

PORTER
COUNTY

LAPORTE
COUNTY

ST. JOSEPH
COUNTY

MARSHALL
COUNTY

ELKHART
COUNTY

KOSCIUSKO
COUNTY

LAGRANGE
COUNTY

Northern Indiana *Foodie* Trail



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NORTHERN INDIANA
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from the Editors of
Midwest Living[®]

The *Midwest Living* Editors know a good thing when they taste it. And we found a lot to love in Northern Indiana. We dined our way across the area and discovered that the foods found here are a delicious representation of the area itself—diverse, refreshing, homespun. It was hard (we're not complaining!) but we pared down all the restaurants, bakeries and sweet shops to create our list of foodie favorites. Now it's your turn to do a little tasting!





ILLUSTRATION: EVE STEGCATI



PORTER COUNTY

The area boasting the stunning Indiana Dunes includes barefoot-perfect beaches, miles of hiking trails and foods that will have you scheming for a return trip.

DESIGNER DESSERTS, VALPARAISO

Owner Adam Wiltfang advises patrons to live life one cupcake at a time. In his pink-olicious store, you'll need a fork—and possibly a friend—to share \$3 decadent cupcakes in more than 15 flavors! It's hard to pick a favorite, but we love the flamboyant coconut cream, Snowball Fight and crème brûlée with a fresh blackberry. Or try the daily special for \$2 (219/465-0008; designerdessertsbakery.com).

BISTRO 157, VALPARAISO

In this contemporary downtown bistro, farm-to-table cuisine stars alongside area artists' works on gallery-style walls. Some artists even double as servers. The menu is French-Asian fusion changing with the seasons. Highlights are the daily specials, such as salmon with toasted coconut basmati rice with Asian vegetable stir-fry. Entrees come artfully arranged (like everything at the Bistro) on geometric plates (219/462-0992; bistro157.net).

OCTAVE GRILL, CHESTERTON

Wedge between downtown buildings, tiny Octave Grill offers creative burgers and homemade desserts in a kitschy setting. The grass-fed beef burgers come on soft brioche buns. Toppings are from local producers, such as Havarti cheese from Fair Oaks Farms, and Saturday morning purveyors at Chesterton's European Market. Area artists' works adorn brick walls (219/395-8494; octavegrill.com).

WAGNER'S RIBS, PORTER

The place isn't fancy—the vintage building used to be a bar—but it's impossible to resist the allure of this friendly, no-nonsense joint specializing in lip-smacking, fall-off-the-bone ribs. Slabs come with your choice of sides; wash it all down with one of nine house-draft beers or one of the some 75 bottled choices. Only 21 and older allowed (219/926-7614; wagnersrestaurantandbar.com).



LAPORTE COUNTY

There's an iconic lighthouse and not-to-miss attractions, but a trip to the Lake Michigan shore isn't complete without a tasty stop at one of these.

HESTON SUPPER CLUB, LAPORTE

Cooked low and slow, prime rib is the house specialty at this off-the-beaten-path supper club. Family owned since the '80s, the restaurant hasn't changed decor much, but makes up for it with melt-in-your-mouth meals. Beef portions are generous (14-ounce modest, 22-ounce house and 40-ounce Heston); go easy on the complimentary crackers and cheddar spread (219/778-2938; hestonsupperclub.com).

MUCHO MASI!, LAPORTE

Casual and friendly, this California-style Mexican restaurant keeps costs low with its fast-food-style of ordering in a line. But the New Wave Mexican food gets delivered to your table on plates. Try the tostada pizza with jalapeño-cilantro crust or stacked enchiladas. Fish tacos with a tangy achiote sauce are a house fave (219/362-9183).

SHORELINE BREWERY, MICHIGAN CITY

The on-site brewery operation serves as part of the decor at this ultracasual restaurant. The menu includes all-day appetizers; sandwiches and pub grub, but you can't go wrong with a burger on a pretzel bun and side of veggie chips (a mix of potato, sweet potato and beet chips). Shoreline offers 10 hand-crafted brews; we like the slight citrus notes in Don't Panic! an English pale ale (219/879-4677; shorelinebrewery.com).

SAHARA, MICHIGAN CITY

Enter the restaurant through a red velvet curtain to find exposed brick walls, aged wood flooring, tapestry-draped walls and a tin ceiling. You'll discover the flavors of Lebanon in this Mediterranean restaurant serving fresh, authentic dishes. Start with the house hummus, made daily. Order the special for a tasty sampling of four cold and four hot dishes for \$17 (219/871-1223; sahara-restaurant.net).



ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

Fun is an integral part of life here, from touchdowns to theater to all kinds of delightful places to satisfy your appetite.

CARRIAGE HOUSE, SOUTH BEND

Artistically executed classic French dishes make this a dining destination. Beyond the double doors of a restored 1851 church, the cozy dining room has a soaring ceiling highlighting original exposed beams. The furniture is antique, the art is museum quality, the service is attentive, and the food is excellent. Tempting items on the dessert cart will make you want

to extend dinner just a bit (574/272-9220; carriagehousedining.com).

ROCCO'S RESTAURANT, SOUTH BEND

The owners greet customers with hugs and smiles, making you feel right at home at this South Bend institution. The food feels familiar, too. A family favorite includes Linguini ala Tonno (with tuna); plus, there's from-scratch pizza, spaghetti, gnocchi and ravioli. On Friday and Saturday nights, try the baked lasagna. Though the place seats 150, expect to wait for a table (574/233-2464; roccosoriginalpizza.com).

MOSER'S AUSTRIAN CAFE, NEW CARLISLE

Traditional German tunes and an attentive owner welcome diners to this cafe specializing in German and Austrian specialties. Choose from 10 different schnitzels or the comforting Austrian *gulasch* (beef and pork tips slowly cooked with onion, garlic and paprika). Dishes come with spaetzle (a delicate drop noodle), red cabbage, plus swirl rye bread and olive spread (574/654-0086; mosersaustriancafe.com).

WEST END BAKERY, MISHAWAKA

Family owned since 1928, the tiny Belgian bakery focuses on bread and pastries (no coffee or tables—everything is to go). The secret to the delicious taste (and aroma) is that they still use the original recipes. Come early for the best selection; baking begins early and production halts at 10 a.m. Creamhorns are made on Thursdays, Mastellen rolls (Belgian buns) on Saturdays (574/255-1267).





MARSHALL COUNTY

Winding roads and colorful quilts add to the relaxed feeling you'll find here. So do these local dining spots.

CORNDANCE CAFE, CULVER

Chef-owner George Pesek's diverse talents shine at this cozy, intimate restaurant in the downtown district. A nearby bison farm he owns supplies meat for burgers, appetizer bites and a special. The eclectic menu reflects many countries, but dishes are made distinctly American and use fresh, local ingredients. Desserts change daily (574/842-3220; corndance.com).

ORIGINAL ROOT BEER STAND, CULVER

This old-school seasonal restaurant comes complete with carhops, neon signs and root beer. Brewed daily, the root beer smells wonderful, and the flavor is strong and pungent, with tones of cinnamon and molasses. Turn on your lights and a carhop takes your order. Favorites include Chicago-style hot dogs and burgers with sides of french fries, cheese fries, onion rings, slaw and fresh fruit cups (574/842-2122).

OPIE'S DELI, PLYMOUTH

Located in a quaint restored building, Opie's Deli offers old-fashioned goodness and quality local ingredients in deli sandwiches, Chicago-style hot dogs, fresh soups, and ice cream and gelato. Breads come from Earthworks, coffee is roasted in Fort Wayne, the gelato is from Michigan, and the ice cream from Middlebury. Opie's is cute with its tin ceiling and abundant natural light, but tiny—just three tables (574/935-3366; opiesdeli.com).

EDWARD CHRISTIAN DINING, BREMEN

Sauce is taken seriously at this barbecue restaurant. A sauce sommelier visits patrons tableside, handing out samples of its 10 housemade choices based on taste preferences. The restaurant's general manager, Randy, creates the variety, which includes Sunfire (hot), Chipotle (smoky) and the No.1 seller, Spiced Rum and Cola, a Caribbean mix of sweet and lively. Open for dinner Thursday through Saturday (574/546-2658; edwardchristiandining.com).



ELKHART COUNTY

Old-world charm and simplicity blend seamlessly with New World flavors and creativity in these choice local restaurants.

KELLY JAE'S CAFE, GOSHEN

Exposed-brick walls and birch trees wrapped in sparkly lights give the effect of sitting in an outdoor courtyard. Somehow it's cozy and airy at the same time, the perfect setting for dinner. The menu blends Asian flavors with the Spanish tapas concept of small plates. Mix and match hot and cold dishes, such as arugula and fennel salad with Meyer lemon vinaigrette, which gives a wonderful brightness to the crisp greens (574/537-1027; kellyjaescafe.com).

VENTURI PIZZA, GOSHEN

In an 800-degree oven, signature pizzas cook for less than two minutes before being served tableside. Plan on ordering one per person without a thought of leftovers. They're that good. Venturi's pizza dough is hand-shaped, made with imported flour and topped with

their *fior di latte* (fresh mozzarella). The result is a perfect thin-crust pizza, slightly crispy on the outside but with a delicious "tooth" inside (574/485-2985; eatventuri.com).

DAS DUTCHMAN ESSENHAUS, MIDDLEBURY

Indiana's largest family restaurant seats 1,100 people at one time! Choose buffet dining (near the entrance) or off-the-menu, which takes patrons through several shopping areas to the rear seating room. Meals are hearty, including 20 hot and cold items at the Thresher's breakfast buffet. At dinner, choose from chicken, roast beef or ham meals served family-style with sides. Dessert includes 29 varieties of from-scratch pies (574/825-9471; essenhaus.com).

ANTONIO'S, ELKHART

Sliced tomatoes and generous amounts of fresh basil—both grown out back in the restaurant's garden—grace a Margherita pizza. The homegrown goodness can also be found on many of Antonio's signature dishes, such as garden pasta with chicken and chicken pasta primavera. During growing season, start with a seasonal salad. Family owned and operated for 25 years, Antonio's shares cooking traditions from their homeland of Calabria, Italy (574/295-8424; antoniositalian.com).



KOSCIUSKO COUNTY

This is lake country—over 100!—and known for the arts, but it's also filled with one-of-a-kind places foodies will want to stop and enjoy.

WECKMULLER FINE CHOCOLATES, PIERCETON

Chocolatier Diana Heckman offers hand-dipped specialties made with premium Belgian, Swiss, German and American chocolates. Pecan turtles and raspberry truffles are two of the top sellers. The store also offers light lunches, including quiches, salads, soups and ice cream treats. Located on the main stretch of First Street, Weckmuller is within walking distance of nearly a dozen antiques stores and art galleries (574/594-3444; weckmuller.com).

CERULEAN RESTAURANT, WINONA LAKE

The extensive menu focuses on Asian foods for lunch and Mediterranean for dinner, as well as offering every possible combination of fish for sashimi, sushi and maki. Ingredients are top-notch, and food is artistically presented, which makes for difficult choices. The duck carbonara features house pancetta and snap peas. No matter the choice, diners will taste freshness and a mix of flavors (574/269-1226; ceruleanrestaurant.com).

NOA NOA WOOD GRILL AND SUSHI BAR, WARSAW

Though nowhere near a coast, this Caribbean-style restaurant offers fresh sushi and seafood in a casual yet sophisticated setting. Island decor features bamboo and breezy windows flanked by plantation shutters. The large menu is booklet-style with a sushi section, specials

sheet and drink menu. Regardless of what you order, it's all good! Seafood comes overnight from Boston and Hawaii, and dinner specials reflect the available catch. Reservations are necessary, even on weekdays (574/372-3224; noanoowoodgrill.com).

CHANNEL MARKER, SYRACUSE

Situated on a channel connecting lakes Wawasee and Syracuse, Channel Marker makes a great location for boaters and others looking for casual dining. The menu is largely beach food—sandwiches, burgers and seafood served in paper-lined baskets. Regulars recommend the Baja fish tacos with mango salsa and the S.S. Ribeye, a Philly cheese steak. More substantial choices include char-crusted sea bass and New York Strip (574/457-5900; channelmarker.net).



The pace is leisurely, the landscape is bucolic, and the food is nostalgia inducing, homemade goodness.

BLUE GATE RESTAURANT, SHIPSHEWANA

Serving traditional Amish and Mennonite fare, Blue Gate's menu includes standards such as fried chicken, meat loaf, liver and onions, and beef and noodles. For breakfast, choose from eggs, pancakes, waffles, French toast and more! Portions are as generous as the hospitality, which makes it a favorite for tourists and church groups by the busload—the restaurant seats 750 diners, more than the entire town's population (260/768-4725; bluegaterestaurant.com).

JO JO'S PRETZELS, SHIPSHEWANA

Hand-rolled soft pretzels come in a variety of flavors with housemade mustards. Choose your flavor—original, salt and vinegar, garlic, sour cream and onion, whole wheat, cinnamon and even dill pickle—and watch, as each is rolled then baked in glass-front ovens behind the counter. They're hot and delicious and way better than the mall pretzel you may have been expecting (260/768-7759; facebook.com/JoJosPretzels).

FOLTZ BAKERY, LAGRANGE

An Amish Country mainstay since 1936, this is the real deal, with bakers arriving at midnight to begin the next day's doughnuts. The bakery opens at 5:30 a.m., and favorites like the bear claw go quickly. All doughnuts are \$1.25 and include tasty choices like the long john (filled or unfilled) and the Diamond (named for owners Amy and Steve Diamond), an unfilled favorite topped with crunchy nuts (260/463-3423).

EMMA'S CAFE AND CATERING, TOPEKA

The screen door opens with a squeak then snaps shut behind you. And you are in love. Built in 1931, the Emma General Store is now a charming restaurant and soda shop. They make focaccia bread for sandwiches and offer homemade specialties like chicken or beef and noodles over mashed potatoes (260/593-9025; www.emmacafeandcatering.com).



PORTER COUNTY DESIGNER DESSERTS

56 W. Lincolnway
Valparaiso, IN
219/465-0008;
designerdessertsbakery.com

BISTRO 157

157 Lincolnway
Valparaiso, IN
219/462-0992; bistro157.net

OCTAVE GRILL

137 S. Calumet Rd.
Chesterton, IN
219/395-8494; octavegrill.com

WAGNER'S RIBS

361 Wagner Rd.
Porter, IN
219/926-7614;
wagnersrestaurantandbar.com

LAPORTE COUNTY HESTON SUPPER CLUB

2003 E. 1000 North
LaPorte, IN
219/778-2938;
hestonsupperclub.com

MUCHO MASI!

609 Lincolnway
LaPorte, IN
219/362-9183

SHORELINE BREWERY

208 Wabash St.
Michigan City, IN
219/879-4677;
shorelinebrewery.com

SAHARA

1701 Franklin St.
Michigan City, IN
219/871-1223;
sahara-restaurant.net

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY CARRIAGE HOUSE

24460 Adams Rd.
South Bend, IN
574/272-9220;
carriagehousedining.com

Contact List

ROCCO'S RESTAURANT

537 N Saint Louis Blvd
South Bend, IN
574/233-2464;
roccosoriginalpizza.com

MOSER'S AUSTRIAN CAFE

127 E. Michigan St.
New Carlisle, IN
574/654-0086;
mosersaustriancafe.com

WEST END BAKERY

414 W. 7th St.
Mishawaka, IN
574/255-1267

MARSHALL COUNTY CORNDANCE CAFE

117 S. Main St.
Culver, IN
574/842-3220; corndance.com

ORIGINAL ROOT BEER STAND

824 E. Lake Shore Dr.
Culver, IN
574/842-2122

OPIE'S DELI

114 N. Michigan St.
Plymouth, IN
574/935-3366; opiesdeli.com

EDWARD CHRISTIAN DINING

115 W. Plymouth St.
Bremen, IN
574/546-2658;
edwardchristiandining.com

ELKHART COUNTY KELLY JAE'S CAFE

133 S. Main St.
Goshen, IN
574/537-1027; kellyjaescfe.com

VENTURI PIZZA

123 E. Lincoln
Goshen, IN
574/485-2985; eatventuri.com

DAS DUTCHMAN ESSENHAUS

240 US-20
Middlebury, IN
574/825-9471; essenhaus.com

ANTONIO'S

1105 Goshen Ave.
Elkhart, IN
574/295-8424;
antoniositalian.com

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY CERULEAN RESTAURANT

1101 E. Canal St.
Winona Lake, IN
574/269-1226;
ceruleanrestaurant.com

NOA NOA WOOD GRILL AND SUSHI BAR

310 Eastlake Dr.
Warsaw, IN
574/372-3224;
noanoowoodgrill.com

CHANNEL MARKER

5793 E. Pickwick Rd.
Syracuse, IN
574/457-5900;
channelmarker.net

WECKMULLER FINE CHOCOLATES

118 N. First St.
Pierceton, IN
574/594-3444; weckmuller.com

LAGRANGE COUNTY BLUE GATE RESTAURANT

105 E. Middlebury St.
Shipshewana, IN
260/768-4725;
bluegaterestaurant.com

JO JO'S PRETZELS

205 N Harrison St.
Shipshewana, IN
260/768-7759;
facebook.com/JoJosPretzels

FOLTZ BAKERY

122 S. Detroit St.
LaGrange, IN
260/463-3423

EMMA'S CAFE AND CATERING

5990 W. 200 S.
Topeka, IN
260/593-9025;
www.emmacafeandcatering.com