

Weekend in West Chester



PHOTO CREDIT LEIGH VOGEL/CHESTER COUNTY'S BRANDY WINE VALLEY

SHOP, DINE, TOUR, RELAX IN THE BOROUGH

Cara Corridoni

YEARS AGO, A FRIEND AND her husband would spend one weekend a year exploring their hometown of West Chester like visitors. They lived within walking distance of the downtown district, but for 36 hours, they imagined they were newbies.

The couple hit up new shops and popped into old favorites. They did — and ate — all the things recommended by friends, neighbors and the West Chester Community Facebook group. They got up early, partied all night and shared their pictures with envious friends.

Who knew the tried-and-true offered so much to do? Don't believe me? Here's your itinerary to explore West Chester, over 225 years old and still going strong.

4 P.M. EASE INTO YOUR STAY

To really escape, you'll want to book a night at one of West Chester's luxurious

new accommodations. Stay in the mix of it all at the [Hotel Indigo](#). Opened in January, everything about this hotel on Gay and Walnut Streets is gleaming new. From West Chester University's purple and gold to the Borough's clockmaking history, keep your eye out for West Chester "Easter eggs" scattered throughout.

Prefer the old-made-new-again? The [Bookhouse at Faunbrook](#) on Rosedale Avenue has recently been renovated and restored to quaint perfection. Each room in this 1860 Federal Italianate-style mansion is literary-themed and stuffed with a library's worth of titles.

After you settle yourself, head over to [Turks Head Wines](#) on Church Street. Constructed in 1870, the beautifully renovated building was once home to West Chester's second market house. Used by local farmers to sell their wares on a weekend morning, the building is once again

dedicated to agricultural endeavors, just this time of the grape variety. An ambitious new wine project, Turks Head Wines hopes to bring a Napa Valley wine experience to the Borough. Stop in for a class or a flight.

7 P.M. DINNER IN CHESTER COUNTY'S HUB

At last count, West Chester was home to more than 70 eateries (see the map at the end of this article). From small BYOBs to ambitious regional projects, casual pubs to elegant farm-to-table restaurants, there's something for everyone to savor. New American [Spence Cafe](#), award-winning [Andiario](#) and bustling [Limoncello](#) are all longtime local favorites.

If those are all familiar to you, grab yourself a reservation at new-ish [West Chester Seafood Kitchen](#). Located at the Hotel Indigo, this modern seafood-centric

restaurant is already generating buzz and repeat customers. If you like a little heat, start with the mussels diablo. They use Dutch mussels, which are a little bigger, and serve them in a rich sauce that can be dabbed up with the grilled focaccia. For the main, try the Maine lobster bucatini or, if your party's feeling ambitious, the decadent seafood tower.

9 P.M. MAKE IT A GAME NIGHT

After dinner, head over to [Bier and Loathing](#) on Market Street for some fun. At this bar-cade, you'll find a selection of retro video games, including classics like Asteroids, The Simpsons and Big Buck Hunter, plus a full beer list. In the basement, there's a pool table. So, put your quarters down, grab a beer and get ready to relive your youth.

11 P.M. NIGHTCAP AT THE SPEAKEASY

Before retiring to your room for the night, make one last stop at the [Room 109 Speakeasy](#). Located in the lower level of the Hotel Indigo, this is a speakeasy more in inspiration than actuality. "We want to be approachable," said Chris Berg, VP of Operations for the hotel. "And you can't be that if you're closed off."

You won't find hidden handshakes or membership fees, but you can get an expertly made martini and an intimate end to the night.

9 A.M. HIT THE GROWERS MARKET

From May through December, West Chester's long-running producer-only farmers market offers the community fresh fruits and vegetables and a variety of locally produced goods. With more than 28 vendors to choose from, it's hard to walk away empty-handed.

If it's their week, grab some cinnamon rolls from Hank's. If not, you can't miss with some fresh-baked goodness from Big Sky Bread and peaches from Fahnestock Fruit Farm.

10 A.M. FUEL UP

As you head back up Church Street, pop into [Twin Valley Coffee](#) for a sweet cream cold brew. With farmers market origins of its own, this expanding coffee shop has earned a reputation for doing cold brew right.

Want something more substantial? Head to [Mayday Coffee](#) on North High Street. This East Coast coffee house has an intentional West Coast vibe. Try the lavender honey latte with their popular avocado toast or any one of the breakfast sandwiches.

11 A.M. SHOPPING FIX

West Chester earned its reputation as a restaurant town, but over the last few years, it's slowly added cute shops that just beg to be wandered through. On Gay Street you'll



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1. Hotel Indigo
2. Bookhouse at Faunbrook
3. Turks Head Wines
4. West Chester Seafood Kitchen
5. Bier and Loathing



6



7



8



9

find the [Green House](#), an entire store dedicated to potted plants and the pottery that houses them, and [Malena's Vintage Boutique](#), West Chester's famous vintage house.

Farther east, get your bookstore fix at [Bookmarks](#). Housed in a home built 165 years ago, Bookmarks offers a history lesson and two floors worth of titles, from today's bestsellers to yesterday's classics. Next, head to [Night-ingle Materials](#) on High Street. This adorable craft store, which opened last spring, has something for everyone from budding artists to seasoned pros, plus a few things for those of us who just like to pretend.

2 P.M. GET CULTURED

Set aside this afternoon to enjoy one of West Chester's unique museums. Located just outside town to the west is the [Antique Ice Tool Museum](#). Pop inside this renovated 1834 stone barn and immerse yourself in the fascinating history of the natural ice trade.

Just outside town in the opposite direction is the [American Helicopter Museum](#). With more than 40 helicopters, autogyros and convertiplanes on display, the museum features one of the largest collections of rotorcrafts in the world.

If the day is nice, leave the car parked and walk to the [Chester County History Center](#) on North High Street for



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a rare glimpse into life before the nation was born.

More of an art person? Last fall, Downtown West Chester introduced an [Art Loop](#). This easy, self-guided, walking tour will take you to several West Chester galleries and public art displays including a collection of murals.

5 P.M. ESPRESSO MARTINI PICK-UP

As the energy begins to fade, it's time to partake in one of West Chester's favorite traditions, the espresso martini. Started at [Pietro's Prime](#) bar, this caffeine-laden concoction has been percolating on West Chester menus well before national trends caught on.

Head to Market Street for the original at Pietro's, or pop into [9 Prime](#) on North High Street for their salted caramel version. [Bar Avalon's](#) aptly named "Wake Me Up" espresso martini is another favorite. In fact, you can find this late-night nightcap at many bars in town.

7 P.M. TAKE IN A SHOW

Energized and ready to go? Continue your evening with a performance at [Uptown](#), West Chester's performing arts center. Located on North High Street, Uptown's rotating schedule includes the best in regional music, theater, dance and comedy.

Or check out up-and-coming talent at East Market Street's [Station 142](#), West Chester's newest live music venue.

9 P.M. DINE LIKE THE FRENCH

When the beat drops, head back to Gay Street and into [Jolene's](#), a modern French restaurant that opened earlier this year. The walls in this seductively lit bistro are adorned simply with paintings thrifted from French art markets. Start with the classic French onion soup, linger through the expertly cooked scallops, and end with the tender duck breast — all while sipping a French 75 and lingering over all the adventures you've had. ♦

Stay up to date with what's happening in West Chester by following [DowntownWestChester.com](#) and County Lines' [Best Local Events](#).



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6. West Chester Growers Market
7. Antique Ice Tool Museum
8. Twin Valley Coffee
9. Mayday Coffee
10. Malena's Vintage Boutique

11. American Helicopter Museum, PHOTO CREDIT: CHESTER COUNTY'S BRANDYWINE VALLEY
12. Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center
13. The Green House
14. Jolene's

WEST CHESTER EVENTS

Chester County History Center

ONGOING

CCHC features permanent exhibits telling the story of the county's roots, early beginnings, evolution and more. 225 N. High St. Wed–Sat, \$5–\$10. MyCCHC.org.

Open-Air Market

THROUGH SEPTEMBER 28

Gay Street is closed to vehicles Friday morning through Monday morning. Restaurants and shops line the street for strolling, eating, exploring. DowntownWestChester.com.

West Chester TAPS

MAY 28–AUGUST 27, Wednesdays

Unwind with friends every Wednesday, 4 to 7 pm. Participating locations offer select \$5 beers, \$6 wines and \$7 cocktails plus half-price appetizers. DowntownWestChester.com for locations.

Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center

JUNE 6–INTO SEPTEMBER

June 6, "That's Life" starring Tony Sands; *June 7*, Whammer Jammer: J. Geils Band Tribute; *June 13*, Griese: Sweet Baby James; *June 22*, Kanin Wren: Taylor Swift Experience; *June 28*, Green River: The Ultimate CCR John Fogerty Tribute Show. 226 N. High St. More shows, tickets and times, UptownWestChester.org.

Turk's Head Music Festival

JUNE 8

Seven bands, 50+ crafters and booths, food ven-

dors, rides & games and more in Everhart Park, 100 S. Brandywine St. Noon to 7 pm. Free. TurksHeadFestival.com.

Mini Golf on Gay St.

JUNE 14

18 holes of mini golf between Matlack and Darlington Sts. on Gay St. during the Open-Air Market. Noon to 4. Age 12 and under, \$5; 13 and above, \$8. West-Chester.com.

Summer Solstice Music Festival

JUNE 14

A family-friendly music festival supporting live local music and celebrating the start of summer. Benefits and held at Brandywine Red Clay Alliance, 1760 Unionville Wawaset Rd. 2 to 10 pm. \$25–\$75. WayKool.com.

Movies in the Park

JUNE 20, AUGUST 15

Pack a picnic, blanket, chairs and the family, and enjoy a movie, TBD. Food trucks on site. *June 20*, Veterans Memorial Park, 315 Viet Alley. *Aug. 15*, Hoopes Park, 700 Hoopes Park Ln. Starts at dusk. West-Chester.com.

Music at Marshall Square Park

JUNE 19–AUGUST 21

Picnic concerts with food trucks opening at 5 pm. Music at 6:30. Sin Brothers perform. Concerts through Aug. 21. Check website for weather updates. 200 E. Marshall St. Free. MarshallSquarePark.org.

World Music Day

JUNE 21

Showcasing local musical talent. Stroll through town and listen to musicians perform on street corners, sidewalks, plazas and more. 11:30 am to 9 pm. Free. DowntownWestChester.com.

Concerts in the Park

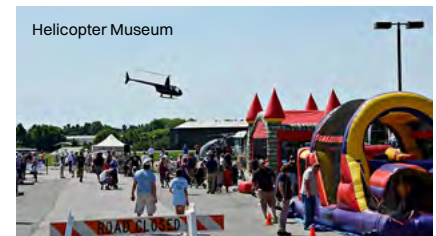
JUNE 20, AUGUST 21

Bring a chair or blanket and kick back to enjoy live music. Food trucks on site. Bands TBD. *June 20*, Everhart Park, 100 S. Brandywine St. *Aug. 21*, John O. Green Park, S. Matlack & E. Miner Sts. 6:30 pm. West-Chester.com.

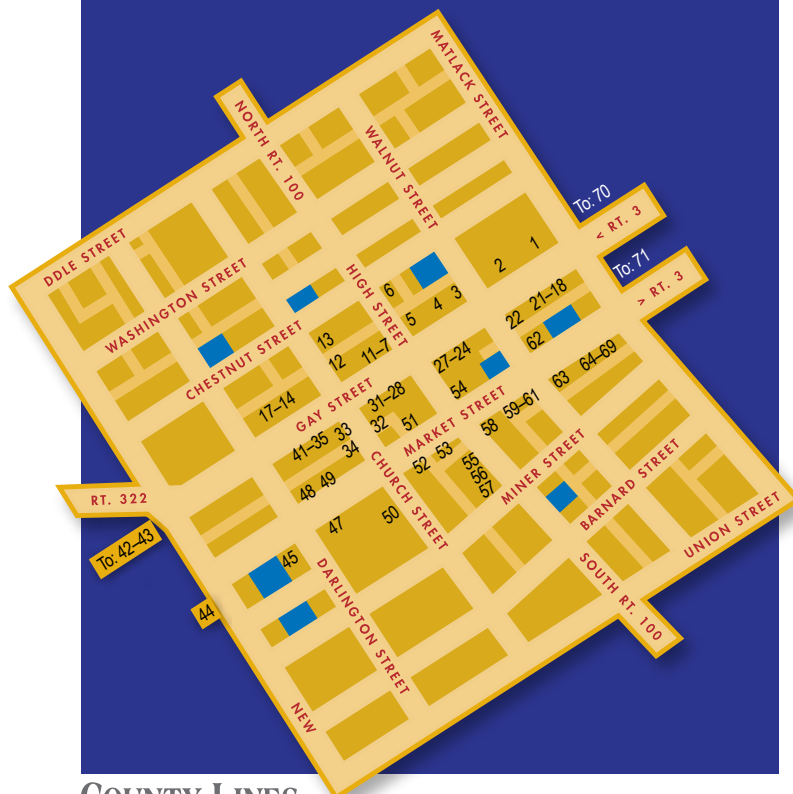
Family Fest at The American Helicopter Museum

JUNE 21

Family fun with helicopter rides, classic cars and motorcycle show, food trucks, inflatable games, static aircraft displays, music and more. 1220 American Blvd. 10 to 3. \$20; under 5, free. AmericanHelicopter.Museum. ♦



DOWNTOWN WEST CHESTER



COUNTY LINES
MAGAZINE

■ Parking Lot or Garage

RESTAURANT GUIDE

1. Roots Cafe
2. The Social
3. West Chester Seafood Kitchen
4. Jolene's
5. Mayday Coffee Shop
6. The Original Spence Café
7. Iron Hill Brewery & Rest.
8. DP Dough
9. The Tomato Shack
10. Buddy's Burgers, Breasts & Fries
11. Mae's West Chester
12. Turks Head Café
13. Kooma Japanese Rest.
14. La Tartine
15. Gryphon Coffee
16. Bookstore Bakery
17. Saloon 151
18. dolce Zola
19. Fire–Nashville Hot Chicken
20. Taco Mar
21. Bar Avalon
22. BierHaul Townhouse
24. Opa Taverna
25. Teca
26. Side Bar & Restaurant
27. Lorenzo & Sons Pizza
28. Mino Sushi & Ramen
29. Jaco Juice & Taco Bar
30. Kildare's Irish Pub
31. Sedona Taphouse
32. Greystone Oyster Bar
33. Slow Hand
34. New Haven Style Pizza
35. Penn's Table
36. Andiaro
37. Ryan's Pub & Restaurant
38. Jitters West Chester
39. The Mediterranean
40. Stove & Tap
41. Good Bad & Ugly
42. Wrong Crowd Brewing
43. Artillery Brewing
44. Nudy's Café
45. La Baguette Magique
47. Carlino's Specialty Foods
48. Pietro's Prime
49. Bier & Loathing
50. Love Again Local
51. Mercato Ristorante & Bar
52. Tsunami Sushi Bar and Asian Cuisine
53. Market Street Grill
54. 9 Prime
55. Playa Bowls
56. Kaboburritos
57. Mimi's Tea Cottage
58. Barnaby's
59. Santino's Tap & Table
60. Shawarma Kebab
61. Saucey's Pizza
62. Limoncello Ristorante
63. Más Mexicali Cantina
64. Bonchon Chicken
65. Rai Rai Ramen
66. Crisp Chick'n
67. Poké Bros.
68. Pizza West Chester
69. Station 142
70. Manjé Caribbean Cuisine
71. Miss Winnie's