Stevie Nicks, My Chemical Romance and Oasis. Visit www.metlifestadium.com for the full schedule.

Only in the Meadowlands: American Dream

The Meadowlands is home to:

- **Big Snow**, the only indoor real snow ski resort in North America.
- **Nickelodeon Universe**, the largest indoor theme park in the western hemisphere.
- **DreamWorks Water Park**, the largest indoor water park in the United States.
- **SEA LIFE Aquarium & LegoLand Discovery Center**.

At roughly 3 million square feet, the retail entertainment complex is the second-largest shopping mall in the United States with more than 450 stores and about 100 dining options. Visit interactive museums, including the *New Jersey Hall of Fame*. Play mini golf, go ice skating, build and play at *LegoLand* and shop at the exclusive luxury wing *The Avenue*. Visit www.americandream.com for more.

Immerse Yourself in Nature

Dekorte Park in Lyndhurst offers panoramic views of the New

Meadowlands Racing and Entertainment

There's live thoroughbred and harness horse racing plus simulcasts, watch parties and sports betting. And this summer is special at the track: the *100th Hambletonian* – the most prestigious event in harness racing will be held at the Meadowlands. The *Hambletonian Centennial* promises to be an experience to remember with special events and activities for fans of all ages.

If you can't make the Hambletonian, exciting events happen just about every weekend, with wine tastings, chili contests and food truck smackdowns. There are concerts and comedians and special dinner events. See www.playmeadowlands.com.

Stargazing, George Washington & Medieval Adventure

- Explore the Universe at the *William D. McDowell Observatory* in Lyndhurst. Open to the public every Wednesday evening – learn from astronomy experts about the towering telescope and the hidden secrets hiding in the stars. Call the Observatory Hotline – 201-460-4619 – after 3 p.m. on Wednesdays for the latest operating status. The Observatory is free of charge.

- Over 90 battles during the American Revolution (1775-83) were fought in New Jersey, more than any other state. Of those conflicts, 11 took place at Historic *New Bridge Landing* in River Edge. General George Washington used the *Stueben House* as his headquarters in 1780. Open to the public from dawn to dusk, visitors are invited to take a self-guided walking tour of the grounds and the outside of the historic buildings. The buildings are only open for events. Visit www.bergencounty-history.org for more.

- Immerse yourself in a live action dinner show like no other at *Medieval Times* in Lyndhurst. You'll travel back to the 11th century when knights rode horses and people ate with their hands. The two-hour show is set inside a castle-style arena and framed around a royal banquet and tournament of jousting, sword fighting and games of skill. Guests are assigned a knight to root for and section to sit in. The ticket price includes a four-course dinner that's served without utensils. For more information visit meadowlandslive.com.

New Jersey's *Meadowlands:* Your Destination for *Spring, Summer, and Beyond!!*



Contact line: 877-652-8287

meadowlandslive.com



The Sterling Hill Mine Rainbow Tunnel



Crystal Springs Resort

Crystal Springs Resort offers an unparalleled experience for visitors seeking luxury and adventure. The resort is home to two exquisite hotels, each featuring state-of-the-art spas that promise relaxation and rejuvenation. Golf enthusiasts will be thrilled to discover six meticulously designed golf courses, including the renowned *Ballyowen*, recently recognized as the #1 Golf Course in New Jersey by Golfweek.

Dining at Crystal Springs Resort is a culinary journey, with many diverse restaurants to choose from. The acclaimed *Restaurant Latour* stands out with its 4-star rating, offers a memorable dining experience showcasing the best of New Jersey's bountiful farms and artisan producers. Crystal Springs Resort is also the proud host of the *New Jersey Food & Wine Festival* — one of the premier culinary events in the New York metro area.

Four Seasons of Adventure in the Sussex Skylands

Enjoy the ultimate getaway in Sussex County, NJ. Branded as the *Sussex Skylands*, this northern most region of New Jersey offers everything from fun festivals and thrilling recreational activities to unique historical sites and peaceful hikes in the woods. It's the perfect place to relax and rejuvenate and it's only an hour's drive to New York City! Here are just some of the great places and activities that will make for a memorable trip to the Sussex Skylands!

Are You Ready for Spring?

Get ready to spring into action and savor the flavors of the season. The Sussex Skylands is rolling out the red carpet for a delightful lineup of spring festivals to tickle taste buds and lift spirits. Don't miss the NJ Wine & Food Fest, where guests sip and savor exquisite wines paired with culinary masterpieces. Next, head to the Skylands Stadium Food Truck and Craft Beer Fest for a mouthwatering adventure featuring delicious bites from local food trucks and refreshing craft brews. Michael Arnone's Crawfish Fest brings the bayou to New Jersey featuring the best music and food that Louisiana and New Orleans has to offer. Next up is Rock, Ribs and Ridges, where smoky goodness meets toe-tapping tunes, and the NJ State Fair, where farm meets fun.

Mountain Creek Resort

An unforgettable warm weather season is coming at Mountain Creek Resort. While the resort prides itself on being a year-round destination for adventure and relaxation, summer is when it shines. Guests can cool off at the expansive water park, soar through the air on a series of ziplines suspended above a mountaintop lake, tackle treetop challenges at TreEscape aerial adventure park or explore the award-winning mountain bike park. With activities for every age and interest, there's something for everyone to enjoy at Mountain Creek.

Explore NJ's Largest Lake

Discover the breathtaking landscapes that surround Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey's largest freshwater lake. Explore the lake and its islands with the *Lake Hopatcong Adventure Company*. They offer Guided Hydrobiking, Pedalboarding, kayaking, biking and hiking tours. After an exhilarating day filled with outdoor adventure, treat yourself to a delightful meal at one of the area's charming lakeside dining establishments. Among the top choices are *The Beacon* restaurant and *The Windlass*, both of which offer a unique culinary experience and outdoor dining paired with stunning views of the water.

Fluorescent Mineral Capital of the World

The mines of Franklin and Sterling Hill are world famous. These historical sites have attracted mineral enthusiasts, researchers and tourists from all around the globe, eager to witness the stunning display of fluorescent minerals that glow under ultraviolet light.

The *Sterling Hill Mining Museum* and the *Franklin Mineral Museum* are treasure troves of mineral wealth, geology and mining history that captivate visitors of all ages. The Sterling Hill Mining Museum not only shows the rich heritage of mining in the region and an extensive collection of fluorescent minerals, but also offers an exciting mine tour that takes guests deep into the underground world where minerals were once extracted.

The unique geological formations and rich deposits found in these mines provide a one-of-a-kind experience for visitors, showcasing a spectacular array of colors and luminescence. Whether you are a seasoned collector or a curious traveler, a visit to these mines promises an unforgettable journey into the fascinating world of geology and mineralogy. 📍

For more information please visit sussexskylands.com

Sussex

New Jersey's
Great Northwest!

SKYLANDS®



Get Your
Tickets Now!



Can't Miss 2025 Events!

May 2 - May 4

New Jersey Wine & Food Festival

Crystal Springs Resort

Hamburg, NJ

crystalgolfresort.com

A premier culinary event in the New York metro area. Meet, mingle, and sample the creations of the world's finest chefs.



May 3

Food Truck & Craft Beer Festival

Skylands Stadium
Augusta, NJ

skylandsstadium.com

100+ Craft Beers, 20+ Food Trucks, live music and more - right on the field!



GET SET FOR
THE SEASON OF

Food, Fests
and Music!



May 30 - June 1

Michael Arnone's

Crawfish Fest

Sussex County

Fairgrounds

crawfishfest.com

Crawfish Fest is back in Sussex County featuring the best music and food that Louisiana and New Orleans has to offer.

June 27 - 29

Rock, Ribs, and Ridges

Sussex County Fairgrounds

rockribsandridges.com

15th annual celebration of great Southern Rock music and finger-lickin' barbeque.



August 1 - 9

NJ State Fair

Sussex County Fairgrounds

Augusta, NJ

sussexcountyfairgrounds.org

Where Farm Meets Fun with carnival rides, fair foods, plus great educational & agricultural exhibits!



For more information and a complete list of events visit:

sussexskylands.com


New Jersey
visitnj.org

The Sussex County Chamber of Commerce received funding through a grant from the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism

BY RENU SAGGAR

District is a hub for artists and creatives, showcasing contemporary art and hosting various events throughout the year. Catch a performance at the historic *Loew's Jersey Theatre* in Jersey City, a beautifully restored movie palace that hosts concerts, films and other events.

Hudson County also boasts a diverse culinary scene with something to tantalize every taste bud. Immerse yourself in the vibrant Cuban culture of Union City and West New York. Sample authentic Cuban cuisine, listen to live music and experience the warmth and hospitality of these neighboring towns, which have earned the nickname "Havana on the Hudson". Hoboken is known for its vibrant nightlife, with trendy restaurants and bars lining the waterfront. The waterfront parks and historic brownstones have made it a popular destination for young professionals and families.

The largest city in Hudson County, *Jersey City* is a melting pot of cultures and a hub for business and innovation. *Jersey City's* burgeoning food scene is also making waves, with innovative chefs and diverse eateries popping up throughout the city. Don't miss out on trying some of the local favorites, like a Jersey-style pizza or a delicious Cuban sandwich.

Getting to Hudson County from New York City is easy, with various transportation options available, including the PATH train, ferries and buses. Once you're here, getting around is also a snap with public transportation and ride-sharing services readily available. For more information go to visithudson.org. 📍



The Hoboken Waterfront

Take A Spring Break in Hudson County

Hudson County offers historic attractions, serene nature, cultural immersion and a creative culinary scene. Visit award-winning restaurants, scenic parks and ferries to the *Statue of Liberty* — all in one, easily navigable destination.

One of Hudson County's biggest draws is the breathtaking view of Manhattan. Whether you're strolling along the Hoboken waterfront, catching a ferry from Jersey City, the iconic skyline is magical, particularly at sunset.

Liberty State Park, is a 1,200 acre park in Jersey City, where you can catch unparalleled views of the Manhattan skyline along the *Liberty Walk* promenade, or visit the state-of-the-art and interactive *Liberty Science Center*, with the largest planetarium in the Western Hemisphere. *Liberty State Park* also offers the fastest, most direct cruises to the *Statue of Liberty* and *Ellis Island*, not to mention boating, canoeing, hiking, biking and nature walks in the warmer weather. The region features a variety of impressive gems, including the *Red Bull Arena*, *Skyway Golf Course* and the celebrated *American Dream Mall*, plus plenty more! Visit Hudson.org for more information.

From its colonial roots to its role in the development of American industry, the county has a fascinating story to tell.

History buffs can explore the historic streets of Jersey City or delve into the area's past at the *Hoboken Historical Museum*. The *Weehawken Dueling Grounds* in Weehawken, is where Alexander Hamilton met his untimely fate. Enjoy the scenic views from the waterfront park and explore the town's charming streets.

Hudson County's arts and culture scene is also thriving. Hoboken, the birthplace of Frank Sinatra, continues to nurture its artistic spirit, with live music venues and art galleries dotting the city. *Jersey City's Powerhouse Arts*



Skyway Golf Course

Visit Hudson County

Experience the *New* New Jersey

NORTH BERGEN UNION CITY EAST NEWARK JERSEY CITY WEEHAWKEN
 WEST NEW YORK HOBOKEN SECAUCUS KEARNY GUTTENBERG HARRISON



FAMILY FRIENDLY



GROUP FRIENDLY



NEARBY TRANSIT



Visit the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, Without the Crowds

Travelers can catch a Statue Cruises Ferry from Jersey City's Liberty State Park—a scenic gem within itself.

Enjoy the Best NYC Views in the World

The Hudson River Waterfront Walkway winds through nearly 20 scenic miles of New York City views.

Relax in Our Restaurants

Enjoy dozens of waterfront restaurants along the Hudson River, from North Bergen to West New York, to Weehawken, Hoboken, and Jersey City.

Easily Access New York City and North Jersey Attractions

International visitors can fly into Newark Liberty Airport for the closest access to Hudson County. You can hop aboard the scenic NY Waterway ferry from Weehawken, Hoboken and Jersey City.

Cape Liberty New Jersey Cruise Port to the Caribbean

Cape Liberty Cruise Port, Bayonne is located right here in Hudson County. Before or after your cruise from New Jersey, spend a few days in Hudson County dining at the city's legendary restaurants and exploring our iconic landmarks.

For more Hudson County travel ideas, go to visithudson.org

New Jersey visitnj.org
 Supported in part by a grant from the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism

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 Hudson County® | visithudson.org
 New Jersey



Morey's Pier

BY RENU SAGGAR

enough of the Wildwoods' beaches. Whether you're a sun soaker or an adventure seeker, you can rent a speedboat or Jet Ski and jump the waves or just relax on the soft white sand and simply catch a few rays.

Experience the true essence of the Jersey Shore with a stroll down our world-famous *Wildwoods Boardwalk*. It's two and half miles of family fun, with over 100 amusement rides and attractions as well as three beachfront waterparks—plus shopping, carnival games, arcades, over 200 unique eateries and so much more. Feast on traditional boardwalk fare or delectable fresh seafood caught daily.

The Wildwoods can take your vacation to new heights. The boardwalk features four of the best seaside roller coasters in the country. Trust us, they won't be hard to find. You'll hear 'em screaming at the three *Morey's Pier* beachfront amusement piers. There's the *Sea Serpent*, the *Great Nor'easter*, an inverted looping coaster, the *Runaway Tram* and the *Great White*, one of the tallest and fastest wooden roller coasters on the East Coast. Any one of them will thrill even the bravest roller coaster enthusiast.

And now for the main events! The Wildwoods play host to a wide array of events and festivals throughout the year, such as the Vintage Antique Car and Motorcycle Beach Drag Races, Monster Truck Beach Races, Mummies Weekends and Parades, Ultimate Beach Frisbee Championships, beach soccer and lacrosse tournaments, ethnic and music festivals, live concerts, the

You Can't Get Enough Of The Wildwoods

Everything you could ever want in a vacation experience is all right here, on one 5-mile island. There's something exciting around every corner. At any moment, you can choose between relaxing on spacious, free white-sand beaches or exploring the 38-block world-famous boardwalk. Three action-packed amusement piers feature over 100 rides and attractions or take the plunge into three beachfront waterparks. Enjoying great shopping, dining, nightlife and so much more.

Whether you're planning your first visit or returning for another adventure, your perfect vacation awaits in the *Wildwoods*. Explore the local culture, indulge in delicious dining options and participate in family-friendly events throughout the year. Named the "#1 Destination on the Rise in the U.S." by TripAdvisor and voted "Best Beaches in New Jersey" by USA Today, the Wildwoods deliver one-of-a-kind value for family vacations at the Jersey Shore.

The Wildwoods welcomes everyone—Unwinders and Sun-Seekers, Planners and Adventurers, Dog-lovers and Festival Goers. The beach lovers—swimmers, surfers, boogie boarders, paddleboarders and kayakers—can't get

world-renowned Harlem Globetrotters, WWE Wrestling, block parties and craft shows—plus free fireworks every Friday night and free outdoor concerts four nights a week all summer long.

Stay in style and in budget. With over 8,000 hotel/motel rooms and 4,000 vacation rentals, you're sure to find the perfect accommodations for your family's budget. So, make precious family memories that will last a lifetime, in the Wildwoods—where you'll find the best of the Jersey Shore and more! 

Start planning your Wildwoods vacation and enter to win a free getaway. Visit WildwoodsNJ.com.





welcome,
NEIGHBORS

The Wildwoods are ready to welcome you to your perfect vacation. Everything you could ever want in a vacation experience is all right here on our 5-mile island. With miles of free white-sand beaches, our world-famous boardwalk and countless activities, it's never been easier to find something to satisfy everybody and every budget. Book your stay today!

800.992.9732 | WILDWOODSNJ.COM





Sandy Hook Lighthouse

BY RENU SAGGAR

to relax with a great performance, Monmouth County has something for you.

Outdoor Adventures and Scenic Views

Outdoor lovers will discover Monmouth County is a natural wonder. The county is home to an expansive parks system, perfect for hiking, biking, fishing and more. Spend a day exploring *Holmdel Park*, or head to the *Manasquan Reservoir* for kayaking and birdwatching. Golf enthusiasts will find some of the finest courses in New Jersey or take in stunning views of the New York City skyline from bayside towns like Keyport, Keansburg and Atlantic Highlands.

Unforgettable Events and Festivals Year-Round

No matter when you visit, there’s always something exciting happening in Monmouth County. From farmers’ markets to seafood festivals, music performances to beach bonfires, the County is packed with events year-round. Attend a thrilling live horse race at *Monmouth Park*, explore local craft fairs or enjoy a concert by the beach. Their calendar is always full of opportunities to create lasting memories.

Stay in Style—Find Your Perfect Accommodation

Monmouth County offers a wide range of accommodations to suit every traveler, from cozy bed- and-breakfasts to boutique or resort-style hotels complete with a spa, you’ll find the perfect

Monmouth County, New Jersey for Everyone

Looking for the perfect getaway that combines sun, sand, culture and adventure? Look no further than Monmouth County, New Jersey—a breathtaking destination just waiting to be explored. Nestled along the iconic Jersey Shore, Monmouth County offers an unbeatable mix of stunning coastlines, rich history, vibrant downtowns and plenty of opportunities for fun, relaxation and exploration.

Sun, Sand, and Sea—The Jersey Shore at its Best

Monmouth County boasts nearly 30 miles of pristine ocean-front, making it a paradise for beach lovers. Whether you’re soaking up the sun in family-friendly *Spring Lake* or enjoying the laid-back atmosphere of *Bradley Beach*, you’ll find the perfect coastal retreat. Stroll along scenic boardwalks, shop for unique treasures in charming local boutiques and savor fresh seafood at seaside restaurants while breathing in the salty air.

Don’t miss Long Branch’s *Pier Village*, where upscale dining and entertainment meet stunning waterfront views. From kite surfing, to peaceful beach walks, Monmouth County offers endless opportunities for fun in the sun.

A Rich Tapestry of History and Culture

Monmouth County isn’t just about the beach—it’s also a treasure trove of American history. History buffs will love visiting *Monmouth Battlefield State Park*, the site of a pivotal Revolutionary War battle, or the historic *Twin Lights in Highlands*, where panoramic views of the coastline awaits!

For maritime history enthusiasts, the *Sandy Hook Lighthouse*, the oldest working lighthouse in the United States, is a must-see. You should also catch a show at the *Count Basie Center for the Arts* or enjoy live music at the legendary *Stone Pony Summer Stage* in Asbury Park. If you’re a culture seeker or simply love



Pier Village

spot to rest after a day of adventure. With easy access to major cities like New York and Philadelphia, Monmouth County is the ideal destination for a weekend getaway or an extended stay.

Start Planning Your Vacation Today

Are you ready to experience everything Monmouth County has to offer? Visit www.MonmouthCountyTourism.com for your free travel guide and start planning your getaway today! Whether you’re lounging on the beach, exploring history or enjoying exciting events, it’s no wonder why so many Canadians choose Monmouth County as their place to unwind and create memories that will last a lifetime. They can’t wait to welcome you to the Jersey Shore! 🍷

A TIMELESS DESTINATION

the Jersey Shore

...AND SO MUCH MORE

Discover the "Gateway to the Jersey Shore," where over 50 miles of pristine ocean and bay beaches await, alongside historic landmarks, nationally acclaimed parks, and world-renowned boardwalks and music venues. Enjoy a round of golf, explore vibrant downtowns, or immerse yourself in the local charm at one of our farms, breweries, wineries, or distilleries.

Start planning at
MonmouthCountyTourism.com
today!



Supported in part by a grant from
NJ Department of State,
Division of Travel and Tourism

Supported by the
Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners
Thomas A. Arnone, Director • Susan M. Kiley, Deputy Director
Dominick "Nick" DiRocco • Ross F. Licitra
Erik Anderson

www.MonmouthCountyTourism.com





The Holland Hotel is just minutes from Manhattan

BY RENU SAGGAR

LCD TV with over 90 local and national channels, a spacious mini-fridge, an in-room safe and a microwave. The bathrooms boast a luxurious glass-enclosed bath and shower combination, a hair-dryer, multiple outlets and a large mirror.

The Holland Hotel goes out of it's way to make each guest feel at home! Complimentary breakfast is served every morning. Coffee, tea and hot chocolate is available absolutely free, 24 hours a day in the lobby.

Enjoy free Wi-Fi and complimentary parking for cars, trucks and even tour buses—no need to worry about expensive parking fees!

Whether you're a solo traveler or part of a large group, The Holland Hotel is ready to accommodate you. Their friendly staff is dedicated to making your stay comfortable and memorable. 🍷

Book your stay with them by visiting TheHollandHotel.com.

Rest Easy at the Holland Hotel

Luciano Calandra and his wife Ortenza, had been in America for just five years when they opened a small Italian and French bakery in 1962. The Italian immigrants worked day and night and their bakery quickly developed a reputation for producing incredible bread.

The business prospered and soon the Calandra's two sons, Anthony and Luciano Jr., began working in the family business. Mr. Calandra not only taught his sons the inner workings of the bakery, but the value of a strong work ethic, an emphasis on family and a belief that the customer is always right. Over 60 years later, Mr. Calandra's philosophy remains their guiding light. Today, their three bakeries deliver baked goods to more than 500 supermarkets, delis and restaurants in the tri-state area.

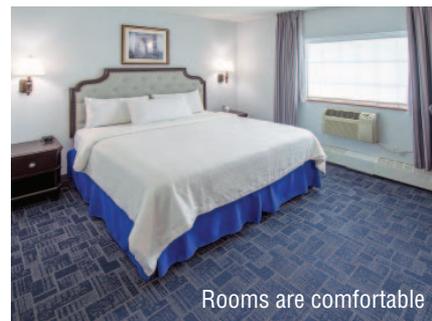
The Calandra's have grown their family business into a full-fledged food-and-hospitality empire with hotels, restaurants and apartment buildings in northern New Jersey. Each one of their hotels has been recently renovated and caters to both corporate and leisure travelers.

New York doesn't have to be expensive, especially, when there are comfortable, value-priced options like the Calandra's *Holland Hotel*. Conveniently located on the New Jersey side of the Holland

Tunnel, between Jersey City's Newport Center and Hamilton Park, The Holland Hotel offers easy access to New York City. They're just minutes from the NJ PATH train, Downtown NYC, Cape Liberty Cruise Port and American Dream Mall.

Holland Hotels' 71 newly renovated rooms provide comfort and affordability for your visit to New York City, without paying exorbitant Manhattan prices.

Each room features a brand-new HD



Rooms are comfortable



Breakfast is served



The Holland Hotel

MINUTES AWAY FROM *adventure!*



STATUE OF LIBERTY & ELLIS ISLAND



TIMES SQUARE, NYC



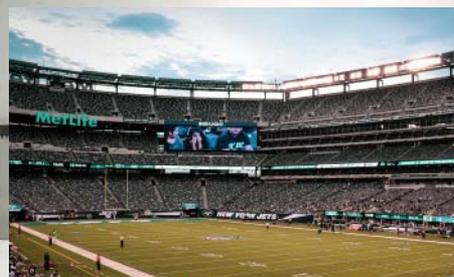
LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER, JERSEY CITY



NEWPORT CENTER MALL, JERSEY CITY



AMERICAN DREAM MALL, EAST RUTHERFORD



METLIFE STADIUM, EAST RUTHERFORD

“Our NYC experience was amazing! And The Holland Hotel helped make it happen.”

– Cindy
Reviewer on Hotels.com

“Location, right next to the mall and PATH subway station. Also the price is great too.”

– Carlo
Reviewer on Booking.com

“The location was perfect for our weekend trip to NYC - a short walk to the PATH train & we were in NYC. The hotel staff (& guests) were friendly. The hotel was clean & quiet - I always felt safe. Off street parking at the building was my favorite amenity!”

– Alisa
Reviewer on Booking.com



Oak Tree Golf Course

BY RENU SAGGAR

Wine & Brew Tours

Mercer County visitors can create a customized wine and brew experience on the Mercer County Wine & Brew Trail. These tours offer a great girlfriends' getaway, a romantic escape or a group adventure. Packages includes a overnight stay, transportation and scenic countryside views including the rolling hills of Amish Country or take in the views along scenic lakes.

Outdoor Adventures

If outdoor adventure is more your style, thrill seekers can experience a skydiving adventure at Skydive Pennsylvania or take a stroll on the Shenango River Water Trail. They have amazing state parks that offer diverse activities.

Must Do Experiences in Mercer County PA

Come for the tax free shopping, stay for the adventure

Canadians know Mercer County, PA for Great Tax Free Shopping at *Grove City Premium Outlets*. The location at the crossroads of 179 and I80 in Western Pennsylvania, makes accessing all the attractions easy. You are invited to discover other attractions in our corner of the world, "Where Fun & Adventure Happens".

Unique Local Shopping

More than 6 million people visit Grove City Premium Outlets each year. The open air center is shopper's paradise with stores that include Michael Kors, Nike Outlet, Coach, American Eagle, The North Face, Calvin Klein, Adidas and many more. Enjoy amenities like free WIFI, a charging station, and an enclosed food court. The tax-free shopping doesn't stop in Grove City. The Winner in downtown Sharon, features four floors of savings on the latest fashions and accessories. It's a great place to find all the latest styles ranging from sportswear, career wear and cruise wear, to elegant evening wear, a unique selection of bridal wear and dresses for special occasions. Find fresh new styles to liven up your wardrobe in the Sharon/Hermitage area at Trendy Trousseau, Diane's Boutique and Poppy Rd. Boutique.

Golf Packages

Spring is a great time to golf in Mercer County. They are recognized as one of America's Top Golf Destinations by Golf Digest. Book your Mercer County golf package at Tam O'Shanter of PA, Pine Lakes Golf Club & Resort, Spring Valley Golf & Lodge, Yankee Run Golf Course, Pine Hill Golf Course, Grove City Country Club, Oak Tree Golf Club, Avalon at Buhl, Willow Hills Golf Course or Buhl Farm Park. Request a Stay & Play package quote at visitmercercountypa.com.

Accommodations and Dining

There are over 20 great dining options near Grove City Premium Outlets and the Shenango River Lake in the Sharon/Hermitage area. All within a short distance of the outlets and other local attractions. They cater to every palate from farm-to-table to ethnic cuisine. Mercer County has you covered!

From traditional hotels, campgrounds, bed and breakfast or luxury overnight stays, Grove County has may options to fit your budget. 

For More information go to VisitMercerCountyPA.com and start planning your visit today!



Shenango River Lake

Mercer County, PA

WHERE FUN **and** ADVENTURE HAPPENS



Grove City Premium Outlets



Tam O' Shanter Golf Course



Tara - A Country Inn

Plan Your Visit Today! VisitMercerCountyPA.com / 1-800-637-2370



BY RENU SAGGAR

creates an ethereal experience.

Spring in Hocking Hills is a spectacle of color. The forest floor transforms into a mosaic of wildflowers. Ash Cave and the gorge trail in Conkle's Hollow Nature Preserve are both handicap accessible allowing everyone to enjoy the wonder of the Hocking Hills.

Spring is an excellent time to experience Hocking Hills from the water. The Hocking River offers some of the best kayaking and canoeing opportunities in the region. The cool, clear water winds through scenic valleys, past towering cliffs and dense forests. For those seeking a peaceful paddle, the stretch from Rockbridge to Logan provides a serene journey with minimal rapids.

If fishing is your passion, Lake Logan and Rose Lake offer great opportunities to catch largemouth bass, bluegill and catfish. Early mornings on the lake are particularly magical, with mist rising off the water and the forest reflecting perfectly in the still surface.

For adrenaline seekers the Hocking Hills offers plenty of opportunities for a jolt of exhilaration.

Local outfitters offer guided rappelling experiences, making it easy for newcomers to try their hand at descending

An Outdoor Enthusiast's Guide to the Hocking Hills, Ohio

AS winter's grip loosens and the first green buds appear, Hocking Hills, Ohio, emerges from its slumber with a breathtaking display of renewal. For an outdoor enthusiast, there's no better time to explore this rugged and enchanting landscape than in spring. The waterfalls roar with fresh snowmelt, wildflowers carpet the forest floor and wildlife stirs from its winter retreat, creating a paradise for hikers, climbers and nature lovers.

Spring in Hocking Hills is synonymous with hiking. With temperatures ranging from the 50s to the 70s and crisp, fresh air, every step along the region's trails is invigorating. The famed Old Man's Cave trail is a must-see, with cascading waterfalls that are at their most powerful in spring. The moss-covered sandstone walls glisten from the moisture and the air hums with the sound of water rushing through the gorge.

For those who seek a quieter, equally stunning experience, Cedar Falls is a breathtaking reward after a moderate hike. The thunderous waterfall is framed by towering hemlocks, with the scent of damp earth and blooming foliage in the air. The surrounding trails connect to Ash Cave, the largest recess cave in Ohio, where wildflowers bloom in abundance, creating a striking contrast against the towering rock formations.

One of the lesser-traveled gems is the Rock House. Its massive openings provide panoramic views of the surrounding forest and inside, centuries of erosion have carved natural windows and chambers that once sheltered Native Americans. As the sun filters through the openings, the interplay of light and shadow

the breathtaking cliffs while soaking in panoramic views of the surrounding wilderness. Fly through the tree canopy on zip lines. Horseback riding stables offer scenic trail rides. There's even a cowboy cookout!

The quintessential Hocking Hills experience includes a stay at one of the many cabins. There are unique options like tree-houses, geodomes and yurts. Luxury lodges can accommodate large groups. Romantic cabins in the woods are perfect for special celebrations. Stay in Ohio's most visited park at the Hocking Hills State Park Campground or the newly opened Hocking Hills State Park Lodge and Conference Center, complete with indoor and outdoor pools, onsite restaurant and trail access.

After a day of exploring, there's nothing better than unwinding in one of Hocking Hills' spa offerings. From traditional spas to in-cabin couple's massage, any stress you have will slip away. Try a session in a serene salt cave with Himalayan salt and Halotherapy. Spend an hour or two in a sauna pod. These outdoor barrel saunas provide the perfect way to relax while surrounded by nature, with panoramic views of the woods.

For outdoor enthusiasts, Hocking Hills in the spring is a place where nature's beauty is at its peak. From thundering waterfalls and blooming wildflowers to thrilling adventures on rock faces and rivers, this region offers an unforgettable escape into the wild. So lace up your boots, grab your gear and set out to experience spring in Hocking Hills—Ohio's premier outdoor playground. 🌲

Begin planning your visit at ExploreHockingHills.com.

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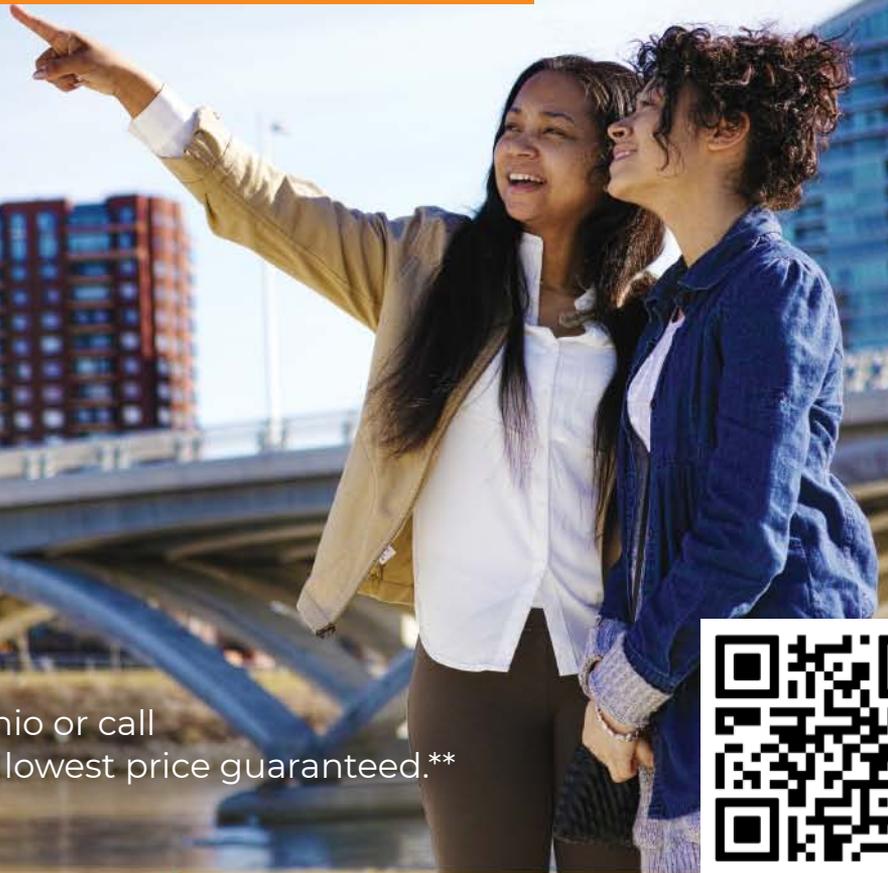
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BY RENU SAGGAR

to tradition. The peaceful atmosphere makes it a relaxing spot to visit while you enjoy the sights and sounds of spring. Fredericksburg also hosts seasonal events and fairs where visitors can immerse themselves in the local culture and traditions, from barn raisings to community gatherings that celebrate the simplicity and beauty of Amish life.

Apple Creek, nestled in the heart of Wayne County, is another gem to explore in the spring. This small town is known for its strong sense of community and beautiful rural landscapes. As the weather warms, the fields and orchards around Apple Creek burst into bloom, creating a picturesque setting. The town's local markets and shops offer a delightful array of seasonal produce, artisanal crafts and homemade goods. Apple Creek's Amish community adds to its charm, with opportunities to purchase handcrafted items and experience the area's rich cultural heritage. The serene environment and friendly locals make it a welcoming destination for those looking to connect with nature and experience the simplicity of small-town life. Additionally, Apple Creek's scenic drives and country roads provide breathtaking views of the countryside, where the rolling hills and vibrant meadows create a stunning backdrop for a leisurely afternoon drive.

Overall, Rittman, West Salem, Fredericksburg and Apple Creek each bring something unique to Wayne County in the spring. Whether you're looking to enjoy outdoor activities, visit local markets or just relax in nature, Wayne County has it all. The mix of natural beauty, community events and local traditions makes it a perfect place to enjoy the season. From the charming villages and scenic parks to the rich cultural experiences and welcoming communities, Wayne County offers a springtime escape that captures the essence of rural Ohio life. Immerse yourself in the tranquil beauty of the region, creating memories that will last a lifetime as you explore the diverse offerings of this enchanting area. Go to VisitWayneCountyOhio.com for more information. 🍷

Spring Magic in Wayne County

Wayne County, Ohio, in the spring is a beautiful and peaceful place, full of charm and natural beauty. Located in north-eastern Ohio, the area has something special about it when the weather warms up and the towns of Wooster, Rittman, West Salem, Fredericksburg and Apple Creek, each offer their own unique slice of springtime magic.

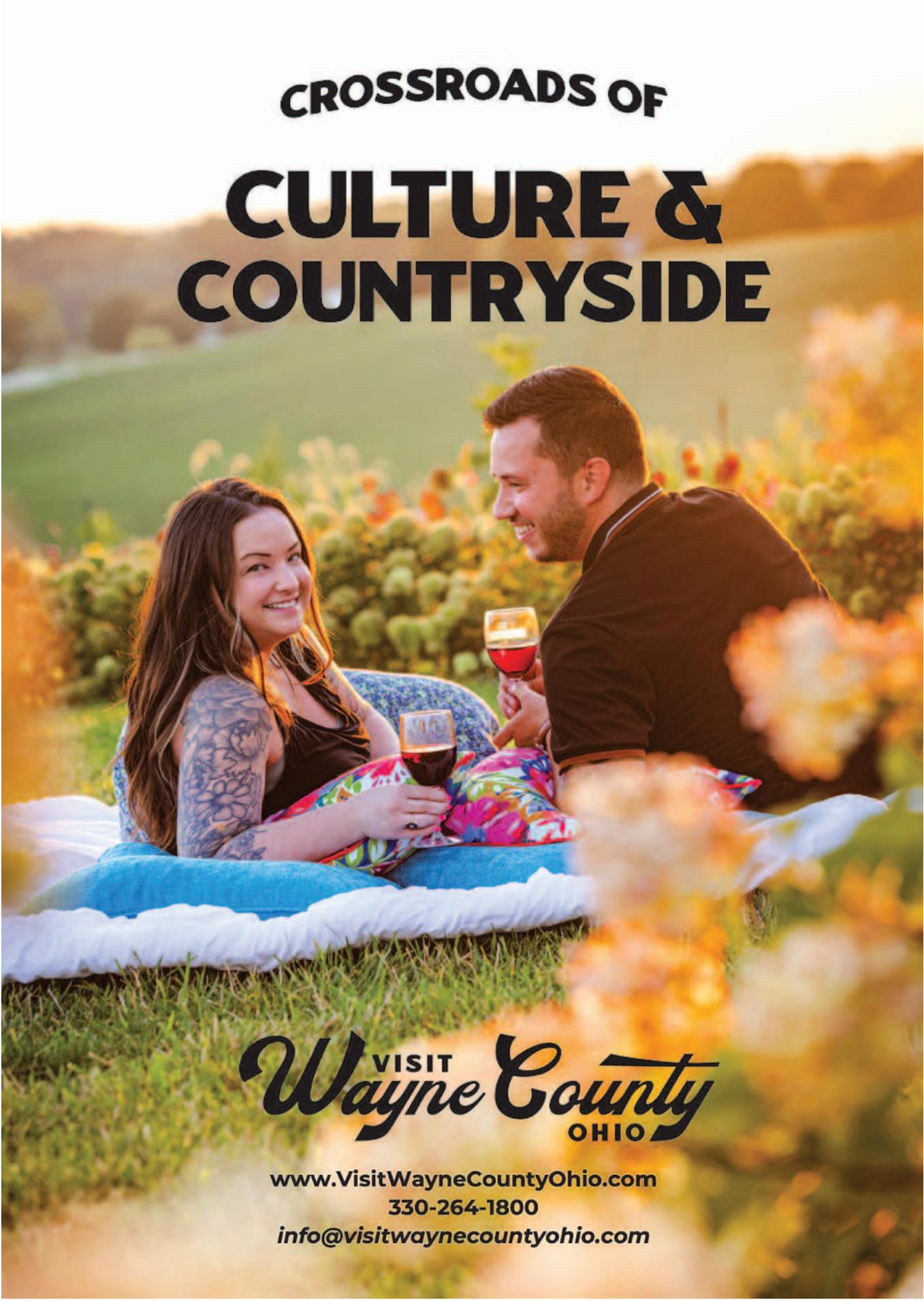
In *Rittman*, spring brings plenty of color, with flowers blooming in parks and gardens all over town. The area has deep ties to farming and in the spring, the fields start to come alive as farmers prepare for planting season. The nearby *Rittman Metro Park* also becomes a favorite spot, with walking trails and peaceful ponds that attract people looking to relax in nature as the trees and flowers bloom. The lush green landscapes and scenic beauty of the park make it an ideal location for picnics and outdoor activities, where families can come together and enjoy the refreshing spring weather. For those interested in local history, the *Rittman Historical Society* offers fascinating insights into the area's past, with exhibits and collections that showcase the heritage of this charming town.

Over in *West Salem*, a small village on the western side of Wayne County, spring feels calm and cozy. The village has a slower pace of life, with its charming local shops and farms. The area is great for anyone looking to enjoy nature and small-town vibes. Nearby *Killbuck Creek* is perfect for outdoor activities like fishing or kayaking and the nearby *Shreve Wildlife*



Area is a great spot for hiking and bird watching as the trees start to grow and the wildflowers bloom. It's a great place to enjoy the fresh air and watch nature come to life. West Salem's local farmers' markets offer an array of fresh produce, artisanal goods and handmade crafts, making it a delightful spot to explore and support local vendors. The village's warm and welcoming atmosphere ensures visitors feel right at home as they wander through its quaint streets and experience the genuine hospitality of its residents.

In *Fredericksburg*, spring is the time to really experience the area's Amish roots. The landscape changes to bright green fields and blooming orchards and you can see local Amish farmers getting their land ready for the season. The village is a great place to stop for homemade goods like fresh-baked treats, quilts and handcrafted furniture. As you stroll through Fredericksburg, you'll notice the horse-drawn buggies and hear the clip-clop of hooves—a serene reminder of the community's rich heritage and commitment

A romantic couple is sitting on a white blanket with blue and floral pillows in a vineyard. The woman, on the left, has long dark hair and a tattoo on her right arm. The man, on the right, is wearing a dark polo shirt. They are both smiling and holding glasses of red wine. The background shows rows of grapevines under a warm, golden sunset sky.

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Medina County Golf

BY RENU SAGGAR

attractions for nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. *Carolyn Ludwig Mugrage Park* in Medina features scenic trails, a large playground and a dog park, while *Chippewa Lake*, Ohio's largest natural inland lake, offers stunning views and water-based recreation. *Oenslager Nature Center at Alderfer-Chatfield Wildlife Sanctuary* in Sharon Center, sits on 248 acres. Hiking is encouraged as there are several must-sees on a visit here. More than four miles of trails take you through an amazing array of landscapes -- including mature forest, wetlands, meadow and prairie. Additionally, the *Susan Hambley Nature Center* at Brunswick Lake, serves as an educational hub, offering programs and exhibits that promote environmental awareness and appreciation. Together, these sites help make Medina County Park District a perfect destination for exploring Ohio's rich natural beauty.

Welcoming Spring in Ohio

Planning a spring getaway this year? Look no further than the Buckeye State! Rich with tradition and history, Ohio boasts an abundance of activities in every region of the state. It's affordable and easily accessible with an extensive network of interstates and highways.

Enjoy the Great Outdoors in Medina

Springtime in Medina County is a breathtaking spectacle, as the blend of vibrant greenery, blooming flowers and the arrival of warmer weather create an inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors alike. This season not only rejuvenates the natural landscapes but also marks a flourishing period for its local golf courses and county park district.

Medina County has it all when planning that perfect golf getaway. Starting with *Coppertop Golf Club* in Valley City, guests can enjoy a round of golf amid stunning views and expertly designed greens. Nearby, *Bunker Hill Golf Course* in Medina adds to the excitement of the season with its challenging course and stunning backdrops. This course stands out for its diverse landscape that presents golfers with unique challenges at every turn. *Shale Creek Golf Club*, also in Medina, offers a similar allure, fusing an impressive golf experience with opportunities for social engagement. Known for its scenic fairways and friendly atmosphere, Shale Creek is sure to make you want to come back for more. *Rawiga Golf Club* in Seville, is a family-oriented course that prides itself on being welcoming to golfers of all ages and skill levels. These clubs aren't just a place to play golf, they also feature beautiful event spaces, ideal for hosting gatherings, weddings or corporate events.

In 2025, *Medina County Park District* will proudly celebrate 60 years of enhancing the quality of all life through education, conservation and the protection of natural resources. Medina County's Park District offers a diverse array of natural

For those visiting Medina County during this beautiful season, comfortable accommodations can be found at the Comfort Suites or the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Wadsworth. Both offer thoughtfully designed rooms and swimming pools, making them perfect bases for exploring the area's attractions. In essence, springtime in Medina County brings together nature's beauty, golfing excitement and outdoor adventures, making it a season worth celebrating! Picture Yourself in Medina County! by planning your trip today at VisitMedinaCounty.com.

Meet Bigfoot in Greater Grand Lake

Sitting just inside the main gate of the Mercer County Fairgrounds sits a gentle giant, a nearly three-story greeter welcoming



the world to this beautiful agrarian county in western Ohio. The hairy ambassador sports a friendly smile, an ample beard and a big thumbs up for the many cameras who have captured his likeness since he arrived early 2024. His name is Nelson and he's a Sasquatch.

The fair is the crown jewel in the fairgrounds' annual calendar, but Fair Manager Cara Muhlenkamp and her group felt the property could bring more to the community throughout the rest of the year as well. They began searching for a way to put the fairgrounds on the map in a big way. That "big way" turned out to be Bigfoot.

The Muhlenkamp and her husband were friends with Cindy and Jason Emmons, the owners of *Bear Hollow Wood Carvers* in French Lick, Indiana. The company has a team of carvers who

do both small and large-scale chainsaw carvings ranging from eagles, wolves and gnomes, to Smokey the Bear. Muhlenkamp first got the idea for a Sasquatch sculpture from visiting the Emmons' small cabin resort in Indiana, where she met Otis, the resident Sasquatch sculpture. Otis sits on a broken dock in the midst of a "lake" of blue wood chips.

Over the weekend of the total solar eclipse in April 2024, Bear Hollow sent nine wood carvers to assemble the sculpture. Locals gathered at the fairgrounds to watch the once-in-a-lifetime celestial event and had the chance to watch the sculpture take shape while they were there. Over five and a half long days, the carvers built a skeleton frame using several hundred feet of treated 2x4' boards and covered it with 5,000'—nearly a mile—of poplar shakes to create the appearance of hair. The most intricate work was done on his face, carved from catalpa wood and weighing 600-700 lbs. when completed. Mercer County's very own Sasquatch greeted the world as a 27' tall and 18' wide friendly giant.

While there are no known legends in Mercer County of a Sasquatch roaming the area forests, daily sightings are being reported at the entrance to the fairgrounds and there are plenty of photos to prove it: Nelson the Sasquatch is already a Mercer County legend.

Go to www.SeeMore.org to plan your visit to Greater Grand Lake.

Holmes County - Ohio's Amish Country

Nestled in the majestic foothills of Appalachia and only eighty miles from Cleveland and Columbus, lies *Ohio Amish Country*. Home to small villages, vineyards and family-owned farms, Ohio Amish Country is a must-see destination for those long-



Holmes County Flower Buggy



Mercer County, Ohio Fairgrounds

www.seemore.org

GRAND
GRAND LAKE REGION

ing for connection to nature, tradition and unique experiences.

From hillside vineyards where horses roam freely, to family-owned wineries offering insightful tours and lively musical entertainment, visitors will want to sip back and stay awhile. Lodging accommodations are plentiful and vary from cozy cottages, cabins and bed and breakfast inns to modern hotels and even treehouse accommodations, providing a unique getaway with a bird's eye view.

Discover hand-crafted treasures within the boutiques, furniture stores and shops where care, craftsmanship and tradition are honored. Explore local greenhouses, nurseries and farm stands offering spring's bounty of hanging baskets, annuals, perennials and garden starters perfect to jump start the growing season. Get nose to nose with a newborn lamb at *Hershberger's Farm and Bakery* or feed exotic giraffes, camels and kangaroos during a horse drawn wagon ride at *The Farm at Walnut Creek*.

No visit is complete without savoring an Amish inspired meal, made fresh from locally sourced ingredients where every dish is crafted with love. The area is home to a wide selection of restaurants, cafes and bistros, each with an inviting atmosphere that encourages guests to linger awhile and celebrate the flavors of the area's rich and unique culture. Find your adventure in Ohio's Amish Country where the simple joys of life come together to create an unforgettable experience. Visit AmishCountry.com for more information.

Choice Hotels Ohio

Planning a visit to Ohio this spring and summer? With Choice Hotels strategically located throughout the Great Lakes State, you'll find the perfect base to explore all Ohio has to offer. A rich

portfolio of diverse brands, offer a range of accommodations that cater to every traveler's wants and needs. From budget-friendly options, to upscale experiences, each brand under the Choice Hotels umbrella: Ascend, Comfort Inn, Sleep Inn, Quality Inn, Clarion, Clarion Pointe and MainStays Suites encapsulates the commitment to quality, comfort and exceptional service. They offer clean and well-maintained rooms and Wi-Fi access. Start your day with complementary hot, fresh and healthy breakfast selections.

Comfort's new logo reflects its warm and welcoming personality and refreshed, modern look and feel. Guest rooms feature RAIO® bath amenities developed exclusively for the brand. Amenities include free Wi-Fi, business center, marketplace and fitness center and/or pool at most locations. A complimentary, hearty and healthy breakfast features fresh baked waffles, hot eggs and Greek and low-fat yogurts, fresh fruits, wholesome cereals and a selection of toppings.

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Guests can join the award-winning Choice Privileges® loyalty rewards program, top-rated by U.S. News & World Report for three consecutive years. Membership is free and offers fast rewards, instant perks and exclusive member rates when booking directly. Earn points to redeem for free nights, gift cards and other exciting rewards. So, start planning your trip with ChoiceHotels.com/Ohio and see what Ohio has to offer.



Ohio Amish Country offers a retreat into a simpler pace. Here, life unfolds with purpose. Roads curve through fields that stretch beyond sight, where you'll discover exciting new destinations, one-of-a-kind experiences, and renowned cultural attractions. The clip-clop of buggies marks the rhythm of the day, a steady reminder of the past that feels present, not nostalgic. In Ohio Amish Country, adventure awaits at every turn.

Living Life Simply,
Holmes County & Beyond.



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VISIT
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COUNTRY**
— Ohio —

Rossford Lights Up the Skies

Looking for an unforgettable summer adventure just a short drive from Michigan or Ontario? Make your way to Rossford, Ohio on July 18-19, 2025, for the spectacular *Rossford Balloon & Fireworks Fest!* This vibrant two-day festival features breathtaking hot air balloons, dazzling fireworks, live music and mouthwatering food, making it the perfect weekend escape for families, couples and friends!

The Ohio skies will be filled with colorful hot air balloons drifting gracefully above the festival grounds, offering a mesmerizing sight. Visitors can watch the launch, take stunning photos and even register to win a ride for an unforgettable experience. As the sun sets, the *Balloon GLOW* will light up the evening, creating a magical atmosphere. Tethered balloon rides are available to all!

Then, as night falls, prepare to be amazed by a spectacular fireworks show unlike anything you have experienced! Each night features a pyro-musical extravaganza as each team competes for the most points with you as the judge! The sky will explode with both aerial and ground displays set to music.

This festival is much more than just balloons and fireworks. Beyond the stunning visuals, this festival is packed with entertainment and activities for all ages. Enjoy live music from talented bands, indulge in delicious eats from food trucks and shop from local vendors offering unique crafts and souvenirs. Kids will love the bounce houses, circus performers and interactive fun zones, ensuring an exciting experience for the whole family.

Located at the Crossroads of I-75 and the Ohio Turnpike

(Exit 64) just south of Toledo, Rossford offers a convenient and comfortable stay for travelers. With five modern hotels on Clark Drive, visitors can relax in style while staying close to the festival action. Book your stay at HotelsOnClark.com.

While you're here, take advantage of the area's attractions! Visit Toledo's world-class zoo and art museum, explore the charming Lake Erie shoreline or try your luck at the Hollywood Casino Toledo.

The Rossford Balloon & Fireworks Fest is a must-visit summer event and with its easy access from Michigan and Canada, it's the perfect excuse for a family weekend getaway. Book your hotel early, pack your bags and get ready to experience the best of Northwest Ohio!

For event details and hotel bookings, visit RossfordBFF.com



2025 Rossford Balloon & Fireworks Fest
Friday-Saturday, July 18-19, 2025
I-75 and Ohio Turnpike Exit 64 just south of Toledo

Rossford Balloon AND FIREWORKS 2025 Fest!
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Scan QR Code to WIN an overnight stay and tickets for exclusive access to the VIP area for food, drinks, and optimal viewing of the balloons, fireworks, and bands!

RossfordBFF.com

Miami County is Home Grown Great

Miami County has not one, but two rivers flowing through it. The *Great Miami River* and the *Stillwater River*, named one of Ohio's Scenic Rivers by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Both offer a variety of experiences on the water such as canoeing, kayaking, camping, paddle boarding, fishing, and more. The Great Miami River is Ohio's first *National Water Trail*, and the *Great Miami Riverway* covers more than 99 miles of river, with waterfront communities and paved biking/walking trails. The ten communities along the Riverway are home to 11 nationally recognized experiences. Miami County is home to three of those waterfront communities — Piqua, Troy and Tipp City — where visitors will enjoy kayaking and canoeing, biking, surfing, walking and so much more.

Ride along the *Great Miami Recreational Trail*, part of the nation's largest paved trail network, hugging the river's edge much of the way. The Great Miami Recreational Trail covers over 330 miles, with over 30 miles winding through Miami County. In addition to the paved trails, Miami County welcomes mountain and fat tire bike enthusiasts to the *Troy Mountain Bike Area* (TMBA). TMBA is located along the river at *Duke Park* and has approximately eight miles of trails for both beginners and experienced riders.

Spend a summer night in Troy on the Great Miami River in *Float Troy*, Ohio's only public floating tent experience. Float Troy's Shoal tents are inflatable, floating rafts with a tent topper, allowing you to sleep on the river. Your tent comes inflated, anchored and ready to use with a raft for transporting personal items and exploring the river around you.

To learn more, visit <https://www.float-troy.com/>.

Visit one of Miami County's beautiful parks. The Miami County Park District is home to over 15 parks. See Miami County's own "Miniature Niagara" at *Charleston Falls Preserve*. With over 216 acres of prairie and forest to explore, Charleston Falls is home to a 37' waterfall, a prime picture spot of the parks. Other highlights of Miami County Parks include the suspension bridge over the scenic Stillwater River connecting Maple Ridge and Stillwater Prairie Reserve, Lost Creek Reserve, the sculptures and walking trails at Hobart Urban Nature Preserve and more. Explore all of these parks at <https://www.miamicountyparks.com/>.

Miami County has so much to share with you. Come for a visit and experience for yourself why we are Home.Grown.Great. Plan your next adventure at <https://www.homegrowngreat.com/>.



Charleston Falls Preserve






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The History & Charm of Chillicothe

Nestled in the rolling hills of southern Ohio, Chillicothe is more than just destination – it's an experience and invites travelers to relax, recharge and unwind. This charming town promises an escape from the ordinary, a place where every corner tells stories of the past and every moment allows you to savor the beauty of the present.

Step into history at *Hopewell Culture National Historical Park*, where ancient mounds and geometric enclosures stand as monuments to the ingenuity of Native American societies nearly 2,000 years ago. These awe-inspiring creations, now recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site, showcase a mastery of engineering and astronomy that will leave you marveling. Walk these sacred grounds and immerse yourself in the peaceful beauty of this timeless landscape.

Travel back in time at *Adena Mansion & Gardens*, an estate that transports visitors to the early 19th century. Built in 1807, the mansion's original furnishings and guided tours tell the compelling story of Thomas Worthington and his role in shaping Ohio's history. Roam the expansive 300-acre grounds, where the echoes of hardworking staff and daily life linger among the outbuildings. Complement this experience with a visit to the *Ross County Heritage Center*, where artifacts weave a vivid tapestry of Native American roots and industrial progress.

A visit to Chillicothe isn't complete without the thrill of "Tecumseh!" *Outdoor Drama*, an electrifying performance that brings the legendary Shawnee leader's story to life. Against the backdrop of nature, the drama unfolds with galloping horses, cannon fire and heart-stirring scenes that immerse audiences

in Tecumseh's fight to protect his homeland. It's not just a show — it's an emotional journey.

Nature enthusiasts will find their haven here too. Chillicothe offers miles of scenic hiking and biking trails and the serene waters of *Paint Creek* for kayaking adventures. As the day winds down, downtown Chillicothe welcomes you with its vibrant streets, lined with unique shops, cozy boutiques and restaurants offering local flavors. The blend of historic charm and modern energy creates an atmosphere you won't want to leave.

Chillicothe isn't just a place to visit, it's a place to feel. Whether exploring ancient earthworks, uncovering history or soaking in the great outdoors, Chillicothe promises to leave a lasting impression.

Discover the magic for yourself at VisitChillicotheOhio.com and let this enchanting town steal your heart.



The Tecumseh Outdoor Drama

ESCAPE THE ORDINARY

Relax in the Extraordinary

Take an adventure to restore your inner peace. Experience ancient Native American earthworks at a UNESCO World Heritage site, explore a beautiful 19th century mansion, and discover fascinating exhibits at local museums. Don't miss the vibrant downtown offering charming shops, delicious dining, and a small-town atmosphere.

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ROSS COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

Shuffle Over to Shelby County

Shelby County, Ohio, is charming corner of the Midwest known for its rich history, unique attractions, friendly atmosphere and beautiful scenery. It's the home of *Airstream*, the world-renowned recreational trailer manufacturer. The company conducts daily plant tours giving visitors the opportunity to see firsthand how this legendary trailer is built. The *Heritage Center* is filled with vintage Airstreams, interactive displays, and Airstream collectibles. The Heritage Center is an ideal visit for Airstream enthusiasts and anyone who has an interest in RVs, camping or Americana in general. Combined with a factory tour and stop over at the Airstream

The *Wallace Learning & Innovation Center* in Downtown Sidney, features six galleries that tell the compelling story of how Shelby County, emerged from a primitive wilderness 200 years ago to become the innovative, vibrant and evolving community it is today.

While you're Downtown the *Austeria Wine Boutique* offers a generous selection of wines, small bites, charcuterie boards and tastings. Their wine cellar features 400-600 labels that include local, national & international varieties. Bottle prices begin at \$10-\$15 and can be enjoyed in the Boutique, on their beautiful patio or taken home.

Sidney is blessed with an expansive park system encompassing almost 400 acres of park grounds. The 220 acre *Tawawa Civic Park*, in the eastern section of the city, is a wooded oasis with hiking trails, fishing, birding and paved and trail bike riding. It's a wonderful outdoor location for family get-togethers, picnics and cookouts.

Lake Loramie State Park in Minster is located just 16 miles from Sidney and includes a 1600 acre lake with 30 miles of shoreline. Visitors can set up camp in its 167 site camping area, launch their boat, kayak, canoe or paddle board and venture out to fish or just cruise the lake. A designated swimming area gives swimmers a chance to enjoy the water or simply relax in the sun. Bicycles and kayaks can be rented at the park giving guests the opportunity to explore the lake, park and nearby communities of Ft. Loramie and Minster.

The scenic Great Miami River offers adventurous canoeing, kayaking and fishing experiences galore. Designated by the United States Department of Interior as a *National Water Trail*, this distinction has been given to only 21 other trails in the country. Sidney is the trail head for this paddle/pedal trail that spans 99 miles from Sidney to Hamilton, Ohio. VisitSidneyShelby.com for more information.



Sidney
OHIO

A SPIRIT WE SHARE!



Golf is but one of many fun activities to enjoy in Sidney!

VisitSidneyShelby.com



Find Your “FUL” in FULTon County Ohio

Visitors will quickly discover that Fulton County is the “Place to Find Your Pace.” History buffs will revel at *Sauder Village*, Ohio’s largest living history museum. Visitors will experience life in Ohio, circa 1803 – 1920s, while interacting with costumed guides in historic homes, farms, gardens and *The Broken Barrel Speakeasy*.

The *Museum of Fulton County* not only offers a very unique perspective on Fulton County heritage, but also American History. Through beautifully designed exhibits, storytelling, elegant teas and “Artful History”, you will journey into an intriguing, finely crafted historical experience.

Magic with a Message is one of the few “brick and mortar” magic shops and museums still operating in the Midwest. Escape the mundane and disappear into this imaginative and intriguing world of illusion. Then relax and sip a glass of wine, or craft beer at one of the area’s wineries and breweries, or join excitement at *Oakshade Raceway*. How about an up-close look at a real live buffalo at the *Bracy Gold Bison Ranch*?

Not only is the *Fulton County Fair* the largest county fair in Ohio, the Fulton County Fairgrounds and campground is host to many events that draw visitors from near and far. These include The Annual Thresher’s Reunion, The Crosley Car Show, The Antique Motorcycle Show and Auction, Midwest GeoBASH, The State Line Gem Show, Maumee Valley Tractor Pull and many horse and dog shows, with more events added every year.

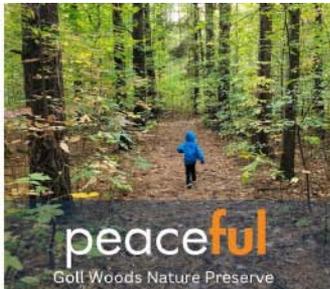
Throughout Fulton County you will find many unique shopping opportunities, artisans such as Richard Morgan Custom Metal Art Studio, Black Swamp Arts Center Turkeyfoot Creek

Creamery, Oak Openings Pottery, Swan Creek Candles, Field of Memories Antique Mall, along with many boutiques and specialty shops.

Slow down and enjoy small town hospitality at our many local festivals: Delta Chicken Festival, Swanton Corn Festival, Fayette Royal Bull Thistle Festival, Wauseon Homecoming and Archbold Street Fest.

Plan on spending the night with us at these comfortable and affordable accommodations including Sauder Heritage Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Tru by Hilton, Days Inn and Suites, Rodeway Inn and local campgrounds, conveniently located directly off the Ohio Turnpike. 📍

Parking and navigation is simple in Fulton County! For more information visit www.fultoncounty.com





Rockport Boat Line sails past Boldt Castle

A Thousand Splendid Islands

Straddling the border between Canada and the United States the Thousand Islands offer a rare destination at the head of the St. Lawrence River. The archipelago boasts more than 1,800 islands, ranging from granite giants like *Wolfe Island*, to tiny, bird-sanctuary islets and *Just Room Enough Island*, the smallest inhabited island in the world. To be considered an island, it has to stay above water 365 days a year and support a living tree.

The international border weaves through the islands, making this a unique two-nation vacation where you can explore hidden coves, waterfront trails and fairy tale castles. The *Thousand Islands Bridge*, a soaring 4,500-foot suspension bridge, crosses the border between America's *Wellesley Island* and Canada's *Hill Island*.

If you only do one thing on the Thousand Islands make it a boat tour. Cruise tours take visitors back to the region's gilded age heyday with opulent mansions like *Singer Castle* on Dark Island and *Boldt Castle* on Heart Island.

Rockport Boat Line offers an unforgettable experience for visitors seeking to explore the natural beauty and rich history of this stunning archipelago. The family-owned and operated business

has over 70 years experience providing exceptional cruises. Conveniently located in the charming village of Rockport, Ontario, just a short drive from Gananoque

BY RENU SAGGAR

and Kingston, cruises operate from May to October and reservations are highly recommended, especially during peak season.

Whether you're looking for a short and scenic tour or a more in-depth exploration, Rockport Boat Line has you covered. The *Heart of the Islands Cruise* is a one-hour cruise that takes you through the most iconic sights of the 1000 Islands, including Boldt Castle, Zavikon Island, and Millionaire's Row.

The two Palaces and Palisades Cruise delve deeper into the history and culture of the region, showcasing the Canadian Palisades and the 1000 Islands International Bridge. The *Boldt four-hour Castle Stop Over Cruise* includes a two-hour stop at the Boldt Castle, allowing you to explore its fascinating history and architecture at your own pace.

Boldt Castle is a monument to one man's folly and one of the saddest love stories ever told. At the turn-of-the-century, George C. Boldt, millionaire owner of the Waldorf Astoria, set out to build a



Singer Castle on Dark Island

full size Rhineland Castle on picturesque *Heart Island* in Alexandria Bay. The castle was supposed to be a birthday gift for his wife Louise. Then tragedy struck!

The castle was nearly finished when Louise died suddenly, just one month shy of her forty-second birthday. Broken hearted, Boldt ordered his workers to “lay down their tools and leave the island immediately.” He never returned to the island and left behind a deserted castle as an elegy to his lost love.

For 73 years, the castle was left to the mercy of vandals and the elements. In 1977, the Thousand Islands Bridge Authority acquired the property and spent \$14-million dollars rehabilitating and restoring all the Heart Island structures.

Imagine experiencing the breathtaking beauty of the 1000 Islands from a perspective few get to see. The *1000 Islands Helicopter Tours* in Gananoque offers precisely that—in an unforgettable aerial adventure showcasing the stunning scenery, iconic landmarks and hidden gems of this remarkable region. You’ll witness the true scale of this natural wonder, appreciating the vibrant colors, dramatic landscapes and the sheer number of islands that make this area so special.

Whether you’re looking for a short introductory flight or a more comprehensive exploration, there’s a tour for you. Witness the grandeur of Boldt Castle from a completely new perspective. Marvel at the iconic 1000 Islands International Bridge, a feat of engineering that connects Canada and the United States. Soar over the historic city of Kingston passing Fort Henry and the infamous Kingston Penitentiary. Explore the unspoiled beauty of the 1000 Islands ecosystem, including shipwrecks, the pristine waters, lush forests and dramatic rock formations. Be sure to bring your camera to capture the incredible views!

The 1000 Islands region isn’t just about stunning scenery, it boasts a rich maritime history, beautifully preserved and showcased at the *Thousand Islands Boat Museum (TIBM)* in Gananoque. This isn’t your typical dusty museum, it’s a vibrant, interactive experience that brings the stories of the St. Lawrence River to life and tells the stories of local boat builders.

The museum houses an impressive collection of antique and classic boats, ranging from the 52 foot Windswept III, (1935 Ditchburn), to the 12 foot Jelly Roll (1936 lapstrake sailing dinghy), each

with its own tale to tell. Exhibits explore the history of boat building, recreational boating and the vital role of the St. Lawrence River in the region’s development.

The museum offers more than just static displays. They host a variety of events throughout the year, including boat shows and demonstrations that support programs in boat building and restoration. Visitors can even experience the thrill of a ride on a vintage boat where you can explore the river aboard a polished mahogany masterpiece. The Annual TIBM Boat Show and Parade features a display of never-before-seen boats in the Boathouse, free deck tours of an antique wooden yacht, music, prizes, food, a beer garden and more.

The Thousand Islands also cater to romantics. It is a great place to view the spectacular scenery and watch the freighters on their voyage from the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes. Many resorts and lodges offer stunning waterfront locales, perfect for a secluded getaway. Imagine waking up to the gentle lapping of waves and spending your days exploring hidden coves or simply relaxing on a private balcony, taking in the fresh air and breathtaking scenery. 🍷



1000 Islands Helicopter Tours flies past the 1000 Islands International Bridge



Bukchon Hanok Village

Korea Has a Heart Full of Seoul

Seoul is a captivating blend of ancient traditions and cutting-edge modernity. The city of 10 million and the frenetic capital of South Korea, seamlessly weaves together majestic palaces, bustling markets and futuristic skyscrapers, offering an unforgettable experience.

History comes alive in the heart of Seoul. Constructed in 1405, *Changdeok-gung Palace* is set on a large park. It is one of Five Grand Palaces built for the Joseon dynasty, and today there are 13 buildings remaining on the palace grounds. The Huwon or Secret Garden, at the rear of the palace, is landscaped with a series of terraces planted with lawns, flowering trees, a lotus pool and pavilions set against a wooded background.

Gyeongbokgung Palace, the largest of the Five Grand Palaces, transports you to the Joseon Dynasty. Constructed in 1395, the name transliterates to “Palace Greatly Blessed by Heaven.” Considered the most beautiful—and most symbolic of the country wander through its ornate gates, admire the intricate architecture and imagine the court life of bygone eras.

Active travellers can hike the *Hanyang-*

doseong – better known as the Seoul City Wall. Originally built in 1396, the wall stretches around an 18.6 kilometer (about 11.6 miles) loop right around the heart of Seoul. Or discover the natural beauty of South Korea in *Bukhansan National*

BY RENU SAGGAR

Park. Hike the scenic trails while enjoying breathtaking views of the city skyline.

For a glimpse into traditional Korean life, head over to *Bukchon Hanok Village*. This charming neighborhood features beautifully preserved hanok – traditional Korean houses with tiled roofs and wooden frames. Stroll through the narrow alleyways, discover hidden tea houses and experience a slower pace of life.

Korean cuisine is a symphony of flavors, textures, and colors and Seoul is a culinary paradise. Indulge in the fiery embrace of Kimchi, the tangy delight of Bibimbap, and the comforting warmth of Samgyetang – Ginseng Chicken Soup. Explore the bustling markets, where vendors skillfully prepare an array of street food delicacies including sizzling Korean BBQ, and spicy tteokbokki (spicy rice cakes). Don't miss the bustling *Gwangjang Market*, where you will find an endless array of local delicacies. *Museum Kimchikan* is the place to go to learn about the many varieties of Kimchi and even taste samples. Visitors can even learn how to make delicious Kimchi themselves!

Contemporary Seoul is a testament to South Korea's technological prowess. Ascend the iconic *Seoul Tower* for breathtaking panoramic views of the city. Explore the futuristic *Dongdaemun Design Plaza*,



Lotte World Tower

a stunning architectural masterpiece designed by Zaha Hadid.

Lotte World Tower is one of Korea's architectural crown jewels. Soaring 555m into the air; with 123 stories, the tower is home to Korea's tallest observation deck.

Banpodaegyo Bridge is a two-tiered bridge over the Han River that features the *Moonlight Rainbow Fountain*, the world's longest bridge fountain. With 380 water jets and a dazzling array of multi-colored lights. The jets can move in time to music creating spectacular ever-changing displays.

K-Pop, short for Korean pop music, has become a global phenomenon with groups like BTS and Blackpink. It blends a diverse range of musical styles, including pop, hip hop, electronic and traditional Korean music. Known for its catchy melodies, intricate choreography and visually stunning music videos, visitors can immerse themselves in the world of K-Pop at the *SMTOWN Museum*, a dedicated space celebrating the global phenomenon.

Myeongdong is Seoul's shopping mecca and is a must-see for visitors. Shoppers will find a mixture of street stalls and retail outlets selling everything from high fashion to casual attire, as well as many

Korean cosmetics stores offering high-quality products at competitive prices. Part of Myeongdong's appeal stems from its relatively affordable prices, especially compared to the other shopping centers in Seoul.

Delve deeper into traditional Korean culture and discover a rich tapestry of traditions, art and philosophy that will leave you truly captivated. "Jeong" is a cornerstone of Korean culture, a profound sense of deep affection and loyalty that binds individuals together. Experience this firsthand by engaging with locals, sharing meals and participating in traditional tea ceremonies.

Seoul boasts an excellent public transportation system, making it easy to navigate the city. Purchase a T-money card for convenient travel on the subway and buses. While English is spoken in tourist areas, learning a few basic Korean phrases will enhance your interactions with locals.

A day trip from Seoul can take you almost anywhere in South Korea, from high mountains and ancient heritage sites to the boundary of the Demilitarized Zone.

Gyeongju, small coastal city is referred to as "the museum without walls." Lo-

cated about 2.5 hours from Seoul, the ancient capital of the Silla Dynasty that ruled the Korea for 992 years, is home to a vast patrimony of heritage sites, Buddhist temples, relics, palaces, royal tombs and fortresses. The iconic *Bulguksa Temple*, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is filled with intricate carvings, serene gardens, and the meditative atmosphere. Immerse yourself in the ancient practice of *Seollal*, the Korean Lunar New Year, where families gather to pay respects to ancestors and enjoy traditional foods like *Tteokguk* (rice cake soup).

Visit the *Gyeongju National Museum* to admire ancient artifacts and delve into the rich history of Korean art. Don't miss the chance to witness a traditional performance of Korean dance or experience the captivating rhythms of *Samulnori*, a percussion ensemble.

Jeju Island, about 300 miles from Seoul is known as the "Island of the Gods." This popular honeymoon destination is famous for its glorious beaches, waterfalls and *Mt. Halla*, a dormant volcano. Jeju is also famous for *Haenyeo*, the female divers who brave bone chilling waters to collect abalone and sea cucumbers from the sea bed. 🌊



Gyeongbokgung Palace



BY RENU SAGGAR

unimaginably warm, bright light.

Parks and gardens are perfect for taking a break from the city center's hustle and bustle. *Kaivopuisto Park* offers stunning views of the sea and the city skyline. It's a great place for a picnic and it's also home to the Ursa Observatory. *Kaisaniemi Park* is located near the city center and is home to the *Helsinki Botanic Garden*.

Helsinki was founded in 1550 by Russian and Finnish-speaking troops who named it *Härmäläinenki* after their commander. It became a significant port for Russian Empire and by the 1800s had over 10 million visitors a year. The "Daughter of the Baltic" has been the Finnish capital since 1812, when Russian Tsars rebuilt it as a kind of miniature St. Petersburg, a role it has played in many Cold War movies. With its golden cupolas and red brick facade, the *Uspenski Cathedral* is one of the best examples of Russian impact on Finnish history.

Market Square is one of the city's most popular landmarks. Located at the South Harbour at one end of Esplanade Park, it's been serving customers since 1889. Old Market Hall vendors offer a wide range of products, including cheese, fish, shellfish, meat, vegetables and baked goods. Dozens

The Daughter of the Baltic

Visitors to Finland will discover lands once inhabited by mad princes, Viking warriors and Tsars. Medieval towns and ancient cobblestone streets are reminders of a time long ago, while palaces and museums house a vast patrimony of art and cultural riches. And that's not all! Finland was recently named the World's Happiest Country for the sixth year in a row.

Helsinki is a remarkable destination filled with unexpected pleasures. With about half a million people, the city is known for stunning architecture, history and breathtaking natural surroundings. An orderly public transportation system helps people get around and its compact size means most of the city's great cultural attractions are within easy walking distance.

Summer in Finland is a spectacular time of the year with parks and gardens in full bloom. For those who venture north of the Arctic Circle, the sun never sets from May to August. Further south the sun is visible almost around the clock

during June and July. Helsinki comes alive in the summer with outdoor cafes springing up on almost every corner. There are dozens of opportunities for shopping and plenty of delicious Finnish cuisine to try. Everything around you is bathed in an



of stalls display Finnish handicrafts and souvenirs. Open every day except Sundays, it's a great place to sample Finnish cuisine, such as smoked salmon, reindeer meat and cloudberry jam.

Allas Sea Pool is an oasis in the Helsinki harbor with a large outdoor pool deck and traditional Finnish saunas and views over the Baltic Sea. The heated seawater pools are open every day all year round, with the heated kiddies pool open in the summer.

Helsinki offers a vibrant cultural scene, with a range of museums, galleries, theaters and music venues. With a collection that spans from the 18th century to Modernism, the *Ateneum* art museum preserves nearly 30,000 national treasures. The *Sibelius Monument*, which resembles a series of giant organ pipes, is a tribute to the famed native composer.

Sinebrychoff Art Museum specializes in the artworks from the 14th century to the 1850s and displays important works by European old masters like Rembrandt van Rijn. The *Seurasaari Open-Air Museum*, showcases traditional Finnish architecture, while the cutting edge *Oodi Library*, which opened in 2018, is a remarkable tribute to the world's most literate nation.

Suomenlinna is known as the "Gibraltar of the North" and was once the Baltic's greatest sea fortress. Located on one of the hundreds of tiny islands off Helsinki, visitors can take the ferry from Market Square. Constructed in the mid-1700s, the sprawling fortifications and catacombs now house trendy cafes, theaters and museums. *Liuskasaari* is one of the most popular islands in the Helsinki archipelago. What makes this island unique, is its location, just a few hundred yards off the Helsinki mainland.

Finnish sauna is a tradition that dates back centuries and saunas are not just a place to sweat, but a place for socializing and relaxing. The city has a range of traditional Finnish saunas, as well as modern ones with rooftop terraces and panoramic views. Some of the most popular saunas in Helsinki include Löyly, Kotiharjun Sauna and Kaurilan Sauna.

Approximately one hour from Helsinki is *Porvoo*, Finland's 2nd oldest town. Celebrated for its waterfront filled red ochre boathouses, the cobblestoned streets are lined with artisanal shops and cozy cafes where local kitchens conjure up traditional Finnish and Scandinavian delicacies.

Finnish cuisine is a unique blend of Nordic, Russian and European flavors. *Poronkäristys* or reindeer stew, is a classic Finnish dish that features tender chunks of reindeer meat cooked with mushrooms, onions and cream. It is typically served with mashed potatoes and lingonberry jam.

Originally used as a medicine, liquorice has become a national passion among the Finns. Alongside its salty sibling, "salmiakki," liquorice divides Finns into two camps: some like the fresh and soft variety, others prefer the hard stuff. Liquorice crème brûlée has been a favorite on the Finnish menu for decades.

Kalakukko is a Finnish fish pie made with rye flour and filled with fish, bacon, and sometimes onions or potatoes. It is traditionally baked in a wood-fired oven and is a popular food for outdoor activities. *Leipäjuusto*, also known as Finnish squeaky cheese, is a traditional Finnish cheese that is made from cow's milk and heated until it forms a golden crust. Popular beverages include koskenkorva, a clear spirit made from barley and cloudberry liqueur. And long dark winters won't feel so daunting when you order homemade apple mulled wine. 🍷



BY RENU SAGGAR



harbor. From the top, visitors will be rewarded with a breathtaking panorama of the city, the Opera House and the surrounding harbour. The tour includes a comprehensive briefing, all necessary equipment and a safety demonstration, which includes an alcohol breath test.

The city can also be enjoyed from the water aboard one of the harbour cruises departing from Circular Quay. *Taronga Zoo*, a 12-minute ferry ride from Circular Quay, has New South Wales' biggest collection of Australian wildlife, including kangaroos and the kookaburra.

The Rocks, is the city's historic heart. Its cobblestone streets, sandstone buildings and lively pubs exude a charming old-world atmosphere. Wander through its laneways, browse the boutique and shops and enjoy a meal. Or tip a pint in the *Hero of Waterloo*, the city's oldest pub.

Sydney's allure extends well beyond its architectural wonders, to its stunning natural environment. *Bondi Beach*, with its golden sands and world-renowned surf, is a must-visit. Take a dip in the ocean, try your hand at surfing or simply relax and soak up the sun. The *Bondi to Coogee Coastal Walk* is a scenic trail that winds along the coastline, offering breathtaking views of cliffs, bays and rock pools.

Australia's Golden Gateway

S ydney, nestled on Australia's southeastern coast, is a city that effortlessly blends natural beauty with urban sophistication. Hailed by many as "the most beautiful harbor in the world," Australia's largest city was born in 1788 with the arrival of the "First Fleet" transporting 760 British convicts.

No visit to Sydney is complete without marveling at the *Sydney Opera House*, on Bennelong Point. A masterpiece of modern architecture, its distinctive silhouette is echoed by sailboats in the harbour. Take a guided tour and delve into the history and design of this cultural landmark, or better yet, catch a world-class performance inside.

A stone's throw away stands the *Sydney Harbour Bridge*, an engineering marvel that dominates the cityscape. Affectionately nicknamed "The Coathanger" it's a powerful symbol of Sydney, Australia and a testament to human ingenuity.

For adventurous visitors, *BridgeClimb* offers a unique opportunity to climb

to the summit of the arch. Travel along catwalks and ladders all the way to the summit — over 430-feet above Sydney



Sydney Opera House

Darling Harbour, a vibrant waterfront precinct, is another popular destination. It boasts an array of attractions, including the SEA LIFE Sydney Aquarium, the WILD LIFE Sydney Zoo and the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Sydney's cultural scene is as diverse as its landscape. The *Art Gallery of NSW* houses an impressive collection of Australian and international art, while the *Museum of Contemporary Art* showcases cutting-edge works from around the world. For a taste of Aboriginal culture, visit the *Australian Museum*, which features exhibits on the history and traditions of Australia's Indigenous people.

From fresh seafood to international cuisine, Sydney offers a culinary adventure for every palate. Indulge in a fine dining experience at one of its award-winning restaurants, sample local produce at a farmers market or enjoy a casual meal at a harborside cafe.

Beyond the city limits, day trips offer further opportunities for exploration. The *Blue Mountains*, a UNESCO World Heritage Site are a scenic wonderland of eucalyptus forests, canyons and waterfalls. Take a hike through its trails, ride the Scenic Railway or marvel at the *Three*

Sisters rock formation.

The *Australian Reptile Park and Wildlife Sanctuary* is located about 45 miles from Sydney on the Central Coast. Visitors will discover the magic of the Australian bush and its native animals. Pose for photos with a cuddly koala or watch platypus, dingoes and Tasmanian devils being fed. Friendly kangaroos will eat right out of your hand, something you should definitely not try with the crocodiles.

Seventeen beaches span the length of Australia's scenic Central Coast and there are countless waterways that crisscross the region. Located about an hour north of Sydney, this natural aquatic playground is a mecca for boating, fishing, scuba diving, kayaking and riding the waves. Vast areas of natural bushland along the coast have been preserved in Bouddi National Park, Brisbane Water National Park, Yengo and Wyrabalong National Parks. There are dozens coastal towns and villages including Terrigal, which offers great surfing and apartment style accommodations.

For a taste of wine country, the *Hunter Valley* is just a short, two hour drive. The region is quite beautiful and a striking setting for the well-restored buildings,

cozy guest houses, galleries and shops

In 1825, James Busby, a young Scotsman, collected samples from Spanish and French vines and sailed back with 700 carefully wrapped cuttings. Today the region has over 70 wineries including Lindemans, Wyndham Estate Tyrells and McWilliams. Hunter Valley has a network of villages including historic *Wollombi*, which was once a ceremonial meeting place for local aboriginal tribes. Their stencilled tribal markings and wall paintings can be visited with a local aboriginal guide.

Port Stephens, about 2.5 hours north of Sydney, is known as the "Dolphin Capital of Australia". Dozens of bottlenose dolphins make their home in the harbour and take great delight in riding the wake of the dolphin watching excursion boats. Captain Cook named Port Stephens when he sailed past the entrance to the harbour in 1770.

The first European settlers were a group of escaped convicts who were found living happily with the Worimi aborigines in 1795. Port Stephens is home to some of Australia's best beaches with miles of deserted white sand, clear blue water and challenging surf. 🏖️



Harbour Bridge

Italian Dining Beyond the Usual!

When someone says “they had a good meal at Mezzo,” it means good food, top notch service, a warm ambience and money well spent! That’s why they’ve won a “Top Choice prestigious Award” for the last four years. The prestigious award identifies and celebrates business excellence in cities across North America as voted on by their local communities. Located in Windsor’s Via Italia, Mezzo Ristorante and Lounge provides a dining experience not-to-miss, with an eclectic contemporary atmosphere. Mezzo offers both indoor and patio dining (seasonally appropriate) and overlooking Via



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tensive wine menu paired perfectly with your meal. Feel free to ask your server for the perfect pairing. There are plenty of menu options to choose from Arancini, Antipasto Misto to Osso Bucco and Grilled Salmon to name a few! Finish your meal with one of their many desserts or even a dessert martini or dessert coffee!

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Eternelle at A La Mode

and bold patterns that all work in harmony, to create a simply irresistible individual portrait of ever lasting elegance.

Angela Mara features modern, authentic woman's wear, for those with a sense of style. A leading source of Bo Ho Chic woman's clothing, they were founded in 2012 in Montreal, by

New lines this spring include *Eternelle*, a proud Canadian designer. Creating the perfect balance between comfort and style *Eternelle* offers customers the finest of the latest European trends. Founded and designed in Montreal, the brand features

elevated knit wear, contrasting fabrics, linens, cotton, subtle

Maggie Medalsy and Guy Derhy. Together, they have over 50 years of experience in the fashion industry. Their collections feature beautiful natural fabrics that compliment any lifestyle in comfort and elegance with refined detailing, outstanding colorful energy and calming basics that will satisfy the most discriminating tastes.

Linen O is from the creators of Linen Luv. Linen O features gorgeous linen fabrics and styles. Their fun quirky linen collection is designed for linen lovers by linen lovers. Linen is known for its effortless charm. Made from natural fibers that last, it keeps you cool & comfy. It softens with wear and gets even better over time. Clothes are beautifully designed using linen fabrics crafted with love in Europe.

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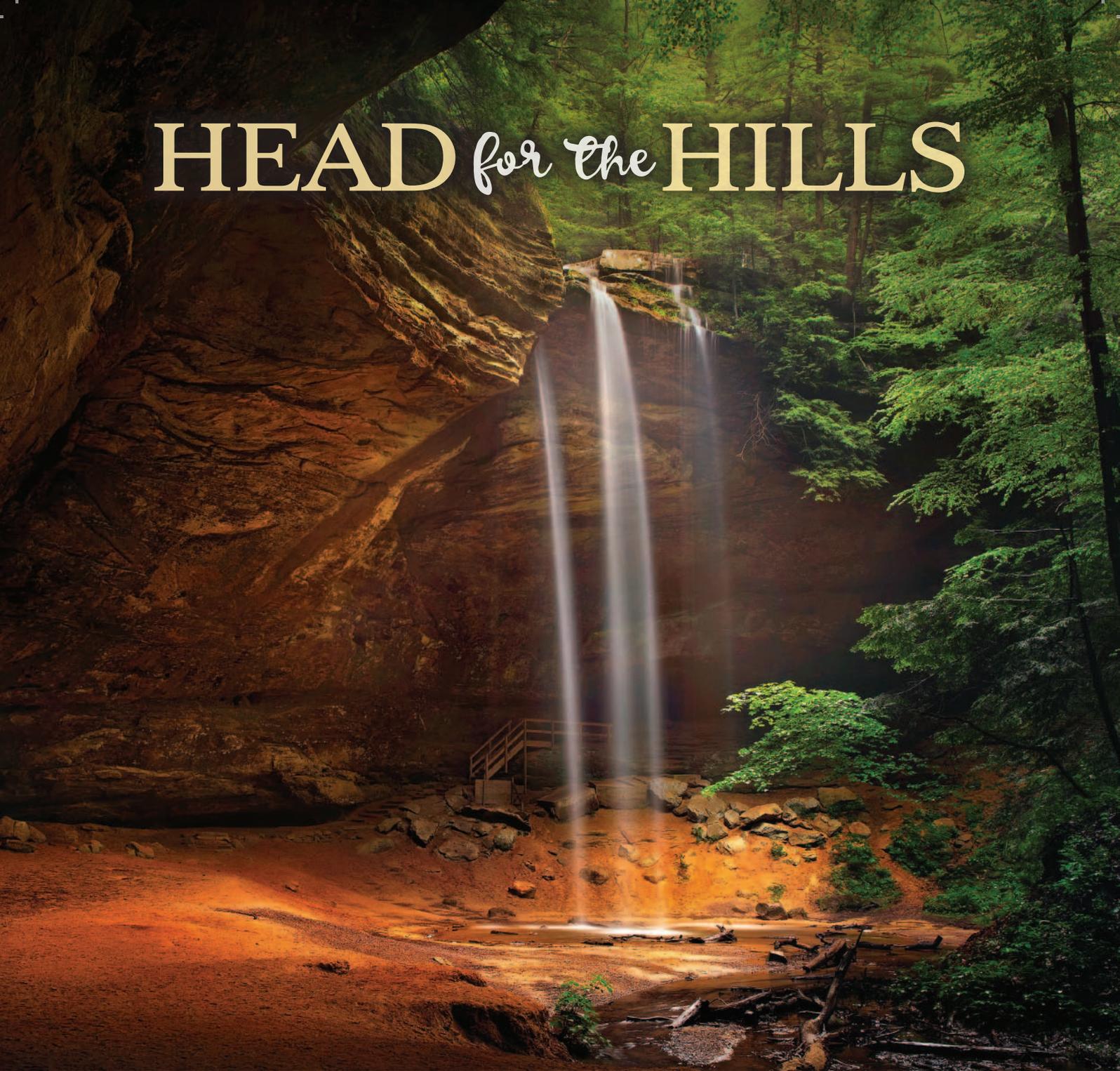


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