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from the  
EDITOR

Happy New Year! For 20 years, *County Lines* has celebrated each new year by recognizing outstanding restaurants in our annual Local Dining Guide.

The cover feature, “Best of the Best” represents the work of our whole writing team to highlight over 100 outstanding local eateries and drinkeries. We recognize the stars, steakhouses, new restaurants, bars and breweries, along with top spots to dine morning, noon, night and for happy hour in towns in our area. Plus, we share new places to start your day with a brew and a treat. Associate Editor Marci Tomassone adds a Dining Guide with even more recommendations.

This issue also includes upcoming food events — festivals, restaurant weeks, beer gardens, weekends of chocolate and wine, as well as the upcoming 22nd annual Taste of Phoenixville fundraiser on January 18.

Wellington Bookshop’s Mimi Liberi suggests new cookbooks to consider in “Out with the Old, In With the New,” Assistant Editor Shannon Montgomery finds relief from cooking duties with many options in “Ready-Made Meals,” and Courtney Diener-Stokes shares her thoughts about the importance of food, family and tradition in the aptly titled “Family Food Traditions Worth Keeping (or Tossing Out).”

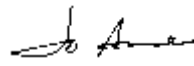
In “Sustainable Sustenance,” Brittany Knick of ChristianaCare provides six tips to reduce our impact on global warming and simultaneously improve our health. In other words, win-win.

Olga and Brian Dressler, of Dressler Estate in Downingtown, offer us “Hard Cider 101.” What is cider? Why should we try it? We bet they’ll convince you to join the cider fanbase.

And as always, we have plenty of Family Fun and the Best Local Events to start off the year and work off any calories you gain from sampling local dining spots.

We hope you enjoy this delectable issue. Thank you for reading this month and all year long.

Our very best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year!

  
Jo Anne Durako  
Editor

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January 2024

Volume XLVII Number 5

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## Good to Know

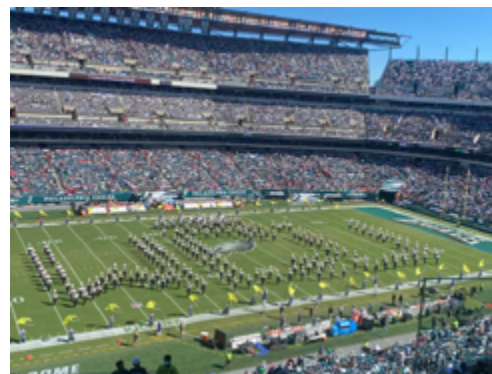
Just a few things we'd thought you'd like to know this month

### New Year, New Dinner Menu.

This month, take a cooking class through Chester County Lifelong Learning to spice up dinner. Craving soup? Try the Spicy Black Bean Soup class on January 6 or more soups, like Japanese Deluxe Miso Soup, on January 20. Check out “Wonderful Winter Vegetables” on January 27 for heart-healthy dishes like Swedish root mash, Irish colcannon and more. Classes are taught at instructor Jessica Lowenadler Sontag’s home in Malvern. [CCLifeLearn.org](http://CCLifeLearn.org).



**Rams to Roses.** If you’re watching TV on New Year’s Day, you just might see a familiar marching band. On January 1, West Chester University’s RamBand is marching in the **135th annual Rose Parade** in Pasadena, with 350+ WCU students playing along the 5.5-mile parade route. West Chester is one of only 20 marching bands chosen to perform. Tune it at 11 a.m. to see the RamBand, horses, floral floats and more before the Rose Bowl game. [TournamentOfRoses.com](http://TournamentOfRoses.com).



**Skate Date.** Embrace the January cold and try your hand — or foot, rather — at ice skating. **Flight on Ice** is open through February for winter family fun. With food trucks, fire pits, heated tents, plus a beer, wine and spirits garden, there’s plenty to do. Catch the theme nights, discount promotions and live music events throughout the season. BYO skates or rent for \$10. *4901 West Chester Pk., Newtown Square. [FlightOnIce.com](http://FlightOnIce.com).*



**Rock On.** Put another dime in the jukebox and celebrate **Women Rock! Day** on January 3. Honor the women who broke the mold and made the male-dominated rock genre their own. Head to a local vinyl shop like Creep Records in West Chester for Joan Jett, Janis Joplin or Tina Turner tunes. On the ride home, headbang to “I Love Rock ‘N’ Roll” and be grateful for the women who made the music industry what it is today.

**The Bronze Resolution.** “Eat better” and “exercise more” are the top two New Year’s resolutions that most folks forget by Super Bowl Sunday. If you’re looking for more tangible results, try the third most popular resolution and **get organized**. Color-code your closet, declutter that junk drawer, clear the fridge of holiday leftovers and maybe treat yourself to a new planner while you’re at it. You’ll be ready for a more productive year in no time.





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## [ January Picks ] Our Picks for top events this month

### Greater Philadelphia Spring Home Show

January 5-7



Be inspired, motivated and excited for your upcoming home improvement project, whether it's a minor renovation or a major remodel. *Valley Forge Casino Resort, 1160 First Ave., King of Prussia. Fri., 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sat., 10 to 8; Sun., 10 to 5. \$10. Free passes at GreaterPhillyHomeShows-VF.com.*

### Philadelphia Auto Show

January 12-21

The 2024 show features over 700 vehicles with new vehicle debuts, concepts, exotics, tuners and antique automobiles.

Food and beverages available for purchase.

**Jan. 12,** The Black Tie Tailgate benefits the Dept. of Nursing and Clinical Care Services at CHOP, 7 to 11:30 p.m., \$325.

*PA Convention Center, 1101 Arch St., Philadelphia. Sat.-Mon., 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; weekdays, noon to 9 p.m.; Sun., 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. \$12-\$20. PhillyAutoShow.com.*



### KATS Annual British Panto

*The Princess, the Pea, and the Planet Zog*

January 19 & 20

The annual British panto brings lots of audience participation in this thinly-veiled children's fairytale, loaded with local commentary, British humor and some outrageous costumes for good measure — fun for the whole family. *Kennett High School, 100 E. South St., Kennett Square. Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Sat., 2 & 7:30 p.m. \$5-\$15. CallKATS.org.*



### Scottish Burns Supper & Whisky Tasting

January 25



Celebrate the birth of Scotland's beloved poet, Robert Burns, with a hearty meal of traditional Scottish fare, including haggis prepared by the Millstone Café's Executive Chef Justin Rumsey along with a tasting selection of single malt whiskies paired with each course. A bagpiper will perform Scottish music as the haggis is brought to the table. *Brandywine River Museum of Art, 1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford. 6 to 9 p.m. \$150. Brandywine.org.*

### The Grand Wilmington Presents Erth's Dinosaur Zoo Live on Stage

January 25

This is a breathtaking tour that begins in prehistoric Australia. You'll observe, meet and interact with a collection of amazingly lifelike dinosaurs and other creatures presented in a theatrical performance that will thrill and entertain. *818 N. Market St., Wilmington. 6 p.m. \$40-\$61. TheGrandWilmington.org.*





# best Local Events

## FAMILY FUN

**THROUGH JANUARY 2**  
Herr's Annual Christmas Lights Display. Pile the family in the car and drive through Herr's corporate campus to enjoy the holiday display featuring more than 600,000 lights. 20 Herr Dr., Nottingham. Dusk till dawn. Free. Visitors should stay in cars for safety. 800-344-3777; Herrs.com.



**THROUGH JANUARY 7**  
Brandywine Railroad Holiday Train Display. This iconic O-gauge model train display features trains running on 2,000 feet of track and includes locomotives, passenger and freight trains, and trolleys that pass through a small village, a farm, factories, a drive-in movie theater and even a carnival. Brandywine River Museum of Art, 1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford. Daily, 9:30 to 5. \$10–\$25. Brandywine.org.



**THROUGH JANUARY 7**  
A Longwood Christmas. "A Very Retro Christmas" is the theme this year. Reminisce amid a vintage Christmas street scene, make new memories amid dazzling light displays—including some super-sized surprises—and revel in the radiance of retro at every turn. 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square. \$16–\$30. Timed tickets req. LongwoodGardens.org.

**THROUGH JANUARY 7**  
Yuletide at Winterthur. Explore the house decorated in all its finery with its signature traditions including the dried flower tree, artistic Christmas trees inspired by Ann Lowe gowns and a spectacular table set for Christmas dinner. 5105 Kennett Pk. (Rt. 52), Winterthur, DE. Timed tickets required. Winterthur.org.

**THROUGH FEBRUARY 26**  
Flight on Ice. See Good To Know.

**THROUGH FEBRUARY 26**  
Franklin Institute Exhibits. Now open, Wondrous Space—journey through the cosmos as you explore this immersive, multisensory, two-story exhibit. Opening in Feb., The Art of the Brick exhibit by artist Nathan Sawaya is a collection of inspiring artworks made exclusively from the LEGO® brick. 222 N. 20th St., Philadelphia. Daily 9:30 to 5. \$21–\$25. FI.edu.

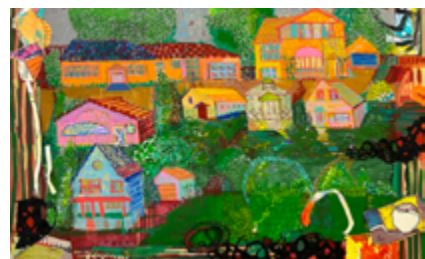


**JANUARY 5–7**  
Jurassic Quest. This is a huge and very popular dino event, with unique and exciting experiences for the whole family. Observe the herd of life size dinosaurs including Apatosaurus, Spinosaurus and an incredible T.rex. Greater Philadelphia Expo Center at Oaks, 100 Station Ave., Oaks. Fri, noon to 8; Sat, 9 to 8; Sun, 9 to 7. \$19–\$36. JurassicQuest.com.



## ART, CRAFTS & ANTIQUES.....

**THROUGH JANUARY 5**  
"Gifted"—18th Annual Holiday Exhibit at The Art Trust. Twenty talented artists display and sell over 200 works. 16 W. Market St., West Chester. Gallery hours, Mon–Fri, 9 to 4:30. TheArtTrust.org.



**THROUGH JANUARY 20**  
CraftForms 2023, 28th Juried Exhibition of Contemporary Fine Craft. An international juried exhibition of contemporary fine craft in basketry, ceramics, decorative fiber, furniture, glass, jewelry, metal, mixed media, paper, wearable art and wood. Wayne Art Center, 413 Maplewood Ave., Wayne. See website for hours. WayneArt.org.



**THROUGH JANUARY 28**  
Bryn Mawr Rehab's 28th Annual Art Exhibition & Sale. An international juried exhibition and sale that features works by artists with physical and cognitive disabilities and hearing and visual impairments. Special events throughout the exhibition. MainLineHealth.org/Specialties/Rehab-Art-Ability.

**JANUARY 5**  
Art is Tasty: "The Salem Wolf" at Delaware Art Museum. Join in a guided discussion of "A Wolf Had Not Been Seen at Salem for Thirty Years" by Howard Pyle, then enjoy lunch in the Kaffaina at the Thronson Cafe. Lunch preorders are highly recommended through advanced registration.

2301 Kentmere Pkwy., Wilmington. Noon to 1 pm. \$18. DelArt.org.



## BOOKS.....

**JANUARY 4, 17, 18**  
Wellington Square Bookshop. NonFiction Book Group: Jan. 4, The Bomber Mafia by Malcolm Gladwell, 7 pm. Fiction Book Group: Jan. 17 & 18, Klara and the Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro, Wed, 2 pm, Thurs, 2 & 7 pm. 549 Wellington Sq., Exton. WellingtonSquareBooks.com.

**JANUARY 16, 18**  
Main Point Book Club. Jan. 16, Fiction Book Group: Mrs. Palfrey at the Claremont by Elizabeth Taylor and Michael Hoffmann, 2 pm. Jan. 18, NonFiction Book Group: Alfie & Me: What Owls Know, What Humans Believe by Carl Safina, 7 pm. 116 N. Wayne Ave., Wayne. MainPointBooks.com.

## DESIGN HOMES.....

**JANUARY 5–7**  
Greater Philadelphia Spring Home Show. See January Picks.

## FOOD & BREWS.....

See Food Events in this issue.

## FUNDRAISERS.....

**JANUARY 18**  
Taste of Phoenixville. See article in this issue.

**JANUARY 27**  
Alex's Lemonade Stand 17th Annual Lemon Ball. Guests wear yellow ties and gowns while making a huge impact for childhood cancer. Cocktail reception, auctions, dining and dancing. Springfield Country Club, 400 W. Sproul Rd., Springfield. 6:30 to midnight. \$275. AlexsLemonade.org.



## GARDENS.....

**JANUARY 20–MARCH 24**  
Winter Wonder at Longwood Gardens.



Relish the beauty of winter both indoors and out. Stroll through a beautiful indoor winter wonderland with a tropical twist. Outdoors, experience the serenity of winter with subtle hues throughout the landscape. 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square. Wed–Mon, 10 to 5. \$13–\$25. LongwoodGardens.org.

## MUSEUMS.....

**THROUGH JANUARY 7**  
Winterthur Museum. "Ann Lowe: American



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Couturier,” featuring 40 iconic gowns, many that have never been on public display. 5105 Kennett Pk., Winterthur, DE. Tues–Sun, 10 to 5. \$8–\$22. Winterthur.org.

**THROUGH JANUARY 28**  
**Delaware Art Museum.** “The Rossettis.” The works of Pre-Raphaelite founder Dante Gabriel Rossetti, his wife, artist Elizabeth Siddal, and his siblings, writers Christina and William Michael Rossetti, are the subject of this major international exhibition organized in partnership with Tate Britain. 2301 Kentmere Pkwy., Wilmington. Wed–Sun, 10 to 4. \$17–\$25. DelArt.org.



**THROUGH FEBRUARY 28**  
**Brandywine Museum of Art.** *Through Jan. 21*, “Allan Freelon: Painter, Printmaker, Teacher.” *Through Feb. 18*, “Abstract Flash: Unseen Andrew Wyeth.” *Through Feb. 28*, “Rooted: Family and Nature in Contemporary Children’s Book Illustration.” Rt. 1, Chadds Ford. Wed–Mon, 9:30 to 4:30. \$8–\$20. Brandywine.org.



**MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT** .....  
**JANUARY 6–FEBRUARY 2**  
**The Keswick Theatre Presents.** *Jan. 6*,

Bubba Bash 2024 Celebrating Neil Peart; *Jan. 11*, All You Need is Love: All-Star Celebration of The Fab Four’s Arrival in America; *Jan. 12*, Kashmir; *Jan. 14*, Peabo Bryson; *Jan. 19*, Stephen Percy of RATT; *Jan. 20*, Hollywood Nights: The Bob Seger Experience; *Jan. 26*, Let’s Sing Taylor, 7 pm; *Jan. 26*, Maureen Langan Comedy Show, 8 pm; *Jan. 27*, The Genesis Show; *Jan. 28*, The Marshall Tucker Band; *Feb. 2*, Who’s Bad (Tribute to Michael Jackson). 291 N. Keswick Ave., Glenside. Times and tickets, KeswickTheatre.com.



**JANUARY 11, 20**  
**At The Grand in Wilmington.** *Jan. 11*, The Greatest Love of All: A Tribute to Whitney Houston starring Belinda Davids; *Jan. 20*, The Acrobats of Cirque-Tacular. 818 N. Market St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, TheGrand-Wilmington.org.



**JANUARY 12 & 13**  
**Lancaster Symphony Orchestra Concert: Bach & Glass.** Featuring pianist Simone Dinnerstein performing Bach’s *Concerto for Harpsichord No. 2 in E major*. Gardner Theatre, Lancaster Country Day School, 725 Hamilton Rd., Lancaster. Times and tickets, 717-291-6440.LancasterSymphony.org.

**JANUARY 12–FEBRUARY 9**  
**American Music Theatre.** *Jan. 12*, Marie Osmond; *Jan. 14*, Puppy Pals Live! Comedic Dog Stunt Show; *Jan. 20*, Elvis Birthday Bash with Mike Albert & Scot Bruce; *Jan. 21*, Mike Albert’s Elvis Gospel Show featuring The Stamps

### Local Farm Markets

**Artisan Exchange**, 208 Carter Dr. Unit 13 B, West Chester. Sat, 10 to 1. ArtisanExchange.net.

**Bryn Mawr Farmers Market**, Lancaster Ave. Bryn Mawr train station lot. Sat, 9 to 1. Beg. Jan. 6 through Mar, 1st, 3rd & 5th Sat, 10 to noon. FarmToCityMarkets.com.

**Downingtown Farmers Market**, Kerr Park, 28 E. Pennsylvania Ave. Sat, 9 to 1. Beg. Jan. 13 through Apr. 27, 2nd & 4th Sat, 10 to noon. GrowingRootsPartners.com.

**Eagleview Farmers Mkt.**, Eagleview Town Ctr., 570 Wellington Sq., Exton. Thurs, 3 to 6:30. Beg. Jan. 4 through Apr. 18, 1st & 3rd Thurs, 11 to 1. GrowingRootsPartners.com.

**Kennett Square Farmers Mkt.**, 401 Birch St. Fri, 3 to 6. KSQFarmersMarket.com.

**Lancaster Central Market**, 23 N. Market St. Tues, Fri & Sat, 6 to 3. CentralMarketLancaster.com.

**Lancaster County Farmers Mkt.**, 389 W. Lancaster Ave., Wayne. Wed, Fri & Sat, 6 to 4. LancasterCountyFarmersMarket.com.

**Malvern Farmers Market**, Burke Park, 26 S. Warren Ave. Sat, 9 to 1. Beg. Jan. 6 through Apr. 20, 1st & 3rd Sat, 10 to noon. GrowingRootsPartners.com.

**Media Farmers Market**, Edgemont St. between Front & State Sts. Beg. Dec. 3 through Apr, 1st & 3rd Sun, 10 to noon. FarmToCityMarkets.com.

**Phoenixville Farmers Market**, 200 Mill St. Sat, 10 to noon. Beg. Jan. 6 through Mar, 1st, 3rd & 5th Sat, 10 to noon. PhoenixvilleFarmersMarket.org.

**Thornbury Farmers Mkt. & CSA**, 1256 Thornbury Rd., West Chester. Thurs–Fri, noon to 6; Sat, 9 to 6; Sun, 11 to 5. ThornburyFarmCSA.com.

**West Chester Growers Mkt.**, Chestnut & Church Sts. Through Dec., Sat, 9 to 1. Jan. 6 through Apr. 20, 1st, 3rd & 5th Sat, 10 to noon. WestChesterGrowersMarket.com.

**Westtown Amish Market**, 1165 Wilmington Pk., West Chester. Thur, 9 to 6; Fri, 9 to 7; Sat, 8 to 4. WestChesterAmishMarket.com.



Quartet; *Jan. 27*, Dancing With the Stars: Live! 2024 Tour; *Jan. 28*, Take Me Home: The Music of John Denver; *Feb. 9*, Little River Band with Firefall. 2425 Lincoln Hwy. E., Lancaster. Times and tickets, AMTShows.com.



**JANUARY 18**  
**The Colonial Theatre Presents Intimate Concerts in the Berry: Pio Quartet.** The Pio Quartet performs African American classical music, also known as jazz, and offers their interpretations of compositions composed by Wayne Shorter, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk and more, along with original compositions. 227 Bridge St., Phoenixville. Times and tickets, 610-917-1228; TheColonialTheatre.com.



**JANUARY 19**  
**Delaware Symphony Orchestra—From Home to Rome.** Featuring Verdi’s *Overture to La forza del destino*, Beethoven’s Violin Concerto, West Chester native Samuel Barber’s *Symphony in One Movement* and Respighi’s *Pines of Rome*. Copeland Hall, Grand Opera House, 818 N. Market St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, DelawareSymphony.org.

**JANUARY 21–FEBRUARY 15**  
**Longwood Gardens Indoor Performance Series—Organists.** *Jan. 21*, Christopher Kehoe; *Jan. 28*, Dalaie Choi; *Feb. 9*, Nicole Keller; *Feb. 15*, Blue Note Records 85th Anniversary Celebration. 1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square. LongwoodGarden.org.

**OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES** .....  
**JANUARY 27**  
**Wolf Sanctuary of PA Full Moon Fund-raiser.** Bring a blanket, flashlight, chair and a sense of adventure. The event features a roaring bonfire (weather permitting), live entertainment and educational wolf tours that are self-guided with volunteers. 465 Speedwell Forge Rd.,

Lititz. 7:30 to 10 pm. \$35, must be 16 years old. WolfSanctuaryPA.org.



**THEATER**.....  
**THROUGH JANUARY 14**  
**Mary Poppins at Media Theatre.** Come watch as the magic unfolds before your eyes. 104 E. State St., Media. Times and tickets, 610-891-0100; MediaTheatre.org.



**JANUARY 5–7**  
**The Playhouse Presents Annie.** One of the best-loved musicals of all time is set to return in a new production, just as you remember it and just when we need it most. 1007 N. Market St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, 302-888-0200; TheGrandWilmington.org.

**JANUARY 10–FEBRUARY 4**  
**Small at People’s Light.** Bullied for his size,



a boy from Long Is land finds purpose and respect atop a racehorse in this wild, autobiographical ride written and performed by stage, film and television star Robert Montano. 39 Conestoga Rd., Malvern. Times and tickets, 610-644-3500; PeoplesLight.org.

**JANUARY 13**  
**Purple and Blue Entertainment Presents Three Men: Three Women: The Stories of Six Strangers.** In honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., an all-star cast performs at The Grand Wilmington, 818 N. Market St., Wilmington. Times and tickets, 302-652-5577; TheGrandWilmington.org.

**JANUARY 19–FEBRUARY 17**  
**Dutch Apple Theatre Presents Agatha Christie’s The Mousetrap.** Seven strangers are snowed in at a remote countryside guest-house with a killer in their midst. 510 Centerville Rd., Lancaster. Times and tickets, 717-898-1900; DutchApple.com.

**JANUARY 20–FEBRUARY 25**  
**Hello, Dolly at The Candlelight Theatre.** Candlelight kicks off the 2024 season with this musical adaptation of Thornton Wilder’s play, *The Matchmaker*. 2208 Millers Rd., Wilmington. Times and tickets, 302-475-2313; Candlelight-TheatreDelaware.org.

**JANUARY 26–FEBRUARY 11**  
**It Happened in Key West at Fulton Theatre.** A romantic musical comedy based on a true story. 12 N. Prince St., Lancaster. Times and tickets, 717-397-7425; TheFulton.org.

**TOWNS, TALKS & TOURS**.....  
**JANUARY 5, 13**  
**1st Fridays, 2nd Saturdays.**  
**First Fridays:** *Jan. 5, Lancaster City*, 717-509-ARTS; VisitLancasterCity.com. *Oxford*, 610-998-9494; OxfordMainStreet.com; *Phoenixville*, 610-933-3253; PhoenixvilleFirst.org. *West Chester*, 610-738-3350; DowntownWestChester.com. *Wilmington Art Loop*, 302-576-2135; CityFestWilm.com.  
**Second Saturday Virtual Arts Stroll:** *Jan. 13*, Media, MediaArtsCouncil.org. ♦

Stay in the know with everything going on in *County Lines* country. Sign up for our Events Newsletter (sent twice monthly) at Newsletter@ValleyDel.com.

Send a description of your activity to Info@ValleyDel.com by the first of the month preceding publication.

For more events visit:

**CountyLinesMagazine.com**



# Food Events

Mark your calendars for these fantastic food events. Many have a \* because dates have not yet been set, so check websites and our monthly events section in the magazine, online and in our Events Newsletter.

## January

### 18 Taste of Phoenixville

Good Samaritan Services fundraiser. [GoodSamServices.org/Taste-Of-Phoenixville](http://GoodSamServices.org/Taste-Of-Phoenixville)

### 19-28 Harford County, MD Restaurant Week

Ten days of delicious dining. For a list of restaurants, [VisitHarford.com/Restaurant-Week](http://VisitHarford.com/Restaurant-Week)



### 25-May + Full Moon Dinners

Communal dining celebrating the full moon. 333 Morgan St., Phoenixville. [BabasBrew.com](http://BabasBrew.com)

### 27 18th Annual Lemon Ball

Fundraiser at Springfield Country Club, 400 W. Sproul Rd., Springfield. [AlexsLemonade.org](http://AlexsLemonade.org)

## February

### 10 & 11, 17 & 18 Berks County Wine Trail Chocolate & Wine Weekends

Chocolates paired with wines of the Berks County region. [BerksCountyWineTrail.com](http://BerksCountyWineTrail.com)

### 3 Philly Chocolate, Wine & Whiskey Festival

Unlimited tastings of chocolates, wine, craft spirits and more. Philly Expo Center, 100 Station Ave., Oaks. [TasteUSA.com](http://TasteUSA.com)



### 24-March 3 Annapolis, MD Restaurant Week

Restaurants will offer prix fixe menus. [DowntownAnnapolisPartnership.org](http://DowntownAnnapolisPartnership.org)

### 24 Kennett Winterfest

Winter brews from unique breweries, live music and food trucks. [KennettWinterfest.com](http://KennettWinterfest.com)

### 25-March 3 West Chester Restaurant Week

Culinary masters will create special multi-course, prix fixe menus. [DowntownWestChester.com](http://DowntownWestChester.com)

## March

### 4-15 King of Prussia Restaurant Week

Prix-fixe lunch and dinner menus. Benefits CHOP. [KOPRestaurantWeek.com](http://KOPRestaurantWeek.com)

### 5 Chester County Community Foundation's Sweet Charity

Giving never tasted so good as at this annual fundraiser. Whitford Country Club, 600 Whitford Hills Rd., Exton. [ChesCoCF.org](http://ChesCoCF.org)



### 23 Annapolis, MD Annual Oyster Roast Sock Burning

Celebrate spring and the beginning of boating season. Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park, 723 Second St. [AMaritime.org/Events](http://AMaritime.org/Events)

## April

### 7-13 Media Restaurant Week

Specials at area restaurants. [VisitMediaPA.com](http://VisitMediaPA.com)

### 20 & 21 Annual Celebrity Chefs' Brunch

Benefits Meals On Wheels. DuPont Country Club, 1001 Rockland Rd., Wilmington. [MealsOnWheelsDE.org](http://MealsOnWheelsDE.org)

### \* City Restaurant Week in Wilmington

Prix fixe lunch and dinner menus at premier restaurants. [CityRestaurantWeek.com](http://CityRestaurantWeek.com)

## May

### May-September, Wednesdays Media's Dining Under the Stars

Restaurants offer outdoor dining on State St. [VisitMediaPA.com](http://VisitMediaPA.com)

### May-October Third Thursday on State St. Kennett Square

Outdoor dining, live music, shopping and family-friendly activities. [KennettCollaborative.org](http://KennettCollaborative.org)



### May-October Food Truck Tuesdays Series in King of Prussia

Eat to the beat with live music and food trucks. [VisitKOP.com/FTT](http://VisitKOP.com/FTT)

### May-October PXV Inside Out

Dine outside or enjoy a drink with friends in downtown Phoenixville. [PhoenixvilleFirst.org](http://PhoenixvilleFirst.org)

### May-October Open Air Market in West Chester

Market and dining in the street. [DowntownWestChester.com](http://DowntownWestChester.com)



### \* FlavorFest at Mt. Hope Estate & Winery

Wineries, diverse food options, artisan crafts. [PARenFaire.com](http://PARenFaire.com)

## June

### June-August Pop-up Biergartens at Historic Sugartown

Beverages, food trucks and live music. 260 Spring Valley Rd., Malvern. [HistoricSugartown.org](http://HistoricSugartown.org)



### June-September Field to Fork Guest Chef Dinners at SIW Vegetables

Dine on the farm and enjoy just-picked produce in an idyllic setting. [SIW-Vegetables.Blogspot.com](http://SIW-Vegetables.Blogspot.com)

### 1 Willistown Conservation Trust Barns & BBQ

Tour of unique barns followed by a BBQ. [WCTrust.org](http://WCTrust.org)



### 2-7 Rehoboth Beach, DE Restaurant Week

Restaurants in Rehoboth Beach, Dewey Beach, Lewes and coastal DE participate. [Beach-Fun.com/Restaurant-Week](http://Beach-Fun.com/Restaurant-Week)

### 8 Great Chefs Event for Alex's Lemonade Stand

Fundraiser. Urban Outfitters HQ, 5000 S. Broad St., Phila. [AlexsLemonade.org](http://AlexsLemonade.org)

### \* Kennett on Top

Great food, live music, beer, wine and a signature cocktail. 100 E. Linden St., Kennett Square. [KennettSquareRotary.org](http://KennettSquareRotary.org)

### \* Wilmington Greek Festival

Authentic food, prepared before your eyes. [Facebook.com/WilmGreekFest](http://Facebook.com/WilmGreekFest)

### \* New Castle County Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Festival

Great food, ice cream, music. Rockwood Park, Wilmington. [VisitWilmingtonDE.com](http://VisitWilmingtonDE.com)

### \* St. Anthony's Italian Festival

A virtual tour of Italy at this annual fundraiser for St. Anthony of Padua in Wilmington. [Facebook.com/StAnthonysWilm](http://Facebook.com/StAnthonysWilm)

### \* Rotary Clubs of Thorndale & Downingtown's Mac-n-Cheese Cook-Off

Benefits the Rotary clubs. [MacNCheeseCookOff.com](http://MacNCheeseCookOff.com)

## July

### \* Willistown Conservation Trust Summer Harvest Celebration

Celebrate the tomato harvest from Rushton Farm. [WCTrust.org](http://WCTrust.org)

## August

### 2 Rotary Club of Annapolis, MD Crab Feast

Benefits local community and cultural organizations. [AnnapolisRotary.org/CrabFeast](http://AnnapolisRotary.org/CrabFeast)



### \* Delaware Burger Battle

Top chefs compete at Rockford Tower in Wilmington. [DEBurgerBattle.com](http://DEBurgerBattle.com)

### \* Phoenixville Veg Fest

Vegan food and street festival with live music and vendors. [PhoenixvilleVegFest.com](http://PhoenixvilleVegFest.com)

## September

### 14 & 15 Maryland Seafood Festival

Crabs and more — come for the food, and stay for the views. City Dock and Susan Campbell Park, Annapolis, MD. [VisitAnnapolis.org/Events](http://VisitAnnapolis.org/Events)

### \* West Chester's Annual "Up On the Roof"

Music, hors d'oeuvres, desserts, beer, wine and martinis. [DowntownWestChester.com](http://DowntownWestChester.com)

### \* Kennett Square Mushroom Festival

Fundraiser in Kennett Square. [MushroomFestival.org](http://MushroomFestival.org)

### \* Chester County Restaurant Festival

More than 65 restaurants, caterers and food vendors gather in West Chester. [DowntownWestChester.com](http://DowntownWestChester.com)

### \* SHiNE in the Vines

Great food, beer and wine benefits Chester Co. Hospital. Location TBD. [PatientShine.org](http://PatientShine.org)

### \* Shugart's Sunday BBQ and Blues

Historic Sugartown hosts with all the fixings. [HistoricSugartown.org](http://HistoricSugartown.org)

## October

### 12 Chocolate Walk in Lititz

Benefits children-focused charities in Lancaster County. [LititzChocolateWalk.com](http://LititzChocolateWalk.com)

### \* Kennett Brewfest

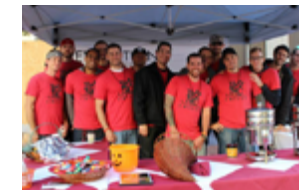
Craft breweries and cideries, live music, food trucks and food pairings. [KennettBrewfest.com](http://KennettBrewfest.com)

### \* Unite For HER Harvest Chef & Wine Tasting Event

Fundraiser at Phoenixville Foundry. 717-461-6988; [UniteForHER.org](http://UniteForHER.org)

### \* West Chester Rotary Chili Cook-Off

Fundraiser. 484-343-4577; [WestChesterChiliCookOff.com](http://WestChesterChiliCookOff.com)



### \* Thorncroft Equestrian Center "Lobstah" Bake

Fundraiser. Malvern. 610-644-1963; [Thorncroft.org](http://Thorncroft.org)

## November

### 3-9 Media Restaurant Week

Specials at area restaurants. [VisitMediaPA.com](http://VisitMediaPA.com)

### \* Good Food Fest

A celebration of local food and agriculture. Kimberton Fair Grounds, 762 Pike Springs Rd., Phoenixville. [GoodFarmsGoodFood.com](http://GoodFarmsGoodFood.com)

## December

### 3 Annapolis, MD Chocolate Binge Festival

A family-friendly celebration of all things cocoa. On the first block of West St., Annapolis, MD. [VisitAnnapolis.org/Events](http://VisitAnnapolis.org/Events) ♦

Visit our website, [CountyLinesMagazine.com](http://CountyLinesMagazine.com), for monthly listings or sign up for our bi-weekly Events Newsletter.



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<https://info.kendal-crosslands.org/countyline-1>  
800.216.1920

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### Senior Happenings

*Retirement communities often hold events that are open to the public. Here are a few. Visit websites for hours and registration.*

#### Acts Retirement-Life Communities

*Multiple locations. 888-675-5091*

*AboutActs.com/County*

Learn how Acts residents “Live a Life They Love” at their upcoming introductory event. Discover the “New Year, New Beginnings” events by visiting *AboutActs.com/County*.



#### Kendal Crosslands

*1109 E. Baltimore Pk., Kennett Square*

*610-388-1441; KCArboretum.org*

**Ongoing**—The certified, accredited arboretum on the grounds is open to the public 7 days a week. Visitors check in at the front desk, pick up a map and walk the arboretum’s paved pathways. Visit and enjoy over 400 trees labeled on the 500-acre campus.



#### White Horse Village

*535 Gradyville Rd., Newtown Square*

*610-675-2054; WhiteHorseVillage.org*

**Feb. 13**—Speaker Margit Novack, Author of *Squint: Re-visioning the Second Half of Life*, 1:30 pm

**Mar. 15**—Taste & Tour, 11 am

**Apr. 12**—Senior Living Showcase, 10 am

**May 18**—Open House, 10 am

**June 8**—Garden Day, 10 am



# Primary care that’s not the same old song and dance

A lifelong musician, 70-year-old Steve Solotist is enjoying an active retirement with support from a primary care provider who’s with him every step of the way.

Steve Solotist has exacting standards for what good healthcare looks like — and doesn’t have time to waste in his retirement. So when his former primary care provider grew unresponsive, he knew he needed to find a new practice. That’s when Steve turned to Patina.

“Since becoming a Patina patient, I’m much more relaxed,” said Steve. “I don’t have to drive into the city to see my PCP. I don’t have to worry about trying to get a sick appointment. And I don’t have to wait days just to get a callback.”

Patina is primary care designed for older adults. Steve has a dedicated team who listens to him, and stays with him over time as his needs evolve. “It feels nice to be seen for who you are rather than just a person walking into an office,” Steve said.

Care with Patina is always convenient. Steve keeps in touch with his team through video, secure messaging and phone calls, with in-person visits right in the comfort of home when needed.

Steve says he most values Patina’s “accessibility and the clinical expertise focused on the age group.” He sums up his experience: “I have high standards when it comes to my health and am very happy with my care.”

“The only other way to find this degree of interactivity is to pay thousands of dollars for a concierge doctor — and Patina offers the same accessibility of a concierge practice for no extra cost.”

**Steve Solotist, Patina patient**

Say goodbye to primary care that’s limited to rushed and impersonal office visits.

Say hello to Patina.



## Primary care for adults 65+

At Patina, relationships come first. You get a dedicated team who stays with you over time. Visits are virtual and in person at home, when needed. Our easy-to-use app keeps you conveniently connected with your care team. All at no extra cost through most Medicare plans. Available to people 65+ in Chester, Bucks, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties.

**patina**

800.476.7992  
[patinahealth.com](https://patinahealth.com)



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## The 22nd Annual **January 18** taste OF PHOENIXVILLE

Edwin Malet

**A CULINARY EXTRAVAGANZA SUPPORTING  
GOOD SAMARITAN SERVICES**

THE RESTAURANTS OF PHOENIXVILLE ALONG with Good Samaritan Services — known as Good Sam — are excited to announce the return of the 22nd annual Taste of Phoenixville on Thursday, January 18. This year's event promises to unite the community once again with a night of culinary delights, live music and a spirit of generosity. Bid on silent auction packages, try your luck in a raffle, enjoy live music and show off your best moves on the dance floor. And of course, sample food and drink from over 20 fabulous local dining destinations.

Every dollar raised at The Taste contributes to Good Sam's mission of providing housing, personal development resources, rental assistance, compassionate case management and counseling to individuals and families facing homelessness and poverty. The Taste plays a pivotal role in funding these programs, with last year's event raising over \$135,000. Since 2001, Good Sam has grown from a single shelter to serving over 600 individuals and families annually.

Good Sam compassionately responds to homelessness and poverty through its unique and personalized approach. Serving over 600 men, women and children annually across Lancaster and Chester Counties, their vision is to serve all who may be otherwise overlooked. Good Sam's comprehensive program allows the organization to serve those experiencing homelessness, those who are at risk of losing their own housing and all levels of housing insecurity in between.

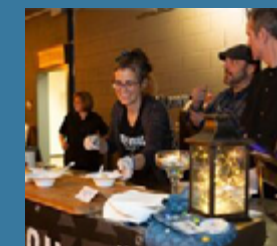
Together, you can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our neighbors in need. Rally your friends, bring your appetite and join the fun for an evening of unparalleled taste, community and generosity. Eat well and do good. ♦

### Restaurants Scheduled:

- Bistro on Bridge
- Great American Pub
- Bella Trattoria
- Mont Clare Deli
- Foresta's Market
- Molly Maguire's
- PJ Ryan's Pub
- Stonehouse Grille
- Your Mom's Place
- Bridge Street Chocolates
- and more!

### Complimentary beer, wine and spirits from:

- Sly Fox
- Stable 12 Brewing Company
- Bluebird Distillery
- Steel City
- and more!



### IF YOU GO:

**WHEN:** Thursday, January 18, 2024, 6 to 10 p.m.

**WHERE:** Franklin Commons, 400 Franklin Ave., Phoenixville

**FOR TICKETS:** \$150. On the website, [TasteOfPhoenixville.com](http://TasteOfPhoenixville.com)



# OUT With the Old, IN With the New!

## COOKBOOKS THAT IS

Mimi Liberi, Wellington Square Bookshop



WHAT A GREAT YEAR 2024 IS FOR COOKS. We can look forward to a selection of new cookbooks to sprinkle in among our old favorites.

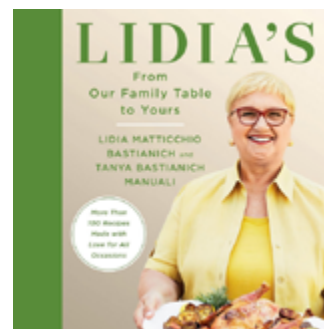
Here's hoping you find new inspiration, new flavors and a new favorite author to follow this year. Happy reading and happy cooking!



## Brilliant Bites

by Morgan Brown

Morgan Brown has released her third cookbook, *Brilliant Bites*, and it truly is brilliant. Although I'd rather cook a four-course meal than tackle appetizers, Morgan offers 75 reasons to change that mindset. Her collection of recipes cover five categories — breakfast, party, dessert, holiday and snack — with each recipe including a delicious photo. Ingredients are easy to find, and no plates or utensils are needed — just enjoy in one or two bites, hence the title *Brilliant Bites*! Brown says, “Preparing delicious food is my favorite way to serve others.” If you agree, serve up these bites to your family and friends.



## Lidia's From Our Family Table to Yours

by Lidia Matticchio Bastianich and Tanya Bastianich Manuali

Italian families may squabble over who makes the best *crespelle*, but they can agree with Lidia's motto, “sharing food is sharing love,” and that the family table is where memories are made and traditions carry on. Considered a queen of Italian cuisine (and a local personality), Lidia's first cookbook written since her mother's passing (at the age of 100) is a homage to her beloved Nonna. Recipes begin with a heartfelt family story, leaving readers feeling the love that Lidia grew up with. Sample more than 100 mouth-watering recipes, and see if you agree with Lidia's sentiment: “Old favorites are always appreciated, but new tastes create new memories that can last forever.”

## Basics with Babish

by Andrew Rea

Here's a cookbook from a YouTube star designed to help us be better cooks. We all remember our early cooking mistakes, ones we learned from that helped us grow. And Andrew Rea's cookbook celebrates the mistakes. Every one of his 100+ recipes begins with a section called “How I've Screwed This Up,” in hopes we'll avoid his mistakes. Then there's a Troubleshooting Section, where anything that could go wrong is highlighted as a cautionary tale. His opening chapter, “Let's Get Down to the Basics,” covers Do's and Don'ts, Kitchen Glossary and Your Spice Rack and You. He not only includes a photo with recipes but an additional 300 instructional photos showing step-by-step techniques. Rea's humor and humility are evident throughout the book. It's no wonder this cookbook has been named a Best Cookbook of Fall 2023 by *Food and Wine*, *Delish* and *Tasting Table*.



## The Blue Zones: Secrets for Living Longer

by Dan Buettner

If you enjoy collecting cookbooks, how about one that includes a “recipe” for life? For those fascinated by the Blue Zones — five places worldwide with low rates of chronic illness and longer life expectancy — Dan Buettner's latest book includes interviews with “super-agers” living in Sardinia, Ikaria, Okinawa, Nicola Peninsula and Loma Linda. Based on lessons learned, he's come up with a recipe for living a long, healthy life with a sharp brain until the end. This how-to manual has breathtaking photos plus advice from the Blue Zoners about the foods they eat, their faith, exercise (natural movement), communities and the important lessons learned over the years. In addition, there are recipes from each region, their top longevity foods and a chapter on “How to Eat Smarter” to help achieve the goal “to feed your body in the best way possible.”



## Cooking My Way

by Jacques Pépin

Once again the legendary Chef Jacques Pépin has released a charming new cookbook, *Cooking My Way*, named one of the Best 24 Cookbooks for Fall 2023 by *Food and Wine* editors and contributors. This book, sprinkled with his delightful artwork, is about saving time, money and cleanup effort while maintaining great flavor in your meals. Pépin encourages readers to shop seasonally to find the most affordable, flavor-filled and nutritious fruits and vegetables, as well as to buy turkeys in the fall, lamb/ham in the spring and seafood in the summer, when they're plentiful and less expensive. More advice: use as much of your ingredients as possible, and if you have leftovers, save them for soups, stock or sauces. Enjoy 150 recipes plus an illustrated menu for each season. This revered chef continues to inspire us with new ways to approach cooking.



## The Chocolate Chip Cookie Book

by Katie Jacobs

How can an entire cookbook be devoted to the iconic chocolate chip cookie, you ask? Katie Jacobs proves it can be done, as she created more than 100 recipes for everyone, every season and every reason. There are not only cookies, but cakes, bars, pies and dessert recipes along with variations that are vegan, paleo, dairy-free and gluten-free, too. The cookbook includes icons for difficulty levels and dietary restrictions, plus more icons for whether a mixer, refrigeration, freezing or brown butter is required, along with step-by-step instructions for this trendy ingredient. Jacobs dedicates a section on the Secrets and Science of creating the perfect cookie, touching on how ingredients and technique affect cookie creation, and includes mouth-watering photos of each recipe. You'll have a hard time choosing which to bake first! Her final advice: “Don't ever let a recipe tell you how many chocolate chips to use. You measure that with your heart.” ♦



Wellington Square Bookshop is an award-winning bookshop in Eagleview Town Center. The patrons are primarily local, but many customers come from around the world to the thoughtfully curated shop with excellent service. There's a coffee and tea bar with cookies and biscotti, plus lots of cozy spaces for curling up to read. Follow them on Instagram and visit [WellingtonSquareBooks.com](http://WellingtonSquareBooks.com). 549 Wellington Square, Exton.





# SUSTAINABLE SUSTENANCE

Brittany Knick, ChristianaCare

**G**OOD NUTRITION IS ONE OF THE KEYS TO good health. But did you know that the choices we make about the food we eat can also impact our environment — and even the health of our neighbors around the globe?

The medical journal *The Lancet* has called climate change “the greatest global health threat facing the world in the 21st century.” And the related health impacts are many and varied. For example, climate change has been linked to increased risk for people with asthma, and it’s also having an impact on the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria.

A direct link exists between climate change and humans’ consumption of food. More specifically, about one-third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, according to the United Nations, is linked to food. This involves several steps — growing, processing, transporting, distributing and preparing food — before it lands on your dinner plate.

Although the lion’s share of food-related greenhouse gases come from agriculture and land use, you can take some easy steps to improve your own nutrition while simultaneously reducing your impact on the environment.

Here are six sustainable eating tips to consider in 2024 to improve both your and the Earth’s health.

## TIP NO. 1: *Consume less meat.*

Meat production is a significant contributor to climate change, including deforestation to create land for grazing animals, as well as animal waste that contributes to greenhouse gas emissions. While meats — chicken, beef, pork and the like — are a good source of protein, they are also high in saturated fats and cholesterol. The high content of saturated fat and cholesterol can lead to obesity, heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

To decrease your meat consumption, consider having Meatless Mondays, when you choose plant-forward meals that are high in fiber, vitamins and minerals.

## TIP NO. 2: *Choose sustainable seafood.*

Ask your seafood supplier where their seafood is harvested. By asking this question, you’re armed with better information to make smarter choices to save our planet. When choosing wild-caught seafood, look for seafood harvested from fisheries using sustainable



Choose sustainable seafood

practices. If you opt for farm-raised seafood, ensure that your seafood suppliers harvest in smaller quantities, which enables the species to more easily repopulate.

A number of resources exist to help you make smart choices about seafood, including the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries and the Marine Stewardship Council, which provide sustainable seafood certifications. Check their websites to learn more.

## TIP NO. 3: *Buy seasonal; buy local.*

When you make the choice to eat seasonally and locally, you decrease the environmental impact of transporting foods long distances. This means buying fruits and vegetables that are grown nearby. Consuming fruits that are ripening on the plant instead of inside a truck or cargo ship will result in fresher food on your table. While eating locally and in-season inhibits some year-round access to foods we love, it does mean we’re making the choice to create a sustainable meal plan.

By buying foods from local businesses and farms, we’re also supporting our community, which in turn fosters growth in our local community and increases the health of our environment. Consider joining a local Community Supported Agriculture group (CSA),



Buy seasonal and local foods

## KEEPING UP WITH GUT HEALTH

The gut, technically known as the gastrointestinal tract, is bigger than your stomach. It actually encompasses your small intestines, large intestines and colon. It also contains hundreds of microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses and fungi. Some of these microorganisms are good for the gut while others are bad.

Because the health of your gut affects your entire immune system, you should nurture your gut with healthy bacteria. Your gut health impacts your risk of chronic diseases such as cancer and Type 2 diabetes. Believe it or not, the gut also impacts your mental health and how well you sleep.

Here are three ways to improve the health of your gut and, hopefully, your life.

**1. Balanced diet.** An easy way to balance your diet is to choose foods of different colors from each of the five food groups: protein, vegetables, fruits, carbohydrates and dairy. Visit [MyPlate.gov](https://www.myplate.gov) to learn more about ways to balance your plate.

**2. Increase your fermented foods.** You can add more fermented foods to your diet by picking a few consumable goods that happen to start with the letter K. For example, kefir is a type of fermented milk, kimchi is a traditional Korean dish made with fermented vegetables, and kombucha is a fermented black tea. All three can improve your gut health. Sorry to break the news, but KitKat bars are not fermented, so the K rule is not absolute.

**3. Increase your prebiotics and probiotics.** Prebiotics are non-digestible fibers that help the good bacteria in your gut flourish. These include apples, cabbage, chickpeas, oats, onions and whole grain foods. Probiotics are live bacteria that make the gut happy and healthy. These include kefir, miso, pickles, yogurt and sourdough bread. It’s important to note that you should consult your healthcare provider before adding prebiotic or probiotic supplements.

With balance on your plate and diversity in your foods, you will experience a happier, healthier gut and body!

which gives farmers the financing up-front to care for their farm and provides a rich variety of both common and seldom found fruits and vegetables.

## TIP NO. 4: *Create a plant-forward diet.*

A plant-forward diet is a great way to decrease the portion size of meat and increase our intake of fruits and vegetables. Since fruits and vegetables are lower in calories than meat, they can help us maintain a healthy weight. Another benefit: fruits and vegetables add vitamins, minerals and antioxidants to our bodies, which are beneficial to boost our immune system and reduce our risk of can-





Create a plant-forward diet

“ To make your diet more sustainable, Consider choosing water from your tap and invest in a filter and a reusable water bottle rather than relying on bottled water.



Make water your primary beverage

cer. Additionally, the fiber found in these foods can help maintain the health of our bowels.

Choosing more fruits and vegetables adds beneficial bacteria to our gut to keep our gastrointestinal system healthy. (See the sidebar.)

TIP NO. 5: Reduce food waste.

Rethink your grocery list. Choose items you can use in several meals. For example, if you choose to roast a whole chicken, don't let it spoil in the refrigerator. Instead, shred the chicken to make chicken salad for lunch one day and use other chicken chunks to make soup with broth. Consider mixing the extra chicken with pasta and vegetables from your pantry.

TIP NO. 6: Make sustainable beverage choices.

First and foremost, make water your primary beverage of choice. Water has zero calories, no added sugar and will keep you hydrated throughout the day. Cases of soda and juice require shipping and thus use more fossil fuels.

To make your diet more sustainable, consider choosing water from your tap and invest in a filter and a reusable water bottle rather than relying on bottled water. If you don't enjoy plain water, add seasonal and local herbs and sliced fruits to create a tasty beverage.

This New Year, I encourage you to help improve the health of both your body and our planet. As you progress in this journey, don't forget to take a walk through nature. You deserve to enjoy the beautiful surroundings that you've supported by making sustainable and healthy eating choices! ♦

Brittany Knick, MS, RDN, LDN, CNSC, is a registered dietitian and diabetes educator at ChristianaCare, where she's responsible for providing nutrition education. As part of her sessions, Knick covers using healthy recipes, taking into account cooking skills and food security/access. She also evaluates blood glucose levels to develop individualized care plans for patients with diabetes using diabetes technology, including insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors.



Ready - Made MEALS

MEAL PLANNING CAN BE STRESSFUL. FROM choosing what to make, balancing family members' dietary requirements and preferences, and getting all the ingredients from the grocery store to actually cooking and serving the meal, the whole process can be a real chore. And with the hectic, food-filled holiday season behind us, many of us are in dire need of a break from the kitchen.

Fortunately, many of our local markets and restaurants are more than willing to take meal-prep off your plate. Whether you're hosting guests or just need an easy weeknight dinner, these food purveyors are sure to please.

So, skip the grocery store — or the fast-food drive-thru — and let someone else make dinner tonight. All you need to do is heat, serve and enjoy.

IN THE MOOD FOR ITALIAN

For many families, spaghetti and meatballs is a dinnertime staple. Why not elevate your Italian meals with a little help from the pros? Several local Italian markets and restaurants offer family dinners,

LET SOMEONE ELSE COOK DINNER TONIGHT

Shannon Montgomery

many with recipes passed down from their famiglia. From hearty pasta dishes to chicken and veal, a meal prepared by one of these local businesses is sure to be a crowd pleaser.

For gourmet Italian fare, head to Carlino's Market, with locations in West Chester and Ardmore. In addition to dried pasta, sauces and other artisan goods, they offer gourmet take-away meals. Led by master executive chefs, the Carlino's kitchen uses high-quality ingredients in their delicious family dinners. Try the award-winning Mama Carlino's chicken lasagna, meatballs with house-made pasta, chicken piccata, veal parmigiano and much more. Then pair with a scrumptious side — creamy risotto, broccoli rabe, pasta salad — and artisan bread and desserts for an elevated dinner experience. Plus, Carlino's offers in-store pickup, local delivery and overnight shipping, so there are plenty of ways to get your fill.

Alternatively, Wayne's Di Bruno Bros. location is another one-stop shop for a winning dinner. Their Chef's Counter offers chef-prepared meals made from scratch daily. Using fresh, seasonal ingredients, they offer restaurant-quality dinners for you to enjoy in the comfort of your own home. Select from several tempting





Carlino's Market

options, including chicken parmigiano, Italian-style sausage and peppers, herb-dusted salmon, lump crab cakes, pasta primavera and rigatoni with Sunday gravy. To complete your meal, pick up sides, artisan bread, fresh-baked pastries and desserts in the market, then head to the Bottle Shop for wine, craft beer, mixers and mocktails.

In Media, [DiFabio's Market & Tap](#) offers fresh, house-made entrees, pizzas and sides, as well as a daily family dinner special. With options to serve four or six people, the dinner comes with an entree, Caesar or garden salad, and a loaf of Italian bread. Entree selections change daily, but recent dishes include prime rib with candied sweet potatoes, stuffed shells in tomato cream sauce, and chicken parmesan over penne. While you're there, pick up cold beer or a bottle of wine to take your dinner to the next level.

Love the food from [Limoncello Ristorante](#), but not in the mood to go out? Both their West Chester and Chester Springs locations offer family-style four-course dinners, Tuesday through Sunday from 12 to 9 p.m. For \$65, you'll get dinner for five (some say more), along with homemade bread and tomato bruschetta. Choose a salad, pasta (penne alla vodka, three-cheese baked rigatoni, cheese tortellini alfredo), an entree (Maria's meatballs or eggplant parmigiana, or several others for an additional



DiFabio's Market & Tap

cost) and a dessert (flourless chocolate torte, cannoli, tiramisu). Limoncello offers curbside takeout and delivery — making it even more convenient.

## HEAD TO THE MARKET

Our area is chock-full of local markets offering a wide selection of delicious dinners. Savor traditional Amish fare, the

tastes of Latin America and the Far East, and much more — all without leaving the Brandywine Valley!

Make your way to Wayne for provisions from the [Lancaster County Farmers Market](#), open Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. In addition to fresh produce, meats, seafood and cheeses, you'll find several purveyors of ready-made meals. Countryview Barbecue's selections include smoked babyback ribs, fried chicken, rotisserie meats and veggies, as well as soups, salads and sides using traditional Lancaster recipes (Amish macaroni salad, mashed potatoes and gravy). Craving something else? Local favorite Margaret Kuo's offers their award-winning Asian specialties, all freshly cooked and prepacked. And V Empanadas promises the tastes of Ecuador with their sweet and savory empanadas, plus fresh shrimp and fish ceviche, homemade sauces and exotic fruit desserts.

Similarly, the [Westtown Amish Market](#), open Thursday to Saturday, is home to more than 15 merchants, selling everything from food to furniture to pet supplies. Stop by Jarlan's Poultry for all-natural goodness, no hormones or antibiotics. Choose from

rotisserie chicken, smoked ribs, wings, fried chicken, homemade turkey sausages and dinner platters. Complement your meal with goodies from other vendors — including fresh salads, baked goods (how about a whoopie pie?) and Amish pretzels.

Over in Phoenixville, you'll find that [Foresta's Market](#) has more than just a butcher shop and deli meats. Their HMR (home meal replacement) case has a large selection of cooked foods, all made in house. Foresta's meal options span the globe — from American (meatloaf, mac and cheese) and Mexican (taco lasagna, mini burritos) to Italian (linguini and clam sauce, breaded chicken cutlets) and Chinese (General Tso's chicken, pork lo mein) — plus seafood and desserts.

Across the state line in Delaware, [Janssen's Market](#) has been a Greenville staple for over 70 years, specializing in gourmet foods with a broad selection of organic, gluten-free and vegan fare. Their Chef's Du Jour Menu offers a selection of heat-and-serve dishes that, as the name implies, changes daily. Recent entrees include hearty meals like sundried tomato chicken, herb-roasted turkey, Hungarian goulash, Chesapeake shrimp and wild mushroom ravioli, as well as sides, salads and desserts.

This New Year, resolve to eat well — while avoiding mealtime stress and cooking less. With so many excellent options for ready-made meals, you can rest easy knowing that dinner is taken care of tonight, along with most of the clean up. *Bon appetit!* ♦



V Empanadas at the Lancaster County Farmers Market



Jarlan's Poultry at the Westtown Amish Market



Di Bruno Bros.



Limoncello Ristorante

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# Family Food Traditions Worth Keeping (or Tossing Out)

## ANNUAL CHECK-IN ON WHAT TO KEEP AND WHAT TO TABLE

Courtney H. Diener-Stokes

JANUARY IS A PERFECT TIME TO REFLECT ON THE holidays, including on our family food traditions. These food rituals generally involve shared time in the kitchen and gathering around the table for a communal meal, often with extended family. There are many reasons we treasure and preserve these family traditions — they connect us with our ancestors and cultural roots, treat us to tastes of beloved recipes, and enhance our closeness with loved ones.

There's comfort in knowing what to expect, and family food traditions help lay that groundwork by engaging our senses. An aroma can evoke childhood memories, talking about the food heightens our anticipation, and the act of creating something together enhances closeness. Plus seeing a table laden with favorite dishes elicits oohs, aahs and smiles.

While the experience of carrying on a tradition should be rewarding, we may feel tethered to one that no longer serves us well. Whatever the reason, it may be time to rethink our collection of traditions, tweak some, switch out others for new ones, or let one or two go altogether. Just make sure you check in with your family — it's often the youngest ones who have the strongest opinions!

### FAMILY RECIPES

For years, I strove to duplicate my late grandmother's (Jean Gross, aka G-mom) almond crescent cookie recipe. I followed the handwritten steps on the worn recipe card in her special wooden box to a T. My time spent baking always felt like a connection to her, and my kids loved rolling the delicate crescents in powdered sugar. Sadly, the final product never really tasted like her airy, melt-

in-your-mouth cookies that we all looked forward to devouring over the holidays.

Truth be told, my grandmother *was* known to add an ingredient or technique that didn't always make it into the written recipe. So, after several pitiful attempts — all while hoping my children could experience the same memorable confection — I decided it was time to shelve that ambition and table that tradition.

Instead, I celebrate G-mom by making her decadent peanut butter eggs for Easter or her beloved scalloped potato recipe that's a perfect side dish for Christmas. Both these recipes passed on from G-mom to my late mom, Emily, and have the added bonus that my three kids get to pitch in. For the scalloped potatoes, our youngest, Olivia, is the potato peeler; our son, Julian, the cheese shredder; and our oldest, Maxwell, the potato slicer. The prep time together always serves as a warm and wonderful opportunity to talk about their great-grandmother, keeping her memory alive and strengthening our family bonds.

The final reward is the reaction whenever I serve this dish — now one of my signatures. There's something so gratifying about knowing you're pleasing people with something they look forward to tasting year after year. Plus, you nourish them body and soul.

Another family food tradition is wrapped up in the eagerly anticipated asparagus quiche my mom served at her home along with mimosas for Christmas brunch before exchanging gifts. After a few years of feeling like the kids barely finished opening their gifts at our home before running out the door to Granny-Em's house — often still in pajamas — I acknowledged the need to adjust the timing to give us more breathing room in the morning. The tweak to this tradition was worth it, since we're now able to more fully enjoy the entire food and gift experience of being together.

Another of my tweaks on traditions is letting go of the fantasy of making my own gingerbread dough as my mom used to do. Instead, I buy boxed sets for the houses, since the kids don't care to eat the gingery goodies. Now we focus on the experience of building the house together — that has the real value to our family.

While I do feel a twinge of guilt about this shortcut, I remind myself it's better to invest my time in scratch cooking foods that are guaranteed to be consumed with joy. The simple time-saving measure of using a gingerbread house kit rather than baking from scratch is one of many that help ensure my sanity and good humor. Other key ingredients in family bonding.

### NEW TRADITIONS

A few years ago, I was struck with a combination of compassion, envy and gratitude when a friend who has two kids shared that she has no traditions to carry on from her family. So she announced plans to create new traditions for her children, including one involving a tropical getaway each Christmas, with the added benefit of experiencing exotic foods there. (Granted not a food tradition per se, but Christmas piña coladas could be!)



Traditions strengthen family bonds across generations

The compassion was for her feeling of immense responsibility of starting family traditions from thin air, with the hope her children would carry them on. The bit of envy came from thinking about the emotional weight and sense of responsibility my friend didn't have as the standard bearer. Keeping family traditions alive is not for the faint of heart!

Then I had an epiphany that inspired me to reframe my thoughts about the burden of preserving traditions. I realized I took for granted the connection family traditions provide from generation to generation. I mistakenly assumed every family came with their own treasure trove worth preserving.

Instead I realized how grateful I am for the privilege of carrying on — albeit select and tweaked — our unique set of family traditions. And my bonus: starting new family food traditions I hope my children will feel are worth preserving when they're adults. And passing them on ...

Wishing you a New Year filled with savoring and passing on your own curated collection of family food traditions, creating new ones and shedding those no longer serving you well.

Read on for some of my family favorites that I'm very happy to share with you in hopes they might bring your family the same pleasure for generations to come!

### Family Favorite Two-Cheese Scalloped Potatoes

*The aroma of these scalloped potatoes cooking on Christmas Day envelops our entire house. The scents of garlic, cheese and cream mingle together as a tangible reward for everyone working together preparing the dish. The flavor of this dish intensifies the day after, so breakfast leftovers are another treat. The key is to cook until a fork easily pierces the potatoes — the 1½-hour bake time is worth the wait. Pairs perfectly with ham.*



Serves 8 to 12 (as a side dish)

2 lbs. (about 10 medium) Yukon Gold potatoes, sliced thin (not too thin)  
2 T. salted butter, divided (plus more to grease casserole dish)  
2 large cloves garlic, sliced thin  
1 pt. heavy cream  
Salt and pepper to taste  
2 C. white sharp cheddar cheese, shredded  
¾ C. shaved or shredded Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 9” x 13” glass casserole dish with butter.

Layer half the potato slices in the bottom of the casserole dish. Dot with half the butter, cut into small pieces. Arrange half the garlic slices evenly on the potato layer. Then pour half the heavy cream evenly over them. Next, sprinkle one cup of cheddar cheese evenly over the potatoes. Season with salt and pepper.

Repeat with another layer of the remaining potatoes, butter, garlic, cream, cheddar cheese, salt and pepper.

Cover with foil and bake for one hour in the preheated oven (make sure foil doesn’t touch the top layer or the cheese will stick). After one hour, remove from the oven and remove the foil before adding a generous layer of shredded Parmesan cheese evenly over the top.

Return to the oven to bake another 15 to 30 minutes, or until potatoes are very tender when tested with a fork and the top is golden brown.

Refrigerate any leftovers in an airtight container up to three days.



**G-Mom’s Peanut Butter Eggs**

*This is an heirloom family recipe I was resistant to share for many years. But I ultimately realized my grandmother would love the idea of others enjoying her sweets. The recipe is so simple to make even kids can help — let them form the eggs and dip them in the melted chocolate. My grandmother always used Smucker’s Natural peanut butter (with salt) and Ghirardelli milk chocolate, so I do the same. (You can substitute your favorite dark chocolate for the milk chocolate.) These decadent peanut*

*butter eggs have a soft center that melds with the chocolate coating in each bite. I offer a generous tray of these eggs along with the other desserts at my father-in-law’s Easter meal. They also pair wonderfully with milk when “testing” a few with the kids.*

Makes about 15 to 20 (depending on size)

4 T. butter (¼ C.), softened  
1½ C. powdered sugar  
¾ C. peanut butter (I use Smucker’s Natural. Stir to combine before using)  
½ tsp. vanilla  
2 T. milk  
1 bag milk chocolate chips (I use Ghirardelli)

In a medium bowl, combine butter, powdered sugar, peanut butter and vanilla. Gradually add in milk and stir to combine (the mixture will be very creamy and soft).

Chill the mixture in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Remove and shape into small egg shapes. Place eggs on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.

Place the cookie sheet in the freezer, uncovered, for 30 minutes to allow the eggs to harden.

While they’re hardening, melt chocolate over a double boiler on low heat.

Once the eggs have hardened, dip each one in the melted chocolate, using two forks to submerge it. Once fully covered in chocolate, remove and place back on the parchment-lined cookie sheet to harden.

Serve the chocolate-covered eggs at room temperature.

Refrigerate any leftovers in an airtight container for up to a week.



**The Perfect Pomegranate Pear Salad**

*Inspired by Guy Fieri, this salad became a new tradition at our annual family Thanksgiving dinner. The crispness of the pear, juiciness of the pomegranate and creaminess of the gorgonzola are the perfect match. I use*

*a huge wooden bowl that makes enough salad for 25 guests, so I usually triple this recipe. A wider bowl with a flat bottom lets the colorful ingredients be more visible. Sometimes I’m lucky enough to have enough greens left growing in my garden to feature them in the salad. This crowd-pleaser goes beautifully with traditional Thanksgiving trimmings.*

Serves 8

**Salad Ingredients:**

8 C. baby spinach or baby romaine lettuce  
1 ripe Asian pear  
2 oz. gorgonzola cheese, crumbled  
⅓ C. pomegranate seeds  
Champagne vinaigrette dressing (recipe below)  
Fresh cracked pepper  
1 T. honey

**Dressing Ingredients:**

¼ C. Champagne vinegar  
1 tsp. Dijon mustard  
½ tsp. minced garlic  
1 T. freshly squeezed lemon juice  
¼ tsp. freshly cracked black pepper  
2 T. olive oil

**To make the dressing:**

Add all ingredients in a mason jar with a secure lid and shake to combine. Refrigerate until ready to use.

**To make the salad:**

Place half the greens in a large salad bowl.

Cut Asian pear into fans, and then cut again on the diagonal. Sprinkle greens with half the gorgonzola cheese, half the pears slices, half the pomegranate seeds and half the dressing. Lightly toss.

Repeat with another layer using the remaining greens topped with the remaining cheese, pear, pomegranate seeds and dressing. Add freshly cracked pepper and evenly drizzle with the honey.


Not recommended to store leftovers.

*\*Note: I don’t toss the top layer of this salad in order to keep the beauty of all the ingredients. As guests are helping themselves to the salad, it will get tossed naturally. ♦*


*Courtney Diener-Stokes is an award-winning journalist, author, food writer, photographer and food stylist. Most recently she co-authored the Kimberton Whole Foods Cookbook and Farmhouse Manna: Nourishing Recipes and Rituals for Head, Heart, Hands & Soul. She lives in the Oley Valley countryside with her husband, three children, two Babydoll South-down sheep, a flock of bantam chickens and a Bernedoodle named Daisy.*



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# 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).*





Andario



Ground Provisions



9 Prime



Joey Chops

STARS OLD AND NEW

Andario

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

Of course we start with our local star, the eponymous Andario, 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. Andario 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: 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.

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 sooooo 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

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

An early entrant into the expanding steak-scape, 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 Madanar'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 Andario 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 / MottoBerywn.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 home-made 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



Talula's Table



Bittersweet Kitchen

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.

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 crème 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



Bistro on Bridge

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,



Avlos

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



Sedona Taphouse



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.



WAYNE

Morning: Minella's Diner

320 Lancaster Ave., Wayne  
610-687-1575 / 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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-

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

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

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

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

Executive Chef Corey Bayer 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

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

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 açaí bowls and ... gluten-free bagels.

Terrain Garden Cafe

Nectar

Amada Radnor

Di Bruno Bros.

Rosalie

At the Table



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. Foregoing 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, tacos, 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, revel 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

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# Dining Guide 2024

Our guide to great local dining. Be sure to check websites before venturing out to check hours and locations.

## SOME OF OUR FAVORITES

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Avondale

✶ **The Farmhouse Restaurant at LocNairn**  
514 McCue Rd.  
610-268-2235; [LochNairn.com](http://LochNairn.com)

#### Berwyn

**La Cabra Brewing**  
642 Lancaster Ave.  
610-240-7908; [LaCabraBrewing.com](http://LaCabraBrewing.com)

✶ **Nectar**  
1091 Lancaster Ave.  
610-725-9000; [TasteNectar.com](http://TasteNectar.com)

#### Birchrunville

✶ ✶ **Birchrunville Store Cafe**  
1403 Hollow Rd.  
610-827-9002; [BirchrunvilleStoreCafe.com](http://BirchrunvilleStoreCafe.com)

#### Bryn Mawr

**Fiore Rosso**  
915 Lancaster Ave.  
484-380-2059; [Facebook.com/FioreRossoPHL](http://Facebook.com/FioreRossoPHL)

#### Chadds Ford

✶ **Antica Restaurant & Wine Bar**  
1623 Baltimore Pk.  
484-770-8631; [AnticaPA.com](http://AnticaPA.com)

✶ **Brandywine Prime**  
1617 Baltimore Pk. (Rts. 1 & 100)  
610-388-8088; [BrandywinePrime.com](http://BrandywinePrime.com)  
Exclusive Catering Venues — Carriage House  
[RockwoodCarriageHouse.com](http://RockwoodCarriageHouse.com)  
Brandywine Prime's rustic charm and casual atmosphere can be attributed to the fact that it's situated in a beautifully restored 300-year-old inn. Chef Jason Barrowcliff's superb traditional

Brandywine Prime

American fare includes steaks, chops and seafood. There are also great spaces for large gatherings with private rooms and a new full service catering menu for a location of your choice.

✶ **The Gables at Chadds Ford**  
423 Baltimore Pk.  
610-388-7700; [TheGablesAtChaddsFord.com](http://TheGablesAtChaddsFord.com)

#### Chester Springs

✶ ✶ **Bloom Southern Kitchen**  
123 Pottstown Pk.  
484-359-4144; [BloomSouthernKitchen.com](http://BloomSouthernKitchen.com)

✶ **Epicurean Garage**  
570 Simpson Dr.  
610-615-5189; [EpicureanGarage.com](http://EpicureanGarage.com)

**Liberty Union Bar and Grill**  
Also in Kimberton. 325 Simpson Dr.  
484-359-4061; [LibertyUnionBar.com](http://LibertyUnionBar.com)

✶ **Limoncello Chester Springs**  
Also in West Chester. 499 W. Uwchlan Ave.  
610-524-3112; [LimoncelloRestaurant.com](http://LimoncelloRestaurant.com)

**Revival Pizza Pub**  
240 Windgate Dr., Suite A7  
610-947-0999; [RevivalPizzaPub.com](http://RevivalPizzaPub.com)

#### Coatesville

✶ **30 Prime Seafood & Chophouse**  
112 E. Lincoln Hwy., Coatesville

✶ **Record Kitchen + Bar**  
206 E. Lincoln Hwy., Coatesville  
484-784-5483; [TheRecordCoatesville.com](http://TheRecordCoatesville.com)

✶ **Stottsville Inn Restaurant, Hotel & Bar**  
3512 Strasburg Rd.  
484-718-5121; [StottsvilleInn.com](http://StottsvilleInn.com)

✶ **The Iron Eagle on Lincoln Bar & Grille**  
143 Lincoln Hwy. E., Coatesville  
610-400-4407; [IronEagleOnLincoln.com](http://IronEagleOnLincoln.com)

Ron's Original Bar & Grill

#### Devon

**Amis Trattoria**  
138 W. Lancaster Ave.  
610-590-4782; [AmisTrattoria.com](http://AmisTrattoria.com)

**Pizzeria Vetri**  
138 W. Lancaster Ave.  
484-207-6663; [PizzeriaVetri.com](http://PizzeriaVetri.com)

✶ **Terrain Café at Devon**  
138 W. Lancaster Ave.; 610-590-4675  
[ShopTerrain.com/Devon-Restaurant](http://ShopTerrain.com/Devon-Restaurant)

#### Downingtown

✶ **De La Terre**  
47 W. Lancaster Ave.  
610-269-2431; [DeLaTerreBYOB.com](http://DeLaTerreBYOB.com)

**Estrella Tacos y Mas**  
202 E. Lancaster Ave.  
484-237-2423; [EstrellaTacoBar.com](http://EstrellaTacoBar.com)

✶ **Green Street Grill**  
150 E. Pennsylvania Ave.  
610-873-1700; [GreenStGrill.com](http://GreenStGrill.com)  
Serving breakfast and lunch to the West Chester and Downingtown area. Their signature breakfasts are not to be missed and include everything from smoked salmon, to spicy sausage, a breakfast burrito and more. Of course you'll find the breakfast staples like eggs anyway you choose, French toast, waffles, pancakes — all cooked to perfection — as well as hot sandwiches and wraps and eggs Benedict served 7 ways!

**La Sponda**  
20 E. Lancaster Ave.  
484-593-4488; [LaSponda.com](http://LaSponda.com)

**The Social on 30**  
541 W. Lancaster Ave.  
484-593-4113; [SocialOn30.com](http://SocialOn30.com)

Tonino's Pizza & Pasta Co.





★ **Station Taproom**  
207 W. Lancaster Ave.  
484-593-0560; StationTaproom.com

★ **Victory Brewing Company**  
420 Acorn Ln.  
610-873-0881; VictoryBeer.com

Exton

★ **Appetites on Main**  
Main Street at Exton, 286 Main St.  
610-594-2030; AppetitesOnMain.com

**ChopHouse Grille**  
301 N. Pottstown Pk.  
484-875-6700; ChopHouseGrille.com

✳ **Duling-Kurtz House & Country Inn**  
146 S. Whitford Rd.  
610-524-1830; DulingKurtz.com

★ **Iron Hill Brewery Taphouse**  
260 Eagleview Blvd.  
484-874-2897; IronHillBrewery.com/Exton-PA

★ **Nudy's Café**  
420 W. Lincoln Hwy., Exton  
610-524-1508; NudysCafes.com

★ **Ron's Original Bar & Grille**  
74 E. Uwchlan Ave. (Rt. 113)  
610-594-9900; RonsOriginal.com  
Serving real food, for the health of it! Delicious meals prepared from scratch, on site daily, with all natural ingredients. American/Italian cuisine with something for everyone. Open Sun–Thurs, 11 am to 9:30 pm, Fri–Sat, 11 am to 11 pm. Curbside pickup daily, 4 pm to 8:30 pm.

**VK Brewing Co. & Eatery**  
693 E. Lincoln Hwy.  
484-873-3199; VKBrewing.com

**Mama Wong**  
268 Eagleview Blvd.  
484-713-8888; BestMamaWong.com

Eagleview Town Center  
Restaurant Row

★ **Bluefin Eagleview**  
555 Wellington Sq.  
610-458-3234; BlueFinEagleview.com

**Brickside Grille**  
540 Wellington Sq.  
610-321-1600; BricksideGrille.com

**Persis Indian Grill**  
541 Wellington Sq. 484-341-8445; PersisExton.com

**Suburban Restaurant & Beer Garden**  
570 Wellington Sq.  
610-458-2337; SuburbanBG.com

Glen Mills

**Byrsa Bistro**  
128 Glen Mills Rd.  
610-558-4700; ByrsaBistro.com

**Harvest Seasonal Grill & Wine Bar**  
549 Wilmington-West Chester Pk.  
610-358-1005; HarvestSeasonalGrill.com

★ **Terrain Garden Café**  
Also in Devon. 914 Baltimore Pk.; 610-459-6030  
ShopTerrain.com/Glen-Mills-Restaurant

★ **White Dog Café**  
981 Baltimore Pk.  
610-822-2100; WhiteDog.com/GlenMills

Kennett Square

**Alexander Catering**  
326 W. Cedar St.  
610-291-2850; AlexanderCateringCo.com  
Alexander Catering Company is a family owned and operated, chef-driven events company providing boutique culinary services for private dinners, bridal parties, weddings, showers and more. Based in Chester County, their full-service catering is provided at homes and venues throughout the Delaware Valley. As a private chef and boutique caterer, they pride themselves on the small details that make your event a memorable one.

✳ **Grain Craft Bar + Kitchen**  
108 W. State St.  
610-444-7232; MeetAtGrain.com

★ **Hank's Place Kennett Square**  
201 Birch St.  
610-448-9988; HanksPlaceChaddsFord.com

**Hearth Kitchen**  
**Shoppes at Longwood Village**  
484-732-8320; HearthKennettSquare.com

★ **La Verona**  
114 E. State St.  
610-444-2244; LaVeronaPA.com  
Using only the finest and freshest ingredients, highlighting the northern region of Italy, La Verona is committed to making your meal a memorable one, with professional service in a warm, welcoming social atmosphere. Whether

you're looking for an intimate dinner with friends or planning a celebration, this is a perfect choice. Keep them in mind for private parties up to 65. They also have takeout available for you to enjoy your delicious meal at home.

✳ **Letty's Tavern**  
201 E. State St. 610-444-5688; LettysTavern.com

**Lily Asian Cuisine Sushi and Grill**  
104 W. State St.  
610-925-3700; LilySushiAndGrill.com

**The Naked Olive**  
759 W. Cypress St.  
610-444-2424; Facebook.com/TheNakedOlivePA

**Portabello's**  
108 E. State St.; 610-925-4984  
PortabellosOfKennettSquare.com

★ **Sovana Bistro**  
696 Unionville Rd.  
610-444-5600; SovanaBistro.com

★ **Talula's Table**  
102 W. State St. 610-444-8255; TalulasTable.com

Kimberton

**The Kimberton Inn**  
2105 Kimberton Rd.  
610-933-8148; KimbertonInn.com

**Stone House Grille**  
1300 Hares Hill Rd.  
610-933-1147; StoneHouseGrillePA.com

Malvern

**BOMBA Taco + Bar**  
10 Liberty Blvd. 610-727-5253; BombaTacos.com

★ **Brick & Brew**  
400 E. King St.  
484-320-8688; BrickNBrewPub.com

★ **The Classic Diner**  
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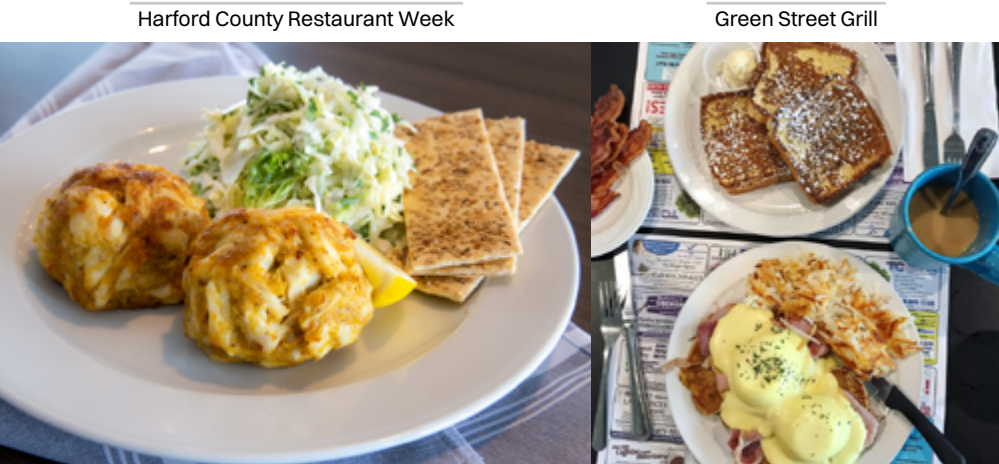






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# Hard CIDER 101

ANOTHER WAY  
TO ENJOY APPLES

Olga and Brian Dressler

**H**ARD CIDER IS THOROUGHLY MISUNDERSTOOD in America. Is it brewed like beer? Distilled like vodka? What makes cider hard cider? And why should I try it?

Hopefully, by the end of this *crush* course (pun intended), you'll know more about this tasty beverage and may be curious enough to try some yourself. And then fall in love with it.

## WHY HARD CIDER?

Hard cider — the alcoholic version of apple cider — is a versatile drink, pairing well with many foods, from hearty roasts to nuanced desserts. It also stands well on its own, showing deep, rich, earthy and complex notes, or other varieties tending toward floral notes and fruit aromas.

A perfect thirst quencher on a scorching summer day, hard cider can just as easily be warmed with spices to thaw the frostiest bones in winter. This multipurpose drink can serve as the backbone for a staggering variety of cocktails (using hard or nonalcoholic cider), as well as stand in for beer and wine for cooking — for braising a roast, making buttery pasta sauces or creating a sweet reduction to glaze a dessert. Frankly, there's not much cider can't do.

## SOME HISTORY

The recent resurgence of cidermaking in the U.S. started in the early 2000s, but the tradition dates back to early settlers in America — and even further back in the United Kingdom and Ireland, where hard cider is popular to this day.

Sadly for American cider lovers, the drink faced a setback during Prohibition when overzealous activists from the Temperance movement cut down many cider apple trees. After Prohibition ended, the slow growth of apple trees compared to much quicker barley harvests gave beer a massive head start in production. Plus, the nation's shifting demographics, led by a surge of German immigrants, increased demand for beer.

And so hard cider never completely bounced back after Prohibition. Although the drink was appreciated by a small group of devoted fans and kept alive by a handful of artisans, hard cider remained a niche product.

In the early 2000s, only a few hard ciders were available in the U.S., mainly Woodchuck Hard Cider from Vermont and Strongbow Apple Ciders imported from the United Kingdom. Then Angry Orchard began production of a mass-market cider at a low

Heritage ciders use less commonly grown apple varieties

price point. Angry Orchard's large advertising budget pushed the product nationwide, resulting in the cider category experiencing astronomical growth seemingly overnight and proving hard cider was a viable product in the U.S.

Eventually, lovers of hard cider began yearning for a drier (less sweet) product, one with more nuance and dimension, as Angry Orchard leaned heavily into sweet, flavored ciders. Purists sought out the core taste of cider (another pun), much like craft beer fans in the 1990s searched for authentic beer tastes and varieties.

## CIDERMAKING BASICS

Basically, hard cider is produced by using yeast to ferment apple juice into an alcoholic product. Think of hard cider as apple wine: to create the main ingredient, apple juice, apples must be grown on trees, then harvested and ground into tiny pieces before being pressed to extract the juice.

Cidermakers, from international conglomerates to home enthusiasts, approach this work in different ways — some purchase apples or juice from outside sources, while others do it all themselves, soup to nuts. Other decisions also affect the final product. Choices of apple varieties and ratios in the blend impact the sugar, acid, tannin and aromatics of the cider. Yeast

selection also affects the final sugar levels and flavor, as cidermakers use wine or beer yeasts or opt for wild fermentation with native yeasts from the apples' skin.

After fermentation, hard cider is rested to clarify naturally — filtering out yeast and other solids — in stainless steel tanks or oak barrels, which can impart additional flavor. Then the cider can be carbonated in a pressure vessel using added carbon dioxide, carbonated in the bottle (similarly to Champagne) or, like many wines, bottled still, with no carbonation.

A cidemaker's choices are endless and incredibly fun to explore.

## HARD CIDER VARIETIES

Many hard cider fans outgrew the overly sweet options from mass-market producers, instead craving drier ciders. However, modern hard ciders use apple varieties we're familiar with for eating and cooking, like Granny Smith, Honeycrisp and Gala. These apples have high sugar and acid but low tannins — natural compounds that add complexity on the palate and a drying sensation in the mouth. The result is a bright, tart cider with gentle apple notes.

Heritage ciders, on the other hand, use antique or heirloom apple varieties. These apples aren't as commonly grown nor are they as tasty to eat — some are incredibly tart, bitter and unbalanced tasting.

Some heritage apples, such as Golden Russet, have rough skin like a potato and are just as hard to bite into but have a deep, honeyed flavor. Another, Hewe's Crab, has orange golden skin and a bright, sweet flavor, but is as small as a golf ball and can be mushy when eaten. And the Wickson variety has very high acid but equally high sugar, tasting like lemonade.

Heritage ciders made from these apples are unique and provide a larger canvas for tasting the growing conditions of the orchard, allowing chalky and mineral notes from the soil to linger in the background, like the terroir of fine wines.

Other popular cider varieties include rosé ciders, made from apples with pink or red flesh or by adding fruit like strawberries or





Olga and Brian Dressler  
at Valley Creek Orchard

red wine grape skins. And ice ciders make use of freezing winter temperatures' impact on apples to yield more concentrated juice, producing a sweeter and more alcoholic cider with incredibly strong apple notes.

Yet another factor affecting ciders' taste is wood aging. Like wine, hard cider can be wood-aged, in barrels or on chips, producing a range to tastes from fruity to chocolate to smoky, depending on the wood type, growing region and char level. And like beer, cider can also be hopped, using a myriad of hop choices and flavor profiles.

We could talk about many more cider styles, but then there'd be no room for other articles in this issue of *County Lines*!

## LOCAL CONNECTIONS

A final important factor in your cider education is that good cider starts in the orchard. At Dressler Estate, our process leans heavily on local agriculture, sourcing all our apples within Pennsylvania, with most coming from orchards in Chester County or nearby counties. All our apples are fresh, sourced directly from trusted growers. (When we use juice, we pick it up ourselves the day it's pressed.)

A quarter of our apples come from Valley Creek Orchard, a one-acre, high-density cider apple orchard just south of Downingtown. We manage this private site, which sits on a hilltop overlooking Valley Creek and produces exceptional cider apples, alongside landowners Mary Lee and Bruce Colley.

When it comes to hard cider, we think of ourselves more as caretakers than makers. The apple trees and the land do the hard

work of growing the apples, then the yeast does the work of converting sugars in the apple juice into alcohol and carbon dioxide.

What we do is ensure conditions are optimal for those components to work best through rigorous cleaning, sanitation, temperature control and monitoring, intervening only when necessary and then minimally. This approach creates ciders that are expressive of the land and climate, with distinctive terroir, allowing special qualities in our ciders that make them unique.

Thank you for taking a short, but hopefully informative dive into the world of ciders. ♦

PHOTO CREDIT: GAB BONGHI

*Dressler Estate's husband-and-wife-owned cidery believes in the power of small businesses working with the community. Visit them at local farmers markets (Downingtown, Phoenixville, Chestnut Hill) and look for a retail taproom on Lancaster Ave. in Downingtown, planned for late spring 2024. Follow on social media @DresslerEstate or sign up for the newsletter on their website, DresslerEstate.com. Remember to shop local and support small businesses in your community!*

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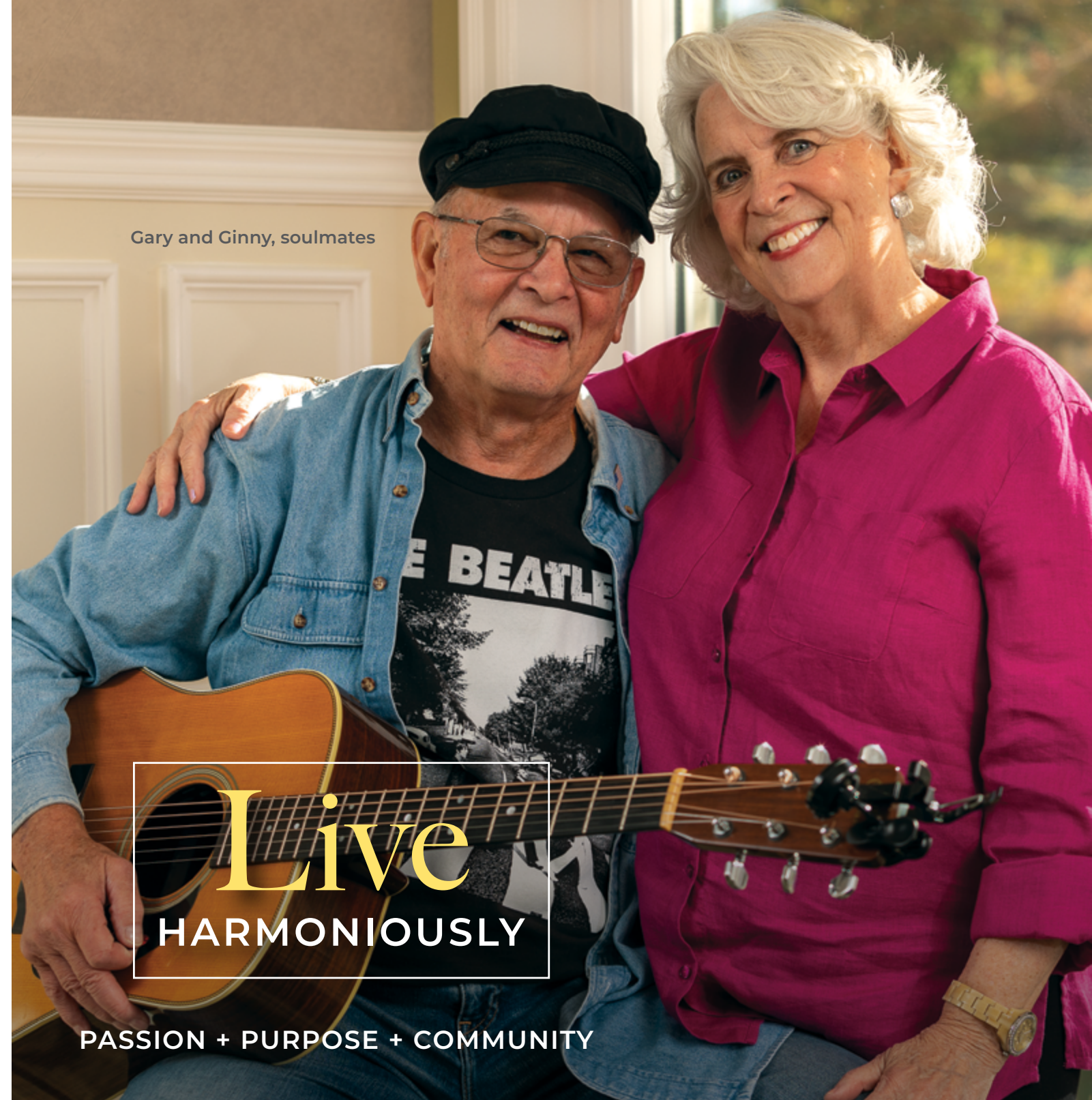
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