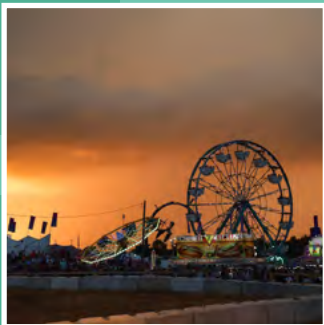


Welcome to County Lines Country



2025-2026
Guidebook

Day Trips & Outings

Start with the Big 3

LONGWOOD GARDENS

It's official. *USA Today* named our local treasure the #1 Best Botanical Garden. But we knew that.

In our 2024 Guide, we hinted at the impact of the massive “Longwood Reimagined” project. And as always, Longwood over-delivered. Check out the 32,000-square-foot West Conservatory glasshouse with reflecting pool, plus the Cascade Gardens (preserving the design by Brazilian landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx), Bonsai Courtyard (with specimens over a century old) and revamped Waterlily Court, along with new outdoor landscapes highlighting views of the Brandywine Valley.

The final big piece of the project, the new 1906 restaurant, with bespoke furniture crafted from reclaimed wood from Longwood trees, was added to the lower level of the East Conservatory. Go there for fine dining and floor-to-ceiling window views overlooking the Main Fountain Gardens — perfect for savoring food *and* fireworks.

So, there's that to visit, or revisit if you got a preview at the November 2024 opening. Or enjoy the fan-favorite features that draw crowds every year. Come for the musical performances and theater — from the local Brandywiners to Alan Cummings and Ari Shapiro. Or the fountain performances, including evening Illuminated Fountains on weekend, daytime Main Fountain Garden shows on weekdays, special Classical Nights and the spectacular Fireworks & Fountain Shows (from the Brat Pack to Everybody Dance Now programs).

Yes, there are family nature strolls, science series, live music in the beer garden, at carillon concerts plus organ demos, free book talks, courses and workshops, plus a dahlia show in September. The treehouses and Children's Garden will always entertain the kiddos. And the café and snack huts will keep energy levels up.

Perhaps the best part, Longwood Gardens offers an escape to let you immerse yourself in nature — albeit a highly cultivated slice of it. Admire the pergolas, pillars, arches and arbors adorned with roses. Plan a few hours to wander the paths lined with a dazzling display of peak blooms, all carefully tended and artfully planted. You'll understand why Longwood is indeed #1. *Routes 1 & 52, Kennett Square. LongwoodGardens.org*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LONGWOOD GARDENS



PHOTO CREDIT: HOLDEN BARNES



PHOTO CREDIT: BECCA MATHIAS



PHOTO CREDIT: BECCA MATHIAS

WINTERTHUR MUSEUM, GARDEN & LIBRARY

Another part of the du Pont family's local legacy — in addition to Longwood Gardens — is Winterthur. Though perhaps best known for the museum's extensive collection of American decorative arts and its annual point-to-point horse races in May, Winterthur deserves more recognition for its gardens and other outdoors activities.

The estate's thousand acres of rolling hills include 60 acres of naturalistic gardens along with 15 miles of walking trails — a wonderful setting for picnicking, birding, wellness yoga (Thursday & Saturday mornings) and forest therapy walks (July 25). A special section, the Enchanted Woods, is a three-acre children's garden that includes a Faerie Cottage, Tulip Tree House, giant Bird's Nest, Acorn Tearoom for make-believe tea parties, Fairy Ring, plus Frog Hollow and Water's Edge water-play areas.

Winterthur's grounds also host the annual Artisan Market, July 18–20, when talented artisans offer their wares, ranging from antiques to upcycled goods and original art to gourmet goodies. Sip wine, make candles, craft a signature scent as you browse the vendors or take a workshop.

And for a rainy day, stop in the museum to see exhibits like “Almost Unknown: The Afric-American Picture Gallery,” through January 2026. *5105 Kennett Pike, Winterthur, DE. Winterthur.org*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WINTERTHUR MUSEUM, GARDEN & LIBRARY



PHOTO CREDIT: BOBLETCH

BRANDYWINE MUSEUM OF ART

Although less grand than Winterthur or Longwood Gardens, Brandywine Museum of Art is a gem — a right-size museum with deep roots in the local art world set on a lush 15-acre campus along the Brandywine Creek.

The museum is well known as home to art by generations of Wyeths (N.C., Andrew, Jamie, Betsy, Carolyn). See exhibits of their work (“Andrew Wyeth at Kuerner Farm”) along with work by other world-class artists (“Joseph Stella: Visionary Nature,” “Artful Deceit: Trompe l’oeil and the Pursuit of the Real”).

Explore the grounds' native plant gardens, trails and animal sculptures. Stroll down the River Trail along the Brandywine Creek, heading under Route 1, then on a wetlands boardwalk over to a meadow near the Chadds Ford Historical Society. Or choose the five-mile Harvey Run Trail through preserved open space. Enjoy a picnic on the grounds or head for the child-friendly museum café.

Other excursions outside the museum include visits to the Wyeths' former studios and Kuerner Farm, inspiration for hundreds of Andrew Wyeth's artworks. More outdoor entertainment includes summer concerts and salsa lessons in the courtyard of the converted grist mill and main building. *Route 1, Chadds Ford. BrandywineMuseum.org*



PHOTO CREDIT: CHESTER COUNTY'S BRANDYWINE VALLEY/LEIGH VOGEL



PHOTO CREDIT: ABOVE GROUND LEVEL DRONEWORKS

Pack a Picnic in Chester and Delaware Counties

Sunny summer days just beg to be spent outdoors. And how better to enjoy our region's natural beauty than with a delicious picnic? We've rounded up a few of our favorite places around the area to enjoy a meal beneath a tree, in a verdant meadow and on the waterfront. Wherever you picnic, be sure to leave no trace — remove all trash and, where pets are allowed, clean up after your pup.



MARSH CREEK STATE PARK

Amid the rolling hills of northern Chester County, you'll find Marsh Creek State Park. Take your pick of more than 150 picnic tables across several designated picnic areas with charcoal grills, while enjoying the view of idyllic Marsh Creek Lake.

The 535-acre lake is the perfect place to beat the summer heat. Fish for warmwater species like largemouth bass, channel catfish, black crappie and panfish, or take a boat out on the lake. A combination of good natural terrain and prevailing winds makes it great for sailing — rent a sailboat (or rowboat, canoe, kayak or paddleboard) at Marsh Creek Water Sports & Boat Rental at the East Launch.

While you can't swim in the lake, the guarded swimming pool and sprayground — plus snack bar and bathhouse — are open through Labor Day. In spring and fall, watch migrating water birds. *675 Park Rd., Downingtown. PA.gov/Agencies/DCNR*



PHOTO CREDIT: CHRISTA NEU/CHESTER COUNTY'S BRANDYWINE VALLEY

HIBERNIA COUNTY PARK

Dine al fresco at scenic Hibernia County Park in western Chester County. Choose from several picnic areas — along the west branch of the Brandywine (a popular fishing site), on the shore of Chambers Lake (great for boating), in grassy Fiddler's Field and more.

Then take your pick of eight trails to explore over 900 acres of woodlands, meadows and open fields. For the little ones, there are plenty of playgrounds and even a children's pond. History buffs will want to explore Hibernia Mansion, home to 19th-century ironmasters. On select Sunday afternoons, you can sign up online for a guided tour of the manor, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Too weary to go home after a long day at the park? Two campgrounds — Fiddler's Campground for small trailers and RVs, Lake Campground for tents — are open through November. Reserve your spot online. *1 Park Rd., Coatesville. Chesco.org*



TYLER ARBORETUM

Dating back to 1681, Tyler Arboretum is one of the oldest public gardens in the United States. Sit at picnic tables by the Visitor Center and Lucille's Garden, or sprawl out on a picnic blanket among 650 acres of protected woodlands and charming meadows. While you savor your meal, keep an eye (and ear) out for several bird species — the arboretum is designated an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society, along with adjacent Ridley Creek State Park. In summer, you can spot the indigo bunting, scarlet tanager, eastern towhee and more.

Next, it's time to explore the arboretum. This month, Franklin trees, hydrangeas, meadow wildflowers and summer perennials are in bloom. Summer highlights include the Pollinator Preserve, Fragrant Garden, Edible Garden and pond. Any time of year, see the arboretum's 20 historic trees, planted by Minshall and Jacob Painter in the 19th century. *515 Painter Rd., Media. TylerArboretum.org*



ROSE TREE COUNTY PARK

While Rose Tree Park might be best known for its annual Summer Festival, bringing concerts to the park's outdoor amphitheater five nights a week, it's also a great spot for an afternoon picnic. Lay out your spread on picnic benches, sit in the gazebo, or unfurl a picnic blanket anywhere on 118 acres of rolling hills surrounded by mature trees.

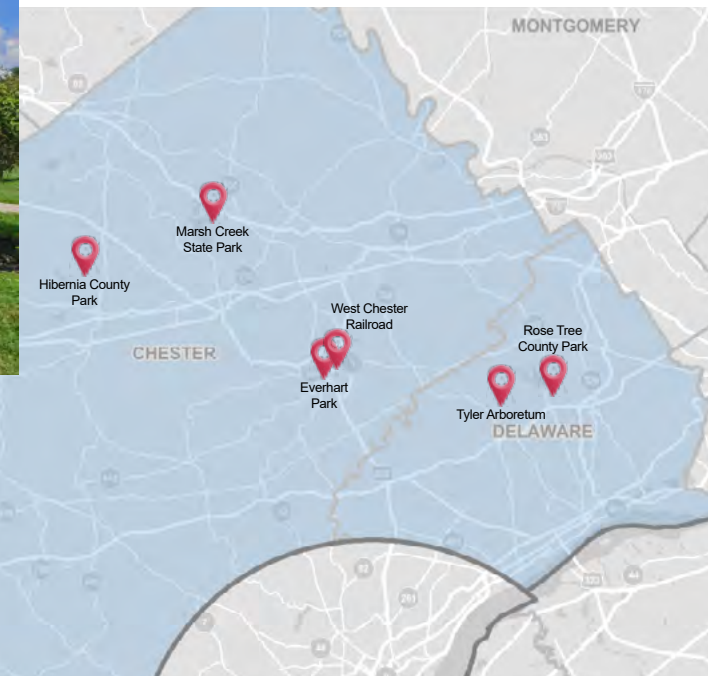
After your meal, take a stroll through the woodland trail. Kiddos will love the ADA-inclusive playground with swings, a spinning zone, a special area for tots 2 to 5, and a large climbing tower for older kids. Then nudge them toward Delaware County Libraries' StoryWalk, now in a new location right next to the playground. Kids can wend their way through 20 stations to read a story, changing seasonally — currently "Aloha Everything" by Kaylin Melia George. *1671 N. Providence Rd., Media. DelcoPA.gov*



West Chester Railroad Picnic Special

All aboard the West Chester Railroad! On Sunday afternoons through September, climb aboard a historic locomotive for a 90-minute ride to the Glen Mills train station and back to Market Street. Pack a lunch to enjoy at the picnic grove along the Chester Creek, explore the 1880s station building (thought to be designed by Frank Furness), and sample the offerings of Red Brick Winery.

The all-volunteer heritage railroad operates on the over 160-year-old former Pennsylvania Railroad tracks. On your voyage, you'll pass the historic Westtown station (now an art gallery), the 19th-century Cheyney station and village, and Locksley station (near one of the oldest iron slitting mills in the country). *Adults, \$25; children (2-12), \$20; under 2, free. 230 E. Market St., West Chester. WCRailroad.com*



EVERHART PARK

For picnicking in West Chester, you can't beat Everhart Park. The borough's second-oldest park is on land originally owned by entrepreneur and shipwreck survivor William Everhart — read his fascinating story in our April 2024 issue. Today, the 10.2-acre park is home to over 400 trees, plus a fountain, gazebo, basketball court, amazing playground, Little Free Library and more.

Plant yourself at a picnic table or blanket and unpack your basket — or whip up burgers and dogs on the grill. Later, walk off your lunch with a stroll around the park, past the rippling stream, across the rustic footbridge and through the tranquil labyrinth.

Before you leave, take a seat on the bright red Horace Pippin bench and imagine you're in the local artist's iconic 1946 painting. *100 S. Brandywine St., West Chester. West-Chester.com*

Do a Day Trip in Delaware

Across the state line, adventure awaits. We're taking you on a driving tour of Delaware, highlighting three towns across the First State, one in each county. Each is perfect for a day trip — or perhaps a weekend getaway.

NEWARK

Just 12 miles southwest of Wilmington, Newark is a small city with lots to discover (including that it's pronounced "New-ark," unlike "New-erk," New Jersey). Explore the award-winning downtown, centered around Main Street.

Get a caffeine boost at Little Goat Coffee Roasting Co., then shop 'til you drop at charming stores, such as Grassroots gift shop, Bloom boutique, Rainbow Records and Switch Skate & Snow. Fuel up at one of downtown Newark's 60-plus restaurants, including the flagship Iron Hill Brewery location. Mark your calendar for the **Newark Food & Brew Fest** on Saturday, July 20.

Or choose to get in touch with nature at one of Newark's 33 parks. At **Rittenhouse Park**, meander natural trails and enjoy a picnic along the scenic Christina River. At **White Clay Creek State Park**, hike or bike over 37 miles of trails, fish for largemouth bass or play disc golf. Look for the tri-state marker, where Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland meet.

Of course, no trip to Newark is complete without a trip to the **University of Delaware** campus. Stroll the sprawling green encircled by Georgian-style buildings. Visit the **University of Delaware Botanic Gardens**, free and open to the public year-round — summer highlights include hibiscus, hydrangea and rose of Sharon. End on a high note with a sweet treat from the **UDairy Creamery!** NewarkDE.gov



Main Street



University of Delaware

PHOTO CREDIT: JASON SAFOUTIN

DOVER

Discover the state capital of Dover, steeped in history with modern appeal. In the heart of the city lies **The Green**, a colonial town square laid out by William Penn in 1717. The Green is surrounded by 79 historic buildings, including the **Old State House**, where the Delaware congregation ratified the U.S. Constitution, earning Delaware its title of First State. It's also home to the **Biggs Museum of American Art**, featuring decorative arts from the 18th century to present.

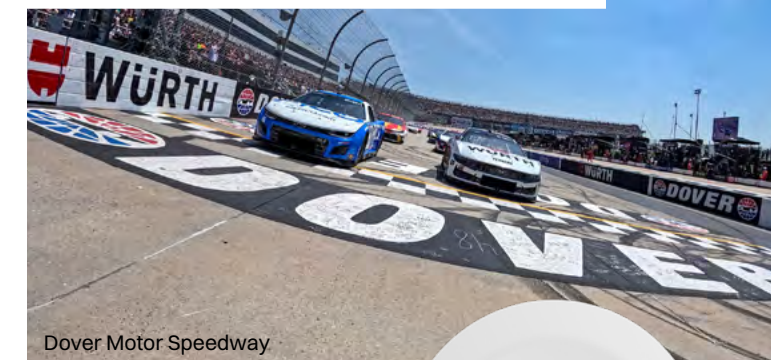
In fact, Dover has several fascinating museums. Located in Dover Air Force Base, the **Air Mobility Command Museum** houses 30 aircraft — including a presidential aircraft and a bomber — plus exhibits on Air Force history and a flight simulator. The **Johnson Victrola Museum** highlights the legacy of Eldridge Reeves Johnson, founder of Victor Talking Machine Company and a pioneer of the sound-recording industry.

For something a bit more fast-paced, head to the **Dover Motor Speedway**. On Sunday, July 20, NASCAR drivers test their skills on the "Monster Mile" — a high-banked, one-mile concrete track — at the Autotrader EchoPark Automotive 400. Afterwards, test your luck at nearby **Bally's Dover Casino Resort**.

Before heading home, wet your whistle at Rail Haus, a German-inspired beer garden with classic pub grub and specialty wursts. Check Instagram for weekly events. VisitCentralDelaware.com



Old State House



Dover Motor Speedway

LEWES

Founded by Dutch seamen in 1631, Lewes was the first European settlement in Delaware, giving it the nickname "The First Town in the First State." Today, this charming cape town is the perfect place to get away from it all.

Situated at the confluence of the Delaware Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, Lewes has both ocean and bay beaches to enjoy. Plus, the **Lewes-Rehoboth Canal**, winding through the commercial district, is great for fishing.

Downtown, stroll past historic homes and buildings, and browse eclectic shops on Second Street, like Lewes Gifts, The Bungalow on 2nd, Lewes Mercantile Antique Gallery and The Vintage Underground. Dining options include A Touch of Italy, Mexican cantina Agave and farm-to-table Heirloom.

Don't miss **Cape Henlopen State Park**, over 5,000 acres of coastal views, pristine beaches and trails for hiking and biking. Highlights include Delaware Breakwater Lighthouse, World War II-era Fort Miles, Gordons Pond saltwater lagoon and The Great Dune, rising 80 feet above sea level. Kiddos will love getting up close and personal with critters from around the park at the Seaside Nature Center's touch tank.

Looking for more adventure? Ride the **Cape May-Lewes Ferry** to the southern tip of the Jersey Shore. LewesChamber.com



Cape Henlopen State Park

PHOTO CREDIT: MELISSA FAGUE



Second Street

PHOTO CREDIT: JARVIS KEENE

Consider a Car Trip

CECIL COUNTY, MD

For a short trip offering the delights of the northern Chesapeake Bay, plus a chance to drive on the **Chesapeake Country National Scenic Byway**, head for Cecil County. North of Baltimore on I-95, this travel destination offers walkable small towns — **Chesapeake City, North East** — plus hundreds of miles of waterfront providing the best of bay cuisine and plenty of family fun.

Add in scenic countryside and outstanding parks, including 2,370-acre **Elk Neck State Park**, with sandy beaches, hiking trails and the historic Turkey Point Lighthouse with panoramic bay views. For history, visit **Gilpin's Falls 1859 Covered Bridge** and nearby Gilpin Falls.

Visit July 18–27 for the **Cecil County Fair**, complete with carnival midway, demolition derby, rodeo, pie-eating contest and more. Or come any time to hike, bike, camp, bird watch, horseback ride, or drop a fishing line or catch the action at a casino. *DiscoverCecil.com*



Cecil County Fair

LEBANON VALLEY, PA

Located between Hershey and Lancaster, the Lebanon Valley is a convenient getaway offering plenty of outdoor activities, mixed with history, the arts and tasty treats.

Special things to do: bike the 20-mile **Rail Trail**, climb the **Governor Dick Observation Tower**, pose atop **Dinosaur Rock**, kayak the **Union Canal Tunnel** (guided tours only), and tout fish at **Swatara State Park**.

Catch a show at one of the oldest summer theaters in the country. The open-air **Mount Gretna Playhouse** performs “Million Dollar Quartet,” “Pete the Cat,” “Hadestown: Teen Edition” and more to appeal to all ages.

No trip is complete without sampling specialty treats — Opera Fudge (chocolate-coated vanilla centers), Jigger Shop sundaes, Shuey's pretzels (handcrafted since 1927) and, of course, Lebanon bologna. *VisitLebanonValley.com*



Swatara State Park



Ladew Topiary Garden

HARFORD COUNTY, MD

On the Chesapeake Bay with the Susquehanna River and Cecil County to its north, Harford County in another fun destination. Sample the eclectic charms of the **Ladew Topiary Gardens** (top 5 in North America), **Havre de Grace Decoy Museum** and **Conowingo Dam** where eagles fly (see our November 2022 article online).

Sports fans can watch the **Aberdeen IronBirds** (owned by Cal Ripken Jr.) or take a “Round-Tripper” journey along the Susquehanna River to Cooperstown, NY, with a stop at the Little League Museum in South Williamsport, PA.

Experience junkies can follow other specialty trails — Snowball Trail, Libation Trail, Mural Trail, Barn Quilt Trail, Chocolate & Cheese Trail or others.

Or if your idea of a perfect meal is whacking hard shells with a mallet or enjoying a plate of steamed crabs, crab cakes and oysters, then head for a bayfront restaurant in Harford County. *HelloHarford.com*

Here are three trips that take less than a tank of gas. Head south to Maryland or west to the Lebanon Valley in Pennsylvania.

Thirty-One Years of Town Tours — “Untold Stories”



Celebrating its 31st year, the Chester County Town Tours & Village Walks program is a free event featuring Chester County's cultural heritage through a series of lectures and evening strolls. You'll come away with an increased awareness of Chester County's rich heritage and historic landscape. Tours are from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.



July 10 – Warwick County Park

The forests of Warwick County Park were once used for making charcoal that fueled the iron industry through the 18th and 19th centuries. Learn about the people, their occupations, plus see where charcoal was made and how resources were used to build an industry that built a nation. *Park: Warwick County Park, 191 County Park Rd., Pottstown.*



July 17 – Valley Forge National Historic Park

Explore some of the lesser-known buildings, monuments and stories, starting at the Washington Memorial Chapel. See historic Maurice Stephens House, owned by the National Park Service and being restored as a coffee house to provide visitor services. End the walk at the Patriots of African Descent Memorial.

Chapel Parking Lot, Rte. 23, Valley Forge.



July 26 – Lafayette Day

The Marquis de Lafayette, a French aristocrat and military officer, volunteered and served in the Continental Army under George Washington. Wounded at the Battle of Brandywine, Lafayette helped to secure France as an ally and served until the end of the Revolution.

Morning events: Thornbury Farm. Park:

Thornbury Farm, 1256 Thornbury Rd., West Chester. Afternoon: Downtown West Chester: Lafayette Memorial Parade, High & Miner Sts., ends at Marshall Square Park, where Lafayette spoke to an adoring crowd.



July 31 – Barnard Station Pocopson Township

Barnard Station represents 19th-century efforts throughout Pennsylvania to end slavery and uphold the community's values and beliefs to help secure “the Blessings of Liberty” for all people. Tour Barnard Station's interior, currently undergoing restoration. Learn

about 19th-century Pocopson Township, its free Black population, agricultural highlights and the Barnard Family's anti-slavery activism. *Park: 664 S. Wawaset Rd., West Chester.*

August 7 – Oxford Region Self-Guided Driving Tour

The Oxford Area Historical Association invites you on a tour of the small villages in the Oxford region, such as Homeville, Russellville, Tweedale, Hopewell and Lewisville. These historic villages highlight the agricultural and scenic resources that characterize the area. *Driving tour start: Oxford Area Historical Association, 119 S. 5th St., Oxford.*



August 14 – Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site

The tour will focus on the lesser-known people who called the furnace their job and home. Look at colliers who made the charcoal, the drovers who shipped raw materials and finished goods, the school that served the village and the families who lived there. *Park: Hopewell Furnace Visitor Center, 2 Mark Bird Ln., Elverson.*



August 21 – Historic Yellow Springs, W. Pikeland Township

Did you know vaccinations were given to Revolutionary War soldiers at Yellow Springs? Or that patient John Knight was wrapped in spring-water-soaked sheets as part of his spa treatment? Or that Burt Bacharach wrote music here for “The Blob,” Steve McQueen raced his Corvette through these country roads, and Patty Duke, Lee Meriwether and Robert Lansing starred in movies made here by Good News Productions? Learn the many “untold stories” from over 300 years of history at Yellow Springs. *Park: 1701 Art School Rd., Chester Springs.*



More at ChesCo.org/TownTours