

MidwestLiving®

COME GET LOST

YOUR FALL GETAWAY STARTS NOW

+
A tent in the woods
and a bed?
Why, yes!

HEE-TA PINES

**WAY-COOL PUMPKIN CAKE / BACKYARD OASIS (PIZZA INCLUDED)
CHASING COLOR WITH THE BURNOUT BABES**

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september/october 2019



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ON THE COVER

The Fields is a luxe new camping destination in South Haven, Michigan. Read all about it (and four more great Midwest glamping sites) on page 40.

—
PHOTOGRAPHER
RYAN DONNELL

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Dropping temperatures signals one of four magical seasons

in the Midwest. And year after year, our editorial team hits the road—working our way from north to south—to capture the blankets of colors in the trees. The great race with recording nature can consume the season, but with every passing year, I promise myself to soak up the beauty surrounding us and to simply slow down. Even for a moment.

The best way to slow down? Take to nature. This issue's Wanderlist feature showcases a carefully curated roundup of glamping experiences to encourage just that. Choose a Wisconsin yurt or a safari overnight in Ohio, or grab some friends and go visit Irene at The Fields in South Haven, Michigan (hello, cover shoot!). While I'd hit a tent or a camp hammock any day of the week, I can tell you those luxurious beds and in-tent bathrooms are tough to top.

For a fall experience that feeds the soul, look no further than the Traverse City area, a few hours north of South Haven. It's one of my go-to destinations in the fall. Anytime



I get the chance to sneak up that way, I'm there, for Smackintosh tastings at cozy Tandem Ciders, delectable doughnuts from Gallagher's Farm Market, fall-color sailing with Inland Seas (above), and a coveted stopover at Hop Lot Brewing Company for my fave local brews and live tunes. Hands down, that's my perfect fall getaway. Pro tip: Don't miss the sunrise from a balcony at Shanty Creek Resort. The sun creates a magical layer of sparkle across the vibrant treetops for a truly bucket list-worthy view. Check out my full itinerary by scanning the code at right.

Safe travels.

KYLEE KRIZMANIC
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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To see videos, bonus photos and more from my weekend away in Traverse City, just hold your phone's camera up to the code. No app required!

grand pours

The glasses in Grand Rapids are always half-full—of something distilled, chilled, steeped or brewed.



O **N A SUNDAY AFTERNOON,** the Founders Brewing taproom feels like Grand Rapids' public indoor-outdoor living room:

Three generations eat lunch in their church clothes. Bearded dudes pair beer with a board game. Cyclists down post-ride pints on the patio. And at the bar, tourists wend through flights of the 25-plus beers on draft. You'd expect all this in a town that's twice held the title of Beer City USA for its 40-some area breweries. What's remarkable today is the diverse drink scene that has blossomed beyond this living room.

Five years ago, no (legal) distilleries had operated in Grand Rapids history. Now there are at least half a dozen. Several outstanding small-batch coffee

roasters have launched here, plus cideries, two meaderies and even a teahouse hosting traditional Japanese tea ceremonies.

"There's so much energy," says Trevor Corlett, co-founder of Madcap Coffee, a pioneer in third-wave coffee. "'Underestimated' is a good word." He says a mid-size city spurs collaboration and a creative freedom that's rare in trendier, spendier towns. "It removes any preconceived notions of what we should be."

For a visitor, that's a tasty proposition, whatever your beverage of choice. And because this is a smaller city straddling the Grand River, what's not strollable will rarely be more than a \$10 Lyft ride away. Cheers to that!



MADCAP COFFEE COMPANY

Madcap has its original spot downtown and one at the Grand Rapids Downtown Market (pictured). But if you want to linger, visit the Fulton Street shop—an airy temple to the pour-over, in a converted 1930s auto-body shop. Madcap doesn't take itself too seriously: Each location offers seasonal drinks, "crazy concoctions we'd initially come up with at barista competitions," says CEO Trevor Corlett. A recent example? The Nicolas Sage, an iced coffee cut with blackberry and sage.



FOUNDERS BREWING

The first brewery in Grand Rapids opened in the late 1830s, and a half-century later, writer Albert Baxter posited a link between the city's booming beer culture and a decline of fevers and malarial illnesses in his 1891 *History of the City of Grand Rapids*. By that standard, today's city looks healthier than ever. There are about 40 breweries here, and a Beer City Ale Trail maps 82 within 65 miles. But one—Founders, launched in 1997—is the granddaddy you can't miss. The brewery makes more than half a million barrels of beer annually, covering a dazzling range (some only available in the taproom). Recent hits have included the Cerise, made with Michigan-grown cherries; Solid Gold premium lager; and Más Agave, an imperial lime gose aged in tequila barrels.

“Don't let anyone tell you there isn't terroir for apples as much as there is for grapes.”

paul vander heide

CO-OWNER OF VANDER MILL

LONG ROAD DISTILLERS



A long road indeed: In 2015, this craft spirits maker became the first distillery to open in Grand Rapids. Long Road's grain-to-glass philosophy means nearly all ingredients are Michigan-grown, including the botanicals flavoring its award-winning Michigan—juniper, fennel, mint, hops, lemon verbena. Sip cocktails or order food in the distillery's bar in the West Side neighborhood. The distillers collaborated with Madcap for their Amaro Pazzo, which combines the bittersweet Italian liqueur with a washed Ethiopian coffee bean called Reko. Before heading home, consider buying Long Road's rich (and nonalcoholic) whisky-barrel-aged maple syrup.



VANDER MILL

Michigan is the nation's third-largest apple producer, after Washington and New York. And Vander Mill sources 99 percent of its apples in-state, working mostly with small farmers within 15 miles of Grand Rapids. Some two dozen ciders are on tap daily, from dry, almost champagne-like versions to experimental, infused ciders you never imagined existed (pink peppercorn and hibiscus? honey and orange blossom water?). Don't forget to eat; the food is excellent—and pairs beautifully with the ciders.

Meijer Gardens

This 158-acre jewel combines lovely gardens, international art exhibits and special events. A \$115 million, multiyear investment has added a learning center and a rooftop sculpture garden with views of the wetlands.



ARKTOS MEADERY

From the outside, it looks like a brick-and-stucco industrial production facility beside a highway. (Because it is.) Inside, Arktos Meadery's cozy tasting room transports you to another time and place, with decor best described as middle-earth modern: heavy wooden benches and tables, animal pelts and skulls on the walls, ceramic goblets lining the shelves. Arktos' take on mead, the honey-based brew that may be the world's oldest alcoholic beverage, honors local ingredients. Michigan wildflower honey is the base of all their varieties.



TEA CEREMONY AT FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS AND SCULPTURE PARK

Once a month, visitors are invited into the serene Japanese teahouse at Meijer Gardens for an hour-long *chanoyu*, a traditional tea ceremony. (Reserve a spot well in advance.) The star is matcha, a finely ground, sun-dried green tea, served in Shigaraki pottery from the teahouse's permanent collection. The structure itself was built in Japan, disassembled and painstakingly rebuilt here in the Japanese garden created by the acclaimed designer Hoichi Kurisu.

make it a weekend

You'll need a couple of days to explore the lively arts scene, presidential history and a new downtown hotel district.

a walk through history

Through November 3, *Extraordinary Circumstances* shares rare photos from Gerald Ford's White House photographer, David Hume Kennerly, at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. You can also see Ford's boyhood home in the walkable Heritage Hill historical district, known for its varied architectural styles.

street art

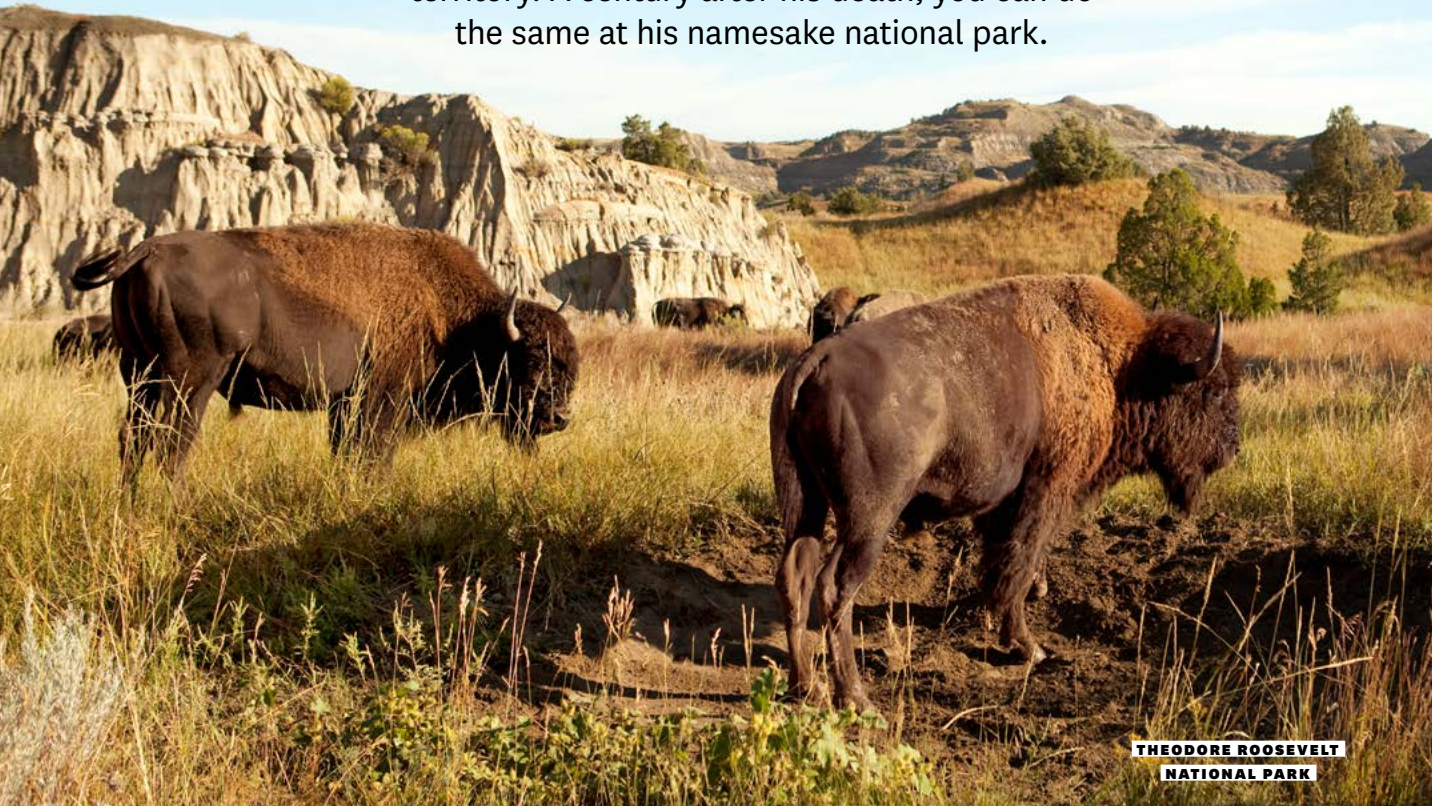
Five U.S., international and local artists will create public installations at the inaugural Project 1 by ArtPrize experience, September 7–October 27. The initiative arose when Grand Rapids' massive ArtPrize competition became a biennial gathering last year.

sleep and eats

Five hotels arrived in 2019, including AC Hotel Grand Rapids and Hyatt Place Grand Rapids/Downtown. Between sleep and sips, head to Grand Rapids Downtown Market for a food hall with 20-plus food vendors and two restaurants. Or try one of the city's best burgers at Butcher's Union gastropub.

dances with bison

Before his presidency, Theodore Roosevelt immersed himself in the wild Dakota territory. A century after his death, you can do the same at his namesake national park.



I AM A THEODORE ROOSEVELT FANBOY. So I hiked North Dakota's Theodore Roosevelt National Park to understand how the frontier changed and shaped him—from sickly asthmatic boy into exemplar of the rugged life and, ultimately, into a U.S. president and a pillar of the conservation movement.

I wasn't sure what I was searching for until I crested a small rise near Medora, not far from where Roosevelt owned a ranch. Behind me, to the west, stretched vast badlands, with buttes like sand castles erupting from the clay floor. Ahead of me, to the east, a prairie rolled out as flat as a board. The duality echoed Roosevelt's life. He was a cowboy and a politician, a Rough Rider and a preening aristocrat, an avid naturalist who carried a Tiffany and Company knife from New York.

Roosevelt initially visited the western edge of North Dakota to hunt bison. He celebrated his first kill in 1883 with a wild dance. And he moved here the following year, after the deaths of his mother and wife on the same day in New York. Broken by grief, he sought solace

in ranching and hunting. But when he pursued bison again, something close to regret mingled with his excitement. The animal had nearly gone extinct due to overhunting, and he lamented that its disappearance would rob the world of such magnificent creatures.

Roosevelt considered the loss a human error that he could work to correct. In 1905, he helped found the American Bison Society. As the 26th U.S. president, he created two big-game preserves and supported plans to populate them with bison. Today, the species numbers 500,000 in North America, compared to about 12,500 when Roosevelt died on January 6, 1919.

The president's conservation efforts went far beyond bison. He started the United States Forest Service and protected roughly 230 million acres of public land. Fittingly, only one national park is named after a person—this one. Standing here, at the intersection of badlands and prairie, I looked north. Two bison grazed, their faces buried in grass. I can only imagine the dance Roosevelt would have done at that sight.

happy glamper

Your rustic-or-not guide to swanky, dreamy, chilly-weather camping—with zero risk of sleeping on a tree root.

**AFTON
STATE PARK**

*Hastings,
Minnesota*

THE FIELDS

*South Haven,
Michigan*

**NOMAD RIDGE
AT THE WILDS**

Cumberland, Ohio

**BAYFIELD COUNTY
RUSTIC YURTS**

*Bayfield County,
Wisconsin*

**UNDER CANVAS
MOUNT RUSHMORE**

*Keystone,
South Dakota*



THE LATE SEPTEMBER SHIFT from muggy bug-swatting to crisp, starry nights begs for campfire chats and waking beneath a canopy of multicolored leaves. But we hear you: *It's too cold out. I don't have the gear. I'm just not that outdoorsy.* That's why we're digging the glamping surge across the Midwest. Sure, you've been able to rent a yurt here or there for years, but fancy camping is reaching new heights. In downtown Chicago, you can book the lavish Lotus Belle tent on the 16th-floor terrace of The Gwen hotel—for a cool \$5,500. For a modest

family budget, even the mega KOA campground chain has added covered-wagon suites and canvas tents with queen beds. Some of these retreats roll out full-on hotel treatment (duvets and private bathrooms). Others are more rustic, asking you to haul your gear down a short trail or light a woodstove for heat.

Admittedly, it's a bit ironic to see these structures of survival morphing into Instagram-candy vacay suites. But when they nudge more people into the outdoors and extend the fall camping season, we aren't judging. In fact, we'll point you down some of our favorite paths.

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM S. JONES/COLUMBUS ZOO AND AQUARIUM

**AFTON
STATE PARK**
*Hastings,
Minnesota*

When fall and winter nights dip below freezing, brush up on your woodstove knowledge in advance. Or recruit friends to feed logs through the night. Bunks sleep up to seven in two spacious yurts, just 20 miles east of the Twin Cities. Bring flashlights, bedding and matches for the barely-off-the-grid stay in the St. Croix River Valley. You can follow trails to wildflower and prairie fields or head next door to Afton Alps for disc golf, foot golf or traditional golf when snow isn't covering the slopes. From \$55.



Hardy campers brave the cold even through winter in the Coyote (ADA-accessible) and Gray Fox yurts at Afton State Park.

**NOMAD RIDGE
AT THE WILDS**

Cumberland, Ohio
Leave the kiddos at home for an adults-only overnight safari at a wildlife park run by the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium in southeastern Ohio. Yurts perched on a hilltop come stocked like a hotel room—electricity, coffee maker and all. Step outside in the morning, and through the fog you might spot zebras, rhinos or other African animals grazing in the pastures. From \$325.

**BAYFIELD COUNTY
RUSTIC YURTS**

*Bayfield County,
Wisconsin*
Lake Superior shimmers just beyond two isolated yurts outside Bayfield in northern Wisconsin. Near Cable, 55 miles inland, a third yurt accesses the famous American Birkebeiner Trail. The properties are managed by the local Forestry and Parks Department. Pack it in at least ½ mile on foot to reach each spot. From \$70.



**UNDER CANVAS
MOUNT
RUSHMORE**

*Keystone,
South Dakota*
Ponderosa pines poke at the sky above this rocky western landscape. But below the tree line (and 3½ miles from the stone-faced presidents), a new spread of white tents softens the landscape. In spring 2018, Under Canvas Mount Rushmore opened a choose-your-glamour-level campground. Deluxe tents include a deck and private bathroom with hot water. All guests can buy adventure packages and enjoy cafe-style dining on-site. From \$189.

THE FIELDS
*South Haven,
Michigan*

When you arrive, park at the front and catch a shuttle through the blueberry fields for the final ¼ mile to the glamping site. It's a tangible shedding of daily cares. Ten chic tents opened this summer, each with pillow-top beds, nice bathrooms, woodstoves and playful flair, like vintage baseball equipment and games. Start your day with a chef-prepped farm breakfast in an outdoor gathering space before doing some yoga or wandering the trails. From \$325.

Want to go road biking or explore the Lake Michigan coast (just 6 miles from your blueberry farm retreat)? The team at The Fields can help guests arrange personalized excursions in the area.



road show

It's like a glamping transformer on wheels.

Why settle for a glamping site when you could take your cushy pad with you on any road trip? Happier Camper sells an ultralight, retro-looking Swiss Army knife of campers (starting at \$24,950). With modular cubes and cushions, the HC1 travel trailer can seamlessly reconfigure from a living space into a kitchen or a hauling bed. Go off the grid for days with the water tank and solar options.

barks and rec

We're drooling like eager pups over Kansas City's sprawling, tricked-out watering hole for dogs and their humans.



Doggie jungle gyms take the fun to new levels.

HOME STYLE

Leib and Dave hope to bring the Bar K concept to other states, but the flagship is distinctly KC.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Bar K's mod building incorporates 17 recycled shipping containers, a nod to the barges that haul freight on the neighboring Missouri River.

LOCAL LIBATIONS

Kansas City distillery J. Rieger and Company supplies liquor for Bar K's signature cocktails; baristas brew local Messenger Coffee; 16 of the 20 beers on tap are made in town.

PUP SHOTS

Giant black-and-white prints of Leib's and Dave's dogs (shot by Kansas City photographer Ron Berg) hang above the bar in the dining room.



\$10

for first dog

\$5

for the next one

\$225

annual membership

\$0

if you come sans pet



LEIB DODELL AND DAVE HENSLEY

take their dogs everywhere—even, Leib admits, spots they probably shouldn't.

Since “leashed to a patio table” isn't exactly Fido's happy place, the friends quit their jobs to build something that would be fun for humans *and* hounds. Opened last summer in Kansas City, Missouri, Bar K is a fast-casual restaurant, bar and coffee shop with a 2-acre, off-leash dog park. Indoors and out, the entire place is dog-friendly. Visitors can lounge in Adirondack chairs, dine on healthy bites or catch live music in the beer garden while their four-legged friends chase tennis balls, sample a treat flight or just, you know, sniff one another. Thoughtful details include “dogtenders” monitoring the action and separate areas for puppies and small dogs. Unlike public dog parks, Bar K charges an entry fee to support facility maintenance—including a bathing area for when playtime is over.

5 things we're crushing on now

Deadwood unplugged. New eats at Frank Lloyd Wright's personal estate. And the world's biggest rooftop bar.



4

EAT

TASTE OF TALIESIN

Spring Green, Wisconsin

Local ingredients and chefs will star at the first Taste of Taliesin, held September 29 at Frank Lloyd Wright's vast estate (a newly named UNESCO World Heritage Site). Miss out on tickets? Eat lunch at Taliesin's Riverview Terrace Cafe, where legendary Wisconsin chef Odessa Piper helped launch the innovative Food Artisan Immersion Program.

5

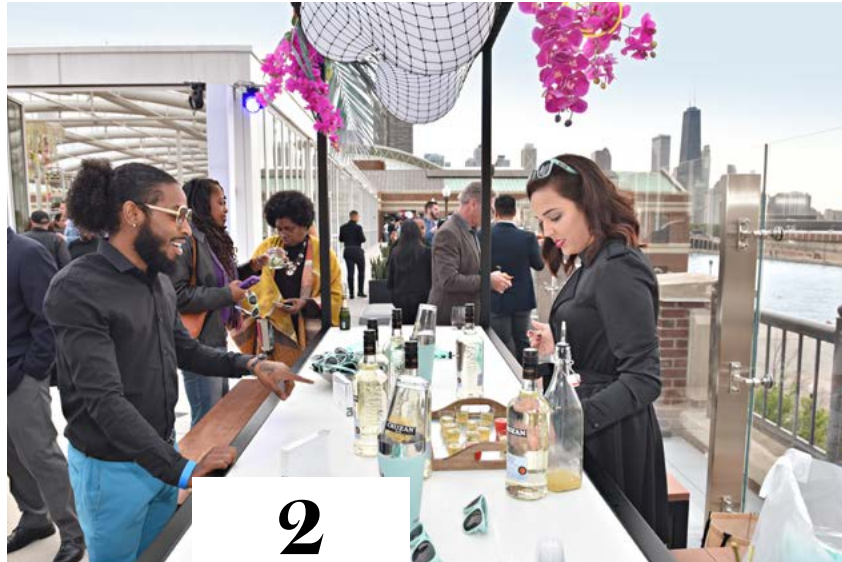
WATCH

DEADWOOD: THE MOVIE

Deadwood, South Dakota

Thirteen years after *Deadwood* ended its three-season run, Calamity Jane and her shady company are back on HBO for a film finale. The real town of Deadwood is leaning into the buzz with gunfight reenactments and Outlaw Square opening this fall.

He's back: Timothy Olyphant reprises his role as lawman Seth Bullock in *Deadwood: The Movie*, a fictional take on South Dakota's early statehood.



2

SIP

OFFSHORE

Chicago

The world's largest rooftop deck has landed—on top of a Chicago landmark. Three stories up on Navy Pier, Offshore made it Guinness World Records-official this summer. In June, the bar opened 20,000 square feet of terrace (and more than double that when you add the year-round, glassed-in space). Sip seasonal cocktails and snack on globally inspired eats against the backdrop of the sparkling skyline and azure Lake Michigan. As the weather cools, seven firepits will keep things cozy well into fall.

Wrought iron, Italian tile and stucco give Tuscan flair to Gervasi. The 55-acre property includes The Still House distillery and cocktail bar.



1

STAY

SWEET NEW SUITES

NORTH

Nisswa, Minnesota

This summer, Grand View Lodge opened North, a boutique hotel at its Brainerd Lakes resort. Your stay includes access to a new rec facility with outdoor hot tubs for year-round soaking. From \$199.

MISSION POINT

Mackinac Island, Michigan

Mission Point resort renovated 133 rooms in Straits Lodge on Michigan's favorite car-free island. Other property upgrades: a meditation station and a waterfront yoga pad on the Great Lawn. From \$164.

GERVASI VINEYARD

Canton, Ohio

Wine, dine and sleep in without leaving this sprawling winery-estate. Each suite in The Casa hotel, open since May, features a patio with a view of the courtyard, lake and gardens. From \$299.





The Shady Ladies Literary Society hosts author Elaine Castillo at the 117-year-old Belle Isle Boat House.

eat. read. love.

Pop-up dinner or book reading? A Detroit journalist finds a novel way to give voice to women writers and chefs.

PARTY LIKE A BOOKWORM Business journalist and teacher Amy Haimerl wrote about fixing up an old house in her book, *Detroit Hustle*. Then a new hustle began. “I was calling bookstores trying to book my own events,” she says. “Like the birthday girl trying to throw her own party. It was awkward.” Plus, she acknowledges, even well-intended book-lovers like herself struggle to find time to attend readings by unfamiliar writers. So she dreamed up an alternative: Pair emerging authors with food, drinks and an irresistible venue. Pump up female empowerment by featuring only women writers and chefs. And give it all a cheeky name. Shady Ladies Literary Society emerged, inspired by the awning at a shuttered beauty salon.

POP-UP BOOK CLUBS For the first event in 2017, Amy invited Cristina Moracho and Julie Buntin, both authors of a thriller, to a bourbon picnic in a cemetery along a creek named, aptly, Bloody Run. Rain loomed. Guests huddled under a tent in sundresses. But the storm passed, along with Amy’s anxiety: “How do we keep supporting women authors and figure out ways to support chefs?” Since then, she’s taken Shady Ladies to Aretha Franklin Amphitheatre, Detroit Foundation Hotel and back to the cemetery this summer for the second anniversary.

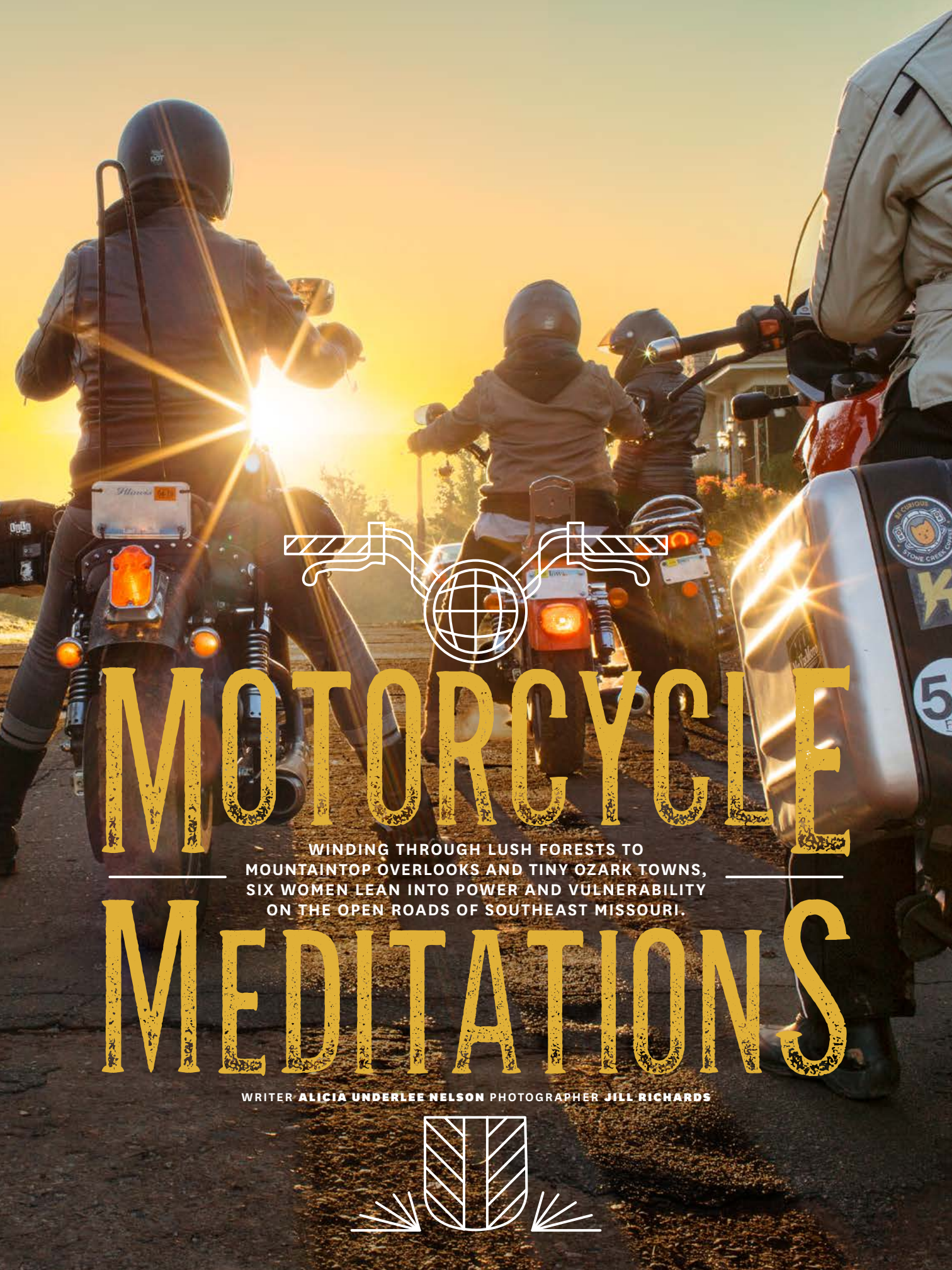
THE NEXT CHAPTER Each event attracts new attendees (including men), and many regulars have become friends. People are requesting Shady Ladies events in other cities, and Amy’s dreamed of opening a space to further the vision. “This is an opportunity for us to be able to see what women are doing,” she says. “If you can see it, you can emulate it.”



↑
book it

Amy says she’s determined to find a way to float an event down the Detroit River on a barge or tugboat. And she’d love to host authors Rebecca Traister and Soraya Chemaly. Find tickets for upcoming readings at shadyladiesliterarysociety.com.

PHOTOGRAPHS: HEATHER SAUNDERS



MOTORCYCLE

WINDING THROUGH LUSH FORESTS TO MOUNTAINTOP OVERLOOKS AND TINY OZARK TOWNS, SIX WOMEN LEAN INTO POWER AND VULNERABILITY ON THE OPEN ROADS OF SOUTHEAST MISSOURI.

MEDITATIONS

WRITER ALICIA UNDERLEE NELSON PHOTOGRAPHER JILL RICHARDS



M

EGHAN MOORLACH AND HER FRIENDS don't notice the woman eyeing them outside a gas station south of St. Louis as they park their motorcycles in the rain. But the woman notices them. "Look at you girls!" she hollers across the parking lot. "Hard-asses! Hell-raisers!"

The women raise their fists and let out a whoop—then walk in the front door, soaked and shivering. But as they take off their helmets, they're grinning. The Burnout Babes have just begun a tour through southeast Missouri, and weather hasn't dampened their enthusiasm for the ride. The group pieced together a new-to-everyone, three-day route through the Ozark hills, a loop of quiet backroads bookended by two storied byways that meet in St. Louis: historic Route 66 and the Great River Road. Planned pit stops include billion-year-old boulders, a Civil War battlefield, waterfalls that cut through granite, and ice cream (always ice cream). But the real lure is the road itself, an asphalt ribbon unspooling through sleepy towns, under the green-gold canopy of Mark Twain National Forest, and past signs advertising bait, barbecue and Jesus.

Everyone on this trip knows Meghan, who started The Burnout Babes, a women's motorcycle riders group in Des Moines. Most of them have joined Meghan on trips across swaths of the United States or over the

ABOVE The riders approach Route 66 near the small town of Cuba. BELOW Meghan Moorlach, founder of The Burnout Babes, and her friends stretch their legs near the summit of Taum Sauk Mountain.





“When you’re on a motorcycle, that’s the common denominator ... a baseline appreciation for each other.”

VIV — ” — SEDLACHEK



FROM LEFT Meghan parks her bike at Fort Davidson Ruins, the historic site of the Battle of Pilot Knob. The riders settle into a rental bungalow for the night at Arcadia Academy. October’s first splashes of red and yellow frame the pink granite at Elephant Rocks State Park in Arcadia Valley.

Himalayas in India. For this ride, the wry and bespectacled Kat Hutchison traveled with Meghan from Des Moines. Cam Roberts and Vic Sedlachek—friends so close they’re referred to as “CamAndVic”—arrived on touring bikes from Milwaukee. Nora Hess and Michelle Halweg roared down from Chicago.

Meghan launched The Burnout Babes in 2015 on Instagram to find like-minded women who love motorcycles. Michelle, who co-founded a similar group in Chicago called The Bleeders, describes it as a refreshing departure from hypermasculine, hierarchical motorcycle clubs. Groups like these just want to encourage people to get out on the road together.

“There’s no president, vice president,” Michelle says, taking a drag on a cigarette and waving the terms away like smoke. “Everybody gets a say.”

On this Missouri sojourn, some of the women met for the first time among air mattresses and a pinball machine in a cozy St. Louis Airbnb. By the next morning, they’re cocooned in a booth at Egg restaurant, trading routes and bites of each other’s breakfasts while assessing their loose plan and alternative options amid a wet forecast.

“On a motorcycle, you might wake up and it’s raining or you have a flat tire,” Meghan says. “You can’t get your heart broken if something doesn’t happen. You have to go with the flow.”

In an era of turn-by-turn directions, top 10 lists and full bucket lists crammed into a few precious vacation days, this slow, goal-free travel feels countercultural. It’s raw and immersive.

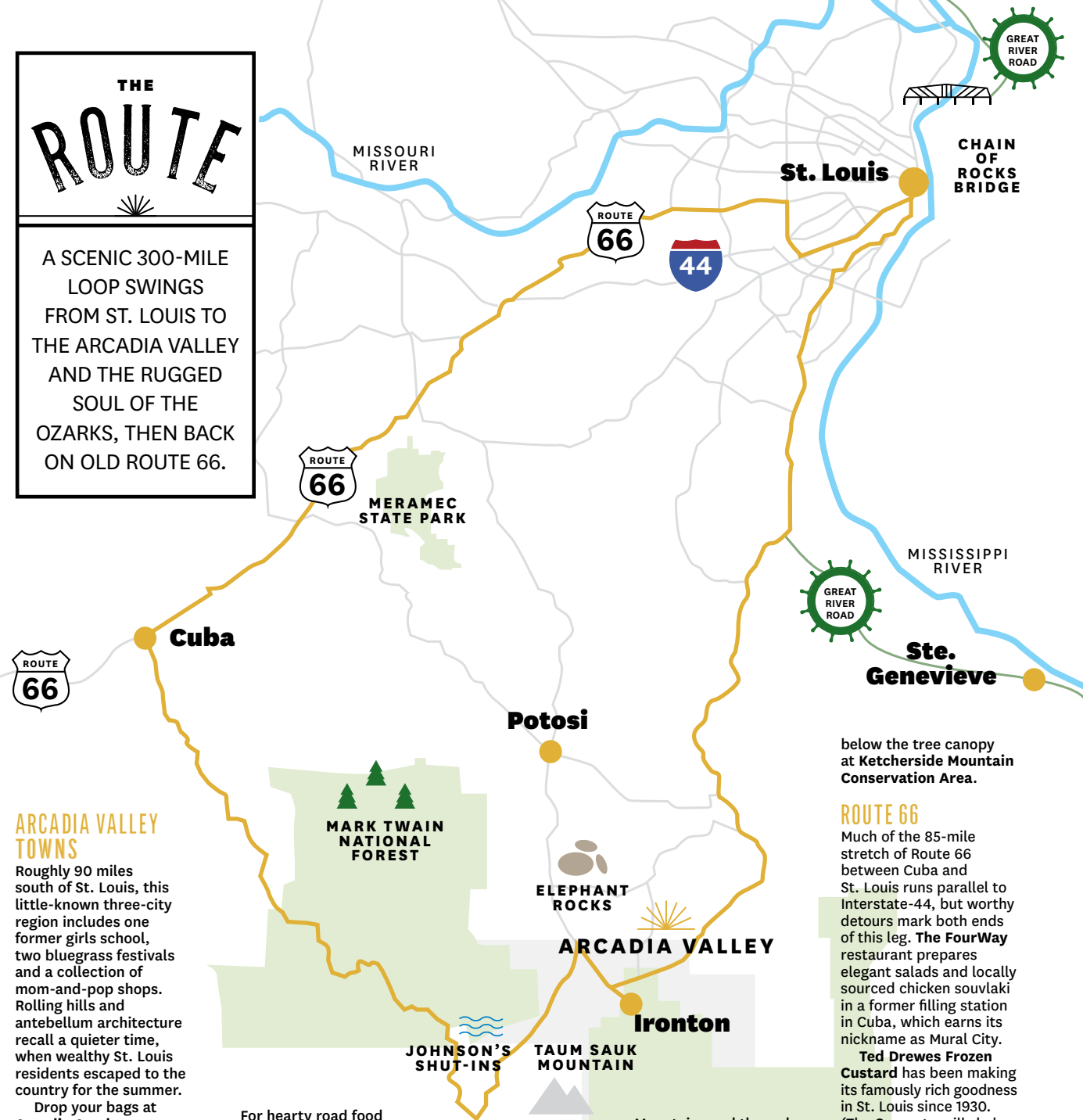
IN AN ERA OF TURN-BY-TURN DIRECTIONS, TOP 10 LISTS AND FULL BUCKET LISTS CRAMMED INTO A FEW PRECIOUS VACATION DAYS, THIS SLOW, GOAL-FREE TRAVEL FEELS COUNTERCULTURAL. IT’S RAW AND IMMERSIVE.

“You’re completely out in the elements; you’re feeling the wind buffeting you, you’re smelling the cows as you go by,” Cam says. “It’s a much more



THE ROUTE

A SCENIC 300-MILE LOOP SWINGS FROM ST. LOUIS TO THE ARCADIA VALLEY AND THE RUGGED SOUL OF THE OZARKS, THEN BACK ON OLD ROUTE 66.



ARCADIA VALLEY TOWNS

Roughly 90 miles south of St. Louis, this little-known three-city region includes one former girls school, two bluegrass festivals and a collection of mom-and-pop shops. Rolling hills and antebellum architecture recall a quieter time, when wealthy St. Louis residents escaped to the country for the summer.

Drop your bags at **Arcadia Academy**, a former girls school in Arcadia. Bed-and-breakfast suites feature claw-foot tubs, and stone bungalows have full kitchens and big porches.

Down the road in Ironton, **Arcadia Valley Roasting Company** serves cake doughnuts and coffee from a farm in Nicaragua. Debra Hendron reimagines her grandmother's lye and pine tar soaps at **Arcadia Valley Soap Company**.

For hearty road food with a sense of humor (Half-A-Clucker fried chicken), try **FDC** cafe in Pilot Knob. It's just steps from **Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site**, which commemorates a Civil War battle that left Ironton's courthouse with cannonball scars.

NATURAL WONDERS

Just west of Arcadia Valley, the route sweeps past a cluster of cool parks. At 133-acre

Elephant Rocks State Park, visitors hike the 1-mile Braille Trail to explore giant pink granite boulders that rise up above the forest.

Taum Sauk Mountain State Park claims Missouri's tallest peak and the state's highest waterfall. A section of the Ozark Trail starts below the falls, winds over the St. Francois

Mountains and through a passage of volcanic rock. About 30 miles away, the summer dreamscape of **Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park** rushes through the valley. The Black River carved chutes and pools into stone to create the natural water park.

A staggering 750 miles of trails crisscross the 1.5 million acres of **Mark Twain National Forest** (broken into six districts). And you'll find striking fall drives

below the tree canopy at **Ketcherside Mountain Conservation Area**.

ROUTE 66

Much of the 85-mile stretch of Route 66 between Cuba and St. Louis runs parallel to Interstate-44, but worthy detours mark both ends of this leg. **The FourWay** restaurant prepares elegant salads and locally sourced chicken souvlaki in a former filling station in Cuba, which earns its nickname as Mural City.

Ted Drewes Frozen Custard has been making its famously rich goodness in St. Louis since 1930. (The Concrete milkshake is so thick it's served upside down.) Also in southwest St. Louis, the doughnuts at **Donut Drive In** are just as addictive.

Just north of St. Louis, the old **Chain of Rocks Bridge** spans the Mississippi River. This historic Route 66 site with a 30-degree turn is now closed to motorized vehicles. Bike or walk across to reach Illinois' Great River Road stretch on the other side.

heightened sensory experience. I get bored on car trips. Even if the scenery is beautiful, I don't feel connected to it like I do when I'm on the bike."

The scenic Arcadia Valley marks the bullseye on the map for day one. The group wraps up the ride with dinner at **Thee Abbey Kitchen**, located on the misty grounds of Arcadia Academy, a former Catholic girls school that once drew students from as far away as Europe and Cuba. Katherine and Darwin Rouse bought the sprawling complex from Katherine's mother, who says she purchased these towering brick buildings because she'd seen them in her dreams. That kind of story is barely surprising around here.

The Ozark Mountains have attracted visionaries for generations. Mighty Osage hunters and revivalist preachers traversed the region, while Scottish, English and Irish immigrants coaxed a living out of the hills. Herbalists like Kerry Brock, owner of **Shawnee Moon**, a wellness and herbs shop in Potosi, scour the same terrain for echinacea, chicory and dandelion. Kerry turns them into tinctures by moonlight, just like her Native American mentor taught her. Tradition flows just below the surface of modern life.

Visiting the Arcadia Valley also means wading into the intimacy of its small towns. In Ironton, musicians gather on Fridays in the town square to play fiddle tunes and aching ballads distilled through generations of love and loss. This particular weekend, a fall celebration overlaps with the Arcadia Valley Mountain Music Festival (held each May and October). Meghan and her crew nod at vendors selling spicy pork rinds and blackberry pies in the street. High school beauty queens will soon be waving from parade floats.

These towns see plenty of travelers, but few strangers. As the women scramble along the boulders of Elephant Rocks State Park the next day, they wave amiably at some familiar faces: a family visiting from western Missouri that they'd met the previous night after dinner.

Between each stop, the road brings focus and solitude, even if it's within the white noise of your own helmet. The sun-dappled ride to Missouri's highest peak, 1,772 feet above sea level in Taum Sauk Mountain State Park, is an exercise in mindfulness. To get there, The Burnout Babes follow yet another gently winding road, their bodies leaning reflexively into the curves. The soothing rhythm of the forest is a constant, comforting blur until the trees part to reveal a rippling vista of russet, emerald and flax.



FROM TOP Meghan and Vic take an ice cream break at **Thee Abbey Kitchen's** bakery in Arcadia. These boots were made for riding—and airing out after many rainy miles. Michelle Halweg snaps a photo at **Elephant Rocks State Park**, where the boulders resemble a train of pachyderms.



“You’re completely out in the elements.
 You’re feeling the wind buffeting you.
 You’re smelling the cows as you go by.”

— ” —
 CAM ROBERTS



When the road west through Mark Twain National Forest unexpectedly turns to gravel, the group stops to assess the risk. Although everybody grinned earlier at Kat’s cheeky “Fake it ‘til you make it” quip, the shadow side of a motorcycle’s power is vulnerability—to the elements, to road conditions, to rider fatigue, to other drivers. On or off the road, the fragility of life always hangs close, unspoken but respected. Cam’s and Vic’s bikes bear stickers honoring friends who died young, and Cam carries the ashes of a friend in a slim pendant. They take a closer look at the gravel, discuss, then ride out slowly, with the deliberate air of a procession.

On the other side of the forest, they cruise past quiet vineyards and over the Meramec River, where locals take leisurely floats. Before hitting Route 66 on the final push back to St. Louis, they roll into Cuba, bikes silhouetted by the sunset. They find a bar called The Rose and are welcomed like sisters by Rose herself and other bikers.

“When you’re on a motorcycle, that’s the common denominator,” Vic says. “You can go somewhere fancy, you can go somewhere rough, but if you’re a rider, you have a baseline appreciation for each other.”

The proprietress pours a glass of moonshine, and the women pass it around. It’s as bracing as the cold night air. They drink to new friends, to the trip’s end, to the expansive peace of riding alone, together. [MWL](#)



FROM LEFT The riders reach Route 66 in Cuba at sunset. Nora Hess, of Chicago, takes a break at Taum Sauk Mountain State Park, home to Missouri’s highest point.

WRITER TIMOTHY MEINCH

GALILENA

alchemy

PHOTOGRAPH: COURTESY OF VISITGALILENA.ORG

WHEN LEAVES TURN TO GOLD IN A TOWN BUILT ON LEAD.

GALENA WAS NAMED AFTER A PRECIOUS LEAD MINERAL ABUNDANT BENEATH THE TOWN'S SURFACE. FOUR DECADES SINCE THE LAST MINE SHUT DOWN, A MOVIE SET-PERFECT MAIN STREET MAKES THIS NORTHWEST ILLINOIS TOWN A GOLDEN GETAWAY. AFTER MINING THE SHOPS, ESCAPE TO THE COUNTRY FOR HIKING, BIKING AND THE LEAFY RICHES OF FALL.



HIT THE STREETS

MAIN STREET SPANS 140 MOSTLY 19TH-CENTURY BUILDINGS HOUSING 100-PLUS SHOPS, RESTAURANTS AND INDEPENDENT INNS.

To experience max charm, go to jail. Galena native Matthew Carroll re-opened the old county slammer as **Jail Hill Inn** in 2016. This year, TripAdvisor named it the best inn or bed-and-breakfast in the country. Find former prisoner names carved into the windowsill in suite 301. A splurge stay includes

a generous happy hour and a three-course breakfast that may be the tastiest meal in town. Somehow it remains mostly a one-man show, with Matthew handling daily reservations, check-ins and the bulk of the kitchen work.

For another historic stay, check out **DeSoto House Hotel**. Abraham Lincoln

once gave a speech from the balcony, and it served as presidential campaign headquarters for local hero Ulysses S. Grant. At the **Ulysses S. Grant Home** nearby, guided tours run Wednesday through Sunday. Ninety percent of the furnishings are original.

You can easily spend a day following Main Street

eye candy into shops. Sample nearly 100 flavored oils and vinegars at **Galena Garlic Company**. Peruse fun cooking gadgets and books at **The Grateful Gourmet Company**. Or stockpile absurdly hot sauces from the arsenal at **Galena Canning Company**.

Along the way, pop into one of Galena's dining mainstays: **Fritz and Frites** combines German and French flavors in a cafe setting. Book a dinner date at **Fried Green Tomatoes** for wild mushroom ravioli and other Italian fare. **Durty Gurt's** is as quirky and casual as it sounds, serving up

loaded burgers, rum buckets and boozy shakes. If fright-seeing is more your style, **Amelia's Galena Ghost Tours** and several other businesses lead haunted walks and rides into pubs, outside cemeteries and to other public spaces after dark.

IN THE KNOW

getaway town Galena is Illinois' second-most visited city for tourism. What does that mean for a town of 3,500? There are more ghost tour companies than grocery stores, and guest beds reportedly outnumber locals.



JAIL HILL INN



PHOTOGRAPHS: (CHURCH) MICHAEL SERONI, (JAIL HILL) COURTESY OF JAIL HILL INN, (DOWNTOWN AERIAL, DINNER, STREET CROSSING) VISITGALENA.ORG, (GALENA CELLARS) BOB STEFKO, (BLAUM BROS.) COURTESY OF ILLINOIS OFFICE OF TOURISM



GALENA CELLARS VINEYARD AND WINERY



FRIED GREEN TOMATOES

SIPS

Raise a glass

Savor a cocktail at **Blaum Bros. Distilling Company**. Or you can line up a flight—bourbon, rye, gin and HellFyre (vodka infused with peppercorns, habanero and jalapeño). Throw them back in a mod tasting room of exposed beams, wooden barrels and plush leather couches. Brothers Mike and Matt Blaum opened this delicious spot on the edge of town in 2013.

About 6 miles from downtown, don't expect farm animals or grain in the large barns at **Galena Cellars Vineyard and Winery**. They've been repurposed for winemaking and storage (50 varieties). After touring the grounds, sample the goods at a tasting in the old country farmhouse—with live music Saturdays through September.

Chicago-born Rosario Bruno taps his Italian roots for his wines at **Fergedaboudit Vineyard and Winery**. Staples include Cabernet Franc, Marechal Foch and Leon Millot (which uses an Illinois grape for a Chianti-style wine).



BLAUM BROS. DISTILLING COMPANY



LOOKOUT POINT VIEW AT MISSISSIPPI PALISADES

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LOOKOUT POINT, SENTINEL TRAIL) BOB STEFKO, (BALLOON) COURTESY OF ILLINOIS OFFICE OF TOURISM, (E-BIKES) COURTESY OF VISITGALENA.ORG, (POTTER) COURTESY OF ESHELMAN POTTERY

GET OUT OF TOWN

GALENA SITS ON THE SOUTHERN EDGE OF THE DRIFTLESS REGION, WHERE THE RIVERS AND ROCKY BLUFFS DODGED THE FLATTENING FORCE OF GLACIERS LONG AGO. CHECK OUT THE FALL COLORS BY FOOT OR ON A PEDAL-ASSIST BICYCLE.

Perched above Lake Galena, **Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa** is a central hub for The Galena Territory, a scenic development of vacation homes. Guests can access **Thunder Bay Falls** spilling out of the lake. Arrive early to beat wedding photographers to the popular rocky, misty backdrop.

For thigh-burning hikes, plan a 30-minute drive southwest to **Mississippi Palisades State Park**. You can string together more than 5 miles of short trails. Expect some steady uphill climbs, such as Sentinel Trail, to reach rock faces where you might spot eagles. In nearby Savanna, grab a bite at **Poopy's**, a roadside restaurant with three bars that draws the biker crowd. Or check out **Frank Fritz Finds**, an antique store run by the *American Pickers* co-host.

In 1900, an archaeologist documented 51 Native American mounds at what's now **Casper Bluff Land and Water Reserve**, 5 miles outside Galena. Today you can look for some of them while hiking the 85-acre preserve, which is popular with bird-watchers and offers grand Mississippi River vistas.

Cyclists can cover 8 miles on the **Galena River Trail**. Rent a battery-powered e-bike from **Fever River Outfitters** to make it a sweat-free affair. Some rental packages include access to **Chestnut Mountain Resort** (alpine slide included) or **Galena Cellars**, with a shuttle ride back to avoid any buzzed biking.

THE WRAFT OF FUNNEL CAKES AND HAND-CUT FRIES LEADS TO BATIK BAGS, SMALL METAL SCULPTURES AND RARE FOLK ART CREATIONS.



POTTER PAUL ESHELMAN

FALL DATES

Follow the makers

Rather than throw clay on a wheel, potter Paul Eshelman carves plaster models with woodworking tools to craft ramen bowls, mugs and other ceramic vessels. Step into his workspace (in Elizabeth) and several others in the area during the self-guided **Twenty Dirty Hands Pottery Tour**. The event, October 18-20 this year, draws visitors into towns and scenic nooks beyond Galena.

At the **Galena Country Fair**, the waft of funnel cakes and hand-cut fries leads to Batik bags, small metal sculptures and rare folk art creations in Grant Park. More than 150 vendors of fine art and food will gather Columbus Day weekend, October 12-13, for the 40th annual celebration.

Flames blast into the sky to illuminate costumed performers and elaborate street floats at the annual **Halloween Parade and Festival**. After 40 years, the Main Street event has become one of the city's biggest, so book your lodging far in advance of the October 26 festivities. [MWL](#)



IN THE KNOW

bird's eye
Departing from Eagle Ridge Resort and Spa, Galena on the Fly hot-air balloon tours soar up to 3,000 feet above the rolling landscape of water, fields and trees.



SENTINEL TRAIL AT MISSISSIPPI PALISADES



E-BIKE RIDE THROUGH THE COUNTRYSIDE

EVENTS

ILLINOIS

Elgin Short Film Festival

ELGIN **SEPTEMBER 21** Filmmakers have 20 minutes to dazzle judges and audience members with original live-action or animated shorts at The Hemmens Cultural Center. Top finalists' films are shown in the 1,200-seat theater. cityofelgin.org

Shrimp Festival

GOLCONDA **SEPTEMBER 21** This Ohio River town is known for its top-notch, farm-raised seafood (really!). Sample freshwater prawns prepared more than a dozen ways by area chefs during the shrimp cook-off. mainstreetgolconda.org

Knox County Scenic Drive

KNOX COUNTY **OCTOBER 5-6, 12-13** Stops along this self-guided driving tour of the Spoon River Valley include museums, century-old chapels and National Register of Historic Places buildings. Plus homemade pie. knoxcountyscenicdrive.com

INDIANA

Grabill Country Fair

GRABILL **SEPTEMBER 5-7** The community swells the weekend after Labor Day when locals offer a rare glimpse into Amish life. Fairgoers enjoy homestyle cooking, a pie-eating contest, crafts and bluegrass concerts. grabillcountryfair.org

Indy Festival of Faiths

INDIANAPOLIS **SEPTEMBER 22** Members from more than 75 congregations celebrate their beliefs through music, films, poetry readings and food. Visitors participate in Q&A discussions and attend mindful meditation workshops. centerforinterfaithcooperation.org

Trevor Noah

BLOOMINGTON **OCTOBER 11** The Emmy award-winning host of *The Daily Show* blends stories from his impoverished childhood in South Africa with his rise to fame into an honest—and hilarious—evening of stand-up at the Indiana University Auditorium. iuauditorium.com

IOWA

Architecture Tours

MASON CITY **FRIDAYS-SUNDAYS, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30** Ranked as one of the best cities for architecture, this northern Iowa spot boasts the world's largest collection of Prairie School-style homes surrounding a natural setting. The one-hour tour showcases buildings by Frank Lloyd Wright and more. wrightonthepark.org

Sulkies to Speedways: A Need for Speed in Cedar Valley

WATERLOO **THROUGH NOVEMBER 16** The Grout Museum of History and Science's collection of antique motorcycles, sulky carts, hot rods and memorabilia examines the history of popular venues and styles. groutmuseumdistrict.org

Tattoo: Identity Through Ink

DECORAH **THROUGH APRIL 26, 2020** The Vesterheim Museum's exhibit explores the 5,000-year history of tattoos. Plan your visit around a live tattoo event, when prominent artists show off their skills. vesterheim.org



KANSAS

ICT Fest

WICHITA **SEPTEMBER 6-7** An eclectic lineup of rock, pop, hip-hop, punk and electronic bands takes the stage at the Wave venue. The music continues during discounted after-party shows at watering holes throughout downtown. ictfest.com

Kincaid Fair

KINCAID **SEPTEMBER 26-28** For 110 years, the small town has celebrated the end of summer with a three-day bash featuring turtle races, horseshoe pitching, a parade and buffalo chip-chucking contests. kincaidfair.com

Tour de Salt

HUTCHINSON **OCTOBER 13** You've biked the prairie's sun-soaked terrain. Now pedal 650 feet underneath it through a salt mine. Headlamps and helmets required. underkansas.org

MICHIGAN

Frankenmuth Funtown Chowdown Food Truck Festival

FRANKENMUTH **SEPTEMBER 12** Chefs sling street food, such as tacos, deep-fried cheese curds and chicken dinners, from trucks parked at Frankenmuth River Place Shops. Local brewers serve serious suds. frankenmuthriverplace.com

Tulipanes Latino Art and Film Festival

HOLLAND **SEPTEMBER 19-21** Venues throughout town screen award-winning shorts and feature films that spotlight Latino culture. Most showings are free; all films have English subtitles. laup.org

Fall Color Tour by Kayak

MIDLAND **OCTOBER 10** Forget road trips. The best way to catch Michigan's peak fall foliage is from the seat of a kayak. Join guides from the Chippewa Nature Center in a leisurely trip down the Chippewa River. chippewanaturecenter.org

MINNESOTA

Mahkato Wacipi

MANKATO **SEPTEMBER 20-22** Each fall, three days of music and education in Mankato's Land of Memories Park honor the fallen warriors of the 1862 Dakota-U.S. Conflict. mahkatowacipi.org

F. Scott Fitzgerald Walking Tour SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

SEPTEMBER 28-29 Explore the acclaimed author's turf during guided, 90-minute walking tours through his hometown. Stops include Fitzgerald's birthplace and the brownstone where he wrote his first novel. mnhs.org

Park Escape

SAINT JOSEPH **OCTOBER 17-20** Your goal: Help break a witch's curse before time runs out. The twist? You're trapped in a county park—not an escape room. Activities include deciphering puzzles and tackling physical challenges along hiking routes. hikehoppers.org

MISSOURI

Archeology Day at Graham Cave State Park

DANVILLE **SEPTEMBER 14** Home to Native Americans 10,000 years ago, this archaeological site was the first in the country to be designated a National Historic Landmark. Park employees host excavation demos. mostateparks.com

Craftoberfest

ST. LOUIS **OCTOBER 10** Twinkling lights illuminate the city's first nighttime, open-air market, where 40 vendors offer handmade, vintage-inspired goods. Nearby breweries pour pints for shoppers, adding to the *craft* experience. craftoberfest.com

Déjà Vu Spirit Reunion

STE. GENEVIEVE **OCTOBER 26** Historical figures guide family-friendly tours of the state's oldest cemetery. The 1787-1880 burial ground includes tombs of pioneers, African Americans and Native Americans who shaped Missouri. visitstegen.com

NEBRASKA

AppleJack Festival

NEBRASKA CITY **SEPTEMBER 20-22** Fall's quintessential fruit draws nearly 80,000 people for apple-peeling races, pie-baking competitions, barrel-bobbing contests and more. Hayrides shuttle visitors to local orchards for apple picking. gonebraskacity.com

Continued on page 99

EVENTS

Continued from page 96

Annie Moses Band

KEARNEY OCTOBER 4 This award-winning, classical-crossover group (made up of six siblings!) performs folk-inspired renditions of classic songs. kearneyconcerts.org

Louder than Words: Rock, Power and Politics

OMAHA FROM OCTOBER 12 At The Durham Museum, explore artifacts from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the Newseum. The exhibit explores the impact music has had on political topics, such as civil rights. durhammuseum.org

NORTH DAKOTA

Maddock Rural Renaissance Festival

MADDOCK SEPTEMBER 22–24 A Medieval market and horse rides combine with pumpkin bowling and wine tastings—a Renaissance Fair-meets-Oktoberfest mash-up. maddocknd.com

GameChanger Ideas Festival

BISMARCK OCTOBER 5 In Belle Mehus Auditorium, author Casey Gerald and other GameChangers will explore this year's topic of The Myth of the American Dream. gamechangerd.com

Sauerkraut Day

WISHEK OCTOBER 9 Cooks serve 125 gallons of kraut with 500 pounds of wieners and speck during a free lunch. wishek-nd.com

OHIO

Kimono: Refashioning Contemporary Style

CINCINNATI THROUGH SEPTEMBER 15 This Cincinnati Art Museum exhibit celebrates the influence that traditional Japanese formalwear has on modern fashion. cincinnatiartmuseum.org

SPACE: A Journey to Our Future

GALLIPOLIS FROM SEPTEMBER 7 The Bossard Memorial Library hosts a 5,000-square-foot touring NASA exhibit, at which you can play astronaut in a self-powered centrifuge and tour a full-scale future moon habitat. bossardlibrary.org

Roscoe Village Apple Butter Stirrin'

COSHOCTON OCTOBER 18–20 Warm apple butter, hand-stirred in copper kettles over open fires, stars at this 49th annual fest. Local vendors serve apple specialties alongside demonstrations, craft exhibits and outdoor stages. roscoevillage.com

SOUTH DAKOTA

Black Hills Plein Air Paint-Out

HILL CITY SEPTEMBER 25–28 Hike some of the Black Hills' best-known trails to watch artists paint iconic scenery. Buy art or bid on a piece in the charity auction. artistsoftheblackhills.com

Siouxpercon

SIOUX FALLS SEPTEMBER 27–29 Lovers of comics, fantasy, sci-fi and gaming unite. Join them for

speakers, workshops and the state's largest cosplay contest at Sioux Falls Convention Center. siouxpercon.com

South Dakota Festival of Books

DEADWOOD OCTOBER 4–6 Bookworms rub elbows with local and national authors during signings, presentations, panel discussions and writing workshops. sdhumanities.org

WISCONSIN

Maker and Muse: Women and Early Twentieth Century Art Jewelry

OSHKOSH THROUGH SEPTEMBER 22 Highlights among the 200 pieces of jewelry on view at Paine Art Center and Gardens include works by Louis Comfort Tiffany and more. thepaine.org

China Lights: Treasures of China

HALES CORNERS SEPTEMBER 13–OCTOBER 20 Chinese lantern-makers bring their tradition to Boerner Botanical Gardens. Day or night, explore the colorful, 20-plus-foot displays that dot the grounds. chinalights.org

Protospiel

MADISON OCTOBER 17–20 Object: Provide feedback to rising game designers. Directions: Join other strategy nerds in testing board and card games before they hit shelves. Here, everyone wins. protospiel-madison.org MWL
Lauren Kassien

out *and* about

Bonus content for select readers in

ILLINOIS / INDIANA / MICHIGAN / MINNESOTA / WISCONSIN



OA2 GETAWAY TO MILWAUKEE | **OA8 THE BUZZ: EAT & DRINK** BUTCHER'S CAFE/HAPPY PIES/
BEAN-TO-BAR CHOCOLATE/FRESH-ROASTED COFFEE | **OA10 THE BUZZ: PLAY** ZIP COASTER/HEARTLAND FILM
FESTIVAL/BALLET ANNIVERSARY/MEGA BOUNCE HOUSE/CREEPY COCKTAIL PARTY/"PLAYING" GOLF/BIXBEE
POP-UP/RAGE ROOM | **OA16 THE BUZZ: STAY** WOODED OVERNIGHT/ZEN HOTEL

a wisconsin deer garden

Milwaukee's new arena district serves up brews, tunes and fun for hoops fans and other visitors. Bucks gear not required (but probably inevitable).



by 4:30 on a Milwaukee Bucks game day, the plaza outside Fiserv Forum is bumping—literally. The bass from an Ariana Grande song thumps underfoot while throngs of fans in Antetokounmpo jerseys play cornhole and mill around a nearby beer garden with brews and plastic cups of brandy in hand. They're tailgating in the Deer District before one of the Bucks' final home games before ending their storied run in last season's NBA playoffs.

Even if you're not a basketball buff, the excitement is intoxicating, especially when you pause to admire the sleek facade of Fiserv Forum, a \$524 million arena that opened last fall. It's the anchor of the 30-acre Deer District, which includes an adjacent plaza with bars, restaurants and a partially covered outdoor beer garden. The sprawling pedestrian square is a showstopping centerpiece to

Milwaukee's evolving downtown. It's also part of a new generation of arenas and stadiums that anchor entertainment districts, like Green Bay's Titledown District and Gallagher Way by Wrigley Field in Chicago. Besides Bucks games and concerts at Fiserv Forum (October brings The Black Keys and Miranda Lambert), Deer District events include live music, fitness classes and movie screenings.

Fiserv Forum, like the energetic young Bucks team that calls it home, represents the new guard in Milwaukee. Step inside the light-filled atrium and you'll wonder if you're inside an arena at all. Stylish Edison bulb light fixtures illuminate some of the spaces. Local restaurants serve up tacos, poké bowls and barbecue at concession stands. And features like reclaimed local wood paneling and Cream City brick accent walls add an only-in-Milwaukee aesthetic.

FORUM FIVE

1

OPEN CONCEPT
With the court and scoreboard visible from many concourse bars and restaurants, you'll never miss a second of the game.



2

ART TO FAWN OVER
Walk the arena and admire the Milwaukee Bucks Art Collection. On the main concourse, pay a visit to Buckley, a life-size stag created with recycled basketballs.



3

FOODIE FORUM
You'll find diverse eats at concession stands run by local restaurants. Delight your sweet tooth with candy sold by the pound at the Wonka-esque Candy Lab.



4

THE SUITE LIFE
You don't need to be a high roller to get into the Panorama Club, a sky-level terrace that's open to everyone at the top of the building.



5

FEAR THE DEER
The 2019-20 season starts in October and is sure to draw a crowd. (The team last year logged its best playoff run in two decades.)



DO THE DISTRICT

No tickets? No biggie: You can get close to the action from one of the bars or restaurants in the plaza.



PUNCH BOWL SOCIAL



GOOD CITY BREWING



THE BEER GARDEN



THE MECCA



DRINK WISCONSINBLY PUB



BEST FOR

Gamers and groups, with eight bowling lanes, karaoke rooms and a throwback arcade room.

BEST FOR

Hungry hopheads in search of craft brews and elevated pub grub.

BEST FOR

An (almost) al fresco brew. Saddle up to the covered bar to order a beer or a canned cocktail, then snag a seat at a picnic table on the plaza.

BEST FOR

Wannabe courtside-ticket holders. Watch the game on dozens of screens throughout—including above the bathroom hand dryers.

BEST FOR

A laid-back Wisco brew or local-liquor cocktail served amid the vibe of a Northwoods neighborhood tavern.

ORDER

A crowd-pleasing punch. A bowl of Will Conga Line for Rum is made with two rums, pomegranate green tea, almond syrup and fresh lime juice.

ORDER

Stone-hearth oven pizza, and wash it down with an IPA. Try the citrusy, balanced Risk IPA or the Reward Double IPA—a bolder (and boozier) option.

ORDER

Any of the 20 rotating Wisconsin beers on tap, featuring breweries from around the state, like Lakefront, New Glarus and Hinterland.

ORDER

The Cream City Chimney Stack Nachos, served in a charcoal chimney starter and topped with barbecue chicken, avocado cream and pico de gallo.

ORDER

The Drink Wisconsin Old Fashioned, crafted with house brandy, Wisconsin-made bitters and a delightfully 'Sconnie cheese curd garnish.



←
check the score

Nobody blocks the TV here, thanks to the enormous outdoor screen at The Beer Garden.

→
ride the hop

Milwaukee's streetcar is the newest way to get around downtown. Rides along the 2-mile route are free until November, then increase to \$1.





PABST BREWERY COMPLEX

Yep, you can totally add PBR to your flight at Pabst Brewery and Taproom.

STAY AND PLAY: HISTORIC PABST NEIGHBORHOOD

Where once sat a blighted remnant of Milwaukee's brewing past, you'll now find an entertainment hub that honors the neighborhood's hoppy history.

Check into a room at **The Brewhouse Inn and Suites**, where copper brew kettles anchor the lobby and an

original 1800s staircase brims with Victorian charm. Or stay at the hoop-theme **Hyatt Place** and sip a cocktail on the patio with views of Fiserv Forum. Grab a bite at **Jackson's Blue Ribbon Pub**, then head across the street to a 19th-century church-turned-**Pabst Brewery and Taproom**, with a tap

list featuring experimental brews like Mexican lagers alongside IPAs and the iconic Pabst Blue Ribbon.

Book a tour at **MKE Brewing Company**, which recently moved into new digs in the neighborhood. Sample the O-Gii, an Imperial Wit brewed with local Rishi Tea. Afterward, refuel at

adjoining **Glass + Griddle** and order the Disco Fries, topped with a heaping pile of Italian beef, mozzarella and giardiniera.

Walk through pocket-size **Preservation Park** for a speed session in local history, with plaques tracing Pabst Brewery's roots back to 1786.



THE BREWHOUSE INN AND SUITES



JACKSON'S BLUE RIBBON PUB



GLASS + GRIDDLE

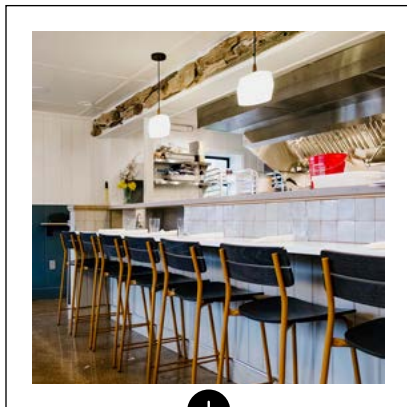
out and about THE BUZZ

Hot off the minds of travel writers across the region: your definitive guide on where to play, eat, drink and stay now.

WRITER ANN HINGA KLEIN



EAT & DRINK



Fresh from Chicago

SAUGATUCK, MICHIGAN

Butcher Melissa Corey, winner of the Food Network's *Chopped* competition, is making the west Michigan coast even more tantalizing. This spring, the esteemed Chicago chef opened Pennyroyal Cafe and Provisions on 2 acres just an hour's drive from the summer camp she loved as a kid.

Her partners in culinary crime are Ryan Beck, a farmer and garden designer, and pastry chef Bryan Kemp. The food plays on nostalgia and "the magic of eating something when it's perfectly ripe," Melissa says. Almost everything served or sold is local, including fresh produce and flowers from Melissa and Ryan's farm (they are also life partners) in nearby Fennville.

After sampling dishes like duck confit sandwiches with cherry mostarda or corn muffins topped with mascarpone and candied bacon, be sure to browse the take-home goods (hence the "provisions") in Pennyroyal's white barn. It serves triple duty as farm stand, event space and home base for classes in cheese making and butchery.

And pie isn't the only lure. Pots and Pans sells potted succulents from Clarissa's parents' wholesale greenhouse. Her bottled cold-brew coffee is a cult fave. And once per month, Burger Club members can show up in the evening for locally sourced grilled beef, served with the works on freshly baked buns.

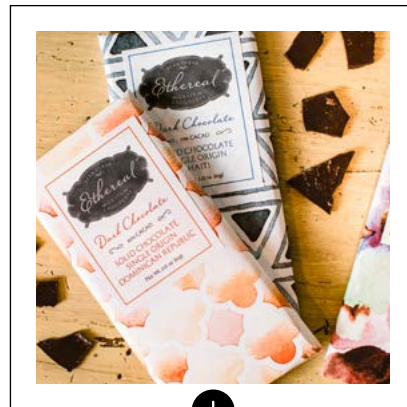
Pie in the Sky

INDIANAPOLIS

A line often stretches out the door at Pots and Pans bake shop—and a parade of smiles files out, as customers tote home sweet and savory pies in flavors like Apple Crumble, Pineapple Passion Fruit, Biscuits and Gravy, or Beef and Mushroom. Sometimes, people don't even make it home, settling in on the benches outside with a warm slice.

"Usually when you have pie, you're sharing," says owner Clarissa Morley, who got her start at farmers markets and opened her tiny storefront in Indy's hip Meridian-Kessler neighborhood late last year. Hearty pot pies (including a popular vegan option called The Rogue) make up half the business; fall's sweet top sellers include Maple Pecan, Caramel Pumpkin, Sugar Crème Brûlée and Sweet Potato Toasted Marshmallow.

A master of the 'gram, Clarissa stokes pie appetites across the city and beyond with mouthwatering posts of daily specials and behind-the-scenes kitchen fun. One trend that she's noticed: Snow days unleash a craving for her comfort food. "People want to snuggle up on the couches with their pies," she says. "We've learned to be ready for them."



All Roads Lead to Chocolate

WOODSTOCK, ILLINOIS

When Ethereal Confections says *made from scratch*, they're talking artisan chocolate bars, breads, pastries, syrups and even bitters for cocktails. You can buy many of the treats online, but driving to Woodstock from—well, just about anywhere—is worth every mile. A new cafe, 100-person events space and chocolate production facility fill up a 10,000-square-foot building on the town square. The spot, scheduled to open late August, marks Ethereal Confections' third move to a bigger place in eight years.

More space means more farm-to-table dishes like grain bowls, featuring microgreens and fried shallots, and wine



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and chocolate flights. There's even a speakeasy in the basement.

Sara Miller and Mary Ervin launched Ethereal in 2011. They recruited Mary's brother, Michael Ervin, to build a wholesale branch and explore a bean-to-bar biz model that involves farm visits overseas. "When we tried to buy equipment, the manufacturers would say, 'How many tons a day do you want to roast?' And we would say, 'Zero tons a day,'" Michael says. He tinkered with lentil grinders and bread proofers until he got the method right. To taste just how right he got it, try one of the dark chocolate Inclusion Bars featuring blueberry, almonds and lavender, or pistachios, cranberries and sea salt. All the chocolate is dairy- and gluten-free.

Home-Ground Coffee

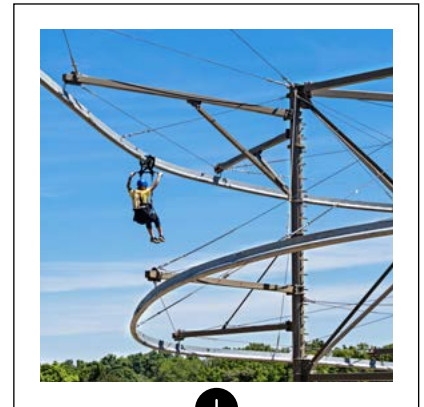
STEVENS POINT, WISCONSIN

For years, Ruby Coffee didn't have a storefront serving the daily brew, and yet the mail-order business climbed the ranks among the nation's best coffee roasters, earning accolades from GQ and Thrillist. But in May, owner Jared Linzmeier fulfilled a longtime dream and opened a cafe in Stevens Point, where fans can enjoy locally sourced foods like buckwheat crepes, quiche and maple sausage, along with the famous coffee, served drip or pour-over. There's also a shop to buy gear like mugs and shirts, plus, of course, freshly roasted beans for brewing at home.

Jared learned about roasting on the West Coast. In 2013, he moved back into his childhood home in Wisconsin, started the operation in his garage and named it in honor of his grandma. His roasting facility in nearby Nelsonville is open to the public on weekends for tours and has a tasting room, but the spacious new restaurant makes it a lot easier for people to discover his coffee. And, if you stop in for breakfast or lunch, you might even spot 90-year-old Ruby Szitta sitting at a table, proudly sipping a cup of her grandson's brew.



PLAY



So Fly

CORYDON, INDIANA

The new Bat Chaser at Indiana Caverns Family Adventure Park feels like hang gliding, ziplining and roller-coaster riding, all at the same time. Your job is to hang in a sling-style harness that descends from a 50-foot tower along a twisting track through the treetops.

Back on ground level, kids can pan for gemstones Old West-style in a wooden trough. And subterranean steel walkways take explorers 100-plus feet down to the park's namesake: a network of big limestone passages (Indiana's longest cave system) that you can visit by tour boat. A caving package available by reservation includes a lighted hard hat so the extra-adventurous can climb, crawl and kayak through an undeveloped portion into the pitch-black darkness.

Lose Yourself to Film

INDIANAPOLIS

Indiana's longest-running film festival has exploded into an 11-day celebration with 300 screenings, 200-plus rising

filmmakers from around the world and, often, some serious star power. Guests at the Heartland International Film Festival have included Robert Downey Jr., Jessica Biel, Rob Reiner and Robert Duvall.

Show up for screenings of more than 100 documentary and narrative features, plus the winning short films from the Indy Shorts International Film Festival. Parties, panels and Q&A sessions fill out the days, with a Filmmakers' Brunch to close the festival. This year, the popcorn starts popping on October 10.

When the world's biggest bounce house rolls into town, even adults get a time slot. A DJ drops beats to inspire your air-time.

THE BIG BOUNCE AMERICA

Behind the Curtain

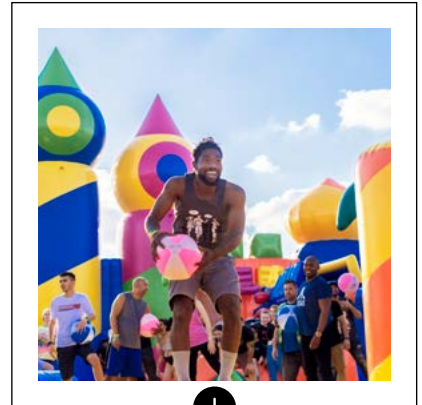
MILWAUKEE

The 50th anniversary season for the esteemed Milwaukee Ballet opens October 17 with a reprisal of the company's first full-length production, the lighthearted *Coppélia*.

What's new behind the scenes: completion of the 52,000-square-foot Baumgartner Center for Dance. The main company and the dancers of next-gen Milwaukee Ballet II (plus hundreds of Milwaukee Ballet School and Academy students) rehearse here. And for the public, the space also includes a 190-seat performance studio that hosts more intimate breakout sessions with smaller audiences.

The center will host the ballet's free programs for public school students (more than 200 participate every year)

and kids working to overcome physical challenges in a joint program with the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Main performances will remain at the Marcus Performing Arts Center and The Pabst Theater.



Pumped-Up Kicks

**ELK GROVE VILLAGE, ILLINOIS,
AND INDIANAPOLIS**

When the world's biggest bounce house rolls into town, even adults get a time slot. Run, climb and crawl through ninja warrior-like features for up to three hours at The Big Bounce America. A DJ drops beats to inspire your air-time.

New this year: The Giant obstacle course, plus airSPACE, a five-person-wide race slide. Afterward, chill among floating aliens and celestial spheres.

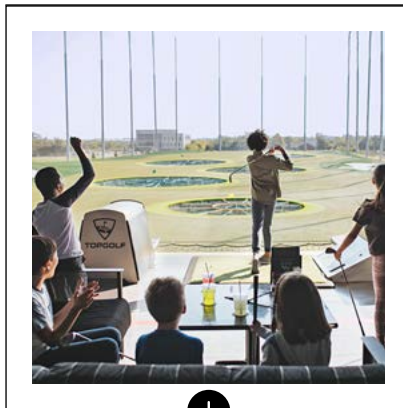
Designated sessions cater to young kids, teens and adults at the 10,000-square-foot play place. For the first two weekends in September, get your bounce on at Busse Lake Boating Center in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. The fun moves next to Waterman's Family Farm in Indianapolis for the third and fourth weekends of the month.

Spooky, with Style

LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS

Toast the season with the well-costumed spirits of residents past at an old-money estate on Chicago's North

Shore. At the Ragdale artists' retreat, the annual Rags to Witches preview cocktail party (October 18 this year) gets all the points for setting. Trees line the drive to an 1897 country house and historic barn on the 5-acre property that architect Howard Van Doren Shaw once called home. On October 20, costumed characters roam the grounds on stilts while kids search for candy in an imaginary pet cemetery. Inside, artists host creative play stations where kids can make creepy crafts, record scary sound effects and take selfies with giant animal heads.



A Slice of Golf Heaven

ALL ACROSS THE **REGION**

There's no rough at Topgolf. In fact, there's nothing rough at all about a place where you can sit back in a weather-protected bay, take turns hitting microchipped balls onto huge targets in the turf, and toast your success with margaritas, martinis and good food.

The concept launched in London in 2000. Since spreading to the United States, it just keeps expanding. Chicago has two monster complexes and a third in the works; Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Detroit, St. Louis and Columbus, Ohio, have one apiece.

Swing Suite, Topgolf's compact cousin, offers eating and drinking bays with simulated targets on a big screen. You'll find them in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Shopping Gone Fantastical

CHICAGO, **ILLINOIS**

For an Insta-worthy shopping experience, point the family SUV toward Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood. Through September 22, you can dive into a pop-up fantasyland of interactive rooms inspired by kiddie brand Bixbee, whose backpacks and lunch boxes come with names like Sparkalicious Butterflyer and Shark Camo. At Bixbee Imagination Station, kids and parents tour immersive rooms inspired by whimsical designs. We're talking dinos eating pizza, floors that emulate the bottom of the ocean and a huge taco for you to climb inside.

Tickets run \$23 for adults and \$15 for kids. A percentage of sales supports education for kids in the Chicago area. And Bixbee's buy-one-give-one model remains the same. Each backpack purchase provides a bag filled with school supplies for a child in need somewhere in the world.

Break It Up

BYRON CENTER, **MICHIGAN**

Spare the office copy machine, or the car that just cut you off at 70 mph or the Road Closed sign that made you late picking up the pooch from doggie day care (again). At Break Room Therapy, unleash your anger on printers, old radios and glass breakables in a safe space. The friendly staff will even give you the hammer to use. Pay for a 25-minute session and choose from a variety of items, including TVs, dishes and computer monitors. Or bring your own objects for a discounted price.



STAY

Out in the Woods

WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

Built from the ground up, The Whittaker Inn sports contemporary-mod design on the inside and Midwest farmhouse on the outside, plus 25 acres of fall color.

Elizabeth and Andrew Whittaker, both Purdue Hospitality grads, made their careers in East Coast restaurants and hotels before returning to western Indiana to open their dream property this spring. Meet them at check-in.

Andrew, who doubles as head chef, makes breakfast daily and plans to roll out weekday happy hour tapas in September. Elizabeth's mom, Pam, bakes treats like Double Drizzle Caramel Pecan cookies for night kitchens on both floors.

An International Scene

CHICAGO

From taxi driver to boxer and mafia boss, Robert De Niro is now playing hotel owner. The not-so-fictional role comes to life this fall with the opening of De Niro's Nobu Hotel Chicago. The actor launched the swanky project along with fellow actor-producer Meir Teper and their longtime friend, famed Los Angeles chef Nobu Matsuhisa.

In the Nobu restaurant, look for dishes like Jalapeño and Black Cod Miso. Head to the sushi bar for creative bites and sips, or to the rooftop terrace above the booming West Loop neighborhood. Signature Nobu platform beds and yoga mats await in Japanese-inspired rooms.

HESITATION POINT
Brown County State Park, Indiana



BEHIND THE LENS

It was a chilly late October morning at the northern tip of the park. I had already made two trips to Hesitation Point but had run into gray skies. This was my last chance. I arrived before sunrise: Clouds again. But I set up my tripod anyway, hoping for the best. Suddenly, the sky cleared and the fog condensed into dramatic pockets. I had about five minutes when all the elements came together to show off the stunning beauty of this secluded area of southern Indiana.

PHOTOGRAPHER **BOB STEFKO**