

BEST ★ Of The BEST 2025



THE TEST OF TIME

Our Best of the Best roundup of local dining spots is a labor of love each year. And this year, that love had a different focus.



Yes, we recognize the truly stellar restaurants we're lucky enough to have nearby. And, as always, we share the recent additions to our local dining scene — New Places to Try, Wine & Spirits to Sample, Sweet Treats to Enjoy, New Concepts to Revisit along with new locations of old favorites and news of restaurants that are coming soon.

But for 2025, we focused on those places that have stood the test of time. In an area with a history of hospitality, we highlight those with a tradition of offering comfort and solace at familiar tables. In these pages you'll find places that for so many years have served up happy memories along with meals morning, noon, night and other times when you need sustenance.

There are diners, cafés, family-owned restaurants along with college bars, tea shops and great places for happy hours. Dine in historic inns, taverns, hotels and old mills. Sample family recipes cooked by the original family or preserved by successor owners. Enjoy food by chefs who have changed their locations but retained the continuity of experience. These iconic dining establishments are our community history and treasures.

We suggest you make plans to gather with family and friends, bask in the nostalgia and make new memories at these longtime favorites.

Check our website and social media for more on restaurants, food news, recipes, beer and wine columns, and more. CountyLinesMagazine.com



Andiaro



Birchrunville Café



1906 at Longwood Gardens

PHOTO CREDIT: ALBERT VECERKA/ESTO. COURTESY OF WEISSMAN/FRED



The Pear

NEW ACCOLADES FOR THE STARS

Andiaro

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

It was no surprise Andiaio was on the *Inquirer's* list, “The 76,” described as “the establishments that define what it means to be part of Philly food culture in 2024.” One of few suburban spots selected, this West Chester standout (and longtime Best of the Best star) made food critic Craig LaBar's Top 10 list, too. Chef Anthony Andiaro maintains the level of excellence and creativity that marked his 2018 debut, with ever-changing, Italian-inspired menus highlighting the best from local farms (including one he tends with partner Maria van Schaijik), paired with perfect pastas and surprises from the wood-fired hearth. Add polished service and handmade tableware for an elevated dining experience.

Birchrunville Café

1403 Hollow Rd., Birchrunville
610-827-9002 / BirchrunvilleStoreCafe.com

Among the treasures of Chester County dining, Birchrunville Café has earned a special place after 25 years — a lifetime for a restaurant, especially for one that's maintained its culinary quality and enduring charm in a historic building way out in the country (be grateful for Google Maps and bring cash). Chef Francis Pascal continues to celebrate both traditional and contemporary flavors in his BYOB's menu, which changes weekly, highlighting everything from cassoulet to black angus filet, with rabbit, venison, ostrich and sea urchin appetizers. Each mouthful displays the clean flavors and layered textures that delight. Order the mini butterscotch Bundt cake drizzled with caramel here or at the neighboring ButterScotch Pastry Shop owned by Pascal and wife Nui.

NEW PLACES TO TRY

1906 & The Fountain Room at Longwood Gardens

1001 Longwood Rd., Kennett Square
610-388-1000 / LongwoodGardens.org/Dine

Reimagine dining at the new restaurant unveiled as part of the ambitious Longwood Reimagined expansion. Located in the lower level of the East Conservatory, facing the Main Fountain Garden (book now for summer fountain shows!), 1906 restaurant is joined by The Fountain Room, a private dining room, and a bar and lounge. Chef George Murkowicz and team craft sustainable, farm-to-table experiences — even tables are of reclaimed wood from Longwood. The seasonal winter menu offers Flora (flower salad), Funga (mushrooms) and Fauna from ocean and pastures. Dream, for example, of the roasted Green Circle chicken with garden lavender, wildflower honey, Brussels sprouts, foie gras and cognac, plus warm du Pont donuts with Earl Grey toffee sauce.

The Pear

275 Brintons Bridge Rd., West Chester
484-260-1425 / ThePearDilworthtown.com

Hooray for those who give historic buildings new life. Linda and Nick Farrel, the fabulous folks behind Kennett's Sovana

Bistro, added The Pear at Dilworthtown to their family of restaurants in late October. Elevated tavern food and tastes from around the world are served up on small plates and in bar snacks (Korean BBQ cracker jacks), along with seasonal cocktails (try the Almost Delco and NA options), plus wine and beer (good local craft choices). Enjoy a meal in this cozy space — maybe a wagyu smash burger, fish kebabs, cacio e pepe — and admire the range.

Fond BYOB

21 N. Providence Rd., Wallingford
484-445-2108 / FondBYOB.com

This elegant, contemporary French BYOB from Chefs Lee Styer and Jessie Prawlucky Styer (CIA grads, Le Bec-Fin vets) opened in October in Delco, bringing their three-bell legacy from over a decade of cooking in South Philly before closing in 2021 because of the pandemic. The format will feel familiar to old fans, with some new twists in a new space (formerly La Cannelle Café) serving a new community. Sample their constantly evolving seasonal lunch and dinner menus sourced locally, including the Styers' own small farm in Media. Come for French onion soup, escargot, chicken liver mousse, seared foie gras, beef Burgundy, butternut crème brûlée and more. It's très French.

Departure

2 Orange St., Media
610-502-3833 / DepartureDelco.com

Fasten your seatbelts, there's a new restaurant in Media. Delco natives Rory and Krystal Hirst transformed an old bank building into what looks like an upscale airline lounge, named Departure, but is actually their new dining spot. The airport theme carries through the design and menu, setting the mood for savoring their international small plates menu — think tabouleh, kebabs, dumplings and the like. Check out more airport lingo on the cocktail menu, which can be sipped at the 45-foot bar, and includes The Take Off (vodka, elderflower, lychee, lime), The Contrail (bourbon + two bitters) and International Spy (gin, vodka, Lillet). No passport required.

The Noble Goat

200 River Station Blvd., Downingtown
484-364-4369 / NobleGoatDowningtown.com

Bryan and Andrea Sikora continue to expand their culinary empire — from La Fia, Merchant Bar and Crow Bar in Wilmington plus Hearth Kitchen outside Kennett Square. And now to The Noble Goat (currently BYOB, pending liquor license approval) in the River Station development outside downtown Downingtown.

Serving a seasonal, eclectic menu featuring global flavors — some things you've had before, some you haven't — including small plates, pizzas, creative larger format dishes. Examples: tuna crudo, curried lamb empanada or pickled beet jar to start, followed by spicy Calabrian chile and soppressata pizza, or sherry-scented risotto, duck cassoulet, pan-seared rainbow Idaho trout. The kind of inspiring yet satisfying food we've come to expect. And love.

Taste & Sea

1810 Wilmington Pk., Ste. 1, Glen Mills
484-800-8331 / TasteSea.com

John and Christina Talbot's Taste & Sea restaurant is a new 146-seat fine dining destination — tablecloths, coat check, bottle service. With 30 years' experience (20+ at Creed's Seafood & Steaks), Restaurant School-trained John was eager to open his own place and brought Chef Charlie Moronski along to oversee an upscale menu of shellfish and fish, raw oysters and steaks. Find Bombay gin martinis and colossal shrimp cocktails on the menu, along with specialties like salmon Wellington, venison Diane and surf & turf combo of sliced filet and half a lobster tail served within Aegean blue walls.

Carina Sorella

866 W. Lancaster Ave., Bryn Mawr
610-596-9166 / CarinaSorella.com

Meaning “darling sister” in Italian and with a sister spot (Philly's Trattoria Carina), Carina Sorella is a welcome addition to Bryn Mawr dining, with a mission to be a neighborhood bistro. The former storefronts were transformed into a lively and lovely black-and-white interior with a mix of what you crave (pizzas, homemade pastas, chicken parm), plus a little something extra. Try the pear pizza with speck, taleggio, burnt honey, or the spicy soppressata, with red sauce, provolone, hot honey. There's bucatini cacio e pepe, mafaldine Bolognese and branzino, too, on this curated menu. Attentive staff and a full bar ensure repeat customers.

Gentili's Pizza & Steaks

318 Lincoln Hwy. E., Exton
610-477-7747 / GentilisPizza.com

Mea culpa for missing the late-2023 opening of Gentili's, a paragon of pizza (& steaks), inspired by a nonna's love of food and family. Go for airy, crispy crusts in round or square pies baked in a high-temp oven, served up in old-school ambiance boasting family photos, where they proudly “take pizza personally.” Pizza guru Tony's 30-year obsession with great pizza is tangible in four-day fermented dough, sauce of to-



The Noble Goat



Taste & Sea



Carina Sorella

mato filet and fresh herbs, with Wisconsin creamy mozzarella. Try the Gentili, Corleone, Donato, Charlie (with hot honey) or another of the dozen signature choices or Brooklyn pies. Life's too short to eat bad pizza!

LaScala's Fire

3739 West Chester Pk., Newtown Square
484-900-2828 / LaScalasFire.com

In March, this Philly and South Jersey chain opened its newest location in the former Fire-point spot in Newtown Square (also in Villanova). Now with 7+ locations, this restaurant group started humbly in 1969 in Media, when home-made dough and special sauce recipes gave birth to fan-favorite Apollo pizza, which spawned LaScala's Pronto, Birra and Fire, plus Beach House. Owner Rob LaScala's recipe for success is a wood-fired Italian-American menu filled with options you crave. Choose from almost 20 apps, 12 pizzas (from grandma's pie to hot honey), over a dozen chicken, veal and seafood classics beyond the pasta section. It's all there. Plus Happy Hour.

Hiramasa

2554 West Chester Pk., Newtown Square
484-420-4023 / HiramasaPA.com

Promising a culinary journey through Japan, Hiramasa has a significantly more upscale vibe than most ethnic restaurants in shopping malls can muster — dramatic lighting, dark wood interiors, handcrafted plates, exotic cocktails. The menu blends time-honored recipes along with modern twists trending toward Pan-Asian, with exquisite presentation — think black truffle garnish or uni, toro and caviar in one bite, wagyu beef ishiyaki (cooked on hot stones). There's classic maki, signature maki (black rice option), nigiri (and premium nigiri), sashimi, plus sushi entrees and other entrees, and of course, omakase (\$128/person).

Rakkii Sushi & Ramen

235 Lancaster Ave., Malvern
610-889-3888 / RakkiiUSA.com

In another shopping mall, this one Liberty Court in Malvern, you'll find a new BYOB option for your eat-in or takeout sushi needs along with traditional ramen noodles or brothless abura soba dishes. Citing a dedication to authenticity and quality, their flavorful ramen broth has simmered for hours, creating depth of taste combined with hand-pulled noodles and toppings in a perfect bowl to satisfy your soul. Seven abura soba dishes let the noodles shine in an umami-rich sauce. So many choices on the menu, including boba tea.

WINE & SPIRITS TO SAMPLE

Johnny O's Speakeasy

19 N. High St., West Chester
JohnnyOsWestChester.com

Top Chef alum Fabio Viviani made a big splash in the big converted bank building serving big-ticket steaks at 9 Prime last year. Although Fabio said farewell, this summer saw the opening of Johnny O's Speakeasy, where a special key fob grants access to a members-only sanctuary in the lower level, Thursday through Saturday (\$2,500 annual membership, guests permitted). It's a place to enjoy an elevated classic cocktail menu, plus signature events, gourmet tastings. The public can check out the speakeasy, complete with bank vaults, safe deposit boxes in a low-light space with leather and velvet, Sunday through Wednesday. Small bites include caviar cones, foie gras, lobster rolls. Sounds right.

Casa Carmen Farm & Winery

49 Camino Way, West Grove
610-340-4335 / CasaCarmenWines.com

A family-owned Eastern Shore winery known for producing dry wines and Spanish-style vermouth from local grapes and sustainably farmed botanicals opened a new location in West Grove. Casa Carmen Farm & Winery is on a historic property once owned by William Penn, who was said to have brought the first wine-producing grapes to the New World. The tasting room (30 inside, more outside) combines the spirit of Argentine farms and Spanish bodegas with Pennsylvania charm and serves seasonal tapas and small bites paired with Casa Carmen wines and vermouth (\$28 to \$42/bottle), plus local beer and cocktails.

Turks Head Wines Tasting Room & Wine Lounge

120 N. Church St., West Chester
610-350-4183 / TurksHeadWines.com

West Chester's bar scene got some polish (smart casual dress code) when Allison and Josh Owen opened the 10,000-square-foot Turks Head Wine Lounge last August. The concept is to enjoy the kind of experience available in a West Coast tasting room by sharing a glass, flight or bottle of Bordeaux-style wines sourced, produced and bottled in California. Sip and learn from sommeliers and wine educators at the elegant marble oval bar or in the tasting room, intimate Blue Room, larger Barrel Room or members-only CRU Club lounge. Pair with curated bites chosen to accentuate the wines. The onsite Bottle Shoppe will let you continue the experience at home or a nearby BYOB.

Village Vine

6 Park Ave., Swarthmore
484-471-3997 / VillageVineSwarthmore.com

Not every change of ownership in notable, but when a new chef creates the best thing *Inquirer* food critic Craig LaBan ate that week

(in February 2024, apple dumpling with salted caramel cremeux), that's worth a shout out. When Village Vine opened in Swarthmore in 2020, the focus was on eclectic wines and small plates. But early last year, new chef/owner John Hearn (West Chester's Roots Cafe, Berwyn's La Cabra Brewing) expanded the vision to bistro food for brunch and dinner, plus A cocktail bar. Try the crab and spinach fondue, prime rib French dip sandwich or hunter chicken (caramelized onion Bordelaise, Gruyère). Still plenty of good wine to enjoy.

Wayvine Tasting Room

217 E. State St., Kennett Square
610-620-5261 / Wayvine.wine

After years of operating their vineyard in Nottingham, Wayvine's Wilson brothers opened a small tasting room in September on Kennett's bustling State Street (former Hilltop Flowers spot), attracted by the town's community spirit. In the warm, handcrafted interior with furnishings made from trees fallen on the family farm, sample 12 varietals — from unoaked chardonnay to field-blend rosé to cabernet franc — by the glass, bottle or in tastings, along with their vermouth or cocktails and beer. It's a BYOFood spot, with plenty of options nearby — Patisserie Lola is next door and Letty's Tavern a block away. Or take a bottle to Kennett's many BYOBs.

Wallace Dry Goods

1 W. Lancaster Ave., Ardmore
484-413-2003 / WallaceDryGoods.com

If you joined Dry January, did Sober October or otherwise explored the NA world (non-alcoholic), then visit Ardmore's Wallace Dry Goods, where they're intoxicated by their craft, not alcohol, and source the finest boozeless refreshments to sip, savor and share. The tasting bar serves up samples, plus craft mocktails with "none of the alcohol, allllll of the vibes" as they skip the booze

but keep the cocktail hour ambiance and community spirit. Check out their online Libation Library glossary — from ABV to zero-proof — and toast (appropriately) to their Best of Philly 2024 accolades for elevating abstinence.

SWEET TREATS TO ENJOY

Ice Cream West Chester

14 N. Church St., West Chester
@IceCreamWestChester

After dominating pizza (2021) and cheesesteaks (2023), ice cream was the next food frontier for Speer Madanat, the West Chester foodie phenom. We've been waiting far too long for the former Juice Pod space to be transformed (The *Inquirer* mentioned it in March 2024). Even without any posts, over 2K Instagram followers eagerly awaited news back in mid-December, while on the brink of opening. Word is Speer's working on recipes and plans for soft-serve and custard, shakes and sundaes. Sneak peek video leaked that jimmies will be available — Speer's fave topping.

Hangry Bear Creamery

660 E. Cypress St., Kennett Square
610-744-2722 / HangryBearCreamery.com

You can ship your favorite ice cream flavor in a cooler box with dry ice, but it's better to head for Kennett Square to enjoy Hangry Bear Creamery's confections in person and on demand. Black raspberry chip, mint cookies and cream, buttered stroopwafel are just a few creative options available by scoop, pint or quart. But what makes us smile are the options to create our own unique, custom flavors onsite in the ice cream-making studio (two-hour session) or craft personalize flavors for birthdays, weddings or special events. Then there's the subscription service, boozy milkshakes and speakeasy adult flavors. They had us at ice cream.

Federal Donuts & Chicken

232 N. Radnor Chester Rd., Wayne
484-580-2929 / FederalDonuts.com

Another reason not to drive to the city but add a new app to your phone: Fednuts has come to the 'burbs with the first franchise in Radnor in September (more to come). While it may take a beat to understand the connection (think max use of the fryers for 13 years in Philly), once you experience the peak taste of the hand-battered, twice-fried chicken (in tenders, wings, sliders and sandwiches in flavors like the classic, Buffalo kick or South Philly), you'll know. And no matter if you're a fan of the Fancies (chocolate cream pie, pear a la mode) or Classics (vanilla bean sprinkle), it's always donut o'clock!

Good Girls Bakery

565 Wellington Sq., Exton
GoodGirlsBakery.com

The May 2024 leap from farm markets to brick-and-mortar shop in Eagleview Town Center let more fans of Good Girls Bakery discover their signature sourdough bread, English muffins (try the cowboy version with jalapeño and cheddar) and breakfast pastries. Adding all-day breakfast, lunch and beverages, plus High Tea Tuesdays, expanded the offerings with more English muffin choices (from the Hottie to Hummus Heaven), the Woodland Bennie (featuring red pepper pesto and shiitake mushrooms), and the Giving Sandwich (yes, Thanksgiving in your hand). Take home a baguette, sour rye or garden loaf plus brown butter chocolate chip cookies and you'll be back for more. Still at farmers markets.

Pastry Pants Bakery

10 Park Ave., Swarthmore
610-328-3963 / PastryPants.com

It's been a journey for baker and former puppeteer Robert Smythe, from working as Village

LaScala's Fire



Hiramasa



Casa Carmen Farm & Winery



Hangry Bear Creamery



Federal Donuts & Chicken



Good Girls Bakery





Pastry Pants Bakery



Rosemary



Il Fiore



Pomod'oro Pizza & Italian Restaurant



Victory Brewing Company



La Sponda

Vine's pastry chef to baking at Swarthmore College, then in a woodshop in his garden to finally opening a proper shop on Park Avenue last spring. This neighborhood bakery in Swarthmore's town center offers a broad array of treats, from lemon glazed madeleines to a Bavarian take on the Philly pretzel to puffy Czech kolaches to heirloom tomato focaccia (in season and from locally grown plants, of course). With lines snaking out the door and pies baked in their signature reusable tins, it's exactly what the town needed.

Sweet Zen Bakery

12 General Warren Blvd., Ste. 800, Malvern
484-202-0345 / SweetZenBakery.com

If your zen is the smell of fresh-baked cinnamon buns, we've found a bakery for you in Malvern. But come early before these goodies are gone. From classic sweets to innovative creations — tiramisu cupcakes, pecan praline cheesecakes, salted caramel chocolate chip scones — this sanctuary of sweetness is full of delights. Capitalizing on her 20 years of experience, Amal Kavar bakes everything onsite, including some gluten-free and egg-free choices along with custom orders for sweet celebrations. Carb lovers can indulge in lighter-than-air brioche or rustic sourdough loaves plus ham and cheese focaccia, while we drool-scroll through the Instagram feed.

260 Bridge Café

260 Bridge St., Phoenixville
610-600-6570 / @260BridgeCafe

Partners Creating Community — which works to improve the lives and opportunities of individuals with disabilities — is the force behind the new coffee shop and bakery that opened in March in the former Black Walnut Winery shop in Phoenixville. Blending educational and vocational opportunities with a mission to stay local and sustainable, the café's menu includes bagels, pastries, campfire cookies, macarons, challah and more. Autumn special coffees went beyond PSL

to treats like rosemary maple latte and cafecito con panna. Plus extra treats like flourless chocolate cake and live music! Even Governor Shapiro made a recent visit to show support.

NEW CONCEPTS TO REVISIT

Rosemary

25 E. Hinckley Ave., Ridley Park
610-671-3770 / RosemaryRP.com

The place that put Ridley Park on the culinary map after a *Philly Mag* shoutout (worth driving to the 'burbs for) got a new chef and new focus last year. Its once ambitious menu (\$50 ribeye, truffle aioli) has been streamlined, now with 40% lower prices (\$22 crab cakes, cheesesteak French dip) and simplified yet exceptional food. Arriving in March, Chef George Sabatino, once anointed "Best Chef in Philly," took over for departing Chef Elijah Milligan. He's cooking less pasta and more pizzas along with chicken with charred lemon and harissa vinaigrette, plus the best fingerling potatoes one food critic ever ate. Happy Hour will be a priority. Still worth a trip.

Il Fiore

915 Lancaster Ave., Bryn Mawr
484-380-2059 / IlFiorePHL.com

The highly anticipated Marc Vetri venture of a meat-focused Fiore Rosso (tomahawk steaks + Picasso paintings) ended last summer when a revamped concept, Il Fiore, appeared in its place (without a Vetri connection). Gone are the many steaks, most of the expensive art and high prices, replaced by classic Italian dishes with a twist, a warmer, cozier vibe and less shocking tabs. You'll even find pizzas and chicken parm from Executive Chef Marie Lavizzo-Mourey (Zahav, Starr restaurants and sous chef at Fiore Rosso) along with a few steaks (8-oz. filet, 14-oz. striploin, 32-oz. ribeye). Try the limoncello flight.

LOCAL PICKS FOR BEST PLACES TO EAT — MORNING, NOON, NIGHT AND MORE

DOWNINGTOWN

Morning: The Coffee Cup

117 E. Lancaster Ave.

610-269-9336 / TheCoffeeCupOnline.com

Whether the egg came first or sliced bread is the best invention, Albert Menna made Downingtown better with both when he started The Coffee Cup diner in 1958. His family continues the tradition. They serve up great breakfasts at the counter or a table indoors or out at the brick building in the historic heart of Downingtown. Gobble up griddle cakes or cream chipped beef. Or start with the fave: a hot "mess" of your choice — combinations of eggs, potatoes, tomatoes, mushrooms, spinach, scrapple, sausage, bacon, ham and cheese — all chopped up and grilled to fill you up for the rest of the day.

Noon: Downingtown Diner

81 W. Lancaster Ave.

610-873-4545 / DTownDiner.com

Head to the Downingtown Diner where the fare is just plain good — jumbo hot dogs, crab patties that would make SpongeBob's mouth water (SpongeBob fans will get it), roast beef and bacon clubs, fried honey-dipped chicken and celebrated fries. For breakfast at noon, ask for the Blob Special, available all day. The two eggs, two pancakes, home fries and meat pay homage to a horror scene in "The Blob," filmed at the location in 1957. A new diner replaced the original in 2013 — an iconic silver diner with neon bright lights, red Coca-Cola fridge and ketchup bottle already on the table.

Night: Thorndale Inn

430 Bondsville Rd.

610-269-5455 / ThorndaleInn.com

The Thorndale Inn has been run by Sam Estephan since 1986, though the property dates back to 1698, when it was bought from William Penn. Operated as a farm until 1938, the owners then converted it to a restaurant. Initially called the Dutch Cupboard and then until 1974 the Dutch Arms, Covattas Thorndale changed its name to the Thorndale Inn. Today, it retains the warmth of a country inn and features a strong steak game (New York strip, prime rib, beef Wellington), as well as seafood options and Italian specialties. A place for dinner and history, plus surprising karaoke and lottery tickets — it sold a \$5 million winner in 2023.

Night: Pomod'oro Pizza & Italian Restaurant

200 Chestnut St.

610-873-0405 / PomodoroDowningtown.com

Tony Cataldo grew up in Sicily, watching his parents and sisters cooking — aromas of garlic, onions, parmesan, the glory of fresh tomatoes, basil. The experience stuck. At 16 and virtually penniless, he followed his dream of opening a restaurant, eventually to Malvern, where he and a partner founded Anthony's in 1993 to great success. Then 22 years later, he and his wife built on that legacy, opening a second restaurant, Pomod'oro, that's brought classic Italian cooking to Downingtown crowds. Today, Pomod'oro features seafood, pastas, pizza and other Italian specialties just like Tony learned to cook in Sicily and has become a mainstay at this location, too.

Happy Hour: Victory Brewing Company

420 Acorn Ln.

610-873-0881 / Downingtown.VictoryBeer.com

Boyhood friends Bill Covaleski and Ron Barchet devoted themselves to crafting innovative, full-flavored beers and founded Victory Brewing in 1996. Victory grew and began opening taprooms and acquiring smaller beer companies about 15 years ago. Today it has five plants, seven taprooms and 20 different beers. But Downingtown remains its flagship. On Sundays, come for its NFL Blitz, with \$2 discounts on beer, wine and highballs. Monday is for its award-winning Monkey drafts. Wednesdays and Thursdays offer wings and burger specials. Fridays, fill a growler or crowler with money left over for food. You know Victory's classic brews and where to enjoy them.

Don't Miss: Whatever's in the Old Mill — now La Sponda

20 E. Lancaster Ave.

484-593-4488 / LaSponda.com

We're pushovers for dining with a water view, so visiting the many restaurants in the historic mill along the Brandywine River is a given. Since 2021 that's been La Sponda (meaning water's edge), which survived Covid then Hurricane Ida and followed Firecreek, Barra Rosa and Milito's restaurants. So, go ahead and take a seat at La Sponda's long bar anchoring the cozy dining room accented with old stone walls and modern leather booths. Better yet, in warm weather, head for the creekside patio to enjoy fresh seafood and homemade pasta dishes. Happy Hour, weekdays, 4 to 6, is another reason to visit for meatballs, fried calamari, short rib egg rolls and more.

KENNETT SQUARE & CHADDS FORD

Morning: Hank's Place

1625 Creek Rd., Chadds Ford

201 Birch St., Kennett Square

610-448-9988 / HanksPlaceChaddsFord.com

With roots as a 1950s hamburger stand, Hank's became the gathering place for artists and characters known and unknown for decades. Tragically, Hurricane Ida devastated the Chadds Ford landmark lauded by the *Washington Post* and loved by the community. So, the eatery moved to Kennett Square, keeping art on the walls, fresh eggs on plates and blooms around the building. Today, the rebuilt restaurant has stilts at its Creek Road home. Grab a seat. Get smoked salmon omelets with cream cheese, red onion and capers or Hank's Breakfast Sub with eggs, cheeses and meats including Lancaster ham — all favorites. Go for weekday business meetings or Saturday Belgian waffles with friends. Order up!

Brunch: Mendenhall Inn

323 Kennett Pk., Mendenhall

610-388-1181 / MendenhallInn.com

Mendenhall Inn's meandering land and history involve notables: William Penn's daughter, former President Richard Nixon's ancestors, Mendenhall family members who used the land for a railroad and the Underground Railroad, Pierre du Pont and others. While all probably ate there, only after the barn became a restaurant around 1968 and the 70-room inn was added in the 1990s did it earn its reputation for divine Sunday brunch. Start with Champagne or mimosas. Continue with scrumptious food stations — chilled seafood, lobster bisque, antipasto, prime rib and custom omelets. Finish with a trip to the dessert buffet, where chocolate mousse and chocolate-dipped strawberries await. Or end with grand pizzazz — Bananas Foster flambé.

Noon: Giordano's

633 E. Cypress St., Kennett Square

610-444-5733 / GiordanosKSQ.com

For over four decades, Giordano's had been a family-owned and -operated hub of casual dining, helmed by the namesake family until 2022.

When the Jamestown Hospitality Group bought the restaurant, they also got the traditional recipes and staff — think your favorites, plus more. For the kids, it's chicken fingers, macaroni & cheese, hot dogs and the like. Meanwhile adult palates can enjoy a wide array of options, from the beloved classic Italian faves, plus new choices. From cheesesteak egg rolls, ahi tuna or Buffalo chicken dip to specialty sandwiches, such as turkey Reuben, crab cake or eggplant parm. Save room for dessert and the cheesecake.

Night: The Gables at Chadds Ford

423 Baltimore Pk., Chadds Ford
610-388-7700

[TheGablesAtChaddsFord.com](#)

In 1997, this Chadds Ford restaurant was first named The Gables, but it had been a local dining spot since the 1980s. In 2011, Ann and Dan Kolenick purchased it and have since received many awards, including for desserts, like first place in the 2015 Kennett Square Chocolate Lovers Festival for the chocolate banana cake that's still on the menu. They've announced new menus coming soon, but we hope they'll continue the favorites, like the local artisanal cheese board with truffle honey, marinated figs and candied walnuts, fried green tomatoes, roasted artichokes, crispy calamari, fettucine with local mushrooms, shrimp & grits and Kennett Square chicken. Also a popular spot for brunch and weddings.

Happy Hour: Chadds Ford Tavern

1400 Baltimore Pk., Chadds Ford
484-800-4084 / [TheCFTavern.com](#)

In 1736, John Chad established what would become Chadds Ford Tavern, and the legacy of hospitality continues. Nearly three centuries later, Philip and Kate Ferro purchased the tavern (along with several others in the area). Today, the tavern serves a popular Happy Hour, 4 to 6 p.m., seven days a week — Martini Mondays, Wing Wednesdays and the like. Beer, wine and cocktails are half off, and clams and oysters are a buck a shuck. For \$8 enjoy French onion soup, pommes frites or a tavern wedge. For \$13, there's prime rib egg rolls, bacon shrimp, tavern wings or short rib fries. Stay for dinner and dessert. Chef Ferro recommends his bread puddings.

Don't Miss: Talula's Table

102 W. State St., Kennett Square
610-444-8255 / [TalulasTable.com](#)

We've been writing and bragging about Talula's Table since it opened in 2007 as a bakery and gourmet grocery store with a killer cheese case. Owner Aimee Olexy soon started serving hyper-seasonal tasting dinners worth the

one-year wait for reservations at the Farm Table for up to 12 guests, then added the Nook Table in the kitchen for up to 8 (\$125+, BYOB). She also expanded into Philadelphia with Talula's Garden, The Love (with Starr Restaurants), but that's another story. *Saveur* and *Condé Nast Traveler* wrote about the local gem we can visit for morning scones, lunch muffuletta sandwiches, everything-but-the-turkey takeout and so much more when we don't have a dinner reservation there.

MALVERN

Morning: The Classic Diner

352 Lancaster Ave.

610-725-0515 / [TheClassicDinerPA.com](#)

Since 1995, The Classic Diner in Malvern has dished up classics, though not in an ordinary diner. From the lattes to jumbo lump crab egg platter or five stellar versions of eggs Benedict, the chef is always cooking up something special for breakfast or brunch. Avocado toast is enticing to see and delicious to eat. Even the spiced oatmeal is extraordinary, with currants, caramelized pears and whipped cream. Whatever you order, don't miss their "Stickiest Buns." The gooey icing, cinnamon and sweet swirls of warm, freshly-baked dough are enough to propel the Laziest Mary to get up out of bed and head to town.

Noon: Anthony's Pizza & Italian Restaurant

127 W. King St.

610-647-7400 / [AnthonysMalvern.com](#)

In 1993, Anthony "Tony" Cataldo opened the Malvern borough BYOB with a passion for cooking that came from his Sicilian family. Thirty-one years later, a new owner, Anthony Natale, has renovated the restaurant, added a wine list and bar, but the eatery still serves up great Italian comfort food and pizza. Start hungry! Begin with pork poutine or fried eggplant that get high marks. Next, dip into the seven fishes risotto, pepperoni and cheese stromboli, big signature pizza pie or homemade pasta like Anthony's nonna made. Live it up with dessert — indulge in cannoli *and* tiramisu so you don't have to choose.

Night: Cedar Hollow Inn

2455 Yellow Springs Rd.

610-296-9006 / [CedarHollowInn.com](#)

Step into Cedar Hollow Inn at nightfall. Tuck into an alcove. Like a charming New England countryside tavern, it's got a comfortable old-inn vibe, low lights, dinner and drinks worth the buggy or car drive from the neighborhood or beyond. The creativity of Culinary Institute of America-trained Chef Stephen Giuseppe en-

sures there's something to please everyone in your group: wild mushroom soup and roasted duck with port wine and cranberry glacé, lemon butter and prosciutto with shrimp and grits or a piping hot cheese pizza. The quarter-century restaurant in a building that's nearly two centuries old is fun for holidays, Eagles or Phillies game days and everyday.

Happy Hour: The Flying Pig

121 E. King St.

610-578-9208 / [@TheFlyingPigSaloon](#)

Roll up to the sign that the locals know — the Flying Pig Saloon. Whether you're bellying up to the bar or grabbing a table, check the blackboard for what's on tap. Since 1999 when a pig weathervane inspired the name of the gastropub, it's been a laidback institution filled with pig décor soaring from the ceiling. Make it a "hoppy" hour with a good IPA. Try dark stout or new craft from a seemingly endless beer list. Chill out with a Jack Frost or other cocktail. Chow down a Barnyard sandwich, pulled pork quesadillas or acclaimed pork belly skewers with bourbon dipping sauce.

Don't Miss: The General Warren

9 Old Lancaster Rd.

610-296-3637 / [GeneralWarren.com](#)

On snowy evenings, the smell of wood smoke draws you to the dining room. In warmer months, al fresco meals lure you to the terrace. Since 1745, the historic country inn has provided hospitality to Conestoga Wagon Trail travelers, the Lancaster Turnpike's toll collectors and locals celebrating special occasions. Today under the leadership of Executive Chef Joshua Smith, fresh white tablecloths, white dishes and sparkling glassware are a canvas for exceptional food and drink. The General Warren is known for its snapper soup served with sherry and traditional beef Wellington — perfect puff pastry with filet mignon, country pâté and mushrooms. Save room for dessert. Pastry Chef Andy Sciarretta outdoes himself every time. Or stop by for a well-made drink at the bar, where experienced bartenders know their craft.

MEDIA

Morning: Court Diner & Restaurant

140 E. Baltimore Ave.

610-566-4403 / [@MediaCourtDiner](#)

When you walk through the doors of the Court Diner, you'll find yourself transported back in time. Opened in 1965, the diner retains that old-school charm — warm wood tones, friendly faces, ample portions. Fill up on

breakfast faves all day long, like brioche French toast, fluffy pancakes, homemade waffles (with or without fried chicken) and eggs any style. Specialty omelets — Greek, western, chorizo, Florentine, lox — are served with home fries and toast, or build your own. For the millennials, there's even avocado toast. Pair with your favorite drink — coffee, tea, cold brew, juice or a refreshing smoothie.

Brunch: La Belle Epoque

38 W. State St.

610-566-6808 / [LaBelleBistro.com](#)

For over 20 years, restaurateur Loïc Barnieu's (Sterling Pig, Two Fourteen) first eatery has brought the cuisine of his native France to State Street. Though most know La Belle Epoque as a dinner destination, the charming wine bistro also serves brunch every day but Monday. Say *bonjour* to brunch with a French twist: quiche du jour, fresh-baked croissants, escargot and, of course, plenty of crepes — chicken, wild mushroom and fontina; basil, Brie and bacon; shrimp, crab and lobster with a white wine cream sauce. Complement your meal with a mimosa, bloody Mary or something off their comprehensive wine list — about half are French.

Noon: Pinocchio's Restaurant

131 E. Baltimore Ave.

610-566-7767 / [PinPizza.com](#)

Media's oldest restaurant and Delco's first pizzeria, Pinocchio's is the definition of an old favorite. This family-owned Italian spot, now in its third generation of management, has been serving up pies since 1955. Choose from hand-tossed, Sicilian and specialty pizzas — Philly cheesesteak, upside-down, Buffalo chicken. Or opt for lunchtime staples like hoagies, grinders, stromboli, wraps, burgers and dogs. Before you leave, drop by the award-winning Beer Garden To Go for over 1,000 varieties of craft beer, plus domestics and imports. Mix and match six-packs, or fill up a growler or crowler from 25 rotating taps — to drink later, of course.

Night: Fellini Cafe

106 W. State St.

610-892-7616 / [FellinisCafe.com](#)

Since opening in 2001, Fellini Cafe has become a State Street staple, perfect for a casual family dinner or special night out. Enjoy classic Italian fare at this inviting BYOB trattoria, complete with granite tables in cozy nooks, ivory Roman columns and hand-painted murals. Start your meal with complimentary bruschetta, then choose from an extensive menu of antipasti (calamari, mozzarella caprese), pasta (penne Bolognese, rigatoni alla vodka, fettucine alfredo) and entrees (chicken parmigiana, chicken piccata), and finish with something sweet (tiramisu, cannoli, gelato). Monday is Opera Night, featuring live performances — non-opera fans can request a table in the other dining room.

Night: Stephen's on State

105 W. State St.

610-891-8900 / [StephensOnState.com](#)

If you've been to Stephen's lately, you may have noticed it looks a bit different. The Italian American steakhouse, opened in 2003, got a makeover in November, with a redesigned interior featuring luxurious seating and contemporary décor. Though fear not, the iconic French doors opening out to the street and live music are here to stay. The menu also got a refresh, adding choices including a drunken cutlet in a vodka blush sauce, lobster Française, double-cut lamb chops, 18-ounce bone-in ribeye. New cocktails include a dirty blue martini, cherry vanilla whiskey sour, blackberry bourbon smash and salted caramel macchiato.

La Belle Epoque



Pinocchio's Restaurant



Fellini Cafe



Stephen's on State



The Towne House



The G-Lodge



Molly Maguire's Irish Restaurant & Pub



Happy Hour: Sligo Irish Pub

113 W. State St.
610-566-5707 / SligoMedia.com

Though you'll find Sligo in downtown Media, the pub evokes its namesake on the north-west coast of Ireland, home to W.B. Yeats. Since 1989, locals have flocked to Sligo for traditional Irish food (fish and chips, Irish beef stew, bangers and mash), live music and, of course, properly poured Guinness. "Make no mistake," the website boasts, "you'll find no finer Guinness pint in America!" Celebrate Happy Hour from 4:30 to 6:30 with \$2 off drafts, \$1 off bottles, \$5 house wines and \$5 snacks. Weekly specials include \$5 Irish pints on Mondays, a burger and pint for \$12 on Wednesdays, and \$3 Bud Light bottles on Fridays. Sláinte!

Don't Miss: The Towne House

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

When D'Ignazio's Towne House closed in 2015, you'd find many Delco locals waxing nostalgic, recounting 65 years of birthday dinners, wedding receptions and class reunions. All rejoiced when Irishman Brian McLaughlin revived the local landmark in 2020. The new-and-improved Towne House is home to five dining rooms, each with its own menu and theme. Take your pick of over 300 whiskeys at The Shebeen, sip seasonal cocktails in Idlewild's open-air courtyard, unwind at the speakeasy-inspired Colony Cocktail Club, host an event at the Towne Hall or dine at the farm-to-table Towne House — highlights include the overnight Guinness short ribs, bone marrow wagyu burger and shepherd's pie. The Delco tradition was saved for future generations.

PHOENIXVILLE

Morning: G-Lodge Cafe

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

G-Lodge Cafe was built in 1928 and became an indoor restaurant in the 1950s. In 2008, as the Filbert Restaurant, the G-Lodge appeared in "The Happening," a box office hit (but critic's dud). That said, a hearty breakfast can't be found in *County Lines* country. Try the breakfast sandwiches — two eggs, cheese and prime rib, sausage, scrapple, ham, bacon or burger. Or three-egg omelets, waffles, pancakes or French toast. Not enough? If you're really hungry, the G-Buster or the 222, combining virtually all the eggs, meats and cheese into a feast, should do the trick.

Noon: Go Straight to Happy Hour

There are so many great spots in Phoenixville, we suggest lunch at any one of them.

Night: Seven Stars Inn

263 Hoffecker Rd.
610-495-5205 / 7-Stars-Inn.com

The original Chester County steakhouse, history reports it first fed travelers on Ridge Road in 1736 and served as George Washington's meeting place, staging ground and gun powder factory during the Revolution. First called the Seven Stars Inn in 1804, it's now widely known for its huge portions and outstanding service. Currently operated by the Canterino family, the restaurant's prime rib weighs in around 2 pounds and its King's Cut of filet mignon at over a pound. Hungry diners also come for other steaks, plus lobster, veal, duck, crab, oysters and more, so much more. A satisfying meal in a historic country inn.

Happy Hour: Molly Maguire's Irish Restaurant & Pub

197 Bridge St.
610-933-9550
MollyMaguiresPhoenixville.com

Inspired by a 19th-century Irish group that fought against landlords and for tenants' rights, the Molly Maguires were the subject of novels, stage plays and a 1970 movie starring Sean Connery. Since 2007, Molly Maguire's Restaurant has offered up warm hospitality in an authentic Irish pub. Stop in for Happy Hour for \$5 wines, \$4 well mixers and \$7 appetizers, such as colcannon potato balls or fried pickles. Plus daily specials, including \$3 for a light draft on Mondays, margaritas for \$5 on Tuesdays and live entertainment. Even brunch on weekends gets you a deal on an orange crush, bloody Mary or mimosa.

Happy Hour: Bistro on Bridge

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

Once a Woolworth's in downtown Phoenixville, Bistro on Bridge has been transformed (and renovated again in 2018) and has drawn crowds since 2009. Try the second floor for fun arcade games, shuffleboard and fireplace. And for great Happy Hour vibes, get a drink from the VW bus on the patio (in season). Specials include \$4 beers or \$8 seasonal mules or sangria, a glass or wine, an orange crush or an old fashioned. And \$6 gets you fries (sweet potato, truffle, regular), while \$8 snags a Bavarian pretzel, risotto balls, or cauliflower or boneless wings. Don't miss the beer bottle chandelier.

Happy Hour: Fitzwater Station

264 Canal St.
610-933-1420 / FitzwaterStation.com

Start with some history here: notably Abel Fitzwater, known for heroic lifesaving efforts during the great flood of 1839. Later Fitzwater Station was a stop on the Underground Railway, and the tavern on the canal was a welcome stop for hard-drinking bargemen out of Philadelphia. When Hurricane Ida hit in 2021, the Fitz was again part of flood relief efforts. Today, share the legacy of hospitality and sit on the dog-friendly waterfront deck, watching wildlife, enjoying live music and outdoor movies. Get half off appetizers on Mondays and Fridays, on burgers on Wednesdays and on wings on Thursdays. Plus special prices on beer, wine and other drinks. The smell of barbecue is free.

Don't Miss: Kimberton Inn

2105 Kimberton Rd., Kimberton
610-933-8148 / KimbertonInn.com

Built in 1796 and no longer offering overnight accommodations, the Kimberton Inn has nonetheless been the site of countless special occasion meals, from wedding celebrations to funeral lunches to anniversary dinners. From the large John Pierce painting of the old inn in the lobby, to the individual dining rooms with fireplaces and Windsor chairs, the atmosphere is quintessential Chester County. It's the kind of place to order a Kimberton Manhattan before your lobster bisque and lamb chops, and perhaps try "Probably the Best Salad You'll Ever Have." In-house desserts include pecan pie and Key lime tart. Serious wine list and wine dinners, too. It's a classic.

WAYNE

Morning: Minella's Diner

320 Lancaster Ave.
610-687-1575 / MinellasDiner.com

Minella's Diner has been feeding Devon Horse Show-goers, Villanova students and Main Line families for 50 years. The family-owned and -operated eatery now offers many options of diner classics and a few menu items you won't see at others: Irish or Mexican coffee and a delightful caramel royale espresso concoction. Take a hefty appetite, park in ample space (a Main Line rarity) and enjoy their large portions: traditional or TOOZ (sausage link) eggs Benedict, steak and eggs, avocado or Greek omelets, or the "All the Way" bagel that has everything including Kalamata olives. Savor apple and blueberry muffins made on site.

Noon: Black Powder Tavern

1164 Valley Forge Rd.
610-293-9333 / BlackPowderTavern.com

Legend holds that George Washington and Lafayette met to wet their whistles at the tavern while secretly strategizing for an American Revolution win. Nearly three centuries later, business leaders find the historic 1745 tavern that has fed and watered stagecoach travelers and covertly stashed black powder ammunition is still the place for lunches where stuff happens. Tried and true traditions: a loaded pub plate appetizer for your wooden table, Big Ale Prime Burger on a pretzel bun if your preference is lunch by land or beer-battered cod with chips if by sea. Seal a deal with a raised glass of ale, cider or stout.

Tea: A Taste of Britain

502 W. Lancaster Ave.
610-971-0390 / ATOBritain.com

If you fancy a spot or a pot of tea and a scone, head to A Taste of Britain. Started in 1991 by an Englishwoman, the shop moved a few times before landing in 2009 at its current home in Eagle Village Shops, where their specialty is full afternoon tea: tiers of tea sandwiches, scones and sweet pastries plus choices of loose-leaf brewed tea. Classic sandwiches are spread with delicious cheese and chutney, egg salad and watercress, cream cheese and cucumber. Large "fruit" scones — with raisins — and clotted cream or lemon curd conjure memories of London, as do china cups of Earl Grey. A separate menu delights young princes or princesses. Take-home treats in the gift shop.

Night: Christopher's: A Neighborhood Place

108 N. Wayne Ave.
610-687-6558

ChristophersANeighborhoodPlace.com

Chris and Molly Todd say "Welcome to Christopher's!" Since 2001, their restaurant has served delicious farm-fresh meals for families, friends and colleagues, featuring friendly service, a complete bar with award-winning mixologists preparing specialty cocktails and a broad menu — including a strong kids' menu — made with fresh local ingredients. Sandwiches, burgers, wraps, pasta, pizza, starters, soups, salads — it's all there, together with tempting entrees like jambalaya, blackened scallops and chicken marsala. Scotch only from Scotland, bourbon only from Kentucky, tequila only from Mexico. It's the kind of place families have been enjoying for ages. All good in this very happy neighborhood!

Bistro on Bridge



Black Powder Tavern



A Taste of Britain



Happy Hour: Teresa's Next Door Bar

124 N. Wayne Ave.
610-293-9909 / TerasasCafe.com

Opened in 2007, the product of Chef/owner Andy Dickerson's collaboration with friends and next door to the 1997 Teresa's Cafe, Teresa's Next Door was an instant success, mainly for its beers. Today, its Happy Hour continues to attract discerning fans with a simple menu. Try eggplant, mussels or prosciutto flatbreads, all priced at \$6, then take a peek at its regular menu. And the beers — there are about 150 choices, with 24 on tap. It also offers over 100 varieties of Scotch and around 200 Irish and other whiskeys, bourbons and ryes. A Balvenie 21 Second Red Rose from Speyside will cost you \$130. Better not spill any.

Don't Miss: Hotel Wayne — now Rosalie

139 E. Lancaster Ave.
610-977-0600 / RosalieWayne.com

The Tudor Revival Wayne Hotel's 100+ years included hosting notable restaurants, each with a distinctive ambiance. Restaurant Taquet, with its old-school Main Line, white-linen-tablecloth vibe from the last century. Then in 2009 the stylish black-and-white Paramour, described by one reviewer as the obvious set if "The Real Housewives of the Main Line" were filmed. The 2020 transformation involved rich colors and Italian soul food when the Fearless Restaurant Group opened Rosalie under Chef Merick Devine, serving Italian comfort food in an approachable restaurant. And through all the changes, we're happy with a drink on the covered porch, overlooking Lancaster Ave.

OTHERS IN CHESTER & DELAWARE COUNTIES

Morning: Wawa

Wawa.com

Stated in 1964, Wawa is PA's largest private company and a major stop for folks starting their day. From 5 to 11 a.m., "Get Up & Get Started" at your local Wawa, offering an astounding variety of options: nine popular grab-and-go Sizzlis, 27 burritos and quesadillas, 23 breakfast hoagies, bagel sandwiches, breakfast bowls and even avocado toast. Choose biscuits, croissants, paninis and donuts, plus bacon, oatmeal and fruit cups. Hot, iced and cold brew coffee, hot chocolate, mango dragon fruit smoothies (and others) and energy drinks with a protein or energy boost. Order on the app, in store or for delivery.

Noon: Ron's Original Bar & Grille

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

Founded in 1982, Ron's has won many awards for its "unique, authentic and original" menu, including seven of our Best of the Best awards since 2011. Their lunch is a favorite, including a variety of specials: chicken chili, grilled Reuben, several pizzas and ovals (just ask), four wraps and five hot specialties on 12-inch rolls — meatballs, eggplant or sausage and peppers, for example. Any of Ron's 15 hoagies is \$2 off. Lunch specials — featured in their Instagram stories — are high-quality, real, healthy food. Everything is prepared from scratch, including imported Italian

flour, salad dressing and most of its appetizers. Organic eggs, local produce, antibiotic- and hormone-free meats. Authentically delicious.

Noon: Teikoku

5492 West Chester Pk., Newtown Square
610-644-8270 / TeikokuRestaurant.com

For more than 20 years now, fans of Japanese, Thai and Asian fusion cuisine have discovered lunch at Teikoku with delight. The lanterns, tatami room and separate seating areas provide a midday getaway from work for colleagues and friends to reenergize with good food and friendly service. Regulars give high praise for its sushi, sashimi, gyozas (steamed pork dumplings) and signature rolls. The Rainbow roll, a California with loads of seafood, is marvelous. And who could resist a Godzilla, including shrimp tempura, eel, strawberry and macadamia nuts? The Teikoku roll with shrimp, avocado, crispy tempura crunchies and more does its name proud.

Night: La Locanda Ristorante Italiano

4989 West Chester Pk., Newtown Square
610-353-7033 / LaLocandaPA.com

Mario Palumbi and Franco Stefanatto are Italian born. Franco trained in Italy and cooked internationally and at Philly's Monte Carlo Living Room before opening La Locanda (meaning the inn) in 1997 with Mario. Combining Abruzzi and new world cuisines along with family recipes, the partners have shared their love of food, wine and celebration. Sample the list of spirits: several 15- and 21-year-old Scotches and bourbons. The wines are elegant and curated to accompany your strip steak, veal chop, double-cut



Bloom Southern Kitchen



Dixie Picnic



Nectar

lamb chop or seafood selection — sea scallops, shrimp, branzino. And, of course, the pastas. Order the house specialty, Timballo di Teramo (crepe pasta, spinach omelet, tiny meatball, sauces). You won't forget it!

Happy Hour: The Whip Tavern

1383 N. Chatham Rd., Coatesville
610-383-0600 / TheWhipTavern.com

Since the early 1900s, neighbors have galloped, driven wagons and steered SUVs across fields and country lanes to arrive at The Whip. The former home of wagon wheel, blacksmith and corner shops landed as a bar that transformed into a well-loved, horse-country British pub. Iconic Happy Hours start with its great beer menu. Walk in for a hazy IPA at the bar. Get bold with an Imperial by the fireplace. Reserve a table — dining room or creekside patio — for cask ale, stout and exclusive For Fox Sake cider. Lift your glass to the food: authentic bangers and mash, shepherd's pie or small plates of crispy Brussels sprouts or Scotch eggs. Cheers!

Don't Miss: Bloom Southern Kitchen

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

The Old Eagle Tavern, built in 1702, rebuilt in 1799, situated at the intersection of Pottstown Pike and Little Conestoga Road, evolved from a stop for weary travelers, to a hangout for outlaws, to a modern watering hole for locals. In the 20th century, it was the Eagle Tavern for many years, then Eagle Tavern & Taphouse when owned by a Victory Brewing alum, before flowers were painted on the exterior and it morphed into Bloom Southern Kitchen in 2020. The current menu is bursting with Southern and Creole classics — hush puppies, jambalaya, stellar fried

chicken and waffles. The bar is deep in bourbon. Southern vibes in northern Chester County.

MORE ON THE MAIN LINE

Morning: Nudy's Café

14 locations
NudysCafes.com

Mornings are a little sunnier because of Nudy's. With locations all over the county, a favorite is the one in a charming old home in Wayne. There are plenty of traditional breakfast choices, including a kitchen's worth of mouth-watering cake and bread French toast. Grab an egg and cheese sandwich and excellent cup of coffee while waiting for the train to pull in at Strafford. Or score a seat at an umbrella table on the patio to treat yourself and a friend to a leisurely stack of pancakes — even a gluten-free option dusted with confectioners' sugar — or Ahi Florentine Benedict.

Noon: Dixie Picnic

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

Started as a seasonal restaurant in Ocean City in 2006, Dixie Picnic moved to its current year-round location in the Lincoln Court Shopping Center in Malvern in 2009 and fans of homemade comfort food celebrated. The beloved box lunch menu was inspired by picnics with owner Tracey Deschaine's Southern relatives. Imagine a perfect lunch with a sandwich featuring fresh meat roasted in house on homemade bread, a small side dish, an unexpected deviled egg, plus a signature dessert of an upcake — an upside-down cupcake frosted on the top and all around the sides. Pride and care are in every bite.

Night: Nectar

1091 Lancaster Ave., Berwyn
610-725-9000 / TasteNectar.com

The late Patrick Feury began Nectar with the purpose of melding French and Asian cuisines. Celebrating its 20th anniversary last year, this stylish space with the big Buddha tapestry has been a culinary success story and place to mark special occasions without going into the city. Using the freshest, sustainable meats, seafood, poultry and produce, Executive Chef Kenny Huang now leads the culinary team. The restaurant serves about a dozen sushi, sashimi and specialty rolls. Its main courses include such choices as moo shu pork as well as rack of lamb, complemented with lo mein and rice. Desserts range from New York cheesecake to wonton cannoli and yuzu sorbet. Plus there's an outstanding bar menu: "The list is long. But distinguished."

Night: Trattoria San Nicola

4 Manor Rd., Paoli
610-695-8990 / SanNicola.net

Named for the patron saint of Bari, Italy, where Chef Vito Giannandrea was born and grew up, San Nicola is a longtime favorite for old-world Italian classics — in fact, years ago they held Opera Dinners there. Starting his first restaurant in 1995 and moving to the current location in 2004, Chef Giannandrea has served up authentic Italian dishes, now amidst gorgeous hand-painted murals in a villa-like setting. So many choices! Start with a cold or hot antipasti or insalata choices. Follow with ravioli, lasagna, tortellini and cannelloni from the pasta menu. Grilled salmon, shrimp, scallops or sautéed veal or chicken, for pesci or carne ... But save room for dolci — doppia mousse is a major fave.

Christopher's: A Neighborhood Place



Rosalie



Ron's Original Bar & Grille





The Berwyn Tavern



Hymie's Deli



Market Street Grill

Happy Hour: Roache & O'Brien

560 Lancaster Ave., Haverford
610-527-6308 / @RoacheAndOBrien

Roache and O'Brien has been around for 92 years, earning a reputation as a welcoming dive bar, complete with a dartboard, jukebox and super-friendly bartenders. Sadly, Franny O'Brien, who ran the place for half a century, died in 2022. But the bar found a new owner, Dan Clark, who operates a string of restaurants in Bryn Mawr (new Carina Sorella), Philadelphia and New Jersey. Roache & O'Brien had a loyal following, especially for its burgers, and Clark is building on that — adding a few new features, like wings and larger TVs — without disturbing the longtime clients. So far, he's been successful. See if you agree.

Happy Hour: The Berwyn Tavern

625 Lancaster Ave., Berwyn
610-889-9352 / BerwynTavern.net

Shoot pool, play bingo or Quizzo, listen to music or watch the game on a huge screen — you go to the Berwyn Tavern to relax. It serves outstanding onion soup, smokes its own meats and makes its own fresh salads and soups. Onion rings, pot stickers, pierogies, Southwest egg rolls to start. Next, five kinds of fries, six salads, cheesesteaks, burgers, grilled chicken and a host of specialty sandwiches, including fried chicken, barbecue pork and French dip. Happy Hour and specials every day. Lounge on the deck, weather permitting. It's by no means an ordinary bar.

Don't Miss: Hymie's Deli

342 Montgomery Ave., Merion
610-668-3354 / Hymies.com

No less than Mashed.com, representing 25 million monthly food-loving readers, proclaimed “the tasty and massive Reubens at Hymie's are some of the best in the business” in its recent national review. But we already knew that. For 60+ years Hymie's has been satisfying uber-demanding Main Liners with New York-style deli delights and comfort food, besting Murray's Deli less than 500 feet away, across the street. Seating almost 100, this institution has all your deli-licious favorites — from chopped liver to knishes to cheesecake plus a major pickle bar. Head there when your soul needs chicken soup.

WEST CHESTER

Morning: DK Diner

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

Opened in 1952, the chrome and teal DK Diner has anchored West Chester's eastern gateway for nearly three-quarters of a century with a friendly smile and a hot cup of coffee. Pull open the glass front door and grab a seat at the counter or slide into a vinyl booth. Prepare to discuss the weather or the Eagles' season while you oscillate between the stack of blueberry hotcakes and the homemade creamed chipped beef. Before you slide out and into the rest of your bustling day, settle your bill and leave a tip on the table for the trouble — both in cash, please.

Morning: Market Street Grill

6 W. Market St.
610-429-5328 / TheMarketStreetGrill.com

The Greco family has been serving breakfast and lunch to hungry West Chester residents for more than 20 years now, and yet, they still manage to cue a line on Sunday mornings. Relying on a combination of one-of-a-kind signature dishes and fun daily specials, they've earned their reputation as among the best around. If you're out past brunch, check out their hot sandwich lineup. Specialties like the chicken panini or the andouille and chorizo stuffed Liam will leave you glad you spent that extra hour in bed. Have a hankering for their famous sausage gravy? No worries. Breakfast is served all day.

Noon: Penn's Table Restaurant

100 W. Gay St.
610-696-0677 / @PennsTableRestaurant

You won't find limit-pushing or trendy concoctions at Penn's Table. There are no hot honey sandwiches or “chickles” (pickles coated in melted cheddar cheese). No green juices or butter espressos either. But not every meal needs to be a foodie challenge. For those days when comfort and familiarity best new and novel, head over to the Gay Street mainstay that's been serving lunch classics for nearly 50 years. The egg salad is on point, the “Best Reuben in Town” won't do you wrong, and if you get the chance (it's seasonal), order the Goshen Road Roast Beef with a black & white shake. Yum.

Noon: Limoncello Ristorante

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

Each Limoncello entrance feels like you are 20 minutes late to an epic family dinner. Hostesses dance by, the chatter is on high while tempting platters of food buzz right under your nose. For nearly two decades, the Mingrino family has greeted residents and visitors to their bustling

North Walnut Street establishment with their favorite Sicilian family recipes. If you can't make it over for dinner, don't fret, Limoncello's lunch is a delight. Served Tuesday through Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., no need to wait until the end of the day for favorites like Maria's meatballs or the penne alla vodka.

Night: The Original Spence Cafe

131 N. High St.
610-918-1272 / Spence.cafe

For over a century, there's been a through line to West Chester dining — the Spence Cafe. In 1896, the Spence family swung open the doors on Gay Street's Spence's Central Cafe and Restaurant, and for many years the cafe was a popular community gathering place. But times and tastes changed, and the borough went Spence-less until acclaimed chef Andrew Patton opened his Spence Cafe on Gay Street in 1996. He repeated his restaurant concept another time or two before settling comfortably into his current North High Street BYOB. If you have not yet been, grab a special bottle of wine and order the spring lamb ravioli or always-popular seafood special, and get ready for a memorable meal.

Night: Teca

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

In 2002, West Chester's dining revitalization was in its infancy. It was a time ripe for innovation. And exactly what owners Roberto Guadagnini and his father had in mind — an old-world Italian dining experience with upscale surroundings in the heart of West Chester. The original location sat only 25 for dinner, but the food was excel-

lent, the vibes welcoming, and the wine flowing. Over time Teca earned its reputation as the town's Friday night go-to. In 2007, the Guadagninis purchased the old firehouse and expanded. Now nearly two decades later, Teca continues to beckon friends and strangers around a seasonal flatbread and good bottles of wine.

Night: The Mediterranean Restaurant & Bakery

150 W. Gay St.
610-431-7074 / TheMedWCPA.com

Each year on the first weekend of October, Margaret and Joe Andraos celebrate the anniversary of the day they took the plunge and opened The Mediterranean. They toyed with the idea of opening a pizza place, but couldn't find the right space. Instead, they fell in love with 150 West Gay Street and cooking together. They blended her Italian heritage with his Lebanese roots and crafted the basis for their ever-changing menu. That was 1997. To this day, anytime you tuck into the charming Gay Street BYOB, you can expect fresh seafood, handcrafted pastas and grass-fed meats cooked in cold-pressed oils — healthy and delicious — just as Margaret and Joe intended.

Night: Kooma Asian Fusion & Sushi Bar

123 N. Church St.
610-430-8980 / KoomaFusion.com

By 2002, the West Chester dining scene was starting to form, but in those early days, most dishes were Italian and the drinks were beer. Initially opening on Gay Street in 2002, Kooma saw the opportunity to do something different.

Instead of heavy plates of pasta and pints of lager, they lightened and brightened things up with an Asian-fusion menu, solid sushi offerings and a cocktail menu full of candy-colored “tinis.” It quickly became a hit. In 2013, Kooma relocated to its larger space on Church Street. Today a modern, neon-dotted interior and an expansive bar continue to complement a fun, vibrant menu.

Happy Hour: Iron Hill Brewery

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

A quarter century ago, Iron Hill owners Kevin Finn, Mark Edelson and Kevin Davies signed a lease for the old Woolworth building in the heart of downtown West Chester and launched a dining revitalization — perhaps, fittingly, launched with a draft of beer. The significance of the Gay and High Street corner goes back before the brewpub, before the Woolworth's, back to 1777, when it was home to a small schoolhouse converted to a hospital treating wounded from the Battle of Brandywine. While the purposes differed, the corner's commitment to community has remained the same. Today Iron Hill has built a reputation for delivering on that “all are welcome” environment with a versatile menu, casual vibe and rotating selection of 86 award-winning beers.

Happy Hour: Kildare's Irish Pub

18 W. Gay St.
610-431-0770 / KildaresPubWC.com

When Kildare's opened in 2003, it brought a little bit of Ireland to the borough — literally. The bar that serves as the heart of the establishment was designed and built overseas,

Limoncello Ristorante



The Original Spence Cafe



Kooma Asian Fusion & Sushi Bar



then shipped statewide and installed at 18 West Gay Street. Irish pubs are known for their friendly, casual atmospheres, and Kildare's delivers. Guinness is always on tap and a Premiere League match on the telly. Stay for the conversation and 10 of their famous whiskey BBQ wings. Just be sure to slip out by 10 p.m. when the college crowd starts to take over.

Happy Hour: Ryan's Pub

124 W. Gay St.
610-344-3934 / Ryans-Pub.com

Like many establishments that have found longevity in West Chester, Ryan's Pub is a family affair. But, unlike most families here, the Ryans weren't in the restaurant business — they were in the bar business. Since the turn of the 20th century, there's been a Ryan behind a bar in the area. West Chester joined the tradition in 2002 when Pat and Paul Ryan opened Ryan's Pub. They envisioned a lively tavern with high-quality food and drinks. Now, more than two decades and significant competition later, the pub remains a popular hangout and a testament to the Ryan family name, now in its fourth generation of barmen.

College Bar: Jake's Bar

549 S. Matlack St.
610-431-3900 / @JakesBarWestChester

Jake's Bar has been a mainstay of the West Chester University college experience since before West Chester became a university. The family-owned establishment on South Matlack Street was taken over entirely by Orazio "Jake" Nastase after his sister's death in 1975. Under his management, the bar leaned into its signature draws — cheap beer, acerbic bartenders, cramped seating, sticky floors and good times. Although

Jake passed in 2017, his pub remains your classic college bar, one of the best around according to Barstool Sports. Stop by anytime to relive your college days or chat with the "old-head" regulars over a \$2 pour.

Town Bar: Jitters

146 W. Gay St.
610-696-0427 / Jitters-WC.com

Narrow and deep, Jitters has sat on the west side of Gay Street for the last 25 years, building its reputation as the place the locals go, and sometimes the students, the occasional passerby and, when in town, a TV star or two. In other words, it's your quintessential townie bar. The focus is not on ambiance, frills or fancy menu items (except maybe in the "Florida Room"). Instead, you come here to cheer on the Eagles (Sixers, Flyers or Phillies) surrounded by fellow fans. You come for a modest-price drink and the company you'll keep. You come for the jukebox and a night you won't soon forget.

Don't Miss: Chester County Restaurant Festival

WestChester.com/139/Parks-Recreation

Every second Sunday of September, thousands of visitors descend on Gay Street ready to enjoy the fall sunshine, some live music and a beer at the beer garden. But mainly they're there to eat. More than 50 food vendors representing local restaurants, independent food artisans and the area's most popular food trucks all pack the street for the borough's biggest event. The menus are meant to encourage tasting. Small bites of this and that. A trio of barbecue ribs, a freshly fried egg roll or maybe a handmade macaroon? For the last 45 years, West Chester has warmly welcomed the county to join it in a culinary feast.

Don't Miss: West Chester Chili Cook-Off

WestChesterChiliCookOff.com

If the Restaurant Festival is about trying a bit of everything, the Chili Cook-Off is about eating lots of chili. Restaurants, home cooks and non-profits are all invited to break out the family recipes and craft their best batch of beans and beef for 10,000 fans. Tops in each category win a cash prize and, more importantly, bragging rights for the year. For 21 years, the West Chester Rotary Club hosted this popular fall fundraiser. In 2024 the baton was passed to a nonprofit food brokerage firm, Fiorenza's Food for Friends (F4). All that leftover chili — if there ever is any — won't go to waste. And the tradition continues!

DELAWARE

Morning: Centreville Place

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

For years, Susan Teiser ran the Centerville Café in a 200-year-old house, offering breakfast all day. High ceilings, comfy furniture, a long wooden table, quiet diners sipping coffee, reading the news: it seemed like home. When Susan retired in 2022, Elizabeth and Vince Moro took over and changed little, updating only incrementally. Centerville Place (new name) still features breakfasts, though until noon. Try the Eddy (breakfast sandwich), Lucy (omelet) or Sammy (smoked salmon and cream cheese), Parisian (toasted baguette, choice of meats) or Mona Lisa (cheese, tomatoes, basil on sourdough). More options: quiche, oatmeal, granola parfait and, of course, avocado toast. Plenty of coffee choices, including French press.

Noon: Buckley's Tavern

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

Buckley's has been a local institution for decades. The building with the wraparound porch, cozy fireplace and bar has known families, stagecoach travelers, ice cream fans and hungry patrons since 1817. In 1951, Dennis Buckley bought it and gave it his name, and since 2012, Tom Hannum, CIA grad and former Hotel du Pont chef, has helmed the kitchen. For years, restaurant-goers (some wearing PJs on Sundays) have flocked for lunch: cream of mushroom or Thai noodle soup with a zing, Buckley's burgers, crab cakes and salmon. Plus comfort food faves of pot pie or penne with vodka sauce. Scoop up cobbler with local ice cream to fit that old-time tavern ambiance.

Night: Krazy Kat's Restaurant

582 Montchanin Rd., Montchanin
302-888-4200 / KrazyKatsDE.com

Located by the historic Inn at Montchanin Village and housed in the former blacksmith shop, Krazy Kat's opened in 1996 and is known for its eclectic, locally sourced farm-to-table cuisine, its tiger-print chairs and fanciful portraits of dogs and cats, some dressed in military outfits. It's the kind of restaurant to start with oysters, crab bisque, foie gras and end with crème brûlée. There are posted special menus but the center cut filet, braised Buffalo short rib and pork osso buco are tempting. Dine on a Saturday, stay at the inn and return for a sublime Sunday brunch.

Night: Columbus Inn

2216 Pennsylvania Ave., Wilmington
302-571-1492 / ColumbusInn.net

The building opened in 1798 as a bakery, then a tavern until 1849, when it became the Columbus Inn. In the 1950s, it hosted actors, athletes and businessmen as Wilmington's social hub. Sadly, it went into a decline and was shuttered for years. But then in 2010, it was bought by the Capano family and began a new life. Recast as a lively place where the old guard and new can meet, it's again become a popular dining destination. Chef Ross Essner describes the current contemporary American menu with signature dishes as "fiercely seasonal." Appetizers are creative — red wine braised octopus, arrogant cauliflower. Steaks, superbly juicy. Crab cakes, shrimp, lobster and other seafoods, exceptional. Plus the wine and cocktail list will make it memorable.

Don't Miss: The Hotel du Pont — now Le Cavalier

42 W. 11th St., Wilmington
302-594-3154 / LeCavalierDE.com

In 1913, the Hotel du Pont began serving up grandeur to VIPs and food aficionados who arrived by auto, foot or horseback. The luxurious dining room, originally the Green Room, became Le Cavalier in 2020 with a nod to early and recent equestrians. Le Cav still offers fine dining in sumptuous surroundings from a past era — wood paneling, exquisite ceiling and piano on the balcony to keep people returning with the next generations to this Wilmington institution. Menus showcase halibut with saffron crema, filet mignon with hints of truffle plus bistro fare. And there are new features to enjoy. Fridays host afternoon tea and Sundays brunch with a martini and Le Cheeseburger with aioli, caramelized onion on brioche. Enjoy "anyday" oysters at the bar and profiteroles at dessert. Just soak in the history, and catch a show at the theater at the hotel.

LANCASTER COUNTY

Shady Maple Smorgasbord

1324 Main St., East Earl
800-238-7363 / Shady-Maple.com

A fixture for 50+ years, Shady Maple is best known for its smorgasbord — the largest buffet in the U.S. with over 200 feet of hand-prepared dishes. It's where you go when you visit Lancaster County, although some fans go weekly. One Redditor called it a "hysterically awesome glutton's paradise," but *Business Insider* extolled its longevity in the face of buffet chains biting the dust. Their secrets: lots of choices, low prices and fresh ingredients with quick turnover. Serving 1.2 million/year for all-you-can-eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. Yes, you'll find whoopie pies and scrapple, along with prime rib, fried chicken and even a salad bar. Some prefer to skip the buffet and head for the grocery store and gift shop. ♦

Shady Maple Smorgasbord



Le Cavalier



PHOTO CREDIT: STUART GOLDENBERG, COURTESY OF GWCVB

Columbus Inn



Centreville Place



West Chester Chili Cook-Off



Jitters



Jake's Bar



New Shoots

When local restaurants open new locations, that's a clear sign of a vibrant dining scene. And we've watched about a dozen expand and grow this past year. Here are a few notable additional places to enjoy some of your favorite food and drinks.

- ★ West Chester's **Artillery Brewing** plans its latest location in Pottstown. Go for a glass of war-themed beer — from the Fighting Quaker to the Patriot. Food and cocktails, too. *305 E. High St.*
- ★ The bucolic Bierhaul Farmhouse in Thornton now has a branch in downtown West Chester. **Bierhaul Townhouse** has a friendly bar downstairs and a family-friendly second floor with beer garden. *15 N. Walnut St.*
- ★ Yes, it's a chain, but the **Chicken Guy!** (as in Guy Fieri) that opened in the KOP food court is the dream of Philly native Kevin Cooper, who won the right by winning "Guy's Chance of a Lifetime." *KOP Food Ct.*
- ★ A more local chain (flagship in Lansdowne), **Crisp Chik'n** brings spicy, hot goodness and the Delco sandwich (American cheese, fried onions, Dijon mustard, pretzel bun) to West Chester. *124 E. Market St.*
- ★ Beloved Berwyn spot **Handel's Homemade Ice Cream** opened in Downingtown last summer, so it may be old news that the 47 flavors are available there and at over 100 other locations nationally for when you scream for ice cream. *520 E. Lancaster Ave.*
- ★ **Madi's on a Roll** made the jump from just farmers markets to a brick-and-mortar location in Exton a while ago and now expanded to Phoenixville. More hand-rolled specialty

egg rolls brimming with flavor (Big Dill, Gobbler) to sample, share and savor. *313 Bridge St.*

- ★ Just a short jump for Malvern Buttery from its longtime East King Street location to the SEPTA station, where its new branch became **The Buttery Cafe**. Great way to start your commute! *13 W. King St.*
- ★ Although the name is different, **Aldo's Restaurant & Grill**, which styles itself as serving American and Italian cuisines, has close ties to the popular Olive Tree Grills in Paoli and Broomall. Just look at the photo of the Greek salad on the menu. *104 Turner Ln., West Chester*



Artillery Brewing



The Buttery Cafe



Madi's on a Roll



Bierhaul Townhouse

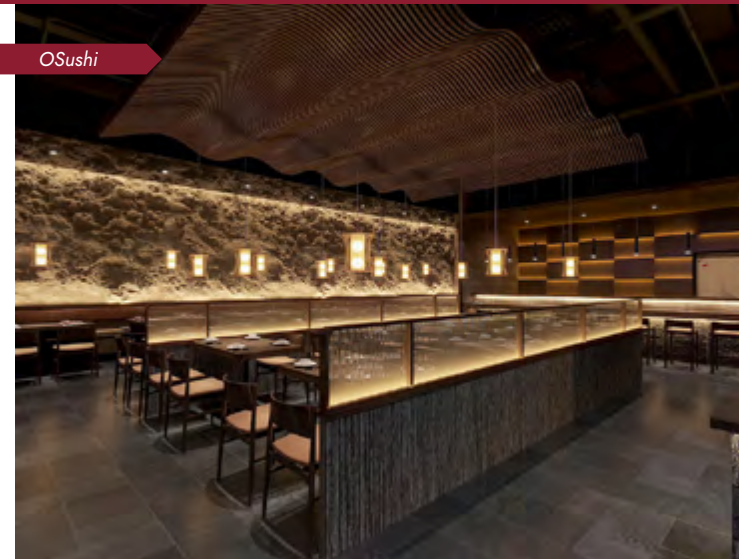


Crisp Chik'n



White Dog Café

OSushi



Handel's Homemade Ice Cream



- ★ With locations in Marlton, NJ and Ardmore, **OSushi** continued its march west, to Wayne, bringing fresh, beautifully presented sushi, specialty rolls and Japanese entrees closer. BYOB. *613 W. Lancaster Ave.*
- ★ West Chester fave **Taco Mar** expanded to Downingtown in 2023, then to Malvern in 2024, with more places to enjoy flavors from Mexico — burrito bar, taco stand or Baja grill. *48 W. Lancaster Ave.; 189 Lancaster Ave.*
- ★ How many times have we written about the **White Dog Café** at the Vicker's Tavern location? Luckily it was worth the wait. Sustainable dining in the renovated tavern with multiple dining rooms with plenty of dog accents.. *181 Gordon Dr., Exton*

Coming Soon

The signs are all over West Chester, promising more dining options in the borough — some long awaited, others recently appearing on social media. Stay tuned for even more good food!

Jolene's. In the former Spence space, 3 West Hospitality plans an upscale, yet inviting French-influenced menu and strong wine program serving 130. The first serious French spot since Gilmore's closed in 2012. *29 E. Gay St. JolenesWC.com*

West Chester Seafood Kitchen. Next door to Jolene's and within the new Hotel Indigo comes a modern, seafood-focused restaurant featuring regional seafood classics, raw bar, hand-rolled sushi, pairing with craft beer, cocktails. Will provide room service to the hotel. Started hiring in December. *39 E. Gay St. WCSeafoodKitchen.com*

Bier and Loathing. A retro arcade bar — barcade? — in the former Sterling Pig space. Pool tables, beer, tiki cocktails and more in an "adult fun emporium." From Bierhaul folks. *113 W. Market St. @BierAndLoathingBar*

LaScala's Fire. We thought they were opening in West Chester in 2023, although they did add a location in Newtown Square. Look for their Italian fare at the busy plaza on Gay St. *44 W. Gay St. LaScalasFire.com*

Dim Sum Taste. Media's had two dim sum spots for years, so it's about time West Chester got its own (Laurento's Formal Wear spot). Look forward to dainty Chinese dumplings with a variety of fillings — pork to veggie — to share at brunch or any time. *127 W. Gay St.*

Mino Sushi & Ramen. New life is planned for the former Starbucks/Kung Fu Tea spot on a busy West Chester corner (sister location in

Malvern). Here's hoping they serve up the same fresh sushi, sashimi and other traditional Japanese dishes *2 W. Gay St. MinoSushi.com*

Oishii. Yet another ramen, sushi, dim sum and bubble tea spot for West Chester. This one in the former Boston Market (site of a December fire), way to the east on Gay Street. There's an Oishii location in Philly with sushi, ramen, plus bento boxes, hibachi dinners. *726 E. Gay St. ♦*



Mino Sushi & Ramen