

MAY/JUNE 2019

# MidwestLiving *live*

MIDWEST LIVING®

MAY/JUNE 2019

midwestliving.com

LIFE'S RICHER HERE™



# THE *Cabin* ISSUE

FIND YOUR PERFECT RENTAL

GET THE LOOK WITH OUR PRODUCT PICKS

LEARN THE SECRETS OF 'CHEF CAMP'

BRING THIS ISSUE *to life*



Hover your phone's camera over this code to see a video kicking off a cabin weekend!

midwestliving.com

Display until June 21, 2019



# contents

may-june 2019



**WE'RE LIVE!**

You can bring this issue's stories to life on your phone—no app required. Whenever you see a smart code like this, hover your phone's camera over it to instantly load a video, recipe demos, interviews and more. Try it now for a tour of our cover cabin and other bonuses.



**76 CAMP LIKE A CHEF**  
Did you ever dream of learning to ferment kraut in a stand of pines? You're in luck, thanks to Chef Camp in Minnesota.

PHOTOGRAPH: NATE LUKE

# contents

may.june 2019



# 64

### ON THE COVER

Jenny Anderson (@girl0f1000lakes) likes to say she married into this 114-year-old Wisconsin cabin, which has been in her husband's family for seven generations. See more family cabins on page 61.

—  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
STARBOARD & PORT

### 61 THE CABIN ISSUE

The Midwest doesn't just *have* some cabins. We secured their place in American culture.

**64 THE MIDWEST CABIN SAMPLER** Find your perfect summer getaway at these cool rentals in every state.

**74 EVERY DAY'S A CABIN DAY** Even if you can't get away this summer, you can still channel the woody vibe at home.

### 76 CAMP LIKE A CHEF

At a Minnesota YMCA camp, food-lovers of all skill levels gather for a weekend of great eats and drinks under the pines.

**84 GETAWAY GEAR** Discover our picks for the accessories you'll want to pack for your backwoods escape.

**86 TRUE TO SIZE** A midcentury cabin gets a refresh—but its tiny footprint stays the same.



# 22



# 18

### in every issue

- HERE / NOW
- 11 BUTTERFLY GARDENS
- 18 MINT RECIPES
- 22 MUDROOM REHAB
- 28 INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL PARK
- 30 TINY VEGGIES
- 35 NORTHEAST IOWA ROAD TRIP
- 40 HOT DOG TOPPINGS
- 42 MODERN FURNITURE-MAKER
- 46 CINCO DE MAYO SPIRITS
- 48 BACKYARD BIRDHOUSES
- 50 PAVLOVA
- 54 ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS
- 58 TRAVEL NEWS
- DEPARTMENTS
- 6 EDITOR'S NOTE
- 96 EVENTS
- 100 BACK ROAD

**If** the Midwest had a regional flag, would we put a cabin on it? You could argue that this issue's featured topic deserves that kind of credit.

(Apologies to our friends at the Society to Promote Lighthouses and Barns.) Few icons top the cabin at representing the Midwest's gumption and knack for balancing reinvention with roots. Do you like cabin classics? We know plenty of screen doors banging at vacation hideaways. Prefer an expectation-defying cabin? Let's talk about twists such as tricked-out tree houses and adventure getaways inspired by Northwoods mines.

Just as cabins keep pivoting for new eras, our cities and towns are booming with new faces, businesses and things to do. But there's no mistaking that it's still the same heart steadily beating under all the changes.



We at *Midwest Living* like to think of this magazine the same way. We're another heartland icon continually coming up with fresh takes ever since our debut in 1987. This issue showcases several ways we're doing that:

**SMART CODES** In this issue, we're taking the experience well beyond the printed page. See the info at right for details.

**AN UPDATED LOOK** We're debuting a makeover of the magazine's design as we roll out some new elements to update our style and make every page easier for you to enjoy.

**NEW VOICES** And, lastly, this will be my final issue before heading off to other pursuits after 15 years with *Midwest Living*. But be assured, you're in good hands. Just as farmers and conservationists view themselves as stewards temporarily managing resources for future generations, I've always considered myself merely the caretaker of this magazine and the stories it tells.

It's been my great pleasure to travel this region with notebook in hand, working with talented storytellers to tell you what we've found. And whether it's in the pages of a magazine or in the smoky glow of a campfire, you can bet I'll never give up sharing tales of the Midwest.

**TREVOR MEERS**  
EDITOR  
@TMEERS



The codes you see throughout the issue are gateways to a big collection of extra content you can view through your phone. To see videos, bonus photos and more, just hold your phone's camera up to the code. No app required.

@midwestliving

/MidwestLivingmag

@midwestlivingmag

**MWL** midwestliving.com



# sand-tastic news

Add a new stop to your (beach) bucket list: One of the Midwest's most beloved lakeshores just got its national park status.

**TALK ABOUT A LONG GAME:** A century of local and national efforts paid off this year when a stretch of Lake Michigan shoreline just east of Chicago won the designation of Indiana Dunes National Park. Recognized since 1966 as a national lakeshore, the park joins the ranks of luminaries like Yellowstone and Yosemite, boosting the Great Lakes' profile along the way.

What's to see here? Thousands of acres of wetlands, woodlands and prairies, plus dune-lined beaches. Botanical buffs should take special notice. The field of plant ecology began here in one of North America's most biodiverse places. Watch for native plants, such as dainty marsh marigolds, downy milkweeds and the silvery (and threatened) Pitcher's thistle.

# 8

## NATIONAL PARKS IN THE MIDWEST

- Indiana Dunes, Indiana
- Isle Royale, Michigan
- Voyageurs, Minnesota
- Gateway Arch, Missouri
- Theodore Roosevelt, North Dakota
- Cuyahoga Valley, Ohio
- Badlands and Wind Cave, South Dakota
- + dozens more sites with "national" status, including preserves, rivers, monuments, trails and historic areas

# about 2 million

Annual visitors to Indiana Dunes, though its new stature likely will land it on *many* more to-visit lists

# 15

Miles of shoreline, with the Chicago skyline peeking over its horizon

# 3

Number of climbs (552 vertical feet total) on a 1.5-mile trail taking hardy hikers over the three tallest dunes at Indiana Dunes State Park. Reward yourself with top-of-the-world views—plus an "I Conquered the 3-Dune Challenge" sticker from the visitors center.

# 61<sup>st</sup>

Indiana Dunes' place in national parks history

CENTRAL AVENUE BEACH  
AT INDIANA DUNES  
NATIONAL PARK



# run for the hills

Two emerging Iowa cities bookend vast caves, a dreamy concert barn and the corn in the outfield that won over Hollywood.

**M**Y HIGH BEAMS wash over the curves of Jackson County's country roads, bouncing off hand-painted signs in the overgrown grass: "Keep Going... You're Almost There." Asphalt turns to gravel, which turns into a cow pasture dubbed a parking lot by another wooden sign. We hop in line by a cattle gate and wait for Marvin to arrive. He packs us shoulder to shoulder in an open-air trailer behind his John Deere tractor for a bumpy ride through the woods. Then a clearing emerges. Codfish Hollow, they call it. But Wonderland feels more fitting. It's a meadow of flickering lights and barns. The old farmhouse has been converted into an art gallery, and a stage in the airplane hanger-like barn has hosted Dawes, Norah Jones, Counting Crows and other national acts.

One-off destinations like Codfish Hollow have long drawn day-trippers to Iowa's far-east elbow: The state's largest public park for caving. Mississippi River vistas. The Field of Dreams Movie Site. (Ready to feel old? The film is 30 years young this summer.) But now Cedar Rapids and Dubuque have caught up, with lively cultural and dining scenes that make the region more weekend-able than ever. Pick a city to explore—or add a day to see them both—and use these tips to road-trip through the land between them.

## HOT TICKET

Sudan Archives performs in a Codfish Hollow Barnstormers show near Maquoketa. Outside the barn, firepits flicker, and glowing tents and a VW van sell crafts, food and drink.

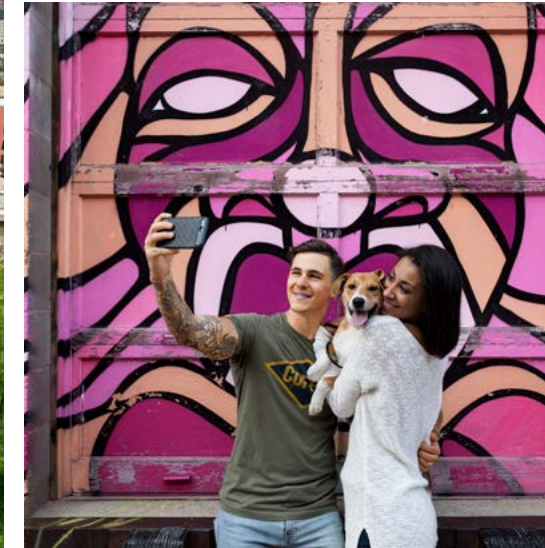
## CEDAR RAPIDS

Iowa's second-biggest city has long had a reputation for food—namely, the smell of Cap'n Crunch wafting from a Quaker Oats plant. But in the wake of devastating flooding in 2008, diverse eats have sprung up across the city, even spreading into nearby towns.

In the **CZECH VILLAGE** neighborhood, visit art studios, shops, and the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library. Through September, *Revolution 1989* explores Czechoslovakia's peaceful Velvet Revolution, which overturned 50 years of Communist rule.

The **CEDAR RAPIDS MUSEUM OF ART** houses the world's largest collection of works by Iowa native Grant Wood. Nearby, visit the studio where he painted *American Gothic*.

Under James Beard nominee Andy Schumacher, **COBBLE HILL** is one of Iowa's best restaurants, where local farmers inspire each dish and elegant cocktail. Don't leave without tasting the Parisian gnocchi. Andy also runs Caucho, a Mexican spot serving novel salsas and drinks. The fresh tortillas are made with masa ground in-house on lava stones.



## DUBUQUE

Steeple and smokestacks crown the bluffs, and 25-plus murals by artists from across the U.S. cover downtown, thanks to a nonprofit project started in 2017. Spot them from the Mississippi riverfront to the burgeoning Millwork District in Iowa's oldest city.

In Cable Car Square, ride 189 feet up "the world's shortest, steepest scenic railway" via **FENELON PLACE ELEVATOR COMPANY** for a tri-state view above the city.

An elegant lobby at **HOTEL JULIEN DUBUQUE** preserves 180 years of history in wood-paneled columns and golden elevators. Small, cozy updated rooms overlook the Mississippi River.

**DIMENSIONAL BREWING COMPANY** opened last fall, pouring knockout IPAs two blocks from Hotel Julien. It joined **7 HILLS BREWING** and two other Dubuque breweries that opened in the past five years.

Turtles and alligator gar fill freshwater habitats at **THE NATIONAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER MUSEUM AND AQUARIUM**. You can get up close to the octopus and touch live stingrays in the Gulf of Mexico exhibit.



More than 20 vendors (and occasional pop-ups) fill **NEWBO CITY MARKET**. Buy truffles and other chocolatey goodness at Lori Anne's Candies, grab Indian street food at Melting Bite or fill a cooler with creative brats and links from Sausage Foundry.

In teeny **SOLON**, 20 miles southeast, Big Grove Brewery serves standout bar food with its brews. Farmer-owned Salt Fork Kitchen pairs house kimchi with omelets. Twenty minutes east of Cedar Rapids, **MOUNT VERNON** is a picturesque college town. Lincoln Wine Bar dishes incredible wood-fired pizza (and live weekend music). Check out the colorful Chalk the Walk fest there May 4-5.



At **BRAZEN OPEN KITCHEN**, taste the work of Kevin Scharpf, fresh off a winter appearance on Bravo's *Top Chef*. Try an elderflower gin cocktail frothed with egg white, salmon with vegan risotto or duck confit tacos, featuring tomato ceviche and cilantro.

**"In 2008, we had 7 feet of water in the restaurant I'm sitting in. Now we're coming into a renaissance."**

*andy schumacher*

CHEF AND CEDAR RAPIDS NATIVE

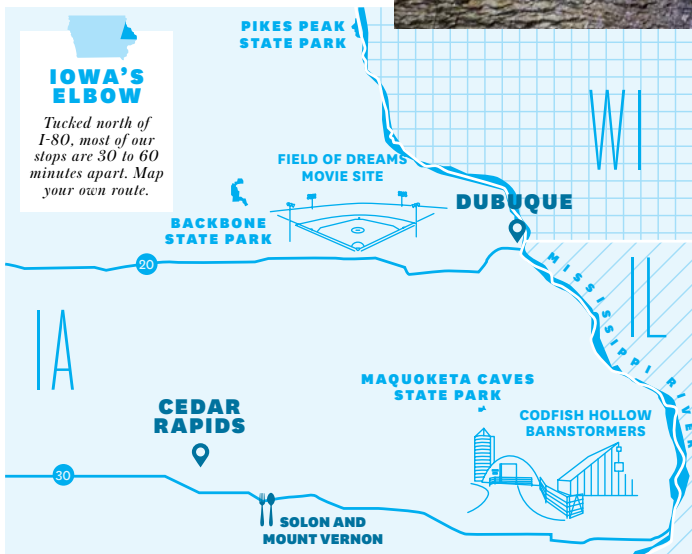
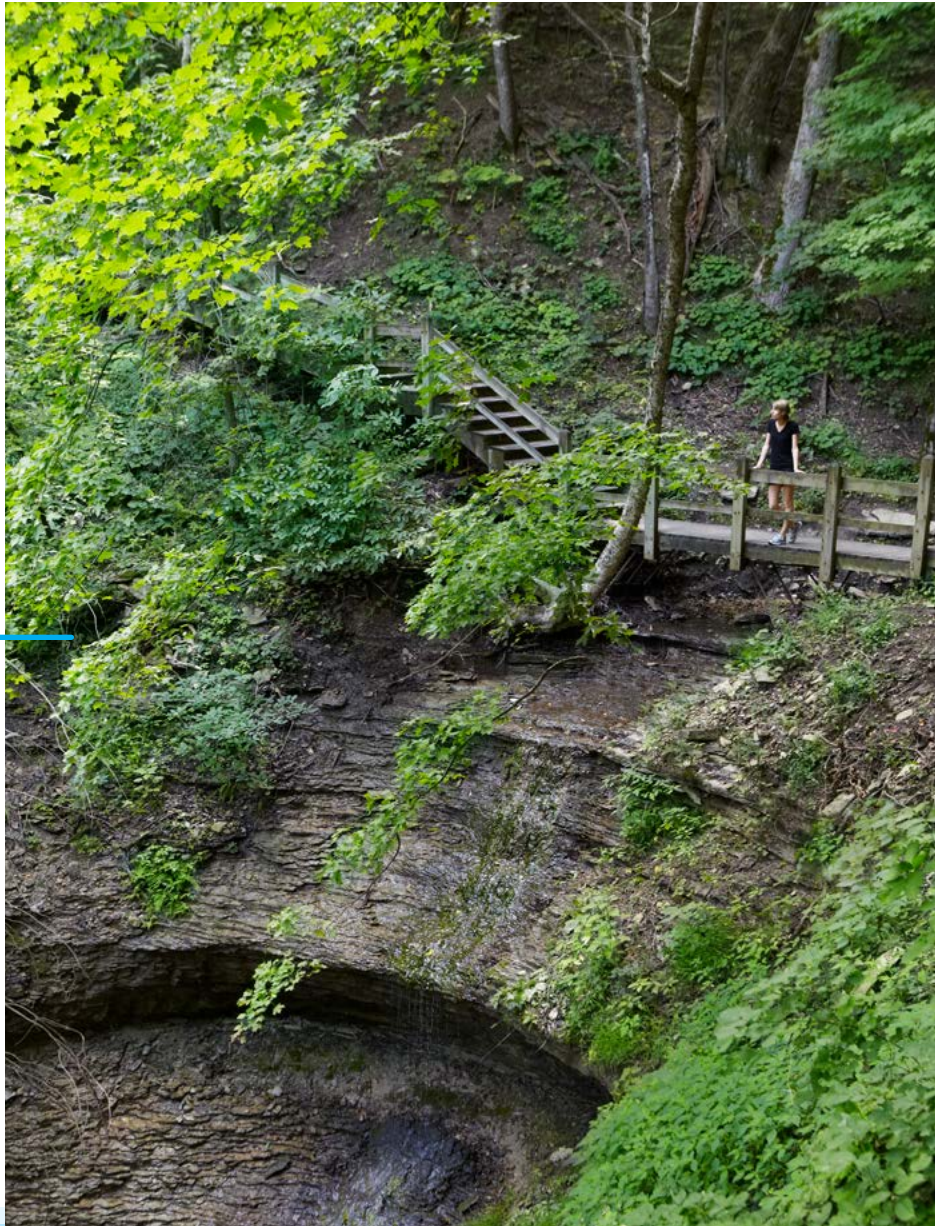
## INTO THE WILD

Whether nature is your overnight sanctuary or a stop to stretch your legs, these parks beyond Cedar Rapids and Dubuque have you covered.

**1** Blankets of green surround the caverns at **MAQUOKETA CAVES STATE PARK**. Follow lighted pathways to the 1,110-foot-long Dance Hall Cave and cross the towering Natural Bridge. A park overhaul last year built a new footbridge and boardwalks. Brave visitors bring headlamps and belly-crawling clothes, but casual hikers find plenty to see, too.

**2** **PIKES PEAK STATE PARK** sprawls above the confluence of the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers. It's a bit of a detour, but worth it for the best view in Iowa (and you can drive straight to the top). Plus, the scenic 55-mile drive from Dubuque follows the Great River Road. Plan a pie and ice cream stop at Sadie's Sweet Shop in McGregor.

**3** Hikers and rock climbers share the namesake trail at **BACKBONE STATE PARK**. This gateway to northeast Iowa bluff country boasts trout fishing, 21 trail miles, two campgrounds and affordable cabins.



### bucket list stops

Pack your mitt for a visit to the actual **FIELD OF DREAMS** baseball diamond and filming location in Dyersville. The site 25 miles west of Dubuque offers tours of the farmhouse and lets you step onto the field. Buy tickets in advance to attend the 30th Anniversary Celebration on June 15.

Ten years ago, **CODFISH HOLLOW BARNSTORMERS** turned a round barn storing wagons and hay into an iconic Midwest concert hub. Watch the show calendar and plan a weekend around the experience. Ticket holders can camp on the farm, but Dubuque and Davenport hotels are just 45 minutes away.

PHOTOGRAPH: JAY WILDE



# creature teachers

Leave the entertaining to the animals—and prehistoric animatronics—at these immersive wildlife destinations.

1

## WONDERS OF WILDLIFE

Springfield, Missouri

2

## FIELD STATION: DINOSAURS

Derby, Kansas

3

## WILDLIFE SAFARI PARK

Ashland, Nebraska

4

## THE GENTLE BARN

Dittmer, Missouri

5

## TURPENTINE CREEK WILDLIFE REFUGE

Eureka Springs, Arkansas



FIELD STATION:  
DINOSAURS,  
DERBY, KANSAS

**WHEN A BROWN SHARK THRASHES** wildly after baitfish in front of your face, try not to shriek through your air helmet. It's a typical lunch break for him, but an otherworldly encounter for any human in southwest Missouri. The Out to Sea Shark Dive experience at Wonders of Wildlife puts you and dive mates nose to nose with barracuda and sharks from the safety of an underwater cage (no scuba certification required).

File it under adventures that even the most exhilarating IMAX film can't quite replicate. Same goes for touring a big-cat sanctuary with a biologist, hearing a grey wolf's haunting howl or meeting the famous St. Louis cows that evaded the butcher's clutches. Animal worlds have a way of inspiring awe and transforming how we view our vibrant planet. And you don't have to travel across the oceans, or swim beneath them, for up-close encounters with some of the most exotic species.

PHOTOGRAPH: DOUG STREML

# I

## WONDERS OF WILDLIFE

Springfield, Missouri

Nearly 10 years in the making, this vast shrine to wildlife feels like a magnum opus for Bass Pro Shops visionary and founder Johnny Morris. In all, 35,000 live animals and thousands of taxidermic pieces fill elaborate exhibits. One museum hall includes the Boone and Crockett Club's *National Collection of Heads and Horns*, first displayed at the Bronx Zoo in 1906. In the aquarium, pet stingrays in a pool, gaze at a sunken ship mast that's home to reef creatures or book a plunge into the shark tank.

With 1.5 million gallons of tank space, the Aquarium Adventure includes Shark Alley, Swamp at Night and Shipwreck Reef.



# 2

## FIELD STATION: DINOSAURS

Derby, Kansas

Dinosaurs that once roamed the Midwest are back—in life-size, animatronic, roar-out-loud form. Check out 40 of them at this impressive destination, which opened last year on 14 acres outside Wichita. The scene includes the Paleo Playground, dino mini golf, a four-story adventure course built inside a geodesic dome and live shows. Learn the scientific method as you figure out *T. Rex's* preferred snacks (hint: the list includes other dinos, mostly herbivores), and get crafty with hands-on “dinosorigami.”

# 3

## WILDLIFE SAFARI PARK

Ashland, Nebraska

You can leave the passport at home for this trek into Nebraska's version of the savanna. Drive yourself on a 4-mile route through Lee G. Simmons Conservation Park, halfway between Lincoln and Omaha. Early in the day is the best time to see bull elk roaming right outside your car or hear grey wolves howling from Wolf Canyon. A short hike overlooks that habitat, which is home to black bears, too. Book ahead for a visit to the cheetah breeding facility or a new tiger conservation tour opening this year.

# 4

## THE GENTLE BARN

Dittmer, Missouri

In 2017, an industrious band of bovines dubbed the St. Louis Six gained celeb status when they escaped from a slaughterhouse and made a dash through the city. Meet the sextet at this sanctuary for neglected, abused, old or ill farm animals. (It's the third Gentle Barn location and the first in the Midwest.) Entry fees and donations further the nonprofit's mission to bring children and adults from traumatic backgrounds into contact with creatures also in need of healing and TLC.



# 5

## TURPENTINE CREEK WILDLIFE REFUGE

Eureka Springs, Arkansas

Lions and tigers and... ligers? Oh yes. The largest known cat hybrid comes from breeding a male lion and female tiger, which happens only in captivity. You can see them (plus cougars, leopards and bears) on the walking tour with a staff biologist at this big-cat sanctuary in the Ozarks. The nonprofit gives a permanent home to mistreated exotic animals in need of rescue. Visit for an afternoon or book a night in one of the safari lodges or new canvas glamping tents.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Follow these zoos for daily doses of cute animals.

### @CINCINNATIZOO

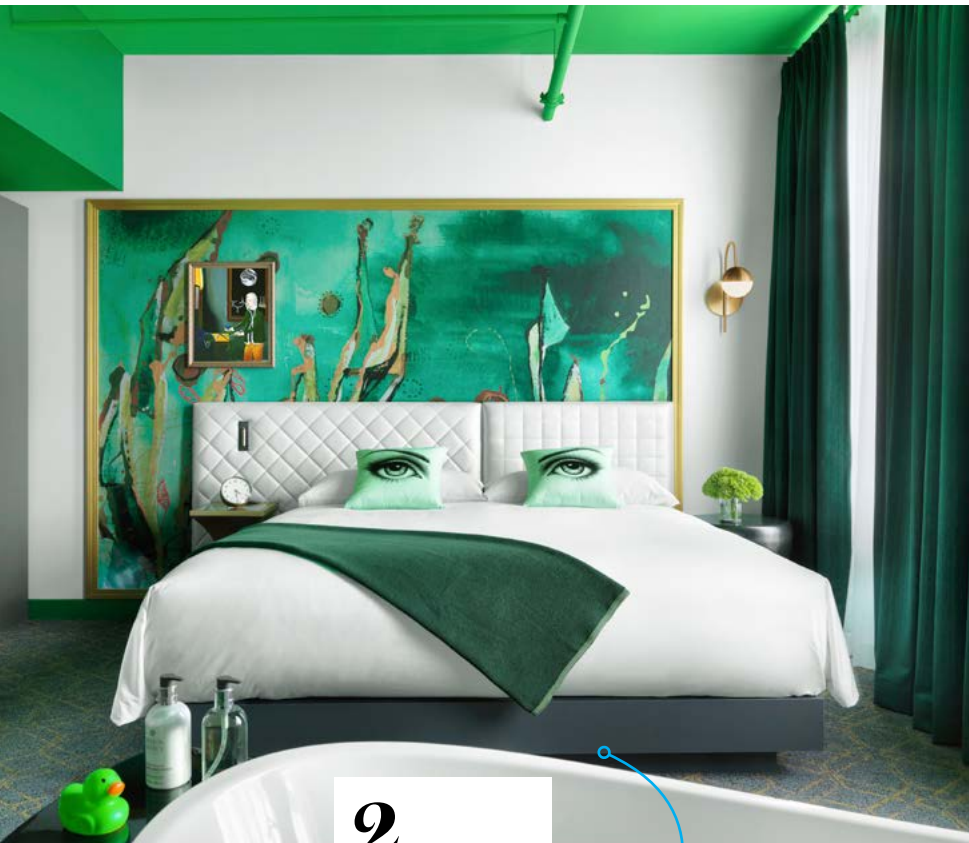
Find updates on Fiona the miracle hippo and other residents on the zoo's Instagram and Facebook.

### @MILWAUKEECOUNTYZOO

Daily videos and photos on Facebook introduce a revolving cast of faces, tails, flippers and whiskers.

# 6 things we're crushing on now

Feeling the summer love? Book a room to match the emotion. Launch to 78 mph in under two seconds. Or splash along Indiana's new \$20 million riverfront.



## 1 MAXX FORCE

A ride debuting this summer at Six Flags Great America in **Gurnee, Illinois**, will break three records: North America's fastest coaster launch (0 to 78 mph in less than two seconds) and world's fastest inversion and tallest double-inversion. Try keeping both hands in the air.

## 2 ANGAD ARTS HOTEL

Why stop at bed size? This new boutique hotel in **St. Louis'** Grand Center Arts District invites guests to book a stay by emotion, with color schemes to match—or stoke?—your mood. The 146 mod rooms come in small, medium and large layouts, plus extended-stay options with kitchenettes.

Pick your color at Angad Arts Hotel: rejuvenating green, happiness yellow, tranquil blue or passion red.



## 3 WORDPLAY FESTIVAL

For those about to read, Stephen King salutes you. With guitar in hand (and a full backing band, including author Amy Tan), the writer will headline **Minneapolis'** inaugural Wordplay festival. The Loft Literary Center is calling its event Minnesota's largest book celebration, touting 100 authors and as many events May 10–12.

## 4 PUP BAGS

No, they aren't for dogs. These sleek leather bags are made from salvaged Amtrak seat cushions. Rather than cram the landfill, the train line tapped People for Urban Progress, an **Indianapolis** nonprofit, while upgrading their Acela Express train cars. PUP's endgame: luxury totes, backpacks and toiletry kits. For a previous product line, PUP reclaimed material from Indy's RCA Dome, former home to the Colts.



## 5 WILD SOUTH DAKOTA

Need a reason for a classic summer road trip to **South Dakota**? Explorers at Jewel Cave National Monument recently mapped the 200th mile in the world's third-longest cave. Public tours resume in May after phase one of a \$4.8 million infrastructure upgrade. Nearby, South Dakota's first state park, Custer State Park, turned 100 in March. State parks will celebrate all summer with concerts and more.

## 6 CITY OF THREE RIVERS

**Fort Wayne, Indiana**, has spent \$20 million along its waterfront where three rivers meet. Check out the new Promenade Park at a celebration June 21–23, with a flotilla, concerts on a barge and other fun.



## BEHIND THE SEAMS

Hover your phone's camera to see seats turn into fashion.



THE  
*Cabin*  
ISSUE

---

A pine-scented, s'more-stickied, plaid-clad guide  
to the history, culture and style of a Midwest icon.



FERRYVILLE, WISCONSIN



OUTING, MINNESOTA



TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN



GOOD HART, MICHIGAN



WISCONSIN RAPIDS, WISCONSIN



SPRING GROVE, MINNESOTA

**YOU DON'T NEED TO READ THE LABEL TO KNOW WHAT A FANCY CABIN-SCENTED CANDLE SMELLS LIKE.**

Just step into your memories: Top notes of woodsmoke and pine. Secondary layers of marshmallow, bacon and summer rain. It's the aroma baked into childhood readings of *Little House in the Big Woods*, into summer camp, into lakeside vacations and even into daydreaming on Instagram, where #cabinlove has 150,000 posts.

But here's what you might not know. Early Americans hated cabins. Yes, really. Swedish colonists built the first ones in the Delaware Valley in 1638. The model—a one- or two-room structure made of felled trees—was adopted by Germans, Scotch-Irish and other new arrivals. But because cabins were linked to poverty and immigration, they were widely derided. In 1775, for example, one writer described cabins as “gloomy to the sight” and “offensive to the smell.” (Clearly he'd never tried the candle.) Even Benjamin Franklin, the “Prophet of Tolerance,” described cabin dwellers as “poor, and dirty, and ragged and ignorant.” Back then, no one escaped to the cabin. You escaped *from* it—or at least covered it in clapboard.

Then something happened: the Midwest. As Americans moved westward in the 1800s, cabins became the bedrock architecture of entirely new communities. From Ohio to the Dakotas, Michigan to Missouri, smatterings of cabins grew into thriving cities. Some of those early cornerstones survive today; you can still see the 1804 Beers Cabin in Columbus, Ohio, or dine in the 1825 Log Inn restaurant outside Evansville, Indiana.

More than just homes, cabins became community hubs. They were polling places, post offices, general stores and even churches. As stories of Midwest success trickled back east, cabins became...cool. No longer a source of shame, they were sparks for American progress, vehicles for national growth.



#MYMIDWESTCABIN

Hover your phone's camera for the stories of these cabins, all shared by readers on Instagram.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (FERRYVILLE) KELSIE KUNKLE; (TRAVERSE CITY) MARISA WEGE; (WISCONSIN RAPIDS) ROCHELLE BEGEL; (HOPKIN) CANTLIN ABRAMS; (GOOD HART) KAREN PARNELL; (SPRING GROVE) TRACIE SOLUM; (HENNEL) GENIE CRAIG CAUGH; (CALLAWAY) MIKE FISHER; (RAPID RIVER) TAMMY GASPORE

Soon everyone wanted a piece of the cabin. Thomas Cole cast one in heavenly light in his widely reproduced 1826 painting *Daniel Boone Sitting at the Door of His Cabin on the Great Osage Lake, Kentucky*. Ohioan William Henry Harrison aided his run to the White House in 1840 by claiming to live in a log cabin. (Few people knew he actually lived in a mansion, and those who did found the myth too attractive to tarnish.) Magazines and newspapers spread tales of cabin heroics. Poems sang the structure's praises. People mailed cabin-theme postcards. The cabin even time traveled: In John Palfrey's 1860 colonial history, he claimed that cabins were built the first winter in Jamestown—funny, since we know cabins actually arrived with Swedes about 30 years later. Once dismissed as the home of the downtrodden, the cabin had been reborn as the imagined cradle of our nation. Ben Franklin and co.'s powdered wigs would be blown.

Even as industrialism forever altered life and landscape in the late 1800s, the cabin endured—not as the hub of everyday life, but as a cocoon to escape it. Tucked along lakes and clustered near national parks, vacation cabins flourished in the early 20th century. People wanted to get away from urban grit and smoke and reconnect with nature and a simpler time. In 1922, *The Indianapolis Star* excitedly wrote up one of these new resorts: “A whole row of real log cabins right in the center of Indiana—yes, cross my heart.... Most folks nowadays are willing to pay a little extra to live in the style of their forefathers.”

It's not too hard to draw a line from that breathless account to the present. How many of us have splurged on a cabin getaway so we can ditch work and the 24-hour news cycle to cook dinner over an open fire and fall asleep with the windows open? (Or, at least, fantasized about it while cuddled under a Pendleton camp blanket watching *Log Cabin Living* on HGTV?)

In his 2015 memoir, *Cabin Lessons*, Minnesotan Spike Carlsen writes about the trials and triumphs of building a cabin on a cliff above Lake Superior. On paper, he admits, it makes no sense. More bills to pay. More pipes to fix. And he's only there a few weeks of the year. “But it's not just a thirty-day affair,” he writes. “Knowing it's there helps us get through the other three hundred and thirty-five days. Knowing it's waiting for us with open arms makes a stressful workday a little calmer.”

“  
The cabin endured—not as the hub of everyday life, but as a cocoon to escape it.”

If this special issue confirms one thing, it's that there's always a cabin waiting out there for you, too, easing your day just a little. It might be rustic or mod, waterside or wooded. It might be one you rent, or one you own. It might be one you book this summer, or one you dream of visiting someday. Or it might even just be your own living room, where buffalo plaid pillows and a just-right candle hold the power to carry you away—and bring you right home.

Andrew Belonsky is the author of *The Log Cabin: An Illustrated History* (Countryman Press, \$28). Follow him on Instagram @log\_cabin\_book for fascinating and funny archival images of cabins.



BENZIE COUNTY, MICHIGAN



ALLAMAKEE COUNTY, IOWA



RAPID RIVER, MICHIGAN

*the*  
**midwest  
cabin**

**SAMPLER**



A CENTURY FARM.  
ANCIENT FORESTS.  
A PRIVATE GLACIAL LAKE.  
EVEN THE TOPS OF TREES.  
CABIN RENTALS HIDE  
EVERYWHERE IN THE MIDWEST.  
WE FOUND SOME OF THE BEST,  
IN EVERY STATE AND FOR  
EVERY SHADE OF SUMMER.

PRODUCER **TIMOTHY MEINCH**



PHOTOGRAPHY: ACKERMAN + GRUBER

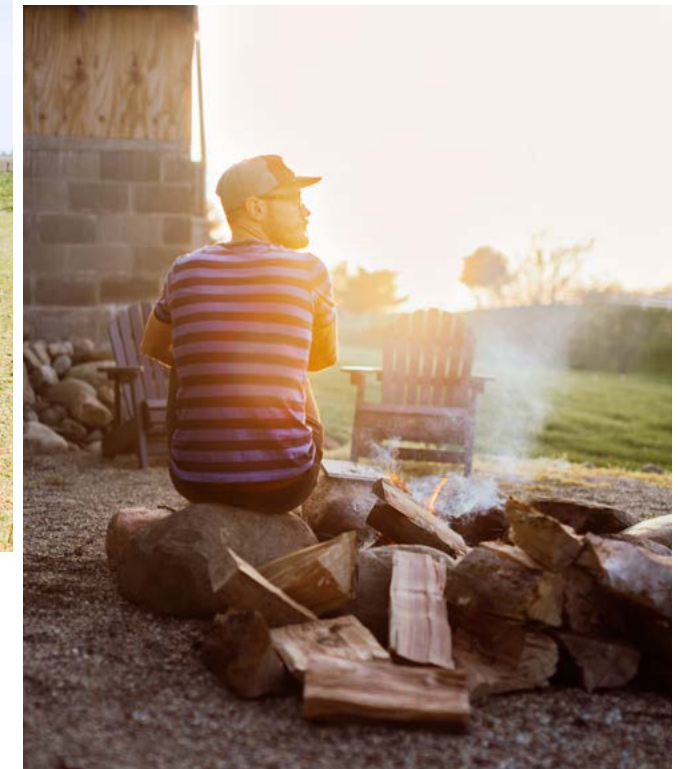
**STONE AND TIMBER  
CABINS AT IOWA'S  
PINE LAKE STATE  
PARK PUT CAMPERS  
NEAR A BEACH  
AND BIKE PATH.**

# Where Time Stands Still

AN HOUR NORTH OF INDIANAPOLIS, A FARMING COUPLE AND 60 ALPACAS INVITE GUESTS TO SAMPLE THEIR CORNER OF PARADISE IN AN 1850S CABIN.



<p><b>QUICK LOOK</b></p> <p>FLORA INDIANA</p>	<p>Bring cookware, drinks and food to cook over a grill or firepit. A sink and mini fridge on the deck makes it glorified camping, 10 miles from groceries and pizza in Flora.</p>
	<p><b>KNOW BEFORE YOU GO</b></p> <p>Four beds sleep six in one big room. Heritage Farm also allows camping and rents a modern guesthouse on the land. Find Heritage Farm and other Midwest farm stays at <a href="http://farmstayus.com">farmstayus.com</a>.</p>
<p>RUSTIC <input type="checkbox"/> LUXE <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>\$\$\$\$</p>



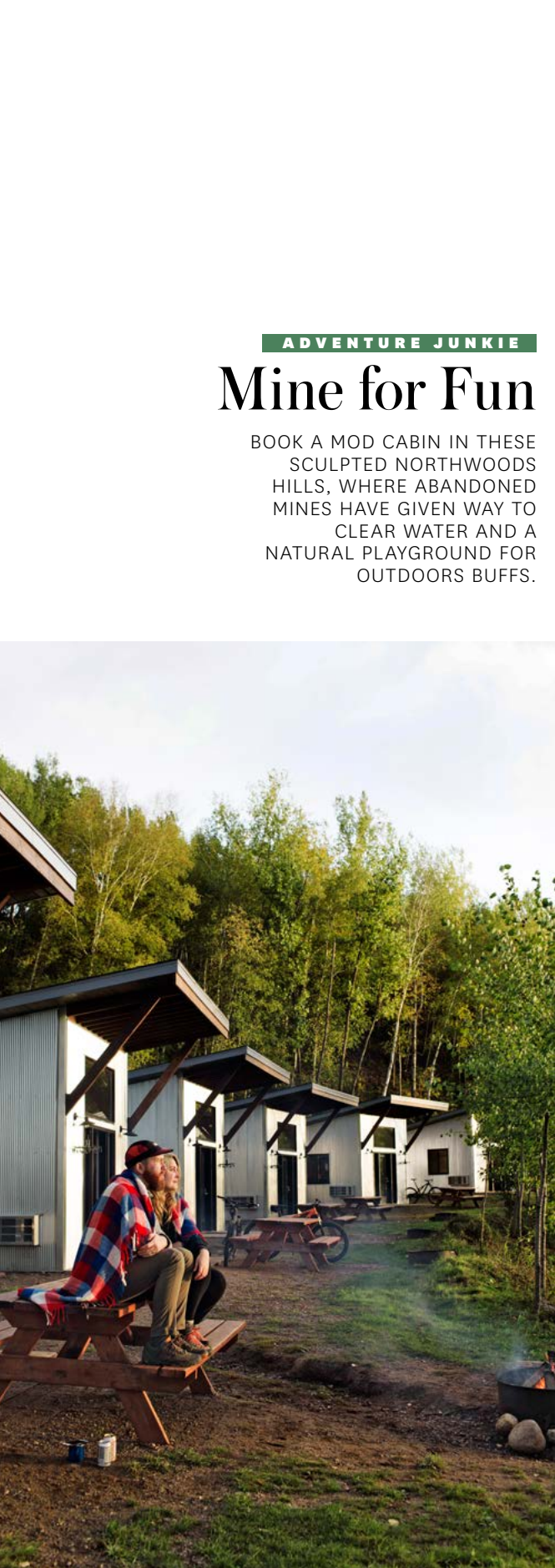
**T**HE MOMENT I OPEN MY CAR DOOR, farm smells and noisy songbirds whisk me far away from the radio static. In lieu of a bellhop, a stray alpaca struts across the gravel driveway. Chickens form a welcome party at my feet, scurry out of reach, then linger close by. Even the landscaping lets out a raspy bark before the bushes part against the roly-poly waddle of...a polar bear? No, a Great Pyrenees, Tim Sheets says, emerging from the farmhouse. He introduces me to Jack and his shy counterpart, Frost, who stays hidden in the shrubs. “Let me show you the cabin,” Tim says. On the porch, another farm friend awaits: Charley the black cat. Home movers relocated this cabin from 3 miles away in 1988. Tim and his wife, Beth, then set about restoring the pre-Civil War relic. They added a shower two years ago and listed it as a vacation rental (from \$150/night) on Airbnb and Hipcamp. Under a maple tree near their farmhouse, it’s become a rustic harbor for anyone seeking a break from modernity.

You can smell the stories in the antebellum wood beams, oil lamps and a musket. A tattered flag hangs on the wall above an ancient Bible that might disintegrate if touched. The original narrow staircase leads to a second level with four beds. A porch swing hangs on the added balcony facing Heritage Farm’s storybook red barn, where the alpacas feed each morning. “Feel free to wander the grounds,” Tim says after I settle in and accept an invite to help with chores the next morning. Before bed, I wander. In the pole barn, I find a couple of alpacas plopped in front of industrial fans and munching on hay. Tim introduces me to Kenji, Vinnie and Jeremiah, who is a seven-time champion at regional and national fair shows. The Farm Store attached to the barn sells alpaca wool socks, sweaters and yarn (many items are Beth’s handiwork) plus honey from the farm’s beehives. A couple of short paths behind the cabin lead past a long zipline to a footbridge and creek. Pooled above a simple stone

dam, the water is surprisingly clear and irresistibly cool. I slip out of my shoes and down the bank. Shadows scurry away from my splash. Then I wait. Crayfish slowly peek out from the rocks, and I pluck a pair out of the current, starting a game of catch-and-release that takes me back to my childhood growing up beside a creek in northeast Ohio. After the sun sets, I open a bottle of wine under string lights on the cabin’s large back deck. Somehow, it’s already 10 p.m., despite the glimmer of July sunlight clinging to the western horizon. On select weekends, Tim fires up the stone oven beside the cabin for pizza parties that entertain overnight guests and a couple dozen locals. When I step onto the balcony before sliding into bed, I can faintly hear the trickling creek. The night is still, except for a haze of fireflies that laces through the tree line. It flickers into the distant field like fairy dust below a sky full of stars.

**Timothy Meinch**

PHOTOGRAPHS: BARB TULLIT GROVES



ADVENTURE JUNKIE

## Mine for Fun

BOOK A MOD CABIN IN THESE SCULPTED NORTHWOODS HILLS, WHERE ABANDONED MINES HAVE GIVEN WAY TO CLEAR WATER AND A NATURAL PLAYGROUND FOR OUTDOORS BUFFS.



QUICK LOOK

CROSBY & IRONTON  
MINNESOTA

RUSTIC LUXE

\$\$\$\$

There are plenty of good eats and drinks 5 blocks away in town, so save cooler space for drinks, snacks and maybe a pack of dogs for a fireside dinner.

**KNOW BEFORE YOU GO** Starting at \$79, True North's techy cabins are modern but minimalist. BYO bedding and towels for the four bunked beds (twin- and full-size) and shared bathrooms with showers.

**T**HIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, the gnash of engines and excavators ground across this land. Today, I hear a lone loon call across the water outside my cabin on Armour No. 2 Mine Lake. True North Basecamp's six rental cabins flank the ridge above the water, with corrugated steel and roofs that resemble mine shafts. Otherwise, nature has reclaimed and reforested what is now the Cuyuna Country State Recreational Area, located 20 minutes northeast of Brainerd, Minnesota.

On a sticky summer day, I glide across nearby Portsmouth Mine Pit Lake on a paddleboard. Near the shore, sunfish swirl among submerged birch trees that reach upward like ghostly northern coral. The full protected area covers 25 miles of shoreline between six natural lakes and 15 retired mine pits. Spring water filled the massive dig sites to create blue and green lakes (some up to 450 feet deep) after iron ore mining shut down in the mid-1980s.

Divers, paddlers, anglers and other outdoors-lovers now flock to the water. Mountain bikers cross the country for

premiere trails that weave through hardwoods carpeting 200-foot hills that were once barren piles of rock and soil. Cuyuna's 30-some miles of singletrack loops earned a coveted silver-level Ride Center designation from the International Mountain Bicycling Association. Volunteers groom them even in winter for fat-tire biking in the snow. And a plan is in place to expand the trail network to 60-plus miles.

True North is primed for the growth, adding five permanent canvas cabin tents with cots, bedside power stations and Internet this season. Its original minimalist cabins from 2015 still feel like a splash of luxury after my day on the water. Inside mine, I find crisp air conditioning, plus charging stations and Internet. A mural adds an urban touch. And a shared shower and bathroom building nearby lets me wash off the iron-red dirt speckling my legs and clothing.

The two rejuvenated mining towns of Crosby and Ironton beckon for dinner. Restaurants, bars and gear shops are within a short walk or bike ride via the paved Cuyuna Lakes State Trail or city streets. Just half a mile from my cabin, Red Raven bike

and coffee shop in Crosby rents bikes and serves daily specials, such as deconstructed egg roll rice bowls and a grilled Cuban sandwich. A few blocks away, Cuyuna Brewing Company pours cold beer across the intersection from Iron Range Eatery, where you can get pizzas and lobster salad lettuce wraps.

Back at Truth North, sunset pinkens the silver siding of the cabins, and fires crackle to life. Campers trickle back outside to share the day's adventures. "There are so many fish everywhere," says my neighbor Kealy Olson, who spent the day snorkeling and convinces me to swap my paddle for a mask and fins on the next visit. Her scuba-certified husband, Zane, ventured into deeper (and much colder) water, best explored in a wet suit.

Our sore bodies bask in the modern comforts that help us recharge on the periphery of wilderness. Before turning in for the night, the loon calls out from across the now-darkened lake. It feels like a thank-you for letting nature reestablish itself where industry once ruled.

**Lisa McClintick**

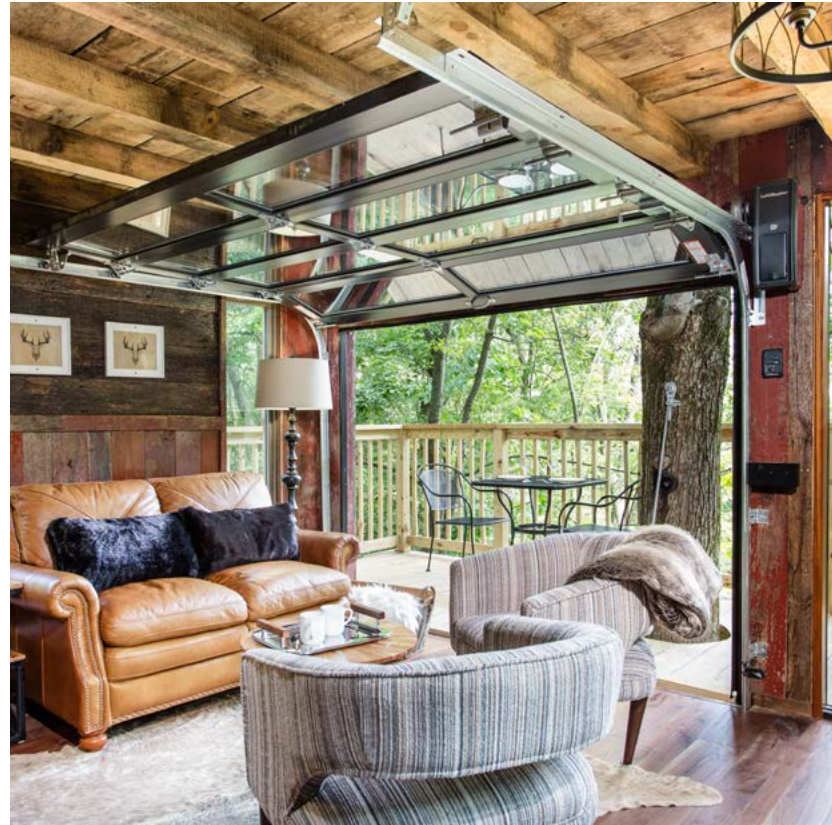
PHOTOGRAPHS: ELIESA JOHNSON



IN THE TREETOP

# Rock-a-Bye Cabin

THESE ELEVATED HOMES TUCK YOU INTO THE TREE CANOPY, JUST LIKE YOUR CHILDHOOD CLUBHOUSE—EXCEPT FOR THE KITCHENS, STAINED GLASS AND DESIGNER CRED.



**S**HORTLY AFTER SUNRISE, a dramatic iron chandelier sways from side to side above my head. I feel subtle movement from my comfy king-size bed, which stirs me out of my dreams and into reality. My home for the past night, El Castillo, is still settling into its foundation: a few towering pine trees, which I think I share with an owl.

Last winter, El Castillo (or “the castle”) became the seventh of its kind—though each themed tree house is unique—at The Mohicans, a cabin resort in northern Ohio. And this year, three more dwellings appeared in neighboring trees, including a 1978 Airstream secured 20 feet above the forest floor. (The tree houses start at \$240/night.)

Laura and Kevin Mooney ditched the corporate grind in 2005 to build cabins on a remote plot of land they own near Mohican State Park and a state forest. During the process, they met Pete Nelson, host of Animal Planet’s *Treehouse Masters*. Pete inspired the Mooneys to raise the stakes at The Mohicans, and they hired him to design their first two aerial concepts. Recruiting the help of local Amish carpenters, they now lay claim to one of the largest tree house villages in the country. It’s spread out above four traditional cabins and an events barn on their 75-acre property.

PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY OF THE MOHICANS. (LITTLE RED TREEHOUSE) COURTESY OF TOURISM/OHIO. (CANOE BAY) COURTESY OF CANOE BAY

“It’s all sustainable,” Kevin says. “I use trees on the property and mill them down. All the siding is 100-year-old barnwood.” The designs incorporate passive solar energy and recycled materials for furniture, windows and decks. They’re open year-round and have become some of the state’s most photogenic backdrops for weddings.

Each of Laura and Kevin’s tree houses wears the cabin aesthetic in its own way. White Oak Treehouse has a three-sided wraparound porch overlooking the Mohican Valley. Tin Shed Treehouse’s garage-door wall opens fully into the forest canopy. The Little Red Treehouse that Pete designed has been featured on Animal Planet. On sunny mornings, a 5-foot stained-glass window on its east wall lights up the inside with a spectrum of colors.

To reach my round two-story castle, I scale two sets of stairs and bounce across a suspension bridge. Inside, black walnut floors and cherry ceilings grace the efficient space. Huge two-story windows frame the forest like landscape paintings. High-end touches include a granite countertop in the compact kitchen and a bathroom featuring a stone shower. A narrow spiral staircase of black walnut with a tree-branch banister leads to the bedroom under an octagonal wooden roof. There’s no Internet and spotty cell service in my nest—which means maybe no one will find me if I decide to stay forever.

**Cynthia Earhart**

QUIET TIME

## Lovers’ Lake

Sometimes a cabin stay means not roughing it at all, and leaving the kids behind. Enter Canoe Bay. The western Wisconsin resort offers Scandinavian-style cottages on a glacial lake, plus Escape Village, with newer tiny homes in the woods. Here’s a taste of an oh-so-hectic day there.

**8AM** Coffee and breakfast arrive at your door in a wooden box. Sip and eat on the porch while deer graze in the sea of ferns leading to the lake.

**9AM** Paddle a canoe to a cove of lily pads dotted with blooms. Turtles and an otter swim below the surface.

**11AM** A wooded hike leads to a smaller hidden lake that you get all to yourself, except for woodpeckers and songbirds.

**2PM** After lunch (also delivered to your cabin), an empty floating dock lures you into the water for a swim in midday sun.

**4PM** Grab a book and settle into the cozy loft of the mod A-frame library overlooking the water. Snag a DVD to bring back to your cabin.

**6:30PM** Prix fixe dinner is served in the lakeside lodge: ramp and asparagus tartine with edible flowers, tender pork medallions, and a fresh berry dessert.

**9PM** Unwind with a glass of wine and a soak in your jacuzzi tub by the fireplace.

Ranging from rooms with private porches to cottages, full-access resort rates start at \$295/night, meals not included.



QUICK LOOK

GLENMONT OHIO

Pack food and drinks for the kitchen (cookware included). Seven miles away, Loudonville is the closest town with some groceries and restaurants, like the Mohican Tavern.

RUSTIC LUXE

\$\$\$

**KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**  
Booking is limited to 60 days or less in advance. Four-wheel drive is ideal for the private tree house roads. Less than 10 miles away: zipline tours, canoeing and Mohican State Park trails.

INTO THE WOODS

# Cabin Meccas

VENTURE TO ONE OF THESE VACATION HAVENS, AND YOU DON'T NEED OUR HELP FINDING A CABIN. THEY SPROUT BY THE HUNDREDS, LIKE MUSHROOMS IN SPRINGTIME, FROM THE WATERFRONTS AND FORESTS.



BROWN COUNTY, INDIANA

## Brown County Indiana

**GOING GREEN** The scenery rapidly transforms 18 miles east of the university town of Bloomington. Trees and bluffs are king of these hills, where Brown County State Park meets Yellowwood State Forest and a swath of Hoosier National Forest. Explore via hiking boots, horseback at Schooner Valley Stables, mountain bikes, watercraft or zipline cables.

**FIND YOUR STAY** You'll find plenty of cabin listings at [browncounty.com/stay](http://browncounty.com/stay). Among the choices: Rent two-story cabins at Abe Martin Lodge in the state park, or head to the fields and kick back in a cabin with a hot tub at Bittersweet Farm (pictured).

## Hayward Wisconsin

**LAND OF LUMBER** Thousands flock to this northern Wisconsin town near the Spider Chain of Lakes each summer for heated matches of logrolling, sawing and chopping at the Lumberjack World Championships. But logs are a year-round fixture, with enough cabins to host a Bunyan family reunion. The town is loaded with gear shops, outfitters and a half-block-long musky, while the area's many lakes offer fishing, boating and cool summer swims.

**FIND YOUR STAY** Northland Lodge puts you on Lost Land Lake. Access pontoon rentals, a tennis court and pools at Treeland Resorts. Or go private cabin hunting online.



HOCKING HILLS, OHIO

## Hocking Hills Ohio

**UNDER THE CANOPY** In southeast Ohio, forests sprawl across the foothills of Appalachia. Below the trees, 70-plus miles of trails weave through Hocking Hills State Park and the surrounding area. Pick a route for waterfalls, caves, Hocking Hills Canopy Tours or a micro-moonshine distillery.

**FIND YOUR STAY** Some 500 cabins and cottages are scattered about the Hocking Hills area. Scope out a tiny off-the-grid cabin, The Box Hop shipping container cabin (new this year), or the upscale Inn and Spa at Cedar Falls.



PINE LAKE STATE PARK, IOWA

FAMILY BUDGET

## A Night in the Park

The Midwest's robust state park system means you're never far from an affordable weekend away. Keep it basic in a camper cabin: roof, bunk, maybe power. Or go ultramodern with resort-level comfort (bravo, Nebraska). Here's where state park officials sent us when asked for their cabin wisdom.

### ROCK CUT STATE PARK ILLINOIS

A rustic cabin (from \$50) sleeps up to six near fields of summer wildflowers.

### POKAGON STATE PARK INDIANA

Historic cabins (from \$99) renovated in 2018 pack a bathroom, mini fridge and TV into 160 square feet.

### PINE LAKE STATE PARK IOWA

Near a beach and bike path, four cabins (from \$65) each have a stove, fridge and bathroom. Closing for updates this July.

### CHENEY STATE PARK KANSAS

Just a stroll from the marina, three new cabins opened this year on Cheney Lake.

### TAWAS POINT STATE PARK MICHIGAN

The digs here (from \$52) sit near Lake Huron. But Michigan is an overachiever, with 100-plus cabins and lodging options scattered across more than 50 parks.

### WHITewater STATE PARK MINNESOTA

Four new camper cabins (from \$100) put you within half a mile of Whitewater River.

### WASHINGTON STATE PARK MISSOURI

Enjoy the pool, boat rentals and newly refurbished cabins (from \$105).

### EUGENE T. MAHONEY STATE PARK NEBRASKA

Lodge rooms and cabins range from \$90 to \$375, some offering big decks and wood stoves near a ropes course.

### ICELANDIC STATE PARK NORTH DAKOTA

Simple camping cabins (from \$60) are a short walk from Lake Renwick and a nature preserve.

### KISER LAKE STATE PARK OHIO

Set up camp at basic cabins (from \$35) before sailing and paddling.

### SANDY SHORE RECREATION AREA SOUTH DAKOTA

Two lakefront cabins (from \$45) opened last year on Lake Kampeska.

### HARRINGTON BEACH STATE PARK WISCONSIN

An ADA cabin (from \$30) accesses an observatory near Lake Michigan. Seven other Wisconsin parks rent cabins to campers with disabilities.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (BROWN COUNTY) JOHN NOLTE/NER; (HOCKING HILLS) RYAN DONNELL; (PINE LAKE) ACKERMAN + GRUBER

# CAMP LIKE A CHEF

PACK YOUR SLEEPING BAG (AND THE DULL KNIFE YOU WANT TO LEARN HOW TO SHARPEN) FOR A WEEKEND OF WOODLAND FORAGING, COOKING LESSONS, A COCKTAIL LAGOON AND GLOBAL FEASTING UNDER THE STARS. THIS IS CHEF CAMP: HOT DOGS AND HOBO PIES NEED NOT APPLY.

WRITER HANNAH AGRAN PHOTOGRAPHER NATE LUKE



Sunshine slips through the Tall Pines classroom, where Jim Bovino of Minneapolis' Topos Ferments leads a session on natural pickling. (Opposite) Dinner is just like what you remember from the mess hall—except, OK, not at all.



Breakfast and lunch are served buffet-style, but dinner is a sit-down affair.

**C**ERTIFIED FORAGER **KATHY YERICH** drops a knob of butter onto a griddle, then slides in a pile of chicken of the woods, a Cheetos-color mushroom that grows on trees in fat, stacked ruffles. She lets the chopped pieces sizzle and brown, then passes around samples. Firm and full-flavored, the sautéed mushroom is a textural dead ringer for chicken breast. Even fellow chef-instructor Janene Holig, who wandered over to this session on a break with her partner and dog, marvels.

This moment—the connection to nature, the casual mingling of experts with amateurs, the *aha* taste, even the ponchos required by a morning rain—is exactly what friends David Friedman and James Norton had in mind when they dreamed up Chef

Camp. David is an attorney; James is an established Twin Cities author and magazine food editor. They dig lavish dinner parties and roughing it in the Boundary Waters, and they wanted to create a sort of fantasy camp mash-up of the two. In 2016, their concept found a home at Camp Miller, a 121-year-old YMCA camp between Minneapolis and Duluth; they've sold out each Labor Day weekend since.

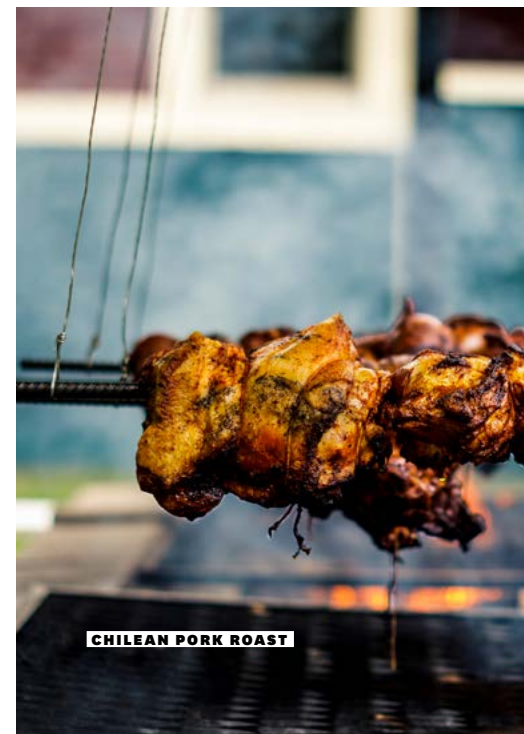
The heart of Chef Camp is outdoor classes on topics like how to make sausage, toast spices, mix cocktails or sharpen knives. David says, "We want to make the lessons easy enough that anybody feels they can come into them, but inspiring enough that anyone feels they can get something out of them." Instructors are big names from the Twin Cities food scene who stay all weekend and eat with campers.

PHOTOGRAPH: (BISCUITS) BLAINE MONTS; FOOD STYLING: (BISCUITS) GREG LUNA



**INDIAN-SPICED GRILLED CORN WITH BUTTER, LIME AND CILANTRO**

For recipes, see page 90.



**CHILEAN PORK ROAST**



**BUTTERMILK BISCUITS AND MUSHROOM GRAVY**

**A LESSON IN**

*mushrooms*



As a forager for Minneapolis chefs, **KATHY YERICH** knows her way around the forest floor. Watch for these edibles on your next wooded walk, or reach out to a local affiliated club of the North American Mycological Association to connect with a pro.



**HEN OF THE WOODS**

A fall mushroom that loves hardwoods, especially oak, and grows after cool nights. If you find one, go back next year—it often reblooms.



**CHANTERELLES**

Beautiful, delicate and delicious, but tougher to find. Look near oak trees in summer. Steer clear of toxic look-alikes, such as Jack O'Lanterns.



**GIANT PUFFBALLS**

Unmistakeable! Like a large white soccer ball. Eat when still white inside, similar to a loaf of bread or marshmallow.

A field guide is critical to safe foraging. Co-authored with Teresa Marrone, *Kathy's Mushrooms of the Upper Midwest* (Adventure Publications, \$15) is a great one.



On Saturday night, campers choose between paddling (to—*shhh*—a secret floating cocktail canoe) on Sturgeon Lake and a guided sensory hike through the dark woods, no flashlights allowed.

A LESSON IN



Ever wonder how to make a trendy smoked cocktail at home? Chef Camp's chief mixologist, **NICK KOSEVICH** of Milwaukee's Bittercube, explains one easy way.



**COCKTAIL CEDARS**

These chemical-free Spanish cedar sticks light quickly and produce a wisp of aromatic smoke that you can use to "season" the inside of a glass.



**SMOKED OLD-FASHIONED**

Light a cedar, let it extinguish in an upside-down rocks glass, then set the glass facedown to trap smoke. Mix your drink (you know the drill: simple syrup, bitters, bourbon, ice). Pour over ice in the smoked glass; garnish with orange peel.

Each cocktail cedar can be used to make several drinks. \$18 for 25. bittercube.com



Campers take an afternoon beer break around a gold mine of chanterelles smoking over the embers.

And about those meals: Chef Nettie Colón helms the kitchen. Her cooking is hearty, generous and seasoned with adventure—summer cookout meets *Parts Unknown*. Big, unfussy hunks of pork shoulder, for example, are crusted in merkén, a smoky spice blend native to the Mapuche people of Chile. The hint of licorice in a peach cobbler comes from Xtabentún, an anise spirit made with fermented honey on Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. Nettie knows most people will swap easier-to-find ingredients when they make her recipes at home, but out here, it's all about inspiration.

The yin to Chef Camp's epicurean yang is its wholesome summer-camp spirit, complete with archery, color wars and late-night s'mores. Everyone sleeps in tents or bunks in cabins, and there's a warm sense of community

among strangers, which David credits to the setting: "Sitting around a campfire is an equalizer."

Of course, good food and curiosity are equalizers, too. On Saturday afternoon, everyone gathers to watch Nettie unbury a pit-roasted Peruvian pachamanca feast. The aroma is intense: steamy banana leaves, smoke, chicken, lamb. Crouching in the hole, she plucks a charred sweet potato from the ashy coals and squashes it triumphantly in her hand. The soft orange flesh bursts from its blackened skin, and cheers erupt. Dinnertime.

*This year's camp is August 30–September 1. Fees run about \$525 if you pitch a tent; a cabin spot costs a little more.* [chefcampmn.com](http://chefcampmn.com)



**DIG IN**

Hover your phone's camera to meet the founders, hear from campers and see the chefs cook.



The Chef Camp secret to rocking campfire cooking? Condiments. Whip together one or two of these flavorful make-ahead sauces to jazz up grilled meats or vegetables.

**A LESSON IN**



Chef Camp's skills man **NICK ZDON** teaches a fast, fuss-free method for keeping cast iron at its shiny, nonstick best.



**SEASONING**

Seasoning is important for both new pans and those looking a little dull. Get a clean pan superhot on the stovetop. Use a rag or paper towel to rub a very thin layer of flaxseed oil all over pan. Return pan to heat and let it smoke off, about five minutes. Repeat three or four times.



**CLEANING**

After cooking, deglaze the hot, dirty pan with water, then wipe under running water. If needed, use a little soap (really, it's fine!) and a plastic scrubber. Dry over heat on the stove.



**MAINTENANCE**

The best way to keep a pan seasoned is to cook with it (especially fatty foods). Whenever it looks a little dull, do a quick booster coat of seasoning while you're drying it on the stove after cooking.

*Everyone knows Lodge Cast Iron, but it's extremely heavy. Vintage pans are lighter and more nonstick. For premium new pans, Nick likes Field Company, whose skillets are made in the Midwest.*

PHOTOGRAPHS: (SAUCES, GUMBO) BLAINE MOATS; FOOD STYLING: (SAUCES, GUMBO) GREG LUNA



**TOP** Chef Sean Sherman, who will soon open The Sioux Chef restaurant in Minneapolis, gathers greens for wild rice paella as part of a lesson in indigenous cooking. The campfire burns all day next to Sturgeon Lake. **CENTER** Mornings start with optional yoga and dockside pour-over coffee and pastries—a mere appetizer before the full hot breakfast that will follow. **BOTTOM** Chef Nettie Colón is the official camp cook. At Friday's opening dinner, a map illustrates the camp's Minnesota-sourced ingredients.



**VEGAN GUMBO**



**GRILLED PEACH COBBLER**



For recipes, see page 90.



FRESH IDEAS IN  
**getaway gear**

**PACK YOUR BAGS WITH SUPPLIES THAT'LL WORK AS HARD AS YOU PLAN TO PLAY.**

WRITER **MARY BEAUMONT**  
 PHOTOGRAPHER **MARTY BALDWIN**

**1 POLYURETHANE CORDS** Stretching twice their length and impossible to break, the metal-free bungees won't scratch car or canoe. From \$19 for six. [thebetterbungee.com](http://thebetterbungee.com)

**2 WOMEN'S MOC BOOT** A classic from Minnesota's Red Wing Shoes, this 8-inch model repels stains and keeps feet dry

as you tramp trails. \$350. [redwingheritage.com](http://redwingheritage.com)

**3 ALAMO DOG TREAT POUCH** A magnet snap provides quick access to treats to reward your pup; a heavy-duty clip secures it to your waist or pack. \$32. [wildebeest.co](http://wildebeest.co)

**4 SANDLITE SAND-FREE MAT** Fabric layers allow

sand, dirt and dust to filter down through the lightweight mat, paving the way for debris-free picnics and sunbathing. Three sizes are available in multiple patterns and colors. From \$50. [cgear-sandfree.com](http://cgear-sandfree.com)

**5 CARVE** You've got time on your hands in a forest full of raw material...see

where we're going? Small whittling projects (like a spoon or pair of dice) take a few hours and only a tool or two to finish. Clarkson Potter, \$16.

**6 THE CAMPOUT COOKBOOK** These recipes will majorly elevate your outdoor cooking menu—think spiced pork carnitas and caramel-raspberry

s'mores—plus the book offers extras like packing lists and tips for selecting the perfect roasting stick. Artisan, \$20.

**7 STEEL COMBS** Unbreakable tools feature a finish that ensures gentleness, even on backwoods bedhead. Pair with a handcrafted leather sheath. From \$25 for

sheaths, \$27 for combs. [chicagocomb.com](http://chicagocomb.com)

**8 TRAVEL PACK 2** The main compartment opens flat to make packing a breeze, and a smartly styled gear panel stores small items. \$230. [aersf.com](http://aersf.com)

**9 HARD LINEN JOURNAL** Select size, color and

paper type in lie-flat journals from a Detroit company. From \$16. [shinola.com](http://shinola.com)

**10 GRIP TIGHT ONE GP STAND** Working with any smartphone, its flexible legs wrap around objects, extend for selfies or provide a stable tripod base on surfaces. \$35. [joby.com](http://joby.com)

# EVENTS



## ILLINOIS

### HerrinFesta Italiana

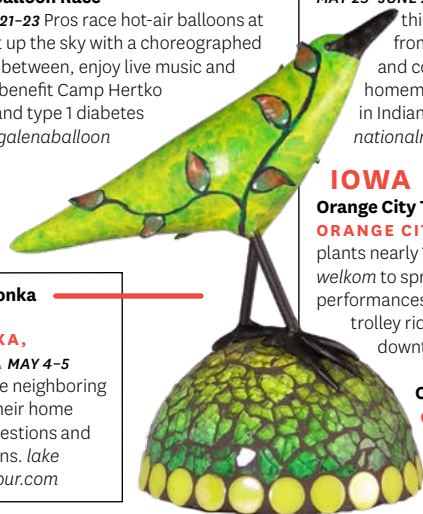
**HERRIN MAY 23-27** The big cooking contest will settle the score on who makes the best pasta sauce. But you can feast on pizza and piles of pasta from vendors all five days in and around the Herrin Civic Center. Between bites, catch bocce tournaments and big-name concerts. (Past headliners have included The Beach Boys and Lee Brice.) [herrinfesta.com](http://herrinfesta.com)

### Great Galena Balloon Race

**GALENA JUNE 21-23** Pros race hot-air balloons at dawn, then light up the sky with a choreographed glow at dusk. In between, enjoy live music and food. Proceeds benefit Camp Hertko Hollow in Iowa and type 1 diabetes research. [greatgalenaballoonrace.com](http://greatgalenaballoonrace.com)

### Lake Minnetonka Studio Tour

**MINNETONKA, MINNESOTA MAY 4-5** Artists in three neighboring towns open their home studios for questions and demonstrations. [lakemtka-studiotour.com](http://lakemtka-studiotour.com)



## INDIANA

### Round the Fountain Art Fair

**LAFAYETTE MAY 25** More than 100 artists display photography, watercolors, sculptures, ceramics and other works for sale and judging. Stop inside the Tippecanoe County Courthouse to see a permanent collection from festivals past. [roundthefountain.org](http://roundthefountain.org)

### National Road Yard Sale

**TERRE HAUTE, RICHMOND AND BEYOND MAY 29-JUNE 2** You're bound to find treasures at this 824-mile garage sale stretching from St. Louis to Baltimore. Find antiques and collectibles alongside produce and homemade goods at participating stops in Indiana, Illinois, Missouri and Ohio. [nationalroadyardsale.com](http://nationalroadyardsale.com)

## IOWA

### Orange City Tulip Festival

**ORANGE CITY MAY 16-18** This Dutch town plants nearly 100,000 bulbs a year for a colorful *welkom* to spring. The celebration includes street performances, daily parades and horse-drawn trolley rides through the tulip-sweet downtown. [octulipfestival.com](http://octulipfestival.com)

### Cherokee PRCA Rodeo

**CHEROKEE MAY 30-JUNE 1** Make it a full day with pro rodeo riders at the Cherokee County Fairgrounds. The weekend will include Western

### Symphony on the Prairie

#### FISHERS, INDIANA JUNE-SEPTEMBER

The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra performs weekend concerts at the outdoor Conner Prairie Amphitheater. Bring lawn chairs and a picnic. [indianapolisymphony.org](http://indianapolisymphony.org)

cookouts, a beer garden and a parade. Kids love the boot race, pony rides and petting zoo. [cherokeeroдео.com](http://cherokeeroдео.com)

### Stone Pier Summer Concert Series

**LAKE VIEW JUNE 1 AND 15; JULY 6; AUGUST 3; SEPTEMBER 1** Watch from the lawn or a boat floating on Black Hawk Lake. The free shows put Iowa acts like The Maytags (June 15) and national bands on a historic pier. Hit up the Burger Boat or BYO food and drink for a picnic. [stonepierconcertseries.com](http://stonepierconcertseries.com)

## KANSAS

### Neil Berg's 101 Years of Broadway

**MANHATTAN MAY 19** Piano man Neil Berg and his New York cast will pay tribute to Broadway's classic hits at the McCain Auditorium. Expect revived arrangements of Broadway classics from *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Les Misérables*, *The Phantom of the Opera* and others. [k-state.edu](http://k-state.edu)

### Riverfest

**WICHITA MAY 31-JUNE 8** The state's largest community festival draws nearly half a million

visitors. The nine-day menu includes music performances, fair food, a parade, a car show and water activities on the banks of the Arkansas River. [wichitariverfest.com](http://wichitariverfest.com)

### National Biplane Fly-In

**JUNCTION CITY JUNE 1** Antique, modern and classic biplanes dot Freeman Field's grassy runways. Visitors can mingle with pilots over breakfast before watching judges hand out awards. This year marks the last hurrah for the event. [nationalbiplane-flyin.com](http://nationalbiplane-flyin.com)

## MICHIGAN

### Engaging African Art: Highlights from the Horn Collection

**FLINT THROUGH MAY 26** The Flint Institute of Arts will show works from more than 40 African cultures. The Robert Horn collection features figures made of bone, metal and clay; various sculptures; and masks. [flintarts.org](http://flintarts.org)

### Zingerman's Camp Bacon

**ANN ARBOR MAY 29-JUNE 2** During this drool-worthy weekend, catch documentary screenings about cooks, farmers and food supply chains, or attend bacon-centric cooking workshops led by chefs. Bonus: a seemingly

endless supply of salty goodness to eat. Most of the one-off events are ticketed individually. [zingermanscampbacon.com](http://zingermanscampbacon.com)

### Irish Hills Lake and Home Tour

**BROOKLYN AND THE IRISH HILLS AREA JUNE 22** Jump from one pontoon boat to the next to see dozens of lakeside homes. The architecture tour spanning the Irish Hills includes six lakes and a glimpse of the area's small towns and local businesses. [irishhills.com](http://irishhills.com)

## MINNESOTA

### Duluth Superior Film Festival

**DULUTH MAY 29-JUNE 2** Theaters throughout downtown screen dozens of documentaries, indie shorts and features by local directors for free. Movie fans can also sit in on screenplay read-throughs and panel discussions or meet filmmakers at cocktail receptions between showings. [ds-ff.com](http://ds-ff.com)





### Chocolate, Shakespeare and Champagne

**WINONA JUNE 7** The Great River Shakespeare company typically performs scenes from several plays at the Winona County History Center. When the curtain closes, visitors mingle with actors over champagne cocktails and pastries from local bakeries. [exploreminnesota.com](http://exploreminnesota.com)

### MISSOURI

#### Magic Dragon Street

#### Meet Nationals Car Show

**LAKE OF THE OZARKS MAY 3-5** Almost anything goes at this eclectic car show featuring 1,000 rat rods, motorcycles and slick rides along Lake of the Ozarks' Bagnell Dam Strip. Stick around to see Bigfoot, the original monster truck, and a muscle-car raffle. [magicdragoncarshow.com](http://magicdragoncarshow.com)

#### For the People Pow Wow

**JEFFERSON CITY MAY 25-26** Watch traditional gourd dances and intertribal singing, leading up to the Grand Entry performance at the Jaycees Fairgrounds. The celebration of Native American culture includes a market, where crafters will display and sell handmade clothing and artwork. [visitjeffersoncity.com](http://visitjeffersoncity.com)

#### Tour de Corn

**EAST PRAIRIE JUNE 29** Bikers ride routes of 15, 30, 65 or 100 miles for charity, then refuel with live music, crafts, a street fair and plenty of the summer's harvest at the neighboring East Prairie Sweet Corn Festival (June 28-29). [tourdecorn.com](http://tourdecorn.com)

### NEBRASKA

#### American Democracy:

#### A Great Leap of Faith

**OMAHA THROUGH JUNE 23** Artifacts on loan from the Smithsonian join pieces from The Durham Museum's permanent collection in an exhibit exploring the history of America's democracy, the changing identity of eligible voters and other themes. [durhammuseum.org](http://durhammuseum.org)

#### Renaissance Festival of Nebraska

**PAPILLION MAY 4-5, 11-12** Sail on an interactive pirate ship, stroll through an Enchanted Forest and watch armored knights compete in jousts. The grounds at Bellevue Berry and Pumpkin Ranch will host more than 100 other costumed performances. Culottes not required. [renfestnebraska.com](http://renfestnebraska.com)

#### Rock Creek Trail Days

**FAIRBURY JUNE 1-2** Some regulars show up for just the buffalo stew cookout. But blacksmithing workshops, Pony Express runs and tours of a military encampment re-create 1860s ranch life, covered wagons and all. [fairbury.com](http://fairbury.com)

### NORTH DAKOTA

#### Badlands Gravel Battle

**MEDORA MAY 26** Experienced bikers pedal through the Badlands' spacious red scoria roads on 39-, 77- or 120-mile races. Noncompetitors score views of Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the Little Missouri River from the sidelines. [experienceland.org](http://experienceland.org)



#### Cogs and Corsets

#### BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS JUNE 7-9

Historical fiction fans nerd out over workshops on Victorian culture, live performances and a mustache contest at the steampunk-inspired festival. Buy a ticket for the Sunday brunch at the historic Vrooman Mansion. [cogsandcorsetsil.com](http://cogsandcorsetsil.com)

#### Creekside Jazz and Blues Festival

**GAHANNA JUNE 14-16** Sample cocktails, learn to kayak and climb aboard midway rides to the tune of five stages of live music at Creekside Park and Plaza. Headliners will include John Scofield, Joe Louis Walker, John Németh and Vanessa Collier. [creeksidebluesandjazz.com](http://creeksidebluesandjazz.com)

### SOUTH DAKOTA

#### South Dakota Kayak Challenge

**YANKTON MAY 24-26** Spectators cheer on paddlers as they brave 72 miles of wind and waves along the Missouri River between Yankton and South Sioux City, Nebraska. Prizes for all competitors include picturesque views and bragging rights for life. [sdkayakchallenge.org](http://sdkayakchallenge.org)

#### Czech Days

**TABOR JUNE 14-15** Stock up on kolaches during baking demos, then hit the dance floor for the polka competition. The Czech heritage celebration in this South Dakota town will delve into traditional storytelling, a costume contest to name the festival queen and live music. [taborczechdays.com](http://taborczechdays.com)

#### Great Plains Cheese

#### and Ice Cream Festival

**ST LOUIS FALLS JUNE 15** Families can sample local cheeses and ice creams while kids play carnival games, visit a petting zoo and win raffle prizes at Strawbale Winery. [strawbalewinery.com](http://strawbalewinery.com)

### WISCONSIN

#### Cut Up/Cut Out

**WAUSAU THROUGH JUNE 2** Paper snowflakes have nothing on these delicate designs cut by artists around the country. Inspired by ancient Chinese paper cutting, the works showing at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum represent transformed maps, magazines and even a car tire and saw blade. [lywam.org](http://lywam.org)

#### Brat Fest

**MADISON MAY 24-26** The quintessential Memorial Day meal fuels a weekend of games (think volleyball, human foosball and laser tag), plus carnival rides and 70-some bands playing three free stages. Stick around for fireworks Sunday. [bratfest.com](http://bratfest.com)

#### Frenchtown Annual

#### Tube Float and Regatta

**CHIPPEWA FALLS JUNE 23** The best way to see the Chippewa River? Float with 5,000 other adventurers. One of the world's largest one-day tubing events begins below the Chippewa Dam, splashes through downtown, and ends with lawn games and food. [723loop.com](http://723loop.com) **MWL**  
**Lauren Kassien**

#### Art on the Red

**GRAND FORKS JUNE 8-9** More than 100 artists and food vendors fill colorful tents downtown near the banks of the Red River. The main stage will host world dance and theatrical performances plus local and national bands that perform late into the night both days. [visitgrandforks.com](http://visitgrandforks.com)

#### Rhubarb Festival

**RUGBY JUNE 23** It may resemble embarrassed celery, but it's the star ingredient in pies, cakes, cookies and drinks at the Prairie Village Museum. Admission plus a \$5 tasting ticket buys half a dozen rhubarb treats and access to concerts and a makers' market. [prairievillagemuseum.com](http://prairievillagemuseum.com)

### OHIO

#### The Memorial Tournament

**DUBLIN MAY 27-JUNE 2** Some of the best PGA pros are invited to this weeklong championship hosted by golf legend Jack Nicklaus at his own Muirfield Village Golf Club. Snag one of the coveted Adirondack chairs near hole 12 or stake out seats on the patio at Patron Village. [thememorialtournament.com](http://thememorialtournament.com)

#### L'Affichomania: The Passion for French Posters

#### CINCINNATI JUNE 8-SEPTEMBER 14

Posters promoting inventions and performers plastered the streets of Paris in the early 20th century. Check out a collection featuring designs by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and many others at this nationally touring exhibit debuting at the Taft Museum of Art. [taftmuseum.org](http://taftmuseum.org)

## FYR BALL

*Ephraim, Wisconsin*



**A**T DUSK, this year's Fyr Bal Chieftain arrives by boat in Eagle Harbor, flanked by boys in Viking horns. A procession follows, trekking from the docks in the tiny village of Ephraim, Wisconsin, up the shoreline, where a crowd rings a tall lumber teepee. The Chieftain raises a torch to the pyre, and almost instantly, flames climb more than 20 feet, lashing into the darkening sky.

The combustion sets off a chain reaction. Along the shore, citizens begin lighting their own bonfires. Within minutes, the coast is a glowing horseshoe. Even the sky sparkles with fireworks launched from a distant barge.

Fyr Bal (pronounced fear ball) pays homage to the village's roots. Centuries ago, Scandinavian fire festivals celebrated the end of winter and the return of longer,

sunnier days. For 55 years, Ephraim's version of the solstice tradition has preserved the flame, without the human or animal sacrifices. As the timber disintegrates into ash, legend says, so goes the winter witch.

Ephraim's official population is only 288. Fyr Bal visitors swell that number beyond 2,500. But this is Door County, one of Wisconsin's busiest tourist hubs. By July, cars will crowd the streets, and out-of-towners will clamor for cherry pie. So in a way, the festival (scheduled for June 15 this year) marks one last moment of relative peace. As night closes in, the entire village is illuminated by the flickering glow. The reflection even seems to set the water aflame around a handful of boaters and kayakers, drifting quietly toward the promise of warmth ahead.

# out *and* about

Bonus content for select readers in  
ILLINOIS / INDIANA / MICHIGAN / MINNESOTA / WISCONSIN



PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI/REDUX

Exhibits at John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, change often and feature a range of media, like these sculpted driftwood pieces by Mary Nohl on display through June 23.





**DOWNTOWN SHEBOYGAN**

# STORYBOOK SHEBOYGAN

Along Wisconsin's Lake Michigan shore, a leafy kingdom of high design and dreamy fun makes the perfect backdrop for your next vacation tale.

WRITER **KRISTI THOM**  
PHOTOGRAPHER **KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI**

**O**NCE UPON A TIME, there was a charming city of nearly 50,000 souls on the edge of a great shimmering lake. The people called this pretty place Sheboygan, and they filled it with an enchanting book-theme garden, compelling art, a bliss-inducing spa, cute shops, a dazzling theater, a very fancy resort and other wonderful things. They enjoyed some amazing bathrooms and still had time to golf. Sounds nice, right? Read on to head off on your own marvelous adventure in Sheboygan.



**BOOKWORM GARDENS**

## chapter 01. BLOOMING BOOKS

Perennial favorite Bookworm Gardens botanically brings to life more than 65 children's books across 3½ lush acres, opening May 1. Kids and adults alike delight in finding their favorite titles tucked among the trees. You'll feel a little like Jack when you look up to see the Giant's castle atop a column of beanstalk-like vines. Polka-dotted rock "eggs" surround a tree complete with a mossy Horton perched on a nest. Signs identify the literary inspiration behind each scene, but it's fun to try to guess. A small chair, a medium chair and a large chair? The three bears must be around here somewhere! You can plot your route on the illustrated map, but freely wandering adds to the adventure. A \$5 suggested donation for admission helps keep things growing.

## chapter 02. FLUSH WITH ART

Don't miss the permanent art fixtures at John Michael Kohler Arts Center: six astounding artist-created washrooms. In the atrium, *The Women's Room* has floor-to-ceiling candy-color custom tiles depicting women's clothing, accessories and flowers. *Sheboygan Men's Room* has a water theme, with intricate hand-painted cobalt patterns and murals. When you visit the arts center, definitely go to the bathroom, even if you don't have to go to the bathroom—it may be your only chance in life to find a hand-painted message inside a toilet bowl. Outside the washrooms, the center exhibits immersive installation artworks and spotlights self-taught artists in its seven galleries. Ponder, get inspired, take a class, see a performance or explore the gardens. Admission is free; donations are nice.

PHOTOGRAPH: (DESIGN CENTER) COURTESY OF KOHLER COMPANY

## chapter 03. PIPE DREAMS

The reason you're seeing stylish bath fixtures around every bend: Kohler Company resides in a neighboring hamlet. A free, three-hour tour of Kohler's vast factory showcases the manufacturing process and leaves you thinking of its tubs and toilets as artisanal ceramics. Nearby, Kohler Design Center artfully combines a home-improvement showroom and high-end gallery. Wander themed rooms from designers around the world—a cleverly compact loft-style kitchen here, a castle turret-like shower space there—featuring Kohler technology, like a digital panel that remembers your bathing preferences down to lighting, temperature and pressure. Plan an afternoon, whether you're prepping for your own home project (chat up a design consultant for free) or just indulging HGTV-fueled fantasies.

**JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER**



**JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER**



**KOHLER DESIGN CENTER**

chapter  
**04. FIELD OF DREAMS**

Warriors wielding bags of clubs do battle on some of the country's top-rated public golf courses. At Kohler-owned Whistling Straits, choose from a pair of courses for a bucket-list round. The Straits, the links-style home of the 2020 Ryder Cup, skirts 2 miles of windswept Lake Michigan shoreline, with undulating greens and unparalleled views. Inland, The Irish course features a number of challenges, including a No. 2 switchback—a wicked trademark of designer Pete Dye—and a vast confetti of bunkers, including one at No. 18's green that measures more than 10 feet deep. Two more Dye courses span a glacier-carved river basin at Blackwolf Run. In Sheboygan Falls, Jack Nicklaus-designed The Bull at Pinehurst Farms offers tricky elevation changes to test distance and accuracy; study No. 9 and No. 10 from the patio at Champions restaurant.

**KOHLER'S WHISTLING STRAITS**



**IL RITROVO**



**SHOPPING ON EIGHTH STREET**

chapter  
**05. TREASURE HUNT**

Back in Sheboygan, peek into downtown's Eighth Street boutiques to discover vintage toys, clever cooking tools and whimsical home goods, then stop for a bite.

- > **FREAKTOYZ** Vintage action figures from your childhood, plus comics, video games and other collectibles.
- > **NEST** Lovely things to make your home look and smell beautiful. Browse rugs, silverware and dishes, pillows, candles, and gifts.
- > **RELISH KITCHEN STORE** A food-lover's haven of stylish bakeware, cookware, knives, linens, books and gadgets.
- > **URBAN ARTIQUE** Home decor incorporating old and new elements, furniture, and works by Wisconsin artists.
- > **PARADIGM COFFEE AND MUSIC** House-made baked goods and granola, plus vegan sandwiches. Check the calendar for live music.
- > **BLACK PIG** Mouthwatering twists on mac 'n' cheese, tacos and fries, plus choose from three types of bacon.
- > **IL RITROVO** Bubbly, crisp-crust pizzas from a wood-fired oven in one of the few Neapolitan-certified pizzerias in the nation.



**WEILL CENTER**

chapter  
**06. CEILING OF STARS**

Step into another world in Sheboygan's fanciful Stefanie H. Weill Center for the Performing Arts. With an interior designed to look like a Spanish garden beneath a darkening sky, this carefully restored historic theater hosts the Sheboygan Symphony Orchestra and welcomes a variety of live shows, like the Red Hot Chilli Pipers, a cleverly named bagpipe band. The Movies and Morsels series pairs films from the past with menus linked to each movie's theme (think French fare accompanying *Moulin Rouge!*).

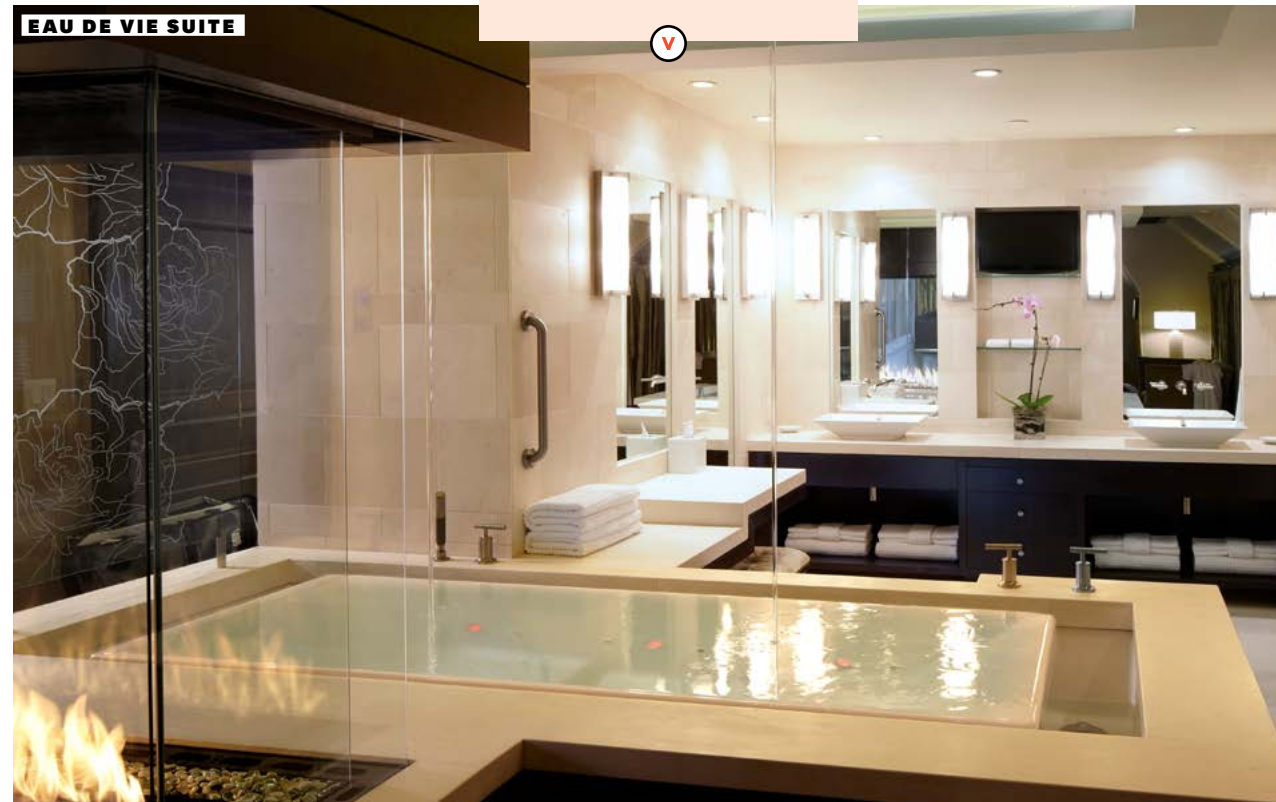
**FALLING WATERS**

The ultraindulent tub in The American Club's Eau de Vie Suite (it translates to "water of life") fills with a cascade from a fixture in the ceiling.

chapter  
**07. BUBBLES AND PILLOWS**

Head back to Kohler and find pampering fit for royalty. Kohler Waters Spa offers classic spa services with water as the star: Rivers, waterfalls and pools inspire a sea of spa choices, like therapeutic baths that feature music, sound vibrations or colored-light chromatherapy. Sink into posh slumber at five-star, 100-year-old The American Club, a former dormitory for Kohler's factory workers. Rooms feature Kohler fixtures—for maximum indulgence, the resort's Eau de Vie Suite includes a high-tech steam shower and a deep, effervescent tub for two with a continuous overflow at the edges, reminiscent of an infinity pool. Later, tuck yourself into a plush bed to dream, inevitably, of living happily ever after.

**EAU DE VIE SUITE**



PHOTOGRAPHS: (GOLF, SUITE) COURTESY OF DESTINATION KOHLER. (STAGE) COURTESY OF WEILL CENTER

# THE SLICE OF LIFE

You had us at deep-dish—  
but that was before we  
knew how much more  
pizza there is to love  
in Chicago.

WRITER **ANN HINGA KLEIN**

**W** E'VE ALL DONE IT. But come on. Walking a couple of blocks to a deep-dish tourist staple and collapsing into a cheese-induced coma back at the hotel sets a pretty low bar in a town steeped in pizza history.

In fact, Chicago has perfected its favorite pie in 10 distinct styles, says Steve Dolinsky, the ABC 7 Eyewitness News Hungry Hound—and he wrote the book on pizza, just last year. Another truth Steve reveals in his new book, *Pizza City, USA: Deep-dish is for tourists. Locals like the thinner tavern-style pizza, cut into squares, no fork needed.*

No matter how you slice it, miles of cheesy, spicy, saucy territory await, and Steve's book can direct you to the places that do it best.

Easier still, hop on his Downtown Loop bus tour (\$69; [pizzacityusa.com](http://pizzacityusa.com)). Or tag along on a walking tour of the Downtown Loop, Wicker Park-Bucktown neighborhoods or the West Loop, and taste your way through as many as four styles of pizza perfection. At each stop, an owner or manager whisks you into the kitchen and spills its secrets while wait staff loads your table with pies.

Just arrive with an appetite. It's not promoted as an all-you-can-eat experience, but that's pretty much a given. "By the third stop, most people are waving the white flag," Steve says.



Spacca Napoli serves up a classic wood-fired Neapolitan Margherita and variations with gourmet toppings like prosciutto, arugula and Sardinian artichokes.

## THE TASTY 10

Strike out on your own to taste test Steve's pizza pick in every style:

**TAVERN-STYLE** *Vito and Nick's Pizzeria, 8433 S. Pulaski Rd.* This is pizza with balance: an ultrathin crust bearing perfectly blistered burn marks and a harmonious mix of toppings.

**DETROIT** *Union Full Board, 3473 N. Clark St.* Baked in the characteristic crisp rectangle with brick and mozzarella cheese around the perimeter; soft, focaccia-like interior with a crunchy undercarriage and two stripes of tomato sauce across the top.

**NEAPOLITAN** *Spacca Napoli Pizzeria, 1769 W. Sunnyside Ave.* Chewy, blistered crust; crushed San Marzano tomatoes; and creamy-sweet *Fior di Latte* cheese placed haphazardly—just as it's served in Naples.

**THIN** *Boiler Room, 2210 N. California Ave.* A delicate, cornmeal-flecked dough bakes up with a crisp edge, and every bite offers the optimal mix.

**DEEP-DISH** *Labriola, 535 N. Michigan Ave.* Meticulously mixed dough delivers a good chew, and it's sturdy enough to hold in your hand. Pecorino Romano jazzes up the mozzarella, and a complex sauce layers on flavor.

**NYC SLICE** *Jimmy's Pizza Cafe, 5159 N. Lincoln Ave.* One of the best deals in town—generous slices with a crust like ciabatta that's evenly blackened on the bottom for an audible crunch.

**ARTISAN** *Pizzeria Bebu, 1521 N. Fremont St.* Achieves what few artisan pies can: an ultrathin middle that stays firm and impossibly crispy, so it's able to hold a generous layer of sauce.

**SICILIAN** *D'Amato's Bakery and Subs, 1124 W. Grand Ave.* The dough—embedded with cheese and sauce, and light like a good focaccia—makes this pizza remarkable. It's sold by the slice; ask for a corner or edge piece.

**ROMAN** *Bonci, 161 N. Sangamon St.* An impossibly light bottom crust with a soft interior is made with a custom flour blend and two fermentations. Local, seasonal toppings on a pizza that's cut to order.

**STUFFED** *Suparossa, 4256 N. Central Ave.* The cheese stays pleasantly soft in this stuffed pie, and the wisp of a top crust doesn't overpower its fresh, vibrant tomato sauce and flavorful house-made sausage.



## DIG IN

**Pizza City, USA: 101 Reasons Why Chicago Is America's Greatest Pizza Town**  
by Steve Dolinsky

Steve pulled up a chair in 185 restaurants to pick his 101 faves. Top 5 maps help you find your next fix; a methodology chapter and glossary with terms like “cheese pull” equip you to break it down like a pro (\$24.95, Northwestern University Press).

## CHARTING PIES

Journalist Steve Dolinsky talks about what he learned eating Chicago pizza almost daily for six months.

### Why did you decide to write a book about pizza?

I was tired of reading yet another listicle of the best pizza in Chicago that had no solid research or legwork behind it. I had tackled things like “the best Italian beef,” so I thought, *How hard could pizza be?* I thought I'd do 40 or 50 places and call it a day. And I ended up going down this crazy rabbit hole, because Chicagoans get emotional about pizza. People started chiming in on social media with things like, “Any list without Phil's Pizza in Oak Lawn is no list at all!” So then I'd have to go to Phil's in Oak Lawn.

### What's the secret to great pizza?

Two things: the dough and what I call OBR—optimal bite ratio. In other words, you get dough, cheese, sauce and topping in every bite. A good pizza has to have that balance.

### None of the city's icons made the Top 5 list in the deep-dish category. Why?

I really was cheering for every place I tried. If a restaurant didn't make the book, it's likely

because the dough wasn't good enough or OBR was bad.

### You call Chicago America's No. 1 pizza town. How so?

I think it's the city with the most pizza variety in the country. Other cities offer one-note experiences, but it's pretty hard to argue with Chicago's range.

Chicagoans love to experiment. We also love to eat. New pizza places open every month here. When Rick Tasman, former COO of P.F. Chang's, approached Gabriele Bonci about bringing Roman-style *al taglio* [pizza] to America, they knew Chicago's West Loop was the best place to start.

*Al taglio* (“by the cut,” in which pizza is cut to order) at its best is notable for its soft, crumb-riddled interior and a distinctive, crunchy bottom. Americans love crispy, crunchy bottom crusts, which is why this style will be the next big thing in pizza. By the way, Bonci's second location in the United States? Wicker Park, only a few miles away.

### Ready to get your hands doughy or time travel to America's pizza past?

#### Continue your adventure here:

**DIY NIRVANA** Pizzeria Uno at the corner of Ohio and Wabash hosts weekly classes (\$45) on making its signature pies. Learn to pinch the crust, crush the plum tomatoes and layer on the ingredients in the right order for deep-dish perfection: cheese slices, toppings, sauce, tomato chunks and an 80/20 mix of Parmesan cheese and fresh oregano. You'll also learn the secret to those perfect crispy crusts: 600-degree ovens that blast heat from below.

Classes require eight students, so gather a group or leave yourself some scheduling flexibility to ensure you get a day with enough attendees.

**KITSCH CACHE** If your love for memorabilia rivals your affection for pizza, stop by the U.S. Pizza Museum at the Roosevelt Collection, a hip open-air mall in the South Loop. Some displays offer lessons on the history of pizza in America, but this spot is at its best in “who knew?” and “remember that?” territory. Exhibit A: an album wall with midcentury pizza-theme greats like *Lou Monte Sings Songs for Pizza Lovers*. And anyone who grew up in the '80s can respect an original Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Pizza Thrower boxed set (with motorized disc-fire action!). Admission is free.

# A SUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

After the long applause dies at a show's conclusion, a chorus of crickets picks up at American Players Theatre in Spring Green, Wisconsin, 40 miles west of Madison.

This amphitheater among the trees channels the alfresco magic of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (shown) in every performance of works by the Bard and other master playwrights, such as Tennessee Williams and George Bernard Shaw.

This season, the theater's 40th, opens June 8. Tickets include admission to a play and to the leafy picnic grounds, where you can toast the season before trekking up the trail to watch the stars come out—onstage and overhead.



PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE





About half the audience picnics on the grounds before heading up to the show—like a refined, woody tailgate. Pack your own spread, or order a prepacked basket to pick up a few hours before showtime. Picnic dinners include sandwiches, wraps or salads, plus sides; picnic baskets are feasts for four, delivered in a souvenir tote bag. A concession area sells snacks and wine by the bottle or glass. [americanplayers.org](http://americanplayers.org)

## STYLISH STAYS

End the evening with a unique overnight in the area.

### Shake Rag Alley Center for the Arts, Mineral Point

Book a room in an 1840s coach house, a studio apartment above a gallery, or a garden suite.

### Brewery Creek Inn and Cottages, Mineral Point

Sleep above a brewpub built into a historic limestone building.

### The House on the Rock Resort, Spring Green

Find comfortable suites, verdant Driftless views, golf and a spa.

# OVERNIGHT WRIGHT

Take your design yen to the next level with a stay in one of the Midwest legend's landmarks.



**STAY**  
Rentals run \$275 to \$325 per night and book out two to six months ahead. But watch the calendar: Cancellations occasionally happen.

**TOUR**  
The conservancy offers tours each month (\$15).



**P** **ADDLING MIRROR LAKE** in the 1980s, Audrey Laatsch reached for some leaves that had drifted into her canoe—and flipped it. She dragged her boat to shore and decided to hike up the bluff to a boarded-up property.

Audrey, a therapist who owned a cottage nearby, knew that Frank Lloyd Wright had designed the home and that the DNR had acquired it in 1966 as part of a land purchase for a state park. She and her neighbors had watched it deteriorate, wondering how such a treasure could lie neglected. It was the tipped canoe, she would say, that convinced her to spearhead the cottage rehab and start a nonprofit for its care.

Today, the Seth Peterson Cottage is one of a handful of Wright-designed residences available for overnight rental. Peter Rott, a graduate of the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture, volunteers with the cottage's conservancy. "Audrey is the heroine of our story," he says. "Every building needs a hero like that."

Hidden in Mirror Lake State Park outside of Lake Delton, Wisconsin, it's one of Wright's smallest homes, a tidy 880-square-foot hideaway for two. (Seth Peterson and his intended bride never lived here, given his untimely death at age 24.) Its open floor plan and soaring ceiling feel spacious, and walls of windows wash the living area with light. Stonework resembles the Wisconsin River valley bluffs that Wright explored as a boy—the very landscape that inspired Prairie School architecture.

There's a complimentary canoe down by the lake so you can paddle out in tribute to Audrey. [sethpeterson.org](http://sethpeterson.org)

PHOTOGRAPHS: KIT HOGAN

## MORE WRIGHT FOR THE NIGHT

**A duplex on Milwaukee's South Side** shares a block with five other Wright-designed homes—test models for architect-drawn properties Wright and a colleague developed for the "working man." Just 6 miles from downtown, this Burnham Park home ([vrbo.com](http://vrbo.com)) sleeps nine. From \$212/night.

**The Bernard Schwartz House** (aka Still Bend; [theschwartzhouse.com](http://theschwartzhouse.com)) overlooks a river marsh in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, a vacation town on Lake Michigan. Built in Wright's Usonian, or American, style for middle-income families, it accommodates up to eight. From \$395/night.

**The Emil Bach House** ([emilbachhouse.com](http://emilbachhouse.com)) in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood north of downtown reflects what Wright could do on a compact city lot. It's walkable to the big lake, but you might not want to leave the backyard patio and Japanese tearoom. It hosts six overnight and 125 for indoor-outdoor events. From \$400/night.



# BURIED HISTORY

Hundreds of Civil War stories live on in an urban Chicago cemetery.

**E**VEN AS THE CROW FLIES, the Civil War's battles missed Chicago by more than 250 miles. So the towering war monument inside Rosehill Cemetery's grand entrance might seem a bit misplaced.

Keep walking, though, and you'll see that the standard-bearing Union soldier topping *Our Heroes* overlooks hundreds of government-issued headstones for Chicagoans who lost their lives in America's bloodiest war.

A 350-acre oasis on the city's North Side, Rosehill holds 14 Civil War generals, plus Cook County politicians who argued the war's decisions and news editors who challenged them.

You can hear their stories on a monthly summer walking tour (\$15) offered by the Chicago Architecture Center. Guides discuss monuments and history of the 8th Illinois Cavalry, which fired the first shots at Gettysburg; opposition newspaper editor Wilbur F. Storey, whose freedom of speech is said to have been defended by President Lincoln himself; abolitionist editor Zebina Eastman; and field surgeon Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, whose Medal of Honor was rescinded for her defense of women's rights.

If a DIY tour is more your style, pick up a map and check out the Civil War museum in the administration building. [architecture.org](http://architecture.org)