

# BEST Of The BEST 2024



## PLAN SOME SPECIAL MEALS FOR 2024



Even after 20 years of surveying the local dining scene, we continue to be awed by the amazing culinary talent that's gravitated to our special corner of the world. And so, we take time to celebrate that happy abundance here in the Best of the Best.

For 2024, we've done our usual survey of what's new and notable. In that 20-page review, we share the stellar options we have for local dining. Specifically, you'll find:

- Stars Old and New
- Steaks Are Happening
- Welcome New Restaurants
- Bars & Beers
- New Locations
- Other Food News
- Recommendations for Best Places to Eat Locally — Morning, Noon, Night and More
- Morning Brews & Sweet Treats

So, savor our suggestions and the mouth-watering photos. Make your list of places to share a meal with friends and family. We hope you'll discover your new favorites.

And most important: dine local and dine often this year.

*Check our website and social media for more on restaurants, food news, recipes, beer and wine columns, and more. [CountyLinesMagazine.com](http://CountyLinesMagazine.com).*



Andiaro

STARS OLD AND NEW

Andiaro

106 W. Gay St., West Chester  
484-887-0919 / Andiaro.com

Of course we start with our local star, the eponymous Andiaro, now back among *Philly Mag's* Top 10 — that's in the whole of Philadelphia's stellar food scene — and previously on the *New York Times'* radar. Andiaro found its stride with pre-set, four-course, Italian-inspired dinner menus (changing weekly, \$80, \$70 wine pairings, \$35 BYOW) that thoughtfully celebrate the best of hyper-locally sourced dining served on handmade pottery. Despite not sharing advance menus (although there's always Chef Tony's fabulous pasta), reservations fill up for the 24 seats soon after online postings on the 20th of the prior month. Prepare for a memorable surprise if you plan to include this star on your 2024 dining list.



Ground Provisions

Ground Provisions: Market & Dining

1388 Old Wilmington Pk., West Chester  
610-355-4411 / GroundProvisionsPA.com

In the former historic Dilworthtown Inn Keeper's Kitchen (kudos for preserving it), the team from the James Beard-nominated, top Philly vegan restaurant, Vedge, launched Chester County's newest dining destination and vegan retreat. Think variation on Talula's Table, with gourmet market by day and locavore dining by night but here with a five-course vegan tasting menu (\$75, \$40 wine pairing). There's magic at Ground Provisions (from the Caribbean term for steamed root vegetables), especially when sourced from owners Rich Landau and Kate Jacoby's nearby farmette. Consider hand-rolled fazzoletto with parsnip, cashew ricotta, caper and sage brown butter or champignon au vin — wood-roasted portabella, celery root puree, mushroom bordelaise, young carrots. Rustic elegance.



9 Prime

STEAKS ARE HAPPENING

9 Prime

9 N. High St., West Chester  
9PrimeWestChester.com

Opening on South High Street in the old bank building, 9 Prime is the highly anticipated new venture from celebrity Chef Fabio Viviani. The expansive 400-seat restaurant is described as a "modern Italian steakhouse" and will include multiple bars across several floors, year-round outdoor dining, a below-ground speakeasy and dining inside the original bank vault. Instagram photos have been tempting and teasing diners with steaks, sides and cocktails for soooo long. The opening is currently scheduled for early 2024.

30 Prime Seafood & Chophouse

112 E. Lincoln Hwy., Coatesville

It may be early, but here's a heads-up on another upscale restaurant planned in Coatesville, this one in the 5,400-square-foot former National Bank building after renovations are completed in 2024. Helmed by Chef Phil Ferro (YouTube's *Million Dollar Chef*; also of Coatesville's Kings Tavern and Steel City Brewing, plus Chadds Ford Tavern), the concept is classic steakhouse, like Philly's Del Frisco's and The Capital Grille, inside the soaring space with 42-foot ceilings. More plans for the lower level, for event space and weekday business buffet. Start salivating.



Joey Chops

Joey Chops

5245 Lancaster Ave., Malvern  
484-450-8890 / JoeyChops.com

An early entrant into the expanding steak-escape, Joey Chops started as a Stove & Tap location (by the same folks as Admore's DePaul's Steakhouse). The concept is an elevated, yet approachable modern American steakhouse for special meals beyond the multitude of casual eateries. Wood-fired prime cuts, hand-cut steaks (6-oz. Queen's cut filet to a tomahawk ribeye (\$190)), plus all the usuals, including wagyu and extensive seafood items (seafood tower to salmon Wellington). Plenty of steakhouse faves: escargot, oysters Rockefeller, baked, whipped and fried potatoes. Look for specialty cocktails, big wines and craft beer from the bar, plus prime rib Sundays (\$35), Happy Hour and a decadent cheesecake cart.

Steaks West Chester

698 E. Market St., West Chester  
484-373-5500 / @SteaksWestChester

Fans of Speer Madanat's uber-popular Pizza West Chester (20k Insta followers) could not believe their luck when the man opened a cheesesteak mecca (former Peter Clark's spot). And this time with regular hours (11 to 9, except Monday), phone orders (call early, but still not online), credit cards! Think ribeye steak, Cooper sharp cheese, rough-cut onions on a custom 12-inch crusty seeded Baguette Magique roll (from the Andiaro folks), plus Buffalo and chicken cheesesteaks, fries, wings, with more to come. Sold out signs appear too often. And Speer still helms the pizza place.

Farm Boy Fresh BBQ

625 N. Morehall Rd., Ste. 100, Malvern  
484-568-4403 / FarmBoyBBQ.com

Now in a permanent location in the old Friendly's — no longer by the Sunoco Station — Farm Boy Fresh serves up premium meats cooked low and slow in authentic central Texas style. Chef Paul Marshall cooks short ribs, brisket, pork ribs, chicken and more, but Saturday is Steak Night with 12-oz. certified Angus ribeyes cooked over an open fire (\$39). Come for the meat (sold by the pound, Wednesday through Saturday), plates, sandwiches, homemade sides (collards, corn bread) and desserts. Some say it's "where BBQ brisket is like a religious experience."

WELCOME NEW RESTAURANTS

Sweet Amelia's

102 E. State St., Kennett Square  
484-732-7943 / SweetAmeliasKSQ.com

Named for Chefs Karessa and Zack Hathaway's daughter, Sweet Amelia's changing monthly menu reflects its commitment to local, seasonal ingredients, working with suppliers like Kennett's Full Table Farm, Buck & Doe Bread Co., Kirkwood's Lindenhof Farm. The space (former Verbena spot) has an upscale, casual Scandinavian vibe, and the menu includes international influence from the chefs' travels (note the paper airplane on the sign). Choose from snacks, small and large plates — braised lamb osso bucco to striped bass and ever-popular chicken skin tea sandwiches on December's menu. Plenty of vegan,

vegetarian and gluten-free options, including grilled haloumi and sweet potato fritters. Yum!

Bar Reverie

4017 Kennett Pk., Greenville, DE  
302-315-3663 / BarReverie.com

From breakfast bistro to chic lunch café to wine bar/date-night restaurant, Bar Reverie spans the day with a French-inflected, international menu. From Dan Dietz of BBC Tavern (next door), this spot with a Manhattan vibe does it all, and does it with high style — check the Petrossian caviar on the menu and specials with black truffle shavings, plus a hundred curated wines from around the world. Stop by for Pastry Chef Gretchen Sianni's confections or Chef Steve Taplin's (Union League) sophisticated cooking. CineMondays, half-price wine Tuesdays and Happy Hour menus provide so many reasons to visit. There's even a Bar Reverie signature scent!

Blue Elephant

110 N. Wayne Ave., Wayne  
484-580-6142 / BlueElephantWayne.com

It was worth the wait for Pottstown's Blue Elephant to expand into this beautiful space on North Wayne Ave. (adios, Matador). Self-proclaimed as Asian fusion, blending Italian with Japanese and Thai cuisine, they're wooing diners with dishes like house-made edamame truffle tortellini, tuna bruschetta and green tea tiramisu. The broad menu covers starters, rice and noodles, sushi, pasta, entrees from branzino to strip steak, plus temaki for two (roll your own sushi). More faves: Main Line roll, drunken noodles and passion fruit chocolate mousse cake.



Sweet Amelia's



Bar Reverie



Blue Elephant

**The Boardroom Restaurant**

101 Bridge St., Phoenixville  
TheBoardroomPXV.com

Promising a “great atmosphere, even better food and drinks,” Pat Merriman, The Boardroom’s owner, bought Paloma’s Restaurant and partnered with Boardroom Spirits to bring something new to Bridge Street. Eclectic menus from Chef George Crow cover brunch, lunch and dinner along with buck-a-shuck on Mondays and negroni week — but that was in September. Starters range from raw oysters to grain salads, while handhelds include burgers, chicken sandwiches and cheesesteaks. For mains, choose from Vietnamese pork vermicelli bowl to hanger steak frites. An extensive cocktail menu features oyster shooters, smoked old fashioned, French 75s and whiskey sours, plus beer, wine and Boardroom Spirits in cans.

**Crown Tavern**

451 Wilmington West Chester Pk., Glen Mills  
610-361-9800 / CrownInConcord.com

A new English pub arose in Concord Township’s former McKenzie Brew House, from the folks behind Will’s and Bill’s, serving lunch, dinner and Happy Hour. Think clubby, dark spaces with fireplace, taxidermy and house-crafted ales, perfectly drawn pints, gin-based cocktails and British standards — cod cakes, curries, fish & chips, pub pie, bangers & mash, plus the Earl’s sandwiches. You’ll find enough of the usual pub grub options to keep everyone happy — Soho nachos, king’s wings, truffle fries, poutine, plus steaks and chops (12-oz. tomahawk pork chop). Top it off with toffee pudding ... for pudding (that’s dessert to Yanks).

**The Iron Eagle on Lincoln Bar & Grille**

143 Lincoln Hwy. E., Coatesville  
610-400-4407 / IronEagleOnLincoln.com

Another addition to Coatesville’s Gateway Development Project, the Iron Eagle looks out on the downtown scene through large windows in the renovated Cultural Society building. CIA-trained Chef Cameron Huhendubler oversees brunch, lunch, dinner and Happy Hour everyday menus served in the industrial space. Sample starters — from bahn mi eggrolls to Korean BBQ quesadillas — along with salads and handhelds, including a hot chicken sandwich and the “Double Old Fashioned,” a two-patty Angus burger. For entrees, braised short ribs, free-range airline chicken or wild boar ragu. Wine and beer menu, plus specialty cocktails, including the Iron Eagle — Bulleit bourbon, Cointreau and lemon.

**Manjé Caribbean Cuisine**

237 E. Gay St., West Chester  
610-241-1852 / ManjeCaribbean.com

Adding a taste of the Caribbean to the West Chester restaurant mix, Manjé serves regional dishes prepared with a proprietary blend of seasonings, marinades, fine selections of meat and fresh ingredients. Dishes feature options like oxtail, goat (stewed, fried, curried), jerk chicken plate or sandwich, curry chicken, Haitian patties. Take the Manjé Caribbean Tour, with two starters, an entree and a side or the Island Feast Fusion — jerk chicken wings, oxtail and veggie stew, and of course, Jamaican rum cake for dessert. Be sure to order the plantains, fried or chips, too. Heaps of 5-star Yelp reviews to welcome them to town.

**Motto Sushi & Ramen**

668 Lancaster Ave., Berwyn  
484-320-8604 / MottoBerwyn.com

Motto, which means “more” in Japanese, promises mindfully selected ingredients and a heightened dining experience focusing on sushi

and ramen (build your own by choosing the broth, noodle, veg and meat). Offering omakase and an extensive and imaginatively named selection of rolls — White Album, Golden Wind, along with a Berwyn and Love PA options — the food is presented like precious jewels. Order a la carte, regular rolls, specialty rolls, sashimi rolls, lunch special or all-day combo. All fresh, all too beautiful to eat — almost.

**Rooney’s at Dilworthtown**

1390 Old Wilmington Pk., West Chester

Across from the new Ground Provisions stands the historic Dilworthtown Inn, vacant for far too many years. News of plans for a breakfast, brunch and lunch spot in that complex cheered fans of preservation and of food. JamOnIt Specialty Foods, which began by making barbecue sauces in 2019 and is known for its Turks Head Sauce, announced in November their plans for opening their first restaurant in the space behind the Inn and Blue Pear. Stay tuned for more.

**Soko Bag**

95 Nutt Rd., Phoenixville  
855-765-6224 / SokoBag.com

From idea to pop-up (at Manayunk’s Pizza Jawn) to a brick-and-mortar, Soko Bag’s Korean fried chicken is the passion project of Shea Roggio and Alice Chang. Modeled after the bustling spots in Seoul, South Korea, and using authentic family recipes (double fried, bamboo salt, all kinds of sauces), they create addictive dishes away from Bridge Street in a sports bar atmosphere. Try a KFC Jawn sandwich topped with kimchi aioli and ghost pepper cheese, bulgogi pizza, cheese-powdered snow chicken and Jeju fries. Quench your thirst with a beer or house-made blueberry cider. Plus merch, 5-star reviews and a year’s worth of fried chicken grand opening giveaway.



Saloon 151 Tequila Bar



Steel City Brewing



Tired Hands Beer Park

**Takumi Bistro & Bar**

821 Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
610-922-1788 / TakumiBistro.com

Nobu-trained chef, as in led by Executive Chef Larry Jiang, who was trained by the team at the renowned Michelin-starred Nobu global chain (note: Chef Nobu Matsuhisa is known as the originator of American sushi). That’s the big news at the new addition to Devon Village (Whole Foods shopping center), where Takumi (meaning artisan or skilled) opened. The dark, sophisticated interior, with cocktail bar, hosts an extensive menu of hot and cold dishes, along with ramen and lengthy listings of maki rolls, nigiri and specialty rolls — the 821 roll, Out of Control roll, Summerlicious. There’s chicken teriyaki, wagyu on stone, uni scallop carpaccio and a nine-piece omakase option.

**BARS & BEERS**

**Omnus Brewing**

137 Wallace Ave., Downingtown  
OmnusBrewing.com

Omnus (Latin for “everyone”) has a people-first approach to business and brewing, with diversity, inclusivity, equity, accessibility and trustworthy products as core values, plus a varied tap list at an accessible price point. Brewery and taproom will be housed in the 8,700-square-foot space, initially working with local food trucks and restaurants to feed guests. One of their first beers to give back was a West Coast IPA called Twenty-Fun, part of a benefit for Down Syndrome awareness. Planned opening early 2024.

**Saloon 151 Tequila Bar**

155 W. Gay St., West Chester  
610-701-8489 / Saloon151.com

Yes, bourbon and craft beer have been big, but it’s time for tequila to take the spotlight. Popular watering hole Saloon 151 opened its Tequila

Bar next door (former Star of India space) now with a modern feel, to feature tequilas, tequila cocktails and mezcals, along with Saloon 151’s good eats. Try trendy agave-based cocktails like mezcal old fashioned and tequila coladas — and yes, there are mere margaritas. Order tequila shots ranging from blanco to flavored, with celebrity brands mixed in (Michael Jordan’s to Kevin Hart’s brands available). Better than a shot in the arm!

**Serum Kitchen & Taphouse**

142 W. Market St., West Chester  
SerumKitchenAndTaphouse.com

Back in August, we wrote that the creators of Hatfield’s Imprint Beer Co., known for fruited sours and pastry stouts, planned to open Serum Kitchen & Taphouse in West Chester in the fall. Now their Instagram post says the “elevated neighborhood experience ... [is] coming late 2023!”

**Steel City Brewing**

132 Lincoln Hwy. E., Coatesville  
SteelCityBrewing.com

Former Coatesville YMCA will be home to Steel City Brewing, a restaurant, bar and meeting space, cum beerhall/rathskeller with pool tables, darts and dining room, spearheaded by Phil Ferro. The renovated 19th-century building retains architectural details like brick walls, Lukens Steel beams and a two-story atrium, plus fun details like a 100-foot bar, speakeasy entrance and beer garden in the back. Expect pub food, craft beer and plenty of historic photos and memorabilia, courtesy of the National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum. Plans to partner with the upcoming Velodrome and sports complex development. Opening 2024.

**Succession Fermentory**

432 Leaman Rd., Cochransville  
814-229-3928 / SuccessionFermentory.com

Enjoy craft beer in the idyllic countryside at Succession Fermentory, a sustainable brewery

on the property of StellaLou Farm in Cochransville. Specializing in spontaneously fermented beer, they brew farmhouse and sour ales using local ingredients, including malted grain from Montgomery County and hops from Glen Mills. Find their beer at local farmers markets, at their brewery or order online. They celebrated their first anniversary October 2023 — sorry we missed you last year!

**Tired Hands Beer Park**

4901 West Chester Pk., Newtown Square  
TiredHands.com

Fans of the renowned Adrmore craft brewery (James Beard nominee) got a warm-weather treat when Tired Hands opened a 15-acre seasonal beer garden just off Route 3. Although it closed in early November, beer is still available, now at Flight on Ice. Though the beer garden may have looked a bit ... informal — string lights, colorful shade sails over picnic tables in a dirt patch parking area — there was music, a makers market, food trucks and, of course, great beer, to drink there or to go. Here’s hoping they find a permanent spot — like the Tired Hands Shop in the lower level of historic Letty’s Tavern in Newtown Square

**Twelve78 Brewing**

35 Bridge St., Phoenixville  
484-685-1470 / Twelve78Brewing.com

This new crowd-sourced and family-owned, 5,000-square-foot brewery and taproom will join the many beer sources in Phoenixville soon. After 30 years of homebrewing, owner Steve Rogacki and wife Kara are taking the next step with their dream, centered around a 36-foot bar inside and a planned beer garden outside in the spring. Phase one will rely on food trucks to supplement their lagers, pale ales, unique brews (honey kolsch, chocolate brownie porter) and sour smoothies (sour beer base with soft-serve ice cream, fruit puree and more). Stay tuned.

The Boardroom Restaurant



Crown Tavern



Takumi Bistro & Bar



NEW LOCATIONS

Al Pastor

13 W. Benedict Ave., Havertown  
EatAlPastorHavertown.com

The modern Mexican eatery in Eagleview's Restaurant Row in Exton opened a new location in Havertown last fall. Part of the Stove & Tap Restaurant Group, this new taqueria, with lots of seats in the outdoor margarita garden, serves up all your favorite Mexican dishes — sharables and handhelds — along with signature goodies like Al Pastor wings, dragon tots and plenty of guac.

Osteria Ama Artisan Kitchen

34 Street Rd., West Chester  
484-301-3955 / OsteriaAma-WC.com

This relatively new BYOB opened early 2023 in Chadds Ford, then opened another location in Thornbury Commons in West Chester later last year. Known for from-scratch bread, pasta and desserts, plus authentic Italian cuisine, the hand-stretched, wood-fired pizzas are not to be missed.

Testa Rossa

919 Baltimore Pk., Glen Mills

With a late 2023 change-up, the former Ruby's Diner space won't be another location for Wayne's Italian soul food restaurant, Rosalie. Instead the Fearless Restaurant brand plans a more casual Italian-American concept (pasta, pizza and more) for that spot, called Testa Rossa (meaning redhead). The location is across from another Fearless Restaurant fave, White Dog. Stay tuned for more and more good food.

OTHER FOOD NEWS

Berwyn Farmers Market

511 Old Lancaster Rd., Berwyn  
267-326-4849 / CulinaryHarvest.com

Can there be too many farmers markets? We say no and welcome the newest to open, this one in Berwyn (Sundays, May–October). Organized by Culinary Harvest, this market has a mission to build community and support local farmers as well as some artisan crafters. You'll find Madi's on a Roll there, among about 40 others providers when they reopen in warmer months.

Farmer Jawn

1125 E. Street Rd., West Chester  
FarmerJawn.co

Most folks know after beloved farm stand Pete's Produce closed in 2022, Westtown School, the landowner, selected Farmer Jawn as the 28-acre property's next caretaker. Christa Barfield, head and face of Farmer Jawn, opened the stand in August through Thanksgiving 2023, offering a selection of locally grown produce plus other regional products. As the farm prepares to become fully organic in three years, it's expanding from the three acres under cultivation in 2023 to over 60 planned for 2024, including 20 acres of grain for a local malt house, and acres of berries (with U-pick) and cut flowers. Stay tuned and stop by to see what happens next.

Full Moon Dinners

333 Morgan St., Phoenixville  
267-738-1973 / BabasBrew.com

Launched last summer, these themed dinners held during the full moon and hosted by

Olga Sorzano (Baba's Bucha) continue in 2024. Join 22 diners at a communal table at the Phoenixville headquarters for memorable monthly meals (BYOB, \$125) — from January 25th Wolf Moon through May 23rd Flower Moon and more. These celestial celebrations, sparked by Sorzano's passions for food and connection, are posted on the website, showcasing local, organic cuisine. At press time, January's Wolf Moon menu was posted. So plan now.

Madi's on a Roll

290 Lincoln Hwy. E., Exton  
484-695-0162 / MadisOnARoll.com

We love to celebrate a farmers market favorite growing into a bricks-and-mortar store, yet still keeping a table at the markets. And so, we salute this purveyor of hand-rolled and homemade specialty egg rolls, which, as the website says, are "brimming with playfully delicious flavors designed to be shared, sampled and savored." We couldn't say it better. Order the big dill, bangin' shrimp, cheesesteak, jalapeño popper or apple pie. Or try them all.

Life's Patina Mercantile & Café

1657 Art School Rd., Chester Springs  
LifesPatina.com/Historic-Yellow-Springs

The historic Jenny Lind house got a new life with the late 2023 opening of a charming café and shop from the folks behind Life's Patina at Willowbrook Farm. Meg Venio brought her magic touch plus many, many years of hard work to restore this building, converting it into a lovely space to sip coffee, sample sweets and treats, then shop for gifts, home and garden decor and vintage treasures. Make up an excuse to stop by and see the transformation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BEST PLACES TO EAT LOCALLY — MORNING, NOON, NIGHT AND MORE

DOWNINGTOWN

Morning: Green Street Grill

150 E. Pennsylvania St., Downingtown  
610-873-1700 / GreenStGrill.com

Green Street serves breakfast all day every day, or at least until they close at 2. And it serves everything to your liking. From The Joanie — smoked salmon, capers, onions, tomatoes and cream cheese on a toasted bagel — to The Telly — three eggs, scrambled, with cheese, onions and peppers, with spicy andouille gravy and scrapple. Or you can have French toast — try the Bullotta, with bacon, bananas and honey, topped with peanut butter. Another option, the pancakes topped with assorted fruits. They call eggs Benedict "Bennys" here and serve them seven ways. You can always build your own omelet or choose from 10 different omelet recipes. A great way to wake up!

Noon: Station Taproom

207 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown  
484-593-0560 / StationTaproom.com

It's a small place, by the tracks, and it may strike you as just another doorway ... until you enter and smell the food. You're in for a tasty surprise. The tamale pie, made with Wyebrook Farm's beef, is amazing, the hot chicken mac & cheese is deeply satisfying, and the shrimp & grits is out of this world. Try the delicious pulled pork sandwich, yummy smash burger or scrumptious chicken sandwich — we're running out of adjectives. Wash it all down with one of their carefully curated beers — Root Down Deep Six or Tröegs Hop Cyclone. Enjoy, but be prepared. You may miss your train.

Night: Anthony's Cucina Fresca

78 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown  
610-873-5544 / AnthonysCucinaFresca.com

This inviting trattoria is known among locals for top-notch Italian fare made with the freshest organic and all-natural ingredients. The menu, inspired by owner/Head Chef Danilo Angelucci's Sicilian roots, features tantalizing appetizers (stuffed figs, baked eggplant, Danilo's Tasting Board), a dozen different pizzas, handmade pasta dishes (squid ink linguini with lobster tail, spe-

cialty raviolis), burgers and sandwiches, plus delectable entrees (seafood risotto, dulce de leche short rib, Italian-style filet mignon). Be sure to pair your meal with a glass of wine or craft cocktail — including the ever-popular Stormy Monday with Johnnie Walker, honey cordial and applewood smoke — and finish with a decadent dessert.

Happy Hour: Victory Brewing Company

420 Acorn Ln., Downingtown  
610-873-0881 / TapRooms.VictoryBeer.com

Victory's Downingtown dining room is set right next to its working fermenters. Although much of the operation has now moved to Parkesburg, Victory still brews 20,000 barrels per year in Downingtown. And the restaurant now seats about 300, serving, among others, appetizers, loaded fries, fried pickles, jalapeño poppers, three kinds of wings and seven pizzas, as well as a variety of handhelds and burgers, several soups and salads, and six main dishes, including fish'n'chips. Of course, come for the beer — 30 on tap — and service gets superlative reviews as well.

Don't Miss: De La Terre

47 W. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown  
610-269-2431 / DeLaTerreBYOB.com

This former pizza place turned 40-seat, white-tablecloth BYOB is a must — both local and food critics agree. De La Terre (from the earth) added major buzz to Downingtown's dining scene, garnering a Best of the 'Burbs nod from *Philly Mag*. It's all due to the artistry Chef Andrew Hufnagel (stints with Steven Star, Jean-Georges Vongerichten) brings to his changing seasonal menus of "French classics with inventive regional fare." From foie gras, escargot, to boeuf borguignon and Royale with Cheese (wagyu burger), the starters plus small and large plates are exquisite — beautifully presented, but more important, absolutely fabulously delicious. Tip: don't miss the triple-cooked, duck fat pomme frites, even if you don't get the steak frites.

WESTERN CHESTER COUNTY

Morning: ButterScotch Pastry Shop

1406 Hollow Rd., Birchrunville  
610-827-0900 / ButterScotchPastry.com

Motor down country roads or take your horse and carriage to possibly the county's most charming pastry shop. It's quaint from every angle — the bridge to the door, cozy interior with fireplaces, old stove and kitchenware decor. On your

Station Taproom



Anthony's Cucina Fresca



De La Terre



Berwyn Farmers Market



Full Moon Dinners



Mercantile & Café



first visit, dive into a latte and mini-Bundt butterscotch cake (yes, for breakfast). House-made butterscotch sauce drizzled over the top and sides fills the center well and flows onto the plate. On your second trip — there *will* be others — arrive early for croissants or bread pudding loaded with pecans. Even better, stay for another round or take home a pink box with scones and tiramisu.

#### Morning: Little Chef

152 Strode Ave., Coatesville  
610-384-3221 / LittleChef.us

There's a little gem on Strode Avenue where a red door flanked by pretty flowers and a bench mark the entrance to a different era's diner vibe and genuinely kind staff. Inside, a black-and-white tiled floor, booths and counter with swivel-top stools are the perfect backdrop for breakfast, whether at dawn or noon. The best: Pete's Famous Mess. The large jumble is steaming with all the favorites — eggs, tasty home fries, Italian sausage with just the right spices, peppers, onions and melted cheese. The dish makes it worth getting out of bed.

#### Noon: Epicurean Garage

570 Simpson Dr., Chester Springs  
610-615-5189 / EpicureanGarage.com

Chef/owner Lee Krasley invites you in. At first, it's all so tempting, so family-friendly. Choose the Cubano Garaje for lunch. Or maybe, sticking with the theme, the Garage Nachos, Garage Garden Salad, Garage Fries, Garage Meatloaf or, simply, The Garage — a barbecue burger with bacon, cheese and coleslaw. Everything — crisp chicken, beef brisket, jambalaya — is delish! The beer menu offers range, including Kingfisher Premium Lager from India and Chimay Grande Reserve from Belgium. Top off lunch with caramel apple galette or Philadelphia cream cheesecake, then sit back and admire the chic industrial brick interior.

#### Night: Bloom Southern Kitchen

123 Pottstown Pk., Chester Springs  
484-359-4144 / BloomSouthernKitchen.com

Go hungry because the food is irresistible. A Southern spirit now wafts from the kitchen in the former Old Eagle Tavern. Linger over the menu. Diners rave about the fried green tomatoes (in season). Other choices, start with fried cauliflower and smoked corn plus jalapeño hush puppies before sharing a bowl of New Orleans-style gumbo. Then try the classic and impressive fried chicken and waffle. Order it with a side of braised collards. Or choose shrimp and grits made with rich fragrant creole spices. For dessert, drool over pecan pie and beignets, and dream about an evening in the Vieux Carre.

#### Happy Hour: The Record Kitchen + Bar

206 Lincoln Hwy. E., Coatesville  
484-784-5483 / TheRecordCoatesville.com

The Record, Coatesville's newspaper from 1908, published its last edition in 1974. Now, front pages adorn the walls of the restaurant in the former office space along

with signs of renewal. From the wood-fired oven, helmed by Chef Arthur Cavaliere, come delicious pizzas — \$10 at Happy Hour along with draft beers for \$4, wine for \$7 and cocktails for \$10, Tuesday through Friday. If you choose to imbibe at less happy hours, choose beer from Coatesville's own Animated Brewing, as well as Guinness, Modelo and the like, and your food from ribs, wings or crispy calamari, all impressively served. Don't miss the press-themed cocktails: Byline, Page Six, Editorial.

#### Happy Hour: Bierhaul Lagerhaus & New American Kitchen

341 Thornton Rd., Thornton  
610-550-3440 / Bierhaul.com

Design your own Happy Hour at Bierhaul, where the lively bar feels happy every hour. Outside downtown West Chester, north of Glen Mills, is Bierhaul Lagerhaus & New American Kitchen. Gather some friends, enjoy the rotating two-dozen draft list, two dozen other beers in bottles and cans, a dozen wines and about a dozen very large cocktails. Food specials — pierogis, pizzas, prime rib, wings, mussels and seafood — are served weekly. And there's live music on Thursday nights and Saturday afternoons. A fire burns in the fireplace. There's *gemütlichkeit* all around!

#### Don't Miss: Birchrunville Store Café

1403 Hollow Rd., Birchrunville  
484-888-5216 / BirchrunvilleStoreCafe.com

Nestled in a hollow (yes, it's on Hollow Road) surrounded by trees, find the Birchrunville Store Café. The former creamery, general store and post office has been one of the best restaurants in town ... well, in the countryside. Menu items change often under the talents of Chef Francis Pascal, but it's nigh impossible to go wrong. Inside or on the porch with stained glass windows, start with delicious lobster bisque or baby greens with fresh figs and Roquefort. Next, savor the herb-encrusted lamb loin. Don't skip the signature dessert that one fan described as "heaven on a plate." Make reservations far in advance of your special occasion and pick up wine that is worthy of a spectacular meal.

## EXTON

#### Morning: Nudy's Café

420 W. Lincoln Hwy., Exton  
610-524-1508 / NudysCafes.com

Pop into Nudy's for fabulous pancakes and French toast — and not just on National Pancake Day. Their fluffy pancakes are always a hit. Short stack options that keep patrons returning include chocolate chip, apple, gingerbread, pumpkin spice and the classic blueberry. French toast faves are the batter-dipped raisin bread or the "Best Ever" carrot cake French toast with cream cheese icing. If protein is your thing, order the omelet with real jumbo lump crabmeat. Can't make it to the Town Center in

Bloom Southern Kitchen



Bierhaul



Sovana Bistro



La Verona



your pajamas? Pancakes are still an option after noon, and there's always delivery, as well as other Nudy's in the area.

#### Noon: Ron's Original Bar & Grille

74 E. Uwchlan Ave., Exton  
610-594-9900 / RonsOriginal.com

When the whole hungry gang's ready to kick back at lunch, Ron's is your restaurant. Inside and out, brick and stone lend a cozy feel to the comfortable, casual atmosphere. While everything on the menu — almost as big as a dictionary — is good, their pizza with perfect crust and ovals (pizza dough in a different shape with great toppings and special seasoning) get quite the raves. Both have gluten-free options. Sit down to a vegetarian Boardwalk pizza with cheddar, mozzarella and yummy sauce. Or go for top ovals: cheesesteak or the kicky Carciofo with marinated artichokes, olives, pepperoncini and more.

#### Night: Bluefin

555 Wellington Sq., Exton  
610-458-3234 / BluefinEagleview.com

There are many reasons to seek the twinkling lights of Eagleview Town Center at night. One is Bluefin, the standout sushi and sashimi restaurant. Combinations of flavors and textures under Head Chef/owner Yong Kim's talented care, along with beautiful plating, make any evening special. For a taste sensation like no other, ask for the small plate of toro sashimi — prized, rich, marbled tuna with fresh wasabi and Bluefin's unforgettable house-brewed soy sauce with a deep smoky flavor. Want a spectacular dining experience at home? Order Bluefin's Omakasi Box that features oysters, coveted toro sashimi, other delectable pieces and the special soy sauce.

#### Happy Hour: Appetites on Main

286 Main St., Exton  
610-594-2030 / AppetitesOnMain.com

On Sundays, owner Brad Weinstein serves huge luscious portions — of flatbreads, nachos, tacos, cheesesteaks, sandwiches and hoagies — catering to very hungry Eagles fans. Also, Apps on Main has specials all the time: for example, wings, nachos, beer and margaritas and more on Mondays; burgers, egg rolls, wings and more on Thursdays; hoagies on Friday, and so on. But every day, at Happy Hour, between 4 and 6, drafts and bottles of beer are only \$2.75, well drinks are \$4, and you get a dollar off on select craft beer, wine, cocktails and appetizers. Make a note. Get off of work early. And enjoy.

#### Don't Miss: White Dog Cafe

181 Gordon Dr., Exton  
WhiteDog.com

Anticipation (cue Carly Simon) ... It's the third year we've been psyched for the newest addition to White Dog's litter (number five), this in the former 19th-century Vickers Restaurant and Underground Railroad stop. When they open, expect the same sustainable

menu served in cozy rooms bedecked with dog portraits, plus a new three-season room adding outdoor dining to the already large space. The other big news: 20 folks can commission local artist Janelle Morrison to paint their pooch's portrait to hang onsite. Proceeds go to Alpha Bravo Canine, a nonprofit providing service dogs to vets. More good works from the Fearless Restaurant folks.

## KENNETT SQUARE

#### Morning: Hank's Place

201 Birch St., Kennett Square  
610-448-9988 / HanksPlaceChaddsFord.com

Much to our delight, the old Chadds Ford eatery where for years regulars and visitors came for good food and people-watching — has taken root now in Kennett awaiting construction at the home site in Chadds Ford. At a booth by a Wyeth print, dig into a wide choice of breakfast options. Our pick: the creamed handcrafted chipped beef. Get it on toast points, potatoes or on a nontraditional eggs Benny. If you've got a hankering for a Southern-style biscuit, order the William Barn's classic — chipped beef on a hot, fluffy biscuit next to home fries. Just sayin', if you like bacon (and who doesn't?), order a side of that, too.

#### Noon: Sovana Bistro

696 Unionville Rd., Kennett Square  
855-429-2532 / SovanaBistro.com

From the moment Sovana Bistro's staff opens the door for you to the time they say goodbye, they are friendly and attentive. They and regulars will let you know what's great from their seasonal lunch menu: fall salad with crisp apples from a nearby orchard and summertime fresh greens topped with salmon. Steamy black truffle mac and cheese leaves you warm and impervious to winter doldrums. All year around, standouts are the wood-fired Margherita pizza and artisanal cheese flights that originate from far away as Tuscany and close to home as Doe Run Road. Save room for divine ooey, gooey molten chocolate cake for dessert.

#### Night: La Verona

114 E. State St., Kennett Square  
610-444-2244 / LaVeronaPA.com

Whether you're looking for a romantic dinner suited for Romeo and Juliet or a night on the town with Mercutio and friends, La Verona — Kennett's Italian restaurant named after the city of Shakespeare's beloved play — is perfect for food and ambiance. From the restaurant's pretty glass doors, turn right for elegant dining tables and impeccable service. Try scampi with just the right garlic or favorite veal saltimbocca. Or turn left for the lively bar where it seems there's always good company, food and drink. The Caesar salad is a winner. And when it's on the rotating menu, lobster ravioli with blush sauce gets accolades.



The Creamery

**Night: Antica, Chadds Ford**

1623 Baltimore Pk., Chadds Ford  
484-770-8631 / AnticaPA.com

Visitors passing through town and regulars from the Kennett/Chadds Ford area have discovered that Antica is a great stop for upscale Italian comfort food. Whether a weeknight or weekend evening, the Sunday Supper is truly special. On a generous plate of homemade wide, flat tagliatelle pasta, a rich red sauce with the aroma of fresh, ripe summer tomatoes accompanies scrumptious meatballs, sausage and pork cheek. Enjoy it with one of Antica's robust red wines or have a little fun with their Italian mojito of vodka, honey pink lemonade and basil. *Buon appetito!*

**Happy Hour: The Creamery of Kennett Square**

401 Birch St., Kennett Square  
KennettCreamery.com

The Creamery is open Thursday through Sunday when every hour is Happy Hour, with live music by local bands. For an IPA, choose the Wave Chaser from Montauk, New York. A pilsner? West Chester-based Levante Craft. A stout? There's the Nitro Expressway from Two Roads Brewing in Connecticut. If you're hungry, try the pig skins, crab fries or chow down on a grilled cheese with Kennett portobello. Founded in 1902 as the Eastern Condensed Milk Company, The Creamery was rebuilt as a community center, beer garden and arts hub. Your ears, eyes and tummies will thank you for visiting at any hour.

**Don't Miss: La Peña Mexicana**

609 W. Cypress St. #3013, Kennett Square  
610-421-0512 / LaPenaMexicanaPA.com

As you pass, you may mistake the building for an unusual gas station. And inside, it may seem a bit small. La Peña is not a place that puts on airs, or dwells on ambiance. Here you get simple, authentic Mexican food — it's where the farmworkers eat — and it's oh so good! The tortillas are homemade and fresh. Tacos, burritos, tamales, enchiladas, quesadillas, chimichangas and fajitas, too. Choose the meat — pork, beef, chicken, chorizo, fish. Select your level of spice. Add black or refried beans, guacamole, rice, cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, bell peppers, fresh cilantro and lime. You'll be very glad you stopped.

**Don't Miss: Talula's Table**

102 W. State St., Kennett Square  
610-444-8255 / TalulasTable.com

You still need to plan a year in advance for a special date at the famed larger farm table.



Talula's Table



Bittersweet Kitchen

There are only two options, one seating eight to 12, the other for four to eight. Gather your friends, and prepare for a decadent, seasonal farm-to-table meal. Recently, Chef Ryan McQuillan served scallops, dumplings, bisque, cavatelli, crispy fried brie and poached pear. But, in January, your menu will be different, seasonal, constantly changing. Aimee Olexy owns the original Talula's here, plus locations in Philly and helped put Kennett on the culinary map. Not a long-range planner? The market is open daily for gourmet takeout.

**MEDIA****Morning: Bittersweet Kitchen**

18 S. Orange St., Media  
610-566-1660 / EatAtBittersweet.com

Early birds and late risers alike flock to this cozy little spot on Orange Street for all-day breakfast. While you may encounter a bit of a wait, especially on weekends, it's made a little sweeter with Philly Fair Trade Roasters coffee or cold brew and a stroll through downtown (you'll get a call when your table's ready). Indulge in decadent crême brûlée pancakes with a burnt-sugar top or challah French toast stuffed with cream cheese and topped with bourbon-caramel sauce, or opt for something savory — like the Bittersweet Breakfast platter (eggs, buttermilk biscuits, potatoes), breakfast enchiladas or rotating omelet selection. Then take home a fresh baked pastry for later!

**Noon: Dim Sum Mania &****Tom's Dim Sum**

Dim Sum Mania: 17-19 E. State St., Media  
610-557-8757 / DimSumMania.com  
Tom's Dim Sum: 13 E. State St., Media  
610-566-6688 / TomsDimSum.com

Walking down State Street, you might think you're seeing double — two dim sum restaurants right next to each other? Like all good food, there's a good story behind it. Three years after Chinatown's beloved Tom's Dim Sum opened a Media location, the eponymous Tom (Tom Guo) split with his partners, opening Dim Sum Mania two doors down. Both are known for Shanghai-style dim sum, with expansive menus of small, sharable dishes — think soup dumplings, scallion pancakes, turnip cakes. Though local foodies and critics alike have taken sides in the dim sum duels, we believe that both are great choices for an afternoon feast.

**Night: Ariano**

114 S. Olive St. Media  
610-892-6944 / ArianoMedia.com

Turn down a Media side street to find a distinctive orange building that would be right at home in an Italian village. The building and everything inside — including hand-hammered copper tables and a stunning curved bar — was built by owner Anthony Bellapigna and his father, Otino. On the second story, admire the gorgeous ceiling mural depicting Ariano Irpino, the Bellapignas' hometown in Italy and restaurant namesake. Though Ariano may be best known for wood-fired pizzas, you can't go wrong with their Old World-inspired entrees (chicken Milanese, paella, pan-roasted filet). Complete your meal with a handcrafted cocktail and Italian gelato made onsite.

**Night: rye byob**

112 W. State St., Media  
610-263-7832 / RyeBYOB.com

With a warm, inviting atmosphere and adorned with local art, rye is a great spot for a night out with a group of friends or family. Their seasonal menu focuses on small plates, encouraging diners to sample and share dishes. Fall menu highlights included salmon with squash stew, scallops with ginger fried rice, and dishes featuring their acclaimed house-made pasta (pappardelle with mushrooms and cream, lumache with vodka sauce and Grana Padano cheese). All year round, expect New American fare made from scratch, with an emphasis on local and sustainable ingredients.

**Happy Hour: Pinocchio's Restaurant**

131 E. Baltimore Ave., Media  
610-566-7767 / PinPizza.com

Since 1955, Delco's first pizzeria has been known for its tasty pies and Italian fare. But these days, it's also known for its award-winning Beer Garden To Go, so you can create your own Happy Hour. Pinocchio's has become a go-to place for local beer lovers, who savor a selection of over 1,000 specialty beers — 200 of them coming from craft and international brewers. Mix and match six-packs, or fill up your growler or crowler from their 25 rotating drafts. With new cans and bottles arriving every weekday, there's always something new to try — and reasons to come back for more.

**Happy Hour: Two Fourteen**

214 W. State St., Media  
724-904-9139 / TwoFourteenRestaurant.com

As the neon sign in the entryway proclaims, there are "Good Vibes Only" at Media restaurateurs Loïc Barnieu (La Belle Époque, Sterling Pig) and Mike Hackett's (House) New

American restaurant and cocktail bar. Gather friends during Happy Hour, 4 to 6 p.m., for \$2 off beer and wine, plus \$12 cocktails, including the fan-favorite Media Mule. Small bites are two for \$14, including a cheese plate, chicken wings with truffled Parmesan and signature 214 sauce, as well as seasonal dishes. Any time of night, enjoy seasonally inspired cuisine — though some mainstays, like the 214 wagyu burger with bourbon bacon jam, are available year-round.

**Don't Miss: The Towne House**

117 Veterans Sq., Media  
484-445-2041 / TowneHousePA.com

For over 70 years, The Towne House has been a Delco landmark, home to many a birthday dinner or wedding reception. Today, it's a go-to dining destination with five unique dining rooms, each with its own menu and theme. Try the braised lamb shank or overnight Guinness short ribs at the farm-to-table Towne House, sample traditional Irish cuisine (shepherd's pie, fish and chips) and over 300 whiskeys at The Shebeen, enjoy seasonal drinks and casual fare in Idlewild's open-air courtyard, sip innovative cocktails at the speakeasy-inspired Colony Cocktail Club or host an event at The Towne Hall. No matter which you choose, this Media staple is sure to satisfy.

**Don't Miss: La Porta**

1192 N. Middletown Rd., Media  
610-358-5104 / LaPortaRestaurant.com

Though it's a bit of a drive outside downtown Media, La Porta is well worth the trip. Philly's Chef Peter McAndrews (Paesano's) brings authentic Italian cuisine to the suburbs in this inviting spot with a rustic, Old World feel. Drawing inspiration from across Italy, the menu consists of wood-fired pizzas, pasta dishes (cacio e pepe, sweet potato gnocchi), Italian entrees (stuffed eggplant, Italian meatloaf) and a robust selection of daily specials. Pair your meal with a glass of wine and the sound of live music nightly, and you'll be glad you made the drive.

**PHOENIXVILLE****Morning: Steel City Coffeehouse & Brewery**

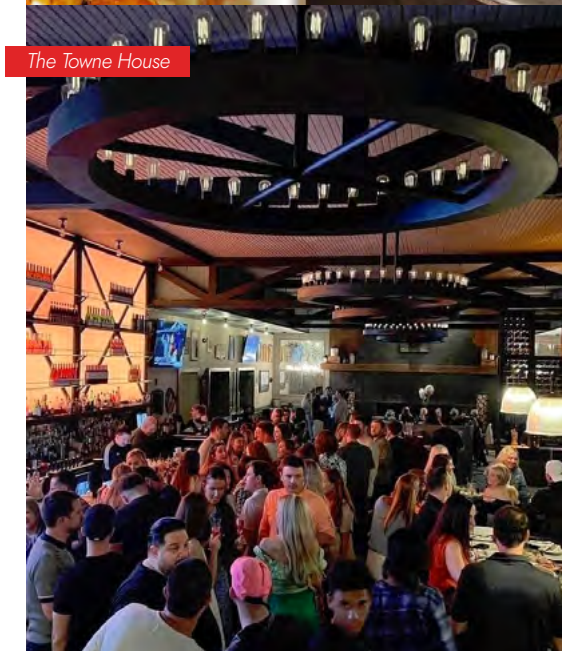
203 Bridge St., Phoenixville  
484-924-8425 / SteelCityBrews.com

Steel City, in the heart of and perhaps the heart of Phoenixville, is a top happy morning place. Along with great pastries, breakfast sandwiches and Hobo Ed's coffee, their

Dim Sum Mania

rye byob

The Towne House



breakfast bowls taste amazing and are a healthy, energizing start to the day. The vegan breakfast bowl serves up black beans, potatoes, asparagus and avocado with add-on options of spinach, mushroom, tomato and a heap of other goodness. As if the superb poached egg and potato bowl with asparagus and avocado isn't enough on its own, meat lovers can add kielbasa, bacon, sausage and more. Local art inside gets high marks, too.

**Morning: Nook & Kranny Kafe**

847 Valley Forge Rd., Phoenixville  
610-933-5393 / NookAndKrannyKafe.com

On the outskirts of Phoenixville, settle in for breakfast at aptly named Nook and Kranny Kafe. Shelves filled with teapots, miniature tea sets and seasonal bric-a-brac line the cozy yet bustling old home turned café. Order their Ultimate Breakfast Sandwich. A plate arrives at your table filled with a large ciabatta piled so high with fluffy eggs, bacon, fresh spinach, avocado, tomato and cheese — your choice of feta, American, provolone or cheddar — that it would delight even Dagwood. Eggs Benedict gets applause, too. Ask for a side of the best grits around.

**Noon: Bistro on Bridge**

212 Bridge St., Phoenixville  
610-935-7141 / BistroOnBridge.com

You can't miss it. Bistro on Bridge is at the center of town, across from the iconic Colonial Theatre. Weekday lunches, 11 to 3, feature a soup/salad/half sandwich (choose two) for under \$12. For soup, try French onion or

chicken and poblano pepper. For salad, how about a fried goat cheese or Southwestern taco salad? And sandwich, tuck into a Cubano or Caprese. Of course, pair your choices with a beer. Bistro has two dozen beers on draft, as well as many more in cans or bottles, plus a choice of wine, spirits and cocktails. What were you planning for the afternoon? Better cancel it.

**Night: Avlos**

258 Bridge St., Phoenixville  
610-455-4110 / AvlosGr.com

Avlos is a Chester County pick for delicious, authentic Greek cuisine. Two sisters who own and operate the restaurant have a passion for the food and recipes from their hometown village and talent. Start with *Dakos* — divine chunks of hearty barley rusk (bread) with feta, capers and tomato. Their lamb gets high praise — braised with artichokes or tender grilled chops with lemon potatoes — for high quality ingredients perfectly cooked and seasoned. End with *Loumidis Kafes*, traditional Greek coffee, and everything on the dessert menu. They're BYOB — take your own ouzo or wine from Mt. Olympus grapes. To go once is to return.

**Happy Hour: Sedona Taphouse**

131 Bridge St. #5, Phoenixville  
484-302-5714 / SedonaTaphouse.com

On weekdays, enjoy Happy Hour from 4 to 6, including half-price craft beers — almost 50 in Phoenixville (over 75 in West Chester, a sister location) — \$7 wine, \$8 truffle fries, guacamole or goat cheese and bruschetta, \$9 for an assortment of flatbreads and sliders,

and \$12 for mussels. Sedona's starter menu is stuffed with good ... stuff — desert fire jalapeños, spicy Thai shrimp, bacon wrapped scallops, for instance. If you stay for dinner, which you just might as you enjoy the laidback ambiance, the menu is stocked with delicious pastas, wood-grilled meats, burgers, tacos and sliders.

**Happy Hour: Root Down Brewing**

1 N. Main St., Phoenixville  
484-302-5407 / RootDownBrewing.com

In a plain brick and glass building, down the hill from Bridge Street, is Root Down Brewing. It doesn't advertise Happy Hour, but some would argue that every hour is happy. Inside, find a cavernous room, with polished wooden floors, a long bar and psychedelic graffiti covering the walls. Behind the bar find 20 drafts, including an imperial stout, dark ale and Root Down's own pilsner. Choose from plenty of shareables, pizzas and handhelds on the menu. There may be live music some nights, but on first Tuesdays, participate in a community science conversation or, on the last Sundays, enjoy its Punk Rock Flea Market.

**Don't Miss: G-Lodge**

1371 Valley Forge Rd., Phoenixville  
610-933-1646 / GLodgeCafe.com

This unassuming diner on Route 23 is a local institution, with a history dating back to the 1920s when it was a roadside stop between Philly and Reading and then morphed into a restaurant in the 1950s for Valley Forge Park visitors. Some may recognize it from its claim to fame cameo in M. Night Shyamalan's 2008



Malvern Buttery



Tonino's Pizza & Pasta Co.



Brick & Brew

thriller *The Happening* (appearing as The Filbert). The iconic rustic G-Lodge (some say the G is for the Gordon family that first owned it) serves breakfast and lunch — eggs Benedict to Dagwood breakfast sandwiches, plus homemade soups, grass-fed smash burgers, chicken and waffles — at the counter, tables and patio. Hang with the locals.

**MALVERN**

**Morning: Malvern Buttery**

233 E. King St., Malvern  
610-296-2534 / MalvernButtery.com

Order your coffee or favorite cup. Then make a beeline for one savory dish and one sweet. Our faves are the Buttery's quiche and — among the tempting selection of pastries, buns, scones, croissants and more, all from scratch — the "cruffin," the perfect cross of croissant and muffin. The two most notable cruffins: tantalizing chocolate and hazelnut or the tart and sweet with lemon curd and cherry jam. Hurry before they're gone! Or try the Buttery's quiche, creamy with sundried tomatoes and spinach or loaded with cheese and bacon. Then sit back to breakfast at a sunny table.

**Noon: Classic Diner**

352 Lancaster Ave., Malvern  
610-725-0515 / TheClassicDinerPA.com

Nothing is quite as satisfying as a good diner. And few do the upscale version as well as the Classic Diner. Its menu is extensive, from eggs at breakfast to burgers, classic sandwiches and assorted salads for lunch. Grilled chicken, salmon, crab cake, tuna or filet can be added to salads. Waffles and pancakes can be supercharged with bacon crumbles, chocolate chips, whipped cream, nuts or berries. Eggs can be

scrambled, poached or served over hard or easy, with cheeses and meats added, and everything from white bread to an English muffin to a sesame bagel. And the "stickiest" buns. A mainstay on the Main Line since 1995.

**Noon: Tonino's Pizza & Pasta Company**

235 Lancaster Ave., Malvern  
610-240-9566 / ToninosPizzaAndPasta.com

The Scotto family prides itself on 40 years' experience, beginning in Baltimore. Nonno Tony, the father, 10 years ago moved the family — Benny, Vinny, Massimo and Antonella — and their business, Tonino's — to Malvern's Lincoln Court Shopping Center, where they serve 18", 24" and huge 30" pizzas (about 20 specialty pizzas), an assortment of semolina pastas and oven specialties, such as eggplant parmigiana and lasagna, as well as seafood, chicken, veal, paninis and subs. Everything is homemade. Diners rave. One declares its pizza is the best in Pennsylvania!

**Night: Restaurant Alba**

7 W. King St., Malvern  
610-644-4009 / RestaurantAlba.com

Restaurant Alba has over 125 wines in its cellar. And that's just the beginning of an inventive culinary experience. You can start with a wood-grilled bruschetta — for example, grilled fig, whipped feta and honey. Or an antipasto like the fried eggplant, then a salad of roasted beets, whipped goat cheese, pickled grapes and almonds. Next feast on your choice of pastas — squab and foie gras ravioli or gemelli with wild mushrooms. For secondi, trout with pistachios, monkfish piccata, ribeye or suckling pig. Chef/owner Sean Weinberg and wife Kelly

were among the early restaurateurs committed to local, seasonal cooking and continue under that banner.

**Happy Hour: Brick & Brew**

400 E. King St., Malvern  
484-320-8688 / BrickNBrewPub.com

We love heading to Brick & Brew around Happy Hour, even though there's no special menu, to enjoy their everyday rotation of 14 beers on tap, wines or an imaginatively named cocktail — a Marilyn Monroe, perhaps, or a Capone. Looking for something stronger? Create your own flight, choosing from bourbons, whiskeys, tequilas and scotch. From the kitchen, order burnt ends, prosciutto fries, fried pickles, oven-fried wings or Moroccan meatballs. For more, feast on one of the handhelds, salads, wood-oven pizzas and featured dishes. Take in the planked wood and brick surroundings that are at once rustic and modern.

**Don't Miss: Dixie Picnic**

215 Lancaster Ave., Malvern  
484-320-8024 / DixiePicnic.com

Make today a picnic day! With recipes from the owners' Southern relatives, Dixie Picnic offers popular Bette's boxed lunches with a choice of sandwich, side, deviled egg and dessert — an "upcake" — upside down so you get twice the icing. You can't go wrong with a carrot cake upcake. For authenticity, select the Goldrush pimento cheese sandwich with Virginia ham or the bestselling chicken salad with pecans and grapes. Eating in? Go for the Georgia BBQ pulled pork with sweet potato fries. Don't be surprised if even patrons with Delco "hoagiemouth" accents finish dessert with a Southern drawl.



Bistro on Bridge



Avlos



Sedona Taphouse

## WAYNE

**Morning: Minella's Diner**

320 Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
610-687-1575 / [MinellasDiner.com](http://MinellasDiner.com)

For 25 years, Nick and Dennis Dellaportas have run Minella's, having bought it from Minella Zoto's son Tom. The brothers Dellaportas remodeled and doubled the capacity. Known especially for its breakfasts, today the restaurant serves breakfast all day and supports an outstanding bakery. Omelets — over 25 choices — are made with three eggs and served with home fries and toast. Or choose other classics: eggs Benedict, egg sandwiches, pancakes, French toast and waffles. Top off your breakfast with their desserts — cheesecakes, apple pie, blueberry pie, chocolate éclair, turnovers ... Mmmm!

**Noon: Di Bruno Bros.**

375 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
484-581-7888 / [DiBruno.com](http://DiBruno.com)

Walk into a bit of Philly's Italian Market that is Di Bruno Bros., known for its stellar cheese — *formaggi*. At its center, surrounded by olives, truffle oil and more, find the Alimentari Bar/Café, where menu options with cheese are a must. Order anything with their burrata — mozzarella and cream: burrata toast of Brussel sprouts with that melted goodness; exquisite burrata and berry salad with greens, orange, pine nuts and pistachio vinaigrette; or Roman pizza with burrata, prosciutto, tomatoes and arugula. Take home some sought-after Black Lava cashews to pair with their Brabander

Di Bruno Bros.



Reserve — aged goat gouda with abundant spectacular, crunchy crystals — that arrives only around Thanksgiving, so plan for next year.

**Night: Rosalie**

139 E. Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
610-977-0600 / [RosalieWayne.com](http://RosalieWayne.com)

Doesn't Italian soul food sound like exactly what you need for a satisfying dinner? Enjoy that and more inside the sumptuous dining rooms of Rosalie in the Wayne Hotel (the wonderful veranda is better saved for warmer seasons). Vegetarians have their own menu (with vegan options), which is easy since so many dishes are veggie based. Have a piccolo plate or pizza in the fireside lounge or dine on the many pastas — from mushroom gnocchi to short rib rigatoni — and secondi choices from bronzino to lamb shank. Dessert? Yes, there's tiramisu, but also olive oil cake and a chocolate hazelnut/salted caramel torte!

**Tea: A Taste of Britain**

503 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
610-971-0390 / [ATOBritain.com](http://ATOBritain.com)

We added a special category to let you live out your *Bridgerton* fantasies with afternoon tea at A Taste of Britain. Choose from an extensive list of teas, including 13 black teas (Earl Grey, English and Irish breakfast, Scottish Highlands) as well as several oolong, green, white and herbal teas, all served in ornate teacups. Pair your tea with classic British fare like Welsh rarebit, Cornish pasties, tea sandwiches and cheese toasties (grilled cheese), warm scones and the Ploughman's Platter, the chef's selection

Rosalie



of English cheeses and accoutrements. Afterwards, check out the shop for British groceries, loose-leaf tea and tea accessories, plus a unique selection of British gifts.

**Happy Hour: Autograph Brasserie**

503 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
610-964-2588 / [AutographBrasserie.com](http://AutographBrasserie.com)

Owner Marty Grim and Executive Chef Jim Davidson invite you, Monday through Friday, 4 to 6, to enjoy their special Happy Hour menu when you can eat and drink for less. Wednesdays are even better. Ladies enjoy Happy Hour drink prices until 9. Grab a \$7 beer, like Hoegaarden's witbier, or \$8 wine, including Albertini's pinot grigio. Autograph's bartenders are happy to mix a specialty \$9 cocktail, like Just a Little Chill or a Red-Headed Stepchild. Food choices range from \$9 to \$15. Make sure to wander among the countless autographed photos that festoon the walls and toast the singers, actors, authors, politicians and sports stars there.

**Don't Miss: At the Table**

118 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
610-964-9700 / [AtTheTableBYOB.com](http://AtTheTableBYOB.com)

At once a top Instagrammable spot for its impeccably prepared plates and a fine dining destination for the culinary talent, At the Table now has a larger kitchen, a four-seat oyster bar and four times the dining space for its growing fanbase. Chefs Alex Hardy and Tara Buzan-Hardy are visible in the kitchen as they prepare their new, upgraded and amazing Chef's six-course tasting menu (\$125), featuring sea-

At the Table



sonal ingredients and artistic creations. For a la carte, choose gems like wild mushroom toast to start and Big Glory Bay salmon or NY strip and braised beef cheeks as mains. Although they're losing the BYOB part of their name, diners can still bring their own or order a cocktail.

## OTHER MAIN LINE

**Morning: The Black Cat Cafe**

42 Berkley Rd., Devon  
610-688-1930 / [TheBlackCatCafeDevon.com](http://TheBlackCatCafeDevon.com)

What's better than breakfast with cats? This cozy café is home to adoptable cats from the Pet Adoption and Lifecare Society (PALS), one of the largest cat rescues in the area. From 9 to 2, feast on breakfast faves, many with on-theme names like the Garfield Sampler (an egg, pancake, French toast, sausage, bacon and home fries), Tigger's Caribbean French Toast and the Puss 'n Boots (creamed chipped beef on toast). The standout may be the pancake board, with pancakes, sausage, bacon, berries and more toppings. With 100% of proceeds benefitting PALS, eating at Black Cat makes you feel good as you help kitties in need.

**Noon: Terrain Garden Cafe**

138 W. Lancaster Ave., Devon  
877-583-7724 / [ShopTerrain.com](http://ShopTerrain.com)

Ah to be a lady who lunches! Then an obvious destination would be mid-Main Line at Terrain's Garden Cafe, set in Devon Yard, complete with a garden center and Anthropologie store for post-lunch shopping. The sun- and plant-filled greenhouse space can make diners feel like well-tended orchids. And the seasonal menu (actually called a brunch, not lunch menu) with select local produce, cheeses and meats from purveyors listed on the menu makes you feel healthier for reading it. Quinoa fritters, beet and burrata salad, wild mushroom frittata, flowerpot bread. Plus coffees and teas, nonalcoholic garden sips and, happily, garden cocktails (pomegranate mule, fig leaf daiquiri and the real dill bloody Mary). Save us a seat.

**Night: Nectar**

1091 Lancaster Ave., Berwyn  
610-725-9000 / [TasteNectar.com](http://TasteNectar.com)

A tall silk-screened Buddha set against stone walls and high ceilings oversees your meal. Your waiters are knowledgeable and patient. You'll feel exalted, even before you order. The late, great Patrick Feury founded Nectar as a fusion of French and Asian cuisines, selecting the finest and seasonal seafoods, beef, lamb,

pork, poultry, fruit and vegetables available, and passed his recipes to Executive Chef Kenny Huang. Begin with a cocktail. Continue with dumplings or sushi. Then, for the main course, try lobster, rack of lamb or tea-smoked venison with sides of lo mein, fried rice or pad Thai. Take your time. Savor. And leave sated.

**Happy Hour: The Pullman Restaurant & Bar**

39 Morris Ave., Bryn Mawr  
610-727-0777 / [ThePullmanRestaurant.com](http://ThePullmanRestaurant.com)

Executive Chef Corey Baver welcomes you to the "Social Hour." Don't worry, you'll feel happy with live music and \$10 drinks (martinis, negronis, old fashioned, margaritas), \$4 beers, along with small plates (lobster bites, mussels, tuna nachos, grilled shrimp) for under \$12. Served only at the bars, and only Tuesday through Friday, 4:30 to 6:30. Pullman is located in the old Bryn Mawr train station, where Tango used to be. Enjoy an elevated experience — cozy, intimate, sophisticated — as you watch the trains go by.

**Don't Miss: Amada Radnor**

555 E. Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
484-429-2158 / [AmadaRestaurant.com](http://AmadaRestaurant.com)

How lucky we were when James Beard-winner Jose Garces opened a third Amada in 2023 in the Radnor Financial Center, seating 250, and offering the "Taste of Andalucia." His extensive network of 10 restaurants in Philadelphia and Atlantic City include two Amadas, four Buena Onda Baja Taquerias (one in Radnor), Garces Eats at the Wells Fargo Center, the Olde Bar and Village Whiskey. Don't miss a chance to enjoy 10 kinds of tapas, including spiced lamb, Galician-style octopus and crab-stuffed peppers, plus sausage, prawns, lamb on the grill, paellas and, with notice, a roast suckling pig. Wow!

**Hymie's**

342 Montgomery Ave., Merion Station  
610-664-3544 / [Hymies.com](http://Hymies.com)

If you want to reenact the deli scene from *When Harry Met Sally*, don't go to Katz's. Instead, head for Hymie's on the Main Line, and don't get Sally's turkey sandwich. This classic New York-style deli wows fans, including Craig LaBan, with dishes like a corned beef/pastrami combo called the Shmoozer. Go for all-day breakfasts (until 3), all the deli classic — chopped liver, lox spread, knishes, cheesecake — and all the deli-licious sandwiches. Even after 60+ years, Hymie's keeps it fresh with açai bowls and ... gluten-free bagels.

Terrain Garden Cafe



Nectar



Amada Radnor





## WEST CHESTER

**Morning: La Baguette Magique**

202 W. Market St., West Chester  
484-947-5024

Facebook.com/MagicBaguette

It's not easy to deliver authenticity — whether in an Italian trattoria, English pub or French bakery. But step inside La Baguette Magique and you'll almost swear you've left West Chester and been transported to Paris. Opened in 2015 by Lyon native Catherine Sessions, this gem is run today by Maria van Schaijik and Anthony Andiaro, the masterminds behind nationally acclaimed Andiaro. Despite its new American roots, La Baguette Magique retains that unhurried vibe of a French café where the glass shelves are stocked with a glittering assortment of creamy pastries and buttery croissants, bins overflow with loaves of fresh-baked bread and rolls, and patrons sit to enjoy a café au lait and a conversation to start their day.

**Morning: Penn's Table**

100 W. Gay St., West Chester  
610-696-0677 / PennsTable.com

Sometimes all a morning calls for are some perfectly cooked eggs, a stack of banana pancakes and a bottomless cup of coffee. On those particular days, walk over to Penn's Table, the Gay Street mainstay that first began frying up breakfast and lunch classics for residents in 1976. From the McGaffneys to the Marion family to the Lucas family in 2017, ownership has traded hands a few times over the years,

but the dedication to friendly service, quality uncomplicated food and making sure you have a smooth morning has remained the same for almost 50 years.

**Morning: DK Diner**

609 E. Gay St., West Chester  
610-692-2946 / DKDiner.com

At some point in every road-trip movie, the protagonists enter the local diner where everyone knows everyone else. That would be the DK Diner on Gay Street, before you hit the business district. Opened in 1952, the decor maintains all the period details — chrome accents, neon lights and vinyl booths. Expect to be greeted by a friendly waitress who will call you “hon.” So, when you need some diner ambiance, grab a seat at the bar and join the debate over the strength of Penn State's secondary, while you fork through a stack of blueberry hotcakes. Just don't forget your cash — another throwback to the '50s.

**Brunch: Roots Cafe**

133 E. Gay St., West Chester  
610-455-0100 / RootsCafeWC.com

As any chef can tell you, good food can be traced to its source. For some, this means scouring the Earth for ingredients. Others believe that local is best. This farm-to-fork mantra has been driving Roots Cafe Chefs/owners John “JT” Hearn and Dan Merola since they opened in 2013. While the menu changes frequently, nearly 90% of the ingredients are sourced from area farms. For brunch, order a cup of West Chester's own Turk's Head coffee

and a plate of French toast bites for the table, while you pour over the rest of the seasonally tailored menu. Even the beer, wine and art on the walls are local here.

**Brunch: Two Birds Cafe**

653 Downingtown Pk., West Chester  
610-222-6200 / TwoBirdsCafeWC.com

Last year, West Chester's Two Birds Cafe was named one of Yelp's Top 100 Places to Eat. It came in at #51 thanks to a slew and a half of 5-star reviews. The acclaim is not surprising to those who frequent the quaint Downingtown Pike cafe known for its pillowy eggs Benedict and fresh-baked everything — including their amazing cinnamon buns. From the rustic feel to the friendly staff to the hearty farmer's omelet, Two Birds is everything you want a brunch place to be. The only complaint — wait times can get a bit long on weekends. So show up early!

**Noon: Limoncello Ristorante**

9 N. Walnut St., West Chester  
610-436-6230 / LimoncelloRestaurant.com

The Limoncello lunch buffet is one of many compelling reasons to indulge in West Chester's dining scene. Although it was launched decades ago, it remains to this day one of the best values in midday dining. Tuesday through Friday from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., fans flock to this welcoming Italian destination to pile plates with fresh antipasti, grilled veggies, pizzas and, of course, pasta ... and more pasta. The warm, rustic atmosphere provides a welcome respite from a busy day but with ready-to-serve platters awaiting action that work-break can be as long or as short as you need it to be.

**Noon: Teca**

38 E. Gay St., West Chester  
610-738-8244 / TecaRestaurants.com

You probably know Teca for dinner, but if you haven't stopped in for lunch, you're missing out. Not convinced? It's in the name. “Teca” is the shared overlap between two words key to understanding this locally owned Italian restaurant — *paninoteca*, panini bar, and *enoteca*, wine bar. While *paninoteca* encompasses the restaurant's embrace of lighter fare or tapas-style dining, it's the actual paninis that should have you pulling up to the bar at lunch. Try the Cubano with roast pork or the Vegetariano, and if the day is light, add a glass of red to the order. You'll see why Italians favor their midday meal.

**Noon: Mercato**

33 W. Market St., West Chester  
610-701-6326 / Mercato-WC.com

In Italy, lunch, not dinner, triumphs as the premier meal of the day. So it should be no surprise the lunch menu at Mercato features piles of fresh pasta and a full list of favorite Italian-American classics, like eggplant parmigiana and chicken piccata. But your best bet may be Neapolitan Chef Alfredo Giannaccari's version of his hometown-style pizza. When the weather warms, nab a table on their popular patio overlooking Market Street and order a round of the Diavola. In that one fire-roasted pie, you'll enjoy all the chef's signatures, including cured meats, hand-pulled mozzarella and fresh-baked bread.

**Night: Spence Cafe**

131 N. High St., West Chester  
610-918-1272 / SpenceCafe

For over a century, West Chester's dining scene has been anchored by a “Spence” café. In 1896, James Spence opened the original Spence's Central Cafe and Restaurant on Gay Street. Then exactly a century later, acclaimed Chef Andrew Patton opened his Spence Café around the corner on High Street. While the location has changed and the vision evolved over the years, the quality of the food and richness of the dining experience have never faltered. In 2021, Spence was named to OpenTable's Top 100 Restaurants list. Start your evening with the Baked Oysters Spence. End it with the crème brûlée. Where you go in between is completely up to you.

**Night: Bar Avalon**

116 E. Gay St., West Chester  
610-436-4100 / AvalonRestaurant.net

From the music selection to the cocktail menu to the shared plates, Chef/owner John Brandt-Lee has crafted Bar Avalon to be an escape from the day's stresses. It's probably why this Gay Street spot is among the area's most visited destinations by out-of-town celebrities. If you have time — and can find a space — start your evening at the bar. Their smoked Manhattan is a sight. The Paper Plane is a classic. Move to your table feeling relaxed and order the baked mussels to share and the penne vodka just for yourself. As Chef Brandt-Lee says, “It's a classic and we almost have it down.”

**Night: Pietro's Prime Steakhouse & Martini Bar**

125 W. Market St., West Chester  
484-760-6100 / PietrosPrime.com

Pietro's Prime, West Chester's premier steakhouse, has been delighting diners with aged

meats and perfectly poured martinis since 2007. While James Bond may have preferred his cocktail shaken not stirred and with lemon, many of today's fans are partial to a perfectly balanced espresso martini sipped at Pietro's bustling mahogany bar. In the background, live music from a favorite local band. A crisp drink followed by a classic wedge salad, the house signature filet and a slice of homemade peanut butter pie, well, that's a night worthy of celebration. Whether that occasion is monumental or another week completed is entirely up to you.

**Happy Hour: Saloon 151**

151 W. Gay St., West Chester  
610-701-8489 / Saloon151.com

For eight years now, Saloon 151 has been the go-to location for sipping whiskey. Stocking nearly 200 different varieties of the spirit from around the globe, the bar created a special niche that matched the growing interest in stronger spirits. (They added tequila in sister bar next door.) Stop by for Happy Hour drinks and weekly food specials (Monday–Friday, 5 to 7) or the changing daily drink specials, from Guinness to Tito's. Can't make the earlier hours? Try the Late Night Menu (10 to 11) with all kinds of wings, fries, tots and jumbo soft pretzel. Or go any time for a Saloon old fashioned and crowd-pleasing tacos.

**Happy Hour: Más Mexicali Cantina**

102 E. Market St., West Chester  
610-918-6280 / MasMexicali.com

A successful Happy Hour needs three things: a festive location with plenty of room to relax, sharable plates of fresh-made appetizers and drinks you can raise a glass to. So, it's no

La Baguette Magique



Roots Cafe



Limoncello Ristorante



Teca



Spence Cafe



Pietro's Prime





Más Mexicali Cantina

wonder, Más Mexicali Cantina on Market Street ranks among the borough's best Happy Hour locations. Inside it's a bold design with rock n' roll details, but outside is where Más really shines. When you get a chance, head up to the borough's only rooftop bar. Grab a seat at one of the Skittle-colored picnic tables, order a signature frozen margarita and a bowl of the Rockin' Guac or some Mexicali Fries for the table and just wait for your friends to show up.

**Happy Hour: Slow Hand**

30 N. Church St., West Chester  
484-999-8638 / SlowHand-WC.com

Perhaps, more than most, Slow Hand has an urban feel. The polished granite bar, exposed brick, white tile backdrop, signature image of Conway Twitty. It hits all the boxes for a refuge from the world. And while the bar staff is friendly, there's plenty of opportunity to retreat for a private conversation. The sophisticated interior carries over to the Happy Hours menu, offering \$8 old fashioned and negronis. Try their deviled eggs with blackened shrimp, hush puppies and Nashville chicken sliders. Forgoing alcohol for dry January? Swap for a refreshing cucumber and mint Mariposa.

**Happy Hour Outside Town: Levante Brewing Co.**

208 Carter Dr. Ste. 2, West Chester  
LevanteBrewing.com

Down a winding road of an industrial park you'll find popular local craft brewer Levante. While the location may not be where you expect, the experience at the former workshop-turned-tasting room is just what you'd hope. Behind the generous bar, you'll find 20 taps rotating through some of their freshest offerings and a knowledgeable bartender ready to answer all your questions. While Levante doesn't have a kitchen, food trucks keeps the



Levante Brewing Co.



Four Dogs Tavern



Pizza West Chester

spirits in balance, and a more-the-merrier vibe (dogs included) make a fun post-work hang.

**Happy Hour Outside Town:**

**Four Dogs Tavern**

1300 W. Strasburg Rd., West Chester  
610-692-4367 / TheFourDogsTavern.com

You go to Four Dogs Tavern in Marshallton for the atmosphere. Whether you choose a table by the glow of the fireplace or a seat on the patio in the summer, Chef/owner David Cox has found a way to harness (pun intended) the charm of these former stables. Rich wood-paneled walls, simple slat-back chairs and unadorned tables create an English pub experience — a perfect counterpoint to the upscale elegance of the neighboring Marshallton Inn. Settle in with a pint and some pulled pork sliders, or if you prefer, a glass of red and their loaded charcuterie board to share. Whatever you choose know you'll be well taken care of.

**Don't Miss: Iron Hill Brewery**

3 W. Gay St., West Chester  
610-738-9600 / IronHillBrewery.com

It's been a quarter century since Iron Hill owners Kevin Finn, Mark Edelson and Kevin Davies signed the lease for the old Woolworth Building in the heart of downtown West Chester and launched the revitalization. Since that historic moment, Iron Hill has built a reputation for delivering an "all are welcome" environment throughout our area with a dependable menu, casual vibe and rotating selection of award-winning beers. For the love of craft brewing, this is a must-visit stop for some dining history. Plus it's the most award-winning brewery east of the Mississippi. Right downtown!

**Don't Miss: Pizza West Chester**

136 E. Market St., West Chester  
@PizzaWestChester

Pizza phenom Pizza West Chester is not owner Speer Madanat's first experience making pies. He and brother Joe Madanat also run Joey's Pizza in Thorndale. It's likely that on those Thorndale pies Speer perfected his decidedly uncomplicated process: a light, thin crust topped with the best ingredients, and finished with a healthy char and a gentle flurry of Grana Padano. The operation, while not accommodating, is simple as well. No phone or website, no credit cards and certainly no QR codes or pizzas of the week. Just place your order — cheese, pepperoni or white — and wait, cash in hand for that box of perfection to slide across the counter.

**DELAWARE**

**Morning: Centreville Place:**

**Cafe + Market**

5800 Kennett Pk., Centreville  
302-777-4911 / CentrevillePlace.com

Located in a converted historic home, this charming spot is the perfect place to start your day. Grab a coffee or tea and a delicious pastry for a light snack, or bring some friends for a homecooked breakfast, served until noon. Menu highlights include the Sammy (smoked salmon topped with wasabi or plain cream cheese, capers, red onion, tomato and cucumber on a bagel or in a wrap), avocado toast with tomatoes, feta and balsamic glaze, and the French breakfast — a fresh baguette with brie, jam and butter, with a side of seasonal fruit. Now you're ready for anything.

**Noon: Buckley's Tavern**

5812 Kennett Pk., Centreville  
302-656-9776 / BuckleysTavern.com

When Coley du Pont needed a chef for Buckley's Tavern, a famed hangout frequented by artists, sports celebrities and folks from Delaware's chateau country, he found Tom Hannum, recently retired from the Hotel Du Pont's kitchen. As executive chef, Hannum manages an iconic spot that's both comfortable and casual. For lunch, we recommend comfort food: macaroni and cheese, chicken wings or nachos, followed by a wild game burger, Reuben or crab cake. The tavern has an extensive list of beers and a solid selection of scotch, bourbon, rum and rye. Savor your meal, but keep your eyes peeled. Who's that pulling up in pajamas in a Rolls-Royce?

**Night: Bardea Food & Drink**

620 N. Market St., Wilmington  
302-426-2069 / BardeaWilmington.com

He won't drown your pastas in red gravy. But the James Beard semifinalist and Executive Chef Antimo DiMeo's restaurant does do Italian — called "innovative Italian" — with imaginative interpretations of the country's cuisine, using local ingredients. Sample small plates of halibut with lobster bisque, charred octopus and washugyu tri-tip. Pastas — spaghetti, busiate, fusilloni, mafaltini, casarecce, ravioli, messe paccheri — are all deliciously inviting. Chicken, ribeye, fish of the day and spare ribs can be prepared for the table. Choose an Italian wine from its long list. But, eat slowly and save room, if you can, for cheesecake and a dessert wine.

**Night: La Fia**

421 N. Market St., Wilmington  
302-543-4474 / LaFiaWilmington.com

Formerly the head chef at Domaine Hudson, and a James Beard award semifinalist for Best Chef in the Mid-Atlantic Region, Executive Chef Dwain Kalup heads the kitchen of this small restaurant in downtown Wilmington. Everything from the Brazilian fish stew to the ravioli with oxtail is homemade using local ingredients. For starters, choose spice-crusted lamb ribs, crispy duck or chicken liver mouse. Finish with white chocolate mousse or yuzu semifreddo, an olive oil cake with Thai granita and lime curd. Wine or beer is from a carefully selected list, as are creatively named cocktails — Not in Kansas Anymore, Don't Fig with My Heart. One diner called his the "best meal of my life."

**Happy Hour: Merchant Bar**

426 N. Market St., Wilmington  
302-502-3385 / MerchantBarWilmington.com

In Wilmington, on Wednesday through Saturday, 5 to 7 p.m., head to the Merchant Bar for an outstanding Happy Hour. It's right downtown, modern and hip, blocks from the Opera House and the Playhouse, a short walk from the river. Try some appetizers, ranging from \$3 to \$10, like guacamole, salsa and chips, fried calamari and tuna crudo. Sip a well-made old fashioned or margarita for \$10, or the \$5 house red or white wine. Tempted to stay for dinner? Korean fried chicken bao buns, duck moo shu and crab pad thai make that the smart choice.

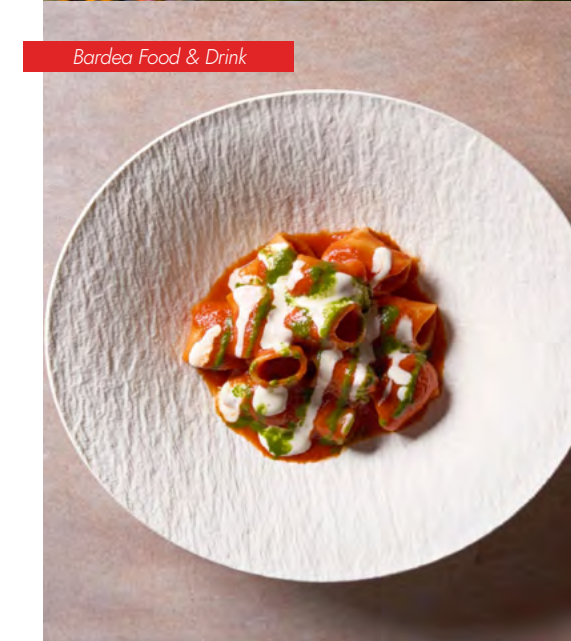
**Don't Miss: Le Cavalier at Hotel Du Pont**

42 W. 11th St., Wilmington  
302-594-3100 / HotelDuPont.com

USAToday Top 10 Hotel Restaurant. The Hotel DuPont's chandeliers, ornate carved-wood ceilings, paintings and marble tables are a sumptuous backdrop for French African cuisine at Le Cavalier that's a must for residents and visitors to the Brandywine Valley. Brunch on salmon tartine with capers and crisp cucumbers or crab sandwiches and frites. Dine on duck Provençal. Word is that even the burgers possess an air of elegance there. Between courses check out the players' balcony, where piano and sax of yesteryear provided live music. Back at the table for dessert, reveal in chocolate mousse with berry compote, paper-thin golden bric tuile and white chocolate pearls that add a delightful crunch. Funny how "perfection" is the same word in French and English. ♦



Buckley's Tavern



Bardea Food & Drink



Merchant Bar

# MORNING BREWS & SWEET TREATS



Mimi's Tea Cottage



Cafesphere



Twin Valley Coffee



Pâtisserie Lola

Our area is awash in new stops to add to your morning routine. With cafes, coffee and tea houses, plus doughnuts, donuts, pâtisseries and bakeries, we should be starting our days caffeinated and happy.

Media's **Cafesphere** is the newest addition to the town's morning spots (25 E. State St.), serving up sustainability along with coffee, matcha, chai, raspberry herbata tea plus sweet and savory breakfast and lunch options. Baguettes, croissants and mousse cake give a French vibe, and the cozy fireplace nook and rooftop deck make you want to stay all day.

It's called a café, but the **Butter Pecan Café** in Coatesville's Small Business Incubator (228 Lincoln Hwy. E.) is more of a Southern cooking/dessert destination, showcasing meal-cappers like banana pudding, 7-Up cake, sweet potato pie, peach cobbler and, of course, butter pecan ice cream. Starting with Friday and Saturday hours, look for them to expand hours and menu, where everything is served with love ... and butter pecan ice cream.

With two new locations (200 River Station Blvd., Downingtown & 120 N. Church St., West Chester), **Twin Valley Coffee** is bringing their signature, fully customizable nitro cold brews (visit on cold brew Wednesdays) along with the classics (from espresso shots to chai lattes) and seasonal drinks (like PSL and maple brown sugar). They've come a long way from

roasting coffee in a hot air corn popper and a roadside stand!

Need more coffee choices? **Lacava Coffee Company** (104 E. Gay St.), across from the old West Chester Post Office, brews up your morning caffeine, with beans imported directly from Honduras and roasted nearby in Lancaster County. And pick up a bar of single-origin chocolate from Yojoa.

Prefer tea? Then **Mimi's Tea Cottage** in West Chester (50 S. High St.) is just the spot. With an English-garden inspired interior, plus touches like a British phone booth, this new shop can serve 50 fans a traditional full afternoon tea with 35 types of tea (bottomless cups), tea sandwiches, scones and dainty desserts made in house and served on a three-tiered tray (\$32.99).

You spell doughnuts, I spell donuts, but both versions are available from new locations. Looking for artisanal, handmade, all-natural goodies (no dyes, corn syrup, GMOs), then head to **Wanderlust Doughnuts** in Kennett Square (119 W. State St.) for a creative selection of about 20 styles a day — dark chocolate sea salt, lemon/raspberry crumble, mascarpone filled.

**Rose's Little Donuts** in West Chester (22 N. Darlington St.) promises fresh donuts, coffee and espresso with its Thanksgiving week opening. Check the changing weekly lineup of choices — cookies & cream, chocolate sea salt

caramel and coffee. Yep, a coffee-flavored donut. Genius. Also in West Chester and also with a late 2023 opening, **Happy Bakery** (formerly known as City Buns, 34 S. High St.) has its yummy sticky buns along with new treats like banana pudding, citrus olive oil cake and the world's best chocolate cake (three layers).

And the *pièce de résistance*, **Pâtisserie Lola** brings beaucoup French pastries to Kennett (219 E. State St.), all made onsite and with sustainability in mind. Feast your eyes on highlights from a changing menu, including pastel macarons, flaky croissants, plus treasures like opera cakes, lemon meringue tarts, nonnettes, sablé cookies, and don't forget the madeleines. Oh là là. ♦



Wanderlust Doughnuts