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Warm Springs proper is a small town that includes an art gallery, history museum and a public library, along with Bath County's circuit court and sheriff's office.

COVER: The recently remodeled Warm Springs Pools bathhouse in Warm Springs, Va.

Hitting Reset

Many of us have places we return to year after year. For me, that place is Warm Springs.

STORY & PHOTOS BY LAUREN LARocca

Bath County is bucolic, to say the least, nestled among the Allegheny Mountains of Virginia, but I often use the word “magical” when describing it. Traveling there each year feels like a pilgrimage.

Exiting the highway traffic of I-81 and heading deeper into the rolling hills and countryside, I always feel like I can finally exhale when I am on those small country roads again, creeks meandering through forest and pasture, almost like I’ve entered another world. My body begins to loosen its knots, even before soaking in the natural springs the area is known for.

I return year after year for the same reason I suspect people have returned for centuries: the magic of its waters. Archaeological evidence confirms that this area has been visited by humans for at least 9,000 years.

As Hidden Valley Bed & Breakfast owner Pam Stidham put it, “Once you come to Bath County, you’ll be back.”

SOAK YOUR BONES

The heart of Warm Springs, and I imagine why most people go in the first place, is Warm Springs Pools, operated by the Omni Homestead Resort & Spa, a massive hotel that sits 5 miles down the road in the



COURTESY LAUREN LARocca

neighboring town of Hot Springs. The bathhouse is fed by naturally warm, 98-degree waters, where you can soak and perhaps feel like you’re part of history, part of something timeless.

The crystal-clear water contains magnesium, lithium, manganese and other minerals, which gently loosen

gravity’s grip and relax any tightness held in the body. Small clusters of bubbles rise up from the gravelly bottom. Everyone in the pool speaks quietly or in whispers, as instructed. I wonder how much of the centered feeling I get there is simply being in such a unique place ~SEE NEXT PAGE~

The author takes a summer dip at a swimming hole at Blowing Springs Recreation Area, which is located inside George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.



The Inn at Gristmill Square operates the Waterwheel Restaurant out of an old mill building on-site.



— CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE —

— a rounded, 22-sided structure with a circular window at the top where sunlight streams in — and how much of it is the minerals easing any tension.

The Ladies' Pool House was built in the mid-1870s, while the nearby men's bathhouse was built much earlier, in 1761, and is said to be the oldest spa building in the nation. Its initial structure was simply a basin to hold water and allow for soaking. It became a covered bathhouse in the 1820s.

As locals like to boast, several notable people made stops to soak there, among them Thomas Jeffer-

son, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and The Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

Though in constant use, "Jefferson Pools," as the bathhouse had come to be known, remained largely untouched until 2021, when the Omni Homestead closed it for a much-needed, \$4 million renovation. My first visit back after its reopening, I was worried its new look might match the grandeur and luxury of the resort down the road, that it might lose the authenticity I'd come to know and love. I was pleasantly surprised to see the repairs were minimal.

The Omni was meticulous about

maintaining its historical integrity, Omni director of marketing and communications Lynn Swann told me during a visit. For instance, they would cut and replace only a portion of a wooden beam that had been lost or warped over the years, rather than the entire plank, when possible. They salvaged whatever they could from the original structure while replacing windows, doors, siding and roofing when necessary, as well as repairing the foundations of both bathhouses. In that same spirit, when the repairs were completed in December 2022, Omni reinstated the bathhouse's

Warm Springs Pools recently underwent a major renovation led by The Omni Homestead Resort & Spa, with meticulous attention paid to the historic integrity of all buildings on the property.

former name, Warm Springs Pools (Jefferson Pools, Swann said, was a marketing ploy created in the 1990s).

Beyond the bathhouse, natural springs are not difficult to find. Just look on a map of the area, and you'll see several towns named after them: Warm Springs, Hot Springs, Healing Springs, White Sulphur Springs, Au-

WHERE TO STAY

The Inn at Gristmill Square, 118 Old Germantown Road, Warm Springs, Va. — Multiple buildings on this property make for a "tiny village" feel, with a courtyard in its center serving as a gathering place. Dining at their on-site Waterwheel Restaurant is a treat, whether or not you're an overnight guest; an old mill building, where a stream still runs just beside it, makes for a rustic atmosphere, complete with

a small bar and a wine cellar where you can see the gears of the old mill wheel.

Fort Lewis Lodge & Farm, 811 Millstone Lane, Millboro, Va. — Escape to a slower-paced time on 3,300 acres of farm, mountain and river, and get treated to creative homestyle meals at the on-site restaurant and bar.

The Inn At Warm Springs, 12968 Sam Snead Hwy #148, Warm Springs, Va. — Lots of rooms in mul-

tiple buildings to choose from, plus a tavern serving food daily in a cozy setting. Another highlight? You are within walking distance of the Warm Springs Pools.

Hidden Valley Bed & Breakfast, 2241 Hidden Valley Road, Warm Springs, Va. — Enjoy a quiet refuge in Jackson Valley, where you can take in the slow life in this old brick mansion and enjoy a home-cooked breakfast in the morning.



The Schoolroom at Hidden Valley Bed & Breakfast served as the Jackson River Hunt Club School from 1919 to 1931.



gusta Springs. There are so many places to fill water jugs — and so many places with river and creek access to scout out the perfect swimming hole.

My personal favorite — maybe because it was my introduction to the area — is Blowing Springs, a recreational site located within the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. From the tiny town of Warm Springs proper, I drove the windy Route 39 through the mountains in the pitch dark, while my friend in the passenger seat was a little apprehensive about where we were headed (I promised her there was a campground back there somewhere). Huge, otherworldly moths flew toward our headlights, until we finally spotted the sign for Blowing Springs Campground and pulled in.

The next day, we would see Blowing Springs in all its glory and learn how it got its name: constant, 58-degree air blows from the rocks there, like nature's air conditioning (or heat, depending on the season), which we discovered while filling our water jugs. Then we meandered down a short trail from the campground for access to Little Back Creek, with its pebbly shores and swimming holes. Heaven.

There are countless swimming holes in Bath County. Nearly all of them are lined with smooth pebbles and limestone, some with dramatic rock outcroppings and cliffs. It's not uncommon to spot blue heron or other water fowl, even bald eagles. Sometimes I bring watercolors and paper,

The Lewis Mill Restaurant and attached Buck's Bar at Fort Lewis Lodge & Farm served food to write home about, taking an artful, sophisticated approach to homestyle comfort foods (and they remembered my dietary restrictions!).

perching myself on a river rock and dipping my brush into the creek or river to slowly paint the scene or nearby flora. But more than anything, I go to swim, to be submerged, to let go. Maybe it's all in my head, but in those waters, I feel reborn. It's like hitting the reset button for my whole life.

REST YOUR BONES

Where you stay will, in some cases, determine your trip — whether you choose a 4-star hotel or a campground. With my own trips to the area over the past decade, I've camped at various campgrounds, but I've also stayed at a roadside motel, a historic inn, a classic bed and breakfast, and a lodge on a farm.

These venues are often self-contained, with dining options and water activities on-site, giving you little reason to leave. Some are more rustic, some elegant, and nearly all of them offer a connection with the natural world.

About 16 miles outside of Warm Springs is a destination in and of itself. Fort Lewis Lodge & Farm sits on 3,300 acres of uninterrupted boundary — pristine forest, meadows, mountains and pasture, with the

—SEE NEXT PAGE—

THINGS TO DO

- **Just off I-81, Staunton, Va.,** is worth a stop. Head to its historic Wharf District for blocks of boutiques, antiquing, restaurants and specialty stores.
- **Warm Springs Pools, 11 Bath St., Warm Springs, Va.** — A soak in one of the historic boathouses is a must. Make reservations in advance by calling 540-839-3860 or book online.
- **Warm Springs Gallery & Garden Cafe, 12 Katydid Trail, Warm Springs, Va.** — Browse two floors of contemporary work by artists from around the world, right in the small town of Warm Springs.
- **Garth Newel Music Center, 403 Garth Newel Lane, Hot Springs, Va.** — More than 100 acres offer a walking trail that is always open to the public, plus chamber music concerts on select dates.
- **Bath County Historical Society, 99 Courthouse Hill Road, Warm Springs, Va.** — Stop in to learn about the area's cultural and geological history, from early settlers to Native Americans, the Civil War to modern day.
- **Bolar Mountain Recreation Area** — Camping, fishing, boating and tubing are in store at this large recreational area that sits on Moomaw Lake. There is plenty of space to spend the day (or week) here.
- **Dan Ingalls Overlook** — Stop your car to take in the mountain views, or set aside time to hike the Dan Ingalls Overlook Trail, about 2 1/2 miles round-trip through the Warm Springs Mountain Preserve. The hike is considered to be moderately strenuous.
- **Milk House Market at Old Dairy, 46 Old Dairy Road, Warm Springs, Va.** — A unique place for a sandwich or pizza, plus outdoor seating with a view.
- **Claire's Cakes & Cafe, 2832 Main St., Hot Springs, Va.** — A great spot for a quick bite, with cute outdoor seating (and with gluten-free options).
- **Hailed as "Virginia's Little Switzerland," Monterey, Va.,** is known for its small-town feel and activities, like the Maple Museum and festival and the Hands & Harvest Festival in the fall.



Richard L. Armstrong, president of the Bath County Historical Society, stands inside the group's history museum in Warm Springs, Va., which is open to the public.

~CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE~

sparkling Cowpasture River running through it — and beyond the boundary is national forest land. Owned by the Cowden family for more than 65 years, it offers miles of hiking and mountain biking trails, swimming, kayaking, incredible farm-to-table food and unique accommodations, including rooms in the main lodge and its attached silo, a Riverside House and private cabins.

Arriving there, I was immediately greeted by staff and treated like family. The experience felt intimate, shared — the ringing of a dinner bell at Lewis Mill Restaurant to announce it was time to gather for the nightly meal; the stone fireplace inside an open-air building, where guests kept a fire going into the evening while playing a game of cards; the screened-in bar and deck where people gathered for happy hour; a stargazing platform to see unobstructed sky; outdoor public art in unexpected places; and activities like disc golf and a game room above the dining hall.

I stayed at the Riverside House — the appeal, of course, being the river, which I could hear from the front porch the next morning as I drank tea and journaled before heading to breakfast.

Another place I have to include here is Hidden Valley Bed & Breakfast. Like Fort Lewis Lodge, it is the kind of place you stay once and remember forever. Ron and Pam Stidham have run the property, which is anchored by a red-brick mansion built in the mid-1800s, for 32 years.

There are only four rooms available nightly, but calling them “rooms” does not do them justice. Two are in the main house, with access to lounge areas, a music room and dining room, all of which are grand with high ceilings and exquisite details, from the art to the books to the hand-woven rugs and antiques.

I stayed in the main house in the Schoolroom, lured in by the 1800s queen canopy marriage bed. Wandering the grounds — the gardens, a spring house, walking trails, a barn



ABOVE: Swimming holes abound in Bath County, Va. This one is along the Cowpasture River, just across from the Riverside House at Fort Lewis Lodge & Farm.

RIGHT: Several roads in Bath County used to be buffalo trails when settlers lived here. Now the area is a tourist wonderland of hiking and biking trails, water activities, and warm springs to soak in.



filled of goats and chickens — was peaceful and back-to-the-earth.

Morning started with a hearty, multi-course breakfast prepared by Pam, who recommended a 4-mile loop trail that takes you to a swinging suspension bridge over the Jackson River. But I had to be on my way and instead daydreamed about a return visit another time of year. How magnificent this place would look in the fall.

LAND OF HIDDEN GEMS

Bath County is a place of hidden gems, partly because so many places are truly hidden from sight, nestled in the hills and tucked away, creating their own worlds to discover.

Something as simple as finding a bite to eat can become a whole experience in and of itself. Take the Milk House Market at Old Dairy, for example.

White and green barn buildings appear to be a typical dairy farm from the road, but pull into the parking lot of the quaint cafe, and you become part of a broader story; the Old Dairy Barn once supplied the Homestead Resort with all its dairy needs.

Another blink-and-you’ll-miss-it attraction is the Garth Newell Music Center, with little signage telling you to turn up the long, narrow road onto its grounds. Buildings there offer spaces for events and chamber music concerts, with scenic views all around and benches to take it in.

I’ve meandered up roads to Bolar Mountain Recreation Area, which sits on Moomaw Lake and offers more camping and water activities, and slammed on my brakes to stop at small farm stands. Even after trav-

eling to Bath County many times, I always find something new.

But I also like that some things stay the same.

I always bring empty water jugs, like a ritual, to fill them with cold spring water. I always head home drinking that sacred water from my water bottle, savoring it like that lasting bit of salt that stays in your hair after a trip to the beach.

After all, all these little surprises — the historic towns and rustic inns and dark night skies over rolling hills and meadows — are part of this area’s charm.

But its magic? That belongs to the waters.

- Lauren LaRocca is the features editor at The Frederick News-Post in Maryland.

A Destination in Itself

The Omni Homestead Resort & Spa

STORY & PHOTOS BY LAUREN LARocca

For an elevated lodging option, ditch the swimming holes and head for the Omni Homestead Resort & Spa in Hot Springs, just 5 miles from Warm Springs. This magnificent hotel, which doubles as a National Historic Landmark, is like a town unto itself, complete with restaurants, bars, shops and activities and employing some 750 people. One step through the front entrance and into the Great Hall, and its elegance is revealed ... and it continues to unfold, hallway after hallway, across five floors, from grand dining rooms to ballrooms to terraces overlooking the property.

The 4-star hotel offers 483 guest rooms, including presidential suites at the end of each floor, as well as meeting rooms, lounges, libraries, restaurants and gardens.

And activities are not an afterthought. The Omni offers game rooms and an arcade, bowling, a movie theater, an indoor pool, a spa, history tours of the building and even a guided hike at the nearby Cascades Gorge. Outdoors, there are a 2-acre water park and golf courses (and with the hotel sitting on Sam Snead Highway, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that the hotel boasts the oldest first tee in continuous use in the country).

Though the Omni did not fully close, sections of it were closed temporarily from 2021 to 2023, as the hotel underwent major renovations. They focused on one wing at a time, from guest rooms to meeting rooms



The exterior of The Omni Homestead Resort & Spa in Hot Springs, Va., (above) and its recently renovated Washington Library (right)

to restaurants. Nearly everything got a refresh or was completely remodeled. Thoughtful details include different wallpaper in each wing to help orient guests. In some cases, entirely new areas emerged, such as a backroom of the Presidential Lounge, a speak-easy-style space with a billiards table.

Martha's Market, which offers coffee, tea, light bites and handhelds, underwent a major renovation (the counter was relocated to allow for better flow through the space, and new flooring and furniture were added throughout), as did the attached Washington Library. The library is lovely with quiet nooks, couches and tables for reading or study, flooded by natural light from large windows throughout.

Theater 1923 also underwent a complete renovation. Where there was once a projection booth, there is now a chic bar, where the Omni occasionally hosts wine tastings. Two movies (one family-friendly) are screened nightly for guests, who should have no trouble getting comfy in the plush theater chairs and love seats.

Many new additions pay tribute to the region or the hotel's history.



Take, for example, carpeting that features flora and fauna native to the area. Also on display are items like an antique carriage, a nod to the hotel's history but also its current era; the Omni's Equestrian Center offers carriage rides and horseback rides through the wooded trails of the Allegheny Mountains.

The hotel exterior required its own renovation, which meant tedious, meticulous work (imagine mixing mortar and repairing a 72,000-square-foot building brick by brick). They worked with the Historical Society of Virginia to honor the building's history.

The renovation was completed in October 2023, and new programs and activities followed suit. One invites a different Virginia winemaker each

month for a meet-and-greet and tasting. An emerging artist series of performances held in the Crystal Ballroom benefits the local food bank.

The Omni is a welcome respite during the warm months, a treat for the eyes in the autumn, and a cozy gathering place in the winter, with fireplaces lit throughout the Great Hall and plenty of indoor activities and winter sports — skiing, snowboarding, tubing and sometimes ice skating. The hotel gets an “over-the-top holiday treatment,” too, said Omni director of marketing and communications Lynn Swann, with twinkling lights everywhere, a huge Christmas tree in the Great Hall, and decorations throughout. In any season, this hotel is timeless.



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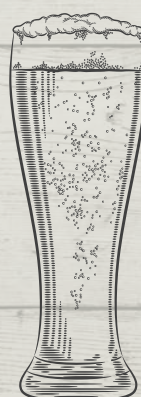
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5 Activities Kids Won't Want to Miss

By TABITHA JOHNSTON

Berkeley County boasts beautiful colors and an overabundance of fun things to do with kids every fall.

1 In downtown Martinsburg, the **Fall Food Festival** will be held on Oct. 4 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The family-friendly event, organized by Main Street Martinsburg, will be a vibrant celebration of Appalachian culture and community spirit, featuring Appalachian flavors from food trucks and local eateries, live folk music and an array of craft vendors.

204 S. Queen St., Martinsburg
304-262-4200
mainstreetmartinsburg.com/events

2 At Orr's Farm Market, the **"Spookily the Square Pumpkin" Pumpkin Patch** will be held from Sept. 13 through Nov. 8, bringing all things harvest to mind. Families can look forward to taking a hayride around the barnyard, interacting with farm animals, winding their way around a small corn maze and picking out the perfect pumpkin from Orr's pumpkin patch.

682 Orr Drive, Martinsburg
304-263-1168
orrsfarmmarket.com

3 Poor House Farm will bring a taste of Germany to local families with its annual **Oktoberfest Festival** on Sept. 27 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Kid-friendly activities will include live music, food trucks, games and a canine carnival.

304-264-4842

4 **Old McDonald's Pumpkin Patch & Corn Maze** will open Friday through Sunday, beginning on Sept. 28, with kid-friendly activities galore. Families can create their own personalized experience at the farm, out of the many options available, from the pumpkin patch to the petting zoo to the sunflower fields to the hayride to the two themed corn mazes. For children with extra energy, there are fun options to try out, like the giant slide, playground and multiple jump pads.

Fall food favorites will also be available for attendees to indulge in, including apple cider slushies, apple cider donuts, pumpkin spice lattes and food from the Twisted Taters Food Truck.

1597 Arden Nollville Road, Inwood
304-839-2330
oldmcdonaldspumpkinpatchwv.com



TABITHA JOHNSTON

A pumpkin grows in a patch, waiting for someone to come and pick it last fall.

5 Another activity of interest for families is the **46th Annual Mountain State Apple Harvest Festival**, which is taking place from Oct. 16

to 19. Kid-friendly activities at the festival will include the Apple Trample 5K, the Grand Feature Parade, the Baby Appleseed Crowning Ceremony, the Pancake Breakfast and the fifth annual Apple Harvest Fall Classic, which is open to softball and baseball players who are in high school.

2419 Golf Course Road, Martinsburg
304-263-2500
msahf.com



TABITHA JOHNSTON



TABITHA JOHNSTON

ABOVE: Goats like this one, along with other small barnyard animals, will be found in the petting zoos at Orr's Farm Market and Old McDonald's Pumpkin Patch & Corn Maze this fall.

LEFT: A bee gathers some honey from a flower at a pumpkin patch last fall.

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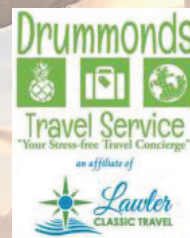
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carrollcountytourism.org
800-272-1933

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Food & drink



Get more details at www.PurcellvilleVa.gov/720/Events-Activities

5 Wineries to Visit This Fall

BY ELLYN WEXLER

Fall is perhaps the ideal season to explore Loudoun County's wineries, as rolling vine rows and vibrant hills create picture-perfect views with every sip. Time your visit for late afternoon and you'll catch the warm glow of a Virginia sunset as you finish your tasting.

Many of these wineries welcome families and even four-legged friends, making them ideal for group outings. And with October designated as Virginia Wine Month, there's no better excuse to plan a getaway. Crisp air amid vibrant hillsides makes autumn especially inviting. To stretch your visit, consider staying in charming Middleburg, where cozy inns and the luxurious Salamander resort pair perfectly with a weekend of wine and relaxation.

1 Stone Tower Winery

Perched high on Hogback Mountain, Stone Tower Winery is renowned for its sweeping vineyard views, expansive patios and elegant tasting rooms—ideal for savoring wine against a backdrop of autumn hues. It's family-friendly, features cozy firepits and delivers an unforgettable fall escape.

19925 Hogback Mountain Road,
Leesburg
703-777-2797
stonetowerwinery.com

2 868 Estate Vineyards

The 2020 Virginia Governor's Cup winner in Loudoun, 868 Estate offers more than just fantastic wine—it's a vibrant destination blending art, live music, delicious dining and wine, all in an inviting, beautiful setting.

14001 Harpers Ferry Road, Hillsboro
540-668-7008
868estatevineyards.com

3 Breaux Vineyards

Established in 1997 in Purcellville, Breaux Vineyards is one of the region's largest and most respected estates. Known for its standout Viognier and Nebbiolo, it offers both award-winning



COURTESY 868 ESTATE VINEYARDS

868 Estate Vineyards' 120 acres of countryside is the setting for sipping wine while soaking in the stunning vistas.

wines and expansive fall scenery, making it a true blend of quality and charm.

36888 Breaux Vineyards Lane,
Purcellville
540-668-6299
breauxvineyards.com

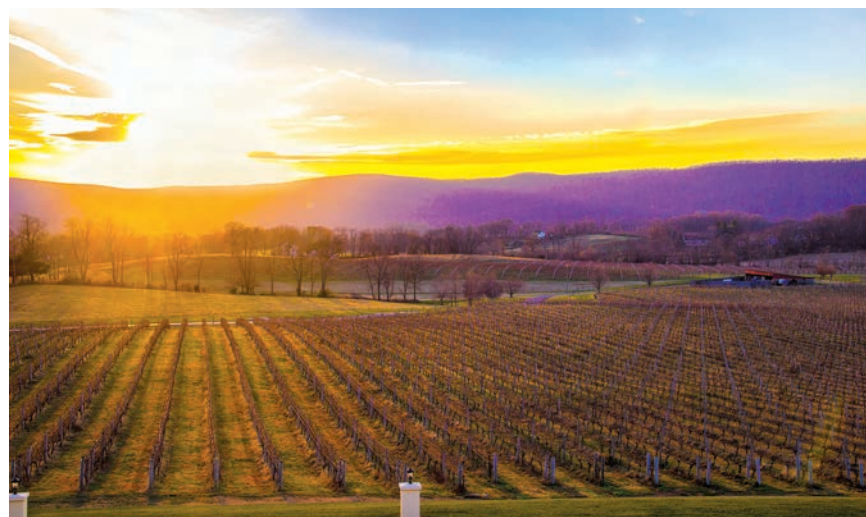
4 Cana Vineyards & Winery

Cana stands out in Middleburg for its thoughtful pairing of wine with food, and its gorgeous, walkable vineyard setting. Enjoy its new Black Oak Café, serving pizza, gelato, charcuterie and espresso drinks. Dog-friendly and offering self-guided wine flights, it's a relaxed, scenic spot perfect for an autumn afternoon.

38600 Little River Turnpike (John Mosby Highway), Middleburg
703-348-2458
canavineyards.com

5 Chrysalis Vineyards

Just minutes from the soothing



COURTESY BREAUX VINEYARDS

Breaux Vineyards has 104 acres planted in 17 grape varieties.

luxury of Middleburg's Salamander Resort, Chrysalis Vineyards is known for its Norton, Petit Manseng and other varietals. With a backdrop of fall foliage and farm-to-table offerings nearby, it's

a beautiful and flavorful stop.
39025 Little River Turnpike,
Middleburg
540-687-8222
chrysaliswine.com

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5 Fairs, Festivals and Other Fun Events

By COMFORT DORN

Is it the clear blue skies? The foliage? That tang in the air? Whatever the reason, fall is the time to get out and do stuff. And in Frederick County, there's plenty to do. Here are five events to get you started.

1 The 163rd Great Frederick Fair

This year's theme is "Egg-cited for the Fair. Fun that will ruffle your feathers!" Whatever the state of your plumage, you'll be excited by the multitude of exhibits (livestock, produce and more), carnival rides and games, demonstrations, nightly entertainment (demolition derby!) and so, so much delicious food.

Sept. 12 to 20 (See website for daily schedules.)

797 E. Patrick St., Frederick
301-663-5895
thegreatfrederickfair.com

2 42nd Annual Brunswick Railroad Days

Brunswick celebrates its history as a hub of the B&O Railroad as well as the vibrant talent of the community's up-and-coming crop of performers, artists and artisans. This two-day festival includes live music, crafts, food, model train displays, kids' activities and more.

Oct. 4 and 5, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

1 W. Potomac St., Brunswick
301-834-7500
brunswickrailroaddays.org

3 Catoctin Colorfest

What began in 1963 as a nature walk has burgeoned into one of the biggest outdoor craft shows on the East Coast, and that's not even counting the yard sales. Each year now, artisans and crafters gather under Thurmont's vibrant foliage for Catoctin Colorfest. Check out the art, jewelry, clothing, crafts and delicious food (even a beer garden) all over the town at this free event.

Oct. 11 and 12, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Thurmont
301-271-7313
visitfrederick.org/catoctin-colorfest



Wanda Peomroy of Thurmont admires tin lawn art at Catoctin Colorfest in 2023.

RIC DUGAN



A model train passes a replica of the Point of Rocks train station. The large model train display was part of Railroad Days Sunday in 2022.

RIC DUGAN

4 Oktoberfest at Schifferstadt

What better place to celebrate this Old-World tradition than a house where early German settlers adapted to their new land — and one of the oldest structures in Frederick County — Schifferstadt Architectural Museum? Enjoy German food and beer on tap while a band plays lively Oktoberfest music. Watch historic demonstrations, tour the museum and purchase prod-

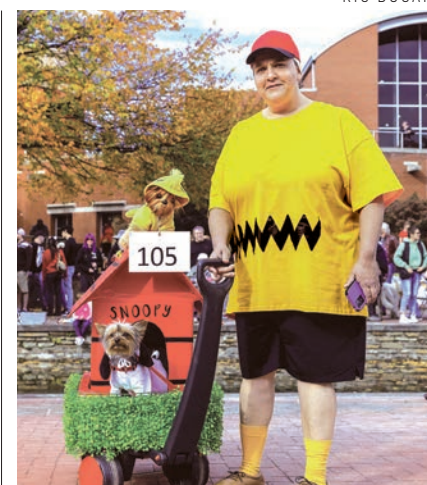
ucts from arts and crafts vendors.

Oct. 18 to 19 (See website for schedule.)

1110 Rosemont Ave., Frederick
301-663-3885
fredericklandmarks.org/events

5 Canines on the Creek

Halloween's not just for humans! Get a head start on holiday fun with the FSK Lions Club's 6th Annual Canines on the Creek event, featuring the



MEGAN PURTELL

Jennifer DeVries and her dog Dolly won first place in the 2024 Canines on the Creek Small Breed category for their Peanuts-themed entry.

Doggy Parade and Costume Contest. Dress yourself and your pooch in your Halloween best for a chance to win a prize (extra points for homemade costumes), or just watch the parade and enjoy the demonstrations.

Oct. 25, noon to 5 p.m. (costume contest & parade, 2:30 p.m.)

Carroll Creek Linear Park Amphitheater
301-606-3012
fslions.org/canines

All Roads Lead to Vines & Wines



MEGAN WILSON

On sunny days, the wrap-around deck at Orchid Cellar Meadery and Winery offers a view of rolling hills and blue skies.

BY COMFORT DORN

Fall is an ideal season for weekend drives, and few destinations rival a vineyard with outdoor seating, where visitors can enjoy views of rolling hills and brilliant foliage. If the wine is good, so much the better.

Frederick County is home to no fewer than 15 wineries. The four highlighted below are scattered across the area, offering scenic country drives between tastings. For a full list of vineyards and to plan a personalized wine tour, visit the **Homegrown Frederick** website at homegrownfrederick.com/wineries.

Start by heading to **Catoctin Breeze Vineyard**, a family-owned winery north of Thurmont with glorious mountain views and wines they say are “as accessible as they

are expressive.” You can book a 90-minute guided tour and tasting or enjoy a glass beside the tasting room fireplace or out in the gardens. Learn more at catoctinbreeze.com.

Point your GPS southwest to reach the **Orchid Cellar Meadery and Winery** between Middletown and Myersville. It’s a woman-owned business “bringing the world’s oldest alcohol into the 21st century.” They specialize in fermented honey-based beverages (meads) in a range of styles, and in serving grape-based wines. Tours are available daily at 2:30 p.m. by request. See orchidcellar.com.

Head east around Frederick to the former estate of Nicholas Hall Sr., co-founder of New Market. Now home to **New Market Plains Vineyards**, the farm in Monrovia has been in the family since the 1760s.

The vines were replanted in 2012, yielding the first vintage in 2014. Several old buildings are intact or restored; the winery is in a 1941 tile dairy barn. Catch live music on Saturday afternoons. For details, visit newmarketplains.com.

Swing north to Libertytown and then east again through rolling farmland almost to the county line for the final stop, **Elk Run Vineyards** in Mount Airy. Here, “close spacing with great attention to crop levels allow the wine maker to create wines of varietal character, structure, balance and good color,” according to the website. Through October, the vineyard hosts live music most weekend afternoons. For more, see elkrun.com.

Vineyards often have restrictions on children and/or pets. Call or check websites before you visit.

3 Things to Do This Winter

BY COMFORT DORN

Love to enjoy the outdoors on a brisk winter day? We’ve got you covered.

1 Cut down a tree.

A winter hike is fun, but if some in your clan need an incentive, consider visiting a farm to cut your own Christmas tree. Frederick County has more than half a dozen places where you can search for perfect fir or spruce. Many also sell precut trees, greens and Christmas décor. See visitfrederick.org and search “Christmas tree” for locations and more details.



COURTESY VISIT FREDERICK

At the Gaver Farm near Mount Airy, you can wander 60 acres in search of the perfect Christmas tree.

2 Check out the ice.

The pond at Pinecliff Park in Frederick is open for skating when the ice is at least 4 inches thick, which county staff checks daily. For details, search for the park at recreater.com. And while warmer winters mean less pond skating, you can still slide around the two indoor rinks at Skate Frederick. Check skatefrederick.com for public session times.

3 Escape the cold.

Not a winter weather fan? Head to one of Frederick’s escape rooms, where you and your crew can solve mysteries in person. Each offers multiple themed adventures – everything from “Wild West Quest” to “Zombie Research Lab” to take your mind off the chill. For details, go to visitfrederick.org and search “escape rooms.”

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 facebook.com/fsuappalachianfest

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Traveling Solo? Check Out These Spots

BY TONI MILBOURNE

For solo travelers, Jefferson County offers a rare blend of freedom and discovery. Nestled in the Eastern Panhandle, the county invites visitors to slow their pace, follow winding trails and lose themselves in history without ever feeling alone.

The heart of the experience is Harpers Ferry, where the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers meet. Here, centuries of history seem to echo through the narrow streets. Exploring on your own allows for unhurried moments, standing at **John Brown's Fort**, wandering through restored buildings or pausing at **Jefferson Rock** to take in a view that has inspired travelers for generations. In addition, **Harpers Ferry** is considered the psychological halfway point of the Appalachian Trail, a fitting stop for anyone contemplating their own journey.

Nature here isn't just scenic; it can be immersive. Outfitters along the rivers make it easy for individuals to try tubing, kayaking or rafting, turning a solo trip into an adventure that builds both confidence and unforgettable memories. For quieter outings, the riverside paths and wooded hills offer opportunities to simply breathe and recharge.

Jefferson County isn't defined by its outdoors alone. In Charles Town, the **Old Opera House** hosts live performances that add a cultural flourish to an evening.

Nearby, the **Jefferson County Museum** tells stories that connect the past to the present, while nearby **Shepherdstown** hums with creativity. Known as West Virginia's oldest town, it offers inviting cafés, bookstores and galleries that encourage lingering, something that is perfect for solo travelers who enjoy mixing exploration with a touch of community.



TONI MILBOURNE

Trails abound in the National Park in Jefferson County, including Bolivar Heights, which offers a quiet, retrospective place to spend quality time.



TONI MILBOURNE



TONI MILBOURNE

ABOVE: The Shenandoah and Potomac rivers meet in Harpers Ferry, allowing visitors to enjoy not only the view of where they merge, but also quiet trails and parks along both rivers within the county.

LEFT: Seeing John Brown's Fort in Lower Town Harpers Ferry takes one back to another time in history.

5 Fun Fall Events



TONI MILBOURNE

Freedoms Run has become a race known nationwide for both its challenges and its generosity through fundraising.

BY AINSLEY HALL

1 Those looking for something to get them up and moving can catch the **Freedoms Run Race Series** set for Oct. 4. Run a half marathon, 5K or Kids Fun Run right through the Harpers Ferry National Park to experience the rich history. The event was started by Dr. Mark Cucuzzella and Lois Turco to promote a healthy community and continues to be a fun tradition for many.

400 S. Mildred St., Suite 6, Ranson
freedomrun.org
304-885-8843

2 The **Jefferson County Fall Festival**, which begins Oct. 18 at 2 p.m., offers fun opportunities for people of all ages. Held at Sam Michaels Park and organized by Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, this event will have live performances by Jah Works at 4:30 and the Kelly Bell Band at 7 p.m. Check out food trucks, vendors, petting zoo, dunk tank, lawn games and more, making it perfect for families.

235 Sam Michaels Lane,
Shenandoah Junction
jcprc.org
304-728-3207

3 Every year, the Bavarian Inn hosts **Oktoberfest**, a fun event that includes a German band, dancers, food and drink, and lots of activities to enjoy. Located in Shepherdstown, the Bavarian Inn is a popular stop for anyone visiting Jefferson County, as this beautiful resort offers comfortable rooms and delicious food. During Oktoberfest, the inn is bursting with exciting fun for all.

164 Shepherd Grade Road, Shepherdstown
bavarianinnwv.com
304-876-2551



TONI MILBOURNE

The Harpers Ferry Pumpkin Roll draws more and more participants and observers each year.

4 In November, people from Harpers Ferry and Bolivar gather for the **Great Pumpkin Roll Competition**. During the unique event, participants pick out the best pumpkin and line up to roll it down the big hill in town. The goal is to send the fall produce down to the targeted area. Though the competition was started only a few years ago by the town's parks and recreation committee, it's quickly become a fun tradition enjoyed by the locals.

575 Washington St., Harpers Ferry
www.harpersferrywv.us/prec.htm
304-535-2206

5 The **Mountain Heritage Arts & Crafts Festival** is a longstanding tradition in Jefferson County, where around 160 artists and craftspeople gather to share their work. Organized by the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce, the festival is celebrating its 49th year. Join the fun at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds from Sept. 26 to 28 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to explore the different vendors. The event will also include live music from several bluegrass bands. Enjoy wine and beer made locally in West Virginia.

707 Old Leetown Pike, Kearneysville
mhacfestival.org/
304-725-2055



SHUTTERSTOCK

Where to Enjoy the Fall Foliage

BY AINSLEY HALL

Maryland Heights Trail Overlook is well known as one of the best spots to see the beautiful fall foliage surrounding Harpers Ferry. Though the 4.5-mile hike can be a bit steep for those who aren't used to walking the trail, it's well worth the effort to see the aerial view of the historic town nestled along the Shenandoah River.

Harpers Ferry
304-535-6029
nps.gov/hafe/index.htm

Another great location is **Morgan's Grove Park**, located in Shepherdstown. This family-friendly park is owned by the Shepherdstown Community Club and includes over 20 acres of land. Much of that land is shaded by trees, making it a great place to visit in the fall. With a playground on the property for kids, there are many fun opportunities for families to spend time outside. It's also home to several creeks and trails, and is perfect for a picnic with kids or fun photo shoots of the vibrant colors.

4198 Kearneysville Pike, Shepherdstown
304-876-3323
shepherdstowncommunityclub.org/
morgans-grove-park

For a nice easy trail that will lead you through a forest of colorful trees, visit **Cool Springs Nature Preserve**. Owned and maintained by the Potomac Valley Audubon Society, Cool Springs is a small preserve located in the southern part of Jefferson County. Walk the short trail to sit by the creek or walk up to the gazebo to take in the gorgeous view. This is also a prime spot to go bird watching as the flocks travel south for the winter.

1469 Lloyd Road, Charles Town
potomacaudubon.org/venue/cool-spring-preserve
681-252-1387



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129 E German Street, Shepherdstown, WV
 304-876-0910
 hsc1786@gmail.com

www.historicshepherdstown.com
www.kentuckyriflefoundation.org

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A fisherman paddles in a kayak in Lake Frederick.

JEFF TAYLOR

5 Outdoor Adventures for Autumn

BY MOLLY WILLIAMS

It's no secret that Winchester and Frederick County abound with activities for those who love outdoor adventures. Here are a few of them.

1 Go catch a fish!

Cast a line in Lake Frederick — a 117-acre public lake owned by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries — and you might reel in a big one. The lake is stocked annually with channel catfish and northern pike. Largemouth bass, bluegill, sunfish and black crappie all reproduce naturally in the lake. Boating (gasoline motors prohibited) and fishing are open to the public with no entrance fee. A small parking area is located near the boat ramp. DGIF requires anyone 17 or older to have an Access Permit if they do not have a valid Virginia hunting, freshwater fishing or trapping license. Permits are available for purchase online or by calling 1-866-721-6911. If you need supplies, stop by Gregory's Lakeside Bait & Tackle (540-869-2950) at 320 Lake Frederick Drive.

Boat ramp is accessible off Lake Frederick Drive
dwr.virginia.gov/waterbody/lake-frederick

2 Go camping!

If you're looking for a place to try a variety of outdoor activities, consider The Cove Campground, where visitors can hike, swim, fish, boat, camp and more. The 3,000-acre site, nestled in the Appalachian Mountains, features 100 campsites and three spring-fed lakes. It's just 12 miles west of Winchester and 80 minutes from Washington, D.C.

980 Cove Road, Gore
540-858-2882
covecampground.com

3 Giddyup!

Check out the beautiful countryside on horseback at Magic Mountain Farm. Riders of all levels are able to participate in trail rides, which are by appointment only.

151 Magic Mountain Road, Winchester
540-336-4267
magicmountainfarm.com

4 Go hunting!

Double Spur Outfitters offers guided hunting experiences in the Shenandoah Valley for bear, turkey and whitetail deer. It also offers 4 miles of private water for the ultimate trout fishing experience on Cedar Creek. Double Spur Outfitters



JEFF TAYLOR

In this photo from 2023, Kernstown Battlefield Association officials stand on Pritchard's Hill, a strategic spot for Union artillery and troops during the Civil War's First Battle of Kernstown on March 23, 1862.

is located 2 hours west of Washington, D.C.

2011 Star Tannery Road, Star Tannery
540-533-3898
doublespuroutfitters.com

5 Explore history!

For history buffs who enjoy fresh air and a pleasant view, Kernstown Battlefield is the best of both worlds. This 388-acre historic site features walking trails where visitors can learn about the Civil War battles

that unfolded there. There are also a visitor center and an 1854 house. Located just south of Winchester, the village of Kernstown and the grounds of the Pritchard Farm twice became a battlefield during the Civil War. It witnessed Stonewall Jackson's only defeat as an independent commander in March of 1862. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the battlefield's preservation.

610 Battle Park Drive, Winchester
540-450-7835
kernstownbattle.org

Where to Hoist a Pint



JEFF TAYLOR

Proprietor Stephen Schuurman inside The Cider House in downtown Winchester. He's a Brit, so expect an authentic pub atmosphere.

BY MOLLY WILLIAMS

Looking for a pint after a long day of day tripping? Winchester and Frederick County offer plenty of options.

1 The Cider House

The official tasting room of Winchester Ciderworks, The Cider House replicates the vibe of the pubs in England where owner Stephen Schuurman grew up. On tap, you'll find hard ciders (and more) to sip in an unrushed atmosphere. Photos and memorabilia from England and Schuurman's favorite sports — cricket and horse racing — are part of the decor. Fans of "John Wick" movies will appreciate the replication of The Continental hotel bar. You can also grab a bite to eat.

30 E. Piccadilly St., Winchester
540-773-4937
CiderHouseVA.com

2 Union Jack Pub & Restaurant

If you think of pubs and immediately think of our friends across the pond, consider checking out Union Jack Pub & Restaurant. Enjoy fish and chips, more than 20 beers on tap and happy hour specials inside this British-style hangout located in a Victorian-era bank building on Winchester's historic Loudoun Street Mall.

101 N. Loudoun St., Winchester
540-722-2055
theunionjackpub.com

3 Vibrissa Beer & Kitchen

Try craft beers in the taproom (which was previously the press room of The Winchester Star) or outside in a lovely beer garden that boasts an awesome mural. It's just a hop, skip and a jump from Winchester's historic Loudoun Street Mall.

10 N. Kent St., Winchester
540-313-4551
vibrissabeer.com

4 Vault & Cellar

Want to grab dinner and drinks? Vault & Cellar offers an immense bourbon-focused whiskey list, regional wines and beers, and handcrafted cocktails, along with a menu featuring "new" Appalachian cuisine. Think fried catfish, wild boar sausage, pan-seared trout, shrimp and grits and venison tenderloin.

7843 Main St., Middletown
540-508-0640
thevaultandcellar.com

5 Inglenook Bar at Lake Frederick

Set directly adjacent to the popular Region's 117 restaurant in the Lake Frederick community, this casual bar is a great spot to relax before, during or after your meal. A veranda offers a view of scenic Lake Frederick.

180 Bald Eagle Drive, Lake Frederick
540-313-4551
mytrilogylife.com



SHUTTERSTOCK

Leaf Peeping Hot Spots

BY MOLLY WILLIAMS

Autumn in Virginia's Northern Shenandoah Valley can be a truly magical experience, and there are plenty of spots in the area to take in the foliage as it transforms from green to vibrant shades of red, orange and yellow.

A good time to go leaf peeping around here is mid- to late October.

If you're feeling adventurous, venture to **Eagle Rock Overlook** in Star Tannery in Frederick County, part of the Tuscarora Eagle Rock Trail. The hike is billed as kid-friendly, and ends with a panoramic view of the valley below. Visit alltrails.com/trail/us/west-virginia/eagle-rock.

For a more leisurely look at the fall leaves, consider a trek on the trails at the **Museum of the Shenandoah Valley** at 901 Amherst St. in Winchester. Guests can enjoy nature as well as art and landscape features along the winding, kid-friendly path. Or, if you'd prefer to sit still, find a well-placed bench or pack a picnic. Visit themsv.org/trails.

Marker-Miller Orchards at 3035 Cedar Creek Grade in Frederick County offers scenic views of the changing seasons, as well as activities to keep the family happy. Children can enjoy a playground and the cow train, and apple picking makes for a fun fall day, though some varieties may only be available at the market due to an April freeze. For more information, visit markermillerorchards.com.

For those who want to go on a Sunday drive to see the changing leaves, Justin Kerns, executive director of the Winchester-Frederick County Convention and Visitors Bureau, recommends tooling along **Poorhouse Road, Apple Pie Ridge Road, Carters Lane, Cedar Creek Grade and Barley Lane**.

The Virginia Department of Forestry also posts weekly foliage updates on its website, dof.virginia.gov, and the Winchester-Frederick County Convention and Visitors Bureau on South Pleasant Valley Road offers recommendations for top autumn destinations. Check out visitwinchesterva.com.

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5 Ways to Spark Romance



The Conococheague Aqueduct along the C&O Canal is perfect for a couple's photo shoot, especially in autumn.

FRANCIS GRANT-SUTTIE

BY ELIZABETH STINETTE

1 Luxuriate at a float center.

Are spa days your ideal couples' getaway? Look no further than the highly-rated Regenerate Float Center in Hagerstown. Besides their sensory deprivation tanks, where you can float in a soothing, womb-like space, Regenerate offers additional healing experiences, such as an infrared sauna, a salt cave and a full-body chair massage.

5 Nottingham Road, Hagerstown
301-992-4249
feelregenerated.com

2 Book a stay at the romance-themed Inn Boonsboro.

It's little surprise that the bed and breakfast owned by famed author Nora Roberts is both literary and romantic. Stay in rooms named after famous couples from literature, and wake up to a two-course breakfast the next morning. With romantic add-ons such as in-room champagne and a couples' massage, the inn is perfect for a honeymoon or special date weekend. Boonsboro is charming

in itself with a walkable small town and a bookstore owned by Roberts' husband, Bruce Wilder.

Inn Boonsboro
1 N. Main St., Boonsboro
301-432-1188
innboonsboro.com

3 Enjoy dinner and a show at Washington County Playhouse.

A mainstay since 1985, the Washington County Playhouse offers professional theater in an intimate venue. No need to grab dinner first—cozy up to your loved one while enjoying a themed meal prepared in-house. Between Sept. 27 and Nov. 2, you and your partner can check out “Jekyll and Hyde: The Musical,” a classic tale of romance and suspense.

44 N. Potomac St., Hagerstown
301-739-7469
washingtoncountyplyhouse.com

4 Stroll along the C&O Canal.

Few dates are more romantic than walking hand-in-hand while admiring fall foliage. Williamsport's stretch of the C&O Canal offers

an easy, delightful stroll. History buffs will enjoy viewing several original canal structures, such as a lockhouse, restored warehouse and iron truss bridge. Visit the Conococheague Aqueduct, with autumn views ideal for couples' photo ops.

Williamsport C&O Canal
Visitor Center
205 W. Potomac St., Williamsport
301-582-0813
canaltrust.org [Search the visitor center.]

5 Indulge in chocolate (for a good cause).

There's a treat for everyone at Brooke's House Coffee and Chocolate in Hagerstown. Give back to a good cause while enjoying delicious handmade chocolates, coffee and breakfast and lunch items—all prepared by women recovering from substance abuse. Stuffed chairs and a fenced-in veranda make the cafe perfect for enjoying an in-depth conversation.

1083 Maryland Ave., Hagerstown
240-203-8183
brookeshousecoffeeandchocolate.com

Catch These Fall Events

1 Celebrate Hagerstown at the City Park Fall Fest.

Stretching across downtown Hagerstown's City Park, the Fall Fest on Sept. 20 will offer activities for everyone in the family, including museum tours, pony rides and art displays. It's scheduled from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., but the fun won't end then. After 5 p.m., stick around for family-friendly activities and fireworks over the lake. Find a full list of activities and vendors at hagerstownmd.org/901/City-Park-Fall-Fest.

2 Get Festive this fall at the Harvest Hoedown.

Give the kids a chance to enjoy traditional harvest activities, like hayrides, pumpkin painting and scarecrow-making at this year's Harvest Hoedown on Oct. 11 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Fairgrounds Park. Kids will receive a pumpkin while supplies last, and adults will enjoy browsing the many craft and food vendors. Find out more at hagerstownmd.org/1123/Harvest-Hoedown.

3 Sample local spirits at the Fall Back Wine Fest.

Scheduled for Nov. 1 from 1 to 7 p.m. at the Washington County Agricultural Education Center, the Fall Back Wine Fest will celebrate local wine, cider and spirits. Besides sampling the libations, rock out to local music performances, including '80s tribute band “The Reagan Years,” and try fun activities. Check out more, including a map of the venue, at ifg-events.com/fallback.



COURTESY QUAD STATE FESTIVALS

Fan-favorite '80s tribute band The Reagan Years will return to the Fall Back Wine Fest this year.



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5 Hidden Gems In Adams County

By ELLYN WEXLER

While Gettysburg draws the spotlight, Adams County hides some wonderfully offbeat gems for day-trippers to explore. From tiny horses and quirky museums to vineyard hideaways and ghostly encounters, these five stops are best savored at a relaxed, curious pace.

1 Land of Little Horses

A delight for kids and kids-at-heart, this 100-acre miniature horse farm is packed with nostalgic charm. Don't miss the "Mane Event" show starring costumed ponies and "Mystic the Unicorn," or the chance to hand-feed goats and chickens. Add wagon rides, pony encounters and seasonal events, and you've got a whimsical slice of Americana.

125 Glenwood Drive, Gettysburg
717 334 7259
landoflittlehorses.com

2 Mister Ed's Elephant Museum & Candy Emporium

Part museum, part candy dreamland, Mister Ed's delights with more than 10,000 elephant figurines, a teapot garden, vintage toys and aisles of sweets. The house-made fudge, available in more than 70 flavors, might be the real showstopper. You can even schedule your own fudge-making experience for groups of eight or more. The entire experience is offbeat, joyful and undeniably sweet.

6019 Chambersburg Road, Orrtanna
717 352 3792
mistereds.com

3 The Historic Round Barn & Farm Market

A rare architectural treasure built in 1914, this round barn doubles as a farm market bursting with fresh-picked apples, jars of farm-made jam, fresh-baked pies and beloved cider donuts. They also offer a bevy



COURTESY DESTINATION GETTYSBURG

Elephant figurines, art and household goods in every size, substance, shape and color, as well as homemade fudge, chocolates and other treats fill Mister Ed's Elephant Museum & Candy Emporium.

of vegetables, and pumpkins ready to become jack-o-lanterns by season's end. Plan your visit as the leaves are turning to soak in exceptional orchard views.

298 Cashtown Road, Biglerville
717 334 1984
roundbarn.farm

4 Haunted Orphanage Ghost Tour

Looking for a spine-tingling story? Gettysburg's former Civil War orphanage — the National Soldiers Orphanage Homestead — is the site of this 90-minute ghost tour, which leads guests down the original stairs and through the dimly lit cellar to hear eerie tales of the mistreated children who once lived there—and perhaps still linger. Tours run year-round, except in January and February.

778 Baltimore St., Gettysburg
877-680-8687
gettysburgbattlefieldtours.com



COURTESY DESTINATION GETTYSBURG

Interacting with animals is a delight for children and their adults at the Land of Little Horses.

5 Boyer Nurseries & Orchards

Tucked among rolling hills, this cozy tasting room pours house-made wines and ciders amid picture-perfect orchard views. After sipping, cross the road to explore the hedge maze, a peaceful labyrinth inspired by the centuries-old royal maze at London's Hampton Court Palace. It has been crafted with 600-plus "Emerald Green" arborvitae evergreens



COURTESY GETTYSBURG TOURS

Visitors can view artifacts found behind the walls of the National Soldiers Orphans Homestead.

and more than 1,850 feet of peaceful green pathways.

405 Boyer Nursery Road, Biglerville
717 667-8558
boyernurseries.com

Insider Tip: Slow down. Pair a petting zoo with a cider flight or a ghost tour with local fudge, and you'll uncover an Adams County that's as surprising as it is unforgettable.

LGBTQ+ Friendly Things to Do



COURTESY FRANKLIN COUNTY VISITORS BUREAU

A costume parade precedes “The Rocky Horror Picture Show: Interactive Movie Experience” at the Capitol Theatre Center in Chambersburg.

BY ELLYN WEXLER

Adams and Franklin counties offer a vibrant and welcoming array of LGBTQ+ affirming activities and spaces. From lively Pride celebrations and drag shows to monthly mixers and year-round support services, the region invites both residents and visitors to connect, celebrate and belong.

In Chambersburg, **Pride Franklin County** has become a year-round presence for inclusivity. Its signature event, the Pride Franklin County Festival, returns Sunday, Oct. 12, noon to 5 p.m., at Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Ave., Chambersburg. This free, family-friendly celebration features drag performances, live music, food trucks, a beer garden, local vendors and kids’ activities. Learn more at pridefranklincounty.org.

Pride mixers, held the second Thursday of each month, offer LGBTQ+ residents, visitors and allies a casual space to connect. Pride Franklin County also runs **The Welcoming Project**, an online directory of inclusive businesses, congregations, and service providers. Get details at pridefranklincounty.org/welcome.

At the Capitol Theatre Center at 159 S. Main St. in Chambersburg, queer cinema takes center stage with “**The Rocky Horror Picture Show: Interactive Movie Experience**” on Saturday, Oct. 25. A costume parade precedes the 9 p.m. screening. Tickets are \$14. Visit thecapitoltheatre.org.

New to the Adams County area, the **Rainbow Rose Center**, 24 W. Chestnut St., Hanover, provides LGBTQ+



COURTESY GETTYSBURG PRIDE INC.

Mandy Mango was Miss Gay Gettysburg 2024. The event returns Sept. 27.

support services, including name-change assistance, drop-in sessions, community training and volunteer opportunities. They also hold events. Find details at rainbowrosecenter.org.

Gettysburg Pride hosts inclusive events throughout the year, including the third annual **Miss Gay Gettysburg America Pageant** on Saturday, Sept. 27, at Gettysburg Community Theatre, 49 York St.; a **National Coming Out Day** event on Wednesday, Oct. 8, at Gettysburg College, and the **10th Annual Gettysburg Pride Fest** from May 29 to 31, 2026, in Lincoln Square. For updates and event details, visit gettysburgpride.org.

3 Places to Dine with the Kids

BY ELLYN WEXLER

Looking for a family-friendly bite in southcentral Pennsylvania? These three local spots in Adams and Franklin counties deliver fun, flavor and flexibility for dining with kids.

The Waynesburger in Franklin County (thewaynesburger.go-daddysites.com) is a hometown favorite known for its classic burgers and sliders, and 50-plus varieties of milkshakes — sure to please even the pickiest palate. Plus, sample their homemade desserts.



COURTESY THE WAYNEBURGER

Sliders, as well as classic burgers and 50-plus varieties of milkshakes, are popular choices for families at The Waynesburger.

Over in Gettysburg in Adams County, **Gateway Family Diner** (223-255-4093) welcomes families with booth seating, big portions and a kids’ menu starring chicken nuggets, spaghetti with meatballs, and Mickey Mouse pancakes with chocolate chips.

Also in Adams County, **The Farmhouse Restaurant at The Barn Resort** (TheBarnPA.com) features a locally-sourced buffet with soups, salads, mains and desserts in a spacious, casual setting where kids can relax — and eat well. The Cellar 75 lounge, at the resort as well, has live music and an arcade. From chicken nuggets to community vibes, these eateries make dining with little ones a delight.



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renfrewmuseum.org

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September 27, 2025 | 10AM-3PM
Creekside Dairy Farm
4675 Fort McCord Road
Chambersburg, PA, 17202
franklincountyfarmbureau.com

Mercersburg Townsfest
September 27, 2025 | 9AM-3PM
mercersburgtownfest.com

Waynesboro Market Day
October 4, 2025 | 9AM-4PM
mainstreetwaynesboro.org

Shippensburg Pumpkin Festival
October 11 & 12, 2025
shippumpkinfest.com

AppleFest
October 18, 2025 | 9AM-4PM
discoverchambersburg.com

Corn Mazes & Pumpkin Patches
ExploreFranklinCountyPA.com/events



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Where to Find Nonstop Fall Fun

By LEE ZION

The Stanley Fall Festival

This festival will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 27 at Ed Good Park in Stanley. There will be crafts for kids and music in the park's performance center. There will be a "barrel train" set up for kids to ride, said Teri Beers, parks director for Stanley.

The festival, "Fall into Stanley," is a way to greet the fall and bring in the fall season, said Terry Pettit, town manager for Stanley. It's especially for people who prefer the fall to the summer season.

The main purpose is to bring people into Stanley, he said.

"We hope to make this a success, and we hope that everyone comes out for fun, music and good food," Pettit said.

Page County Heritage Festival

The festival will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 11 and 12 at the Page Valley Fairgrounds.

The event dates to 1970. The two-day event is held over Columbus Day weekend and includes crafters and



COURTESY LORA JENKINS

A cow waves at people during the Page County Heritage Festival last year.

artisans from throughout Virginia and the Valley.

Throughout the weekend, during the peak fall foliage season, visitors can enjoy food, entertainment, activities

and dozens of demonstrations, with many people dressed to reflect the Valley's olden days. Demonstrations include log sawing, wheat thrashing, corn husking and more. There will

be a steam and gas engine show, and a lineup of antique engines, tractors and automobiles — all in running condition — as well as barrel train rides for the festival's tiniest goers. Kids can also enjoy face painting, a petting zoo, a pedal tractor pull, a hay maze and more.

There will be live music and live demonstrations, such as spinning, crocheting, apple butter boiling, oil painting, pottery, basket weaving and blacksmithing. The event will be held rain or shine.

Halloween Block Party

Page County will hold its Halloween Block Party from 6 to 8 p.m. on Nov. 1 in Stanley. The event extends along East Main Street, from Honeyville Avenue to the railroad tracks. Parking is at Ed Good Park.

Kids can enjoy the barrel train, while the 12-and-under crowd can go trick-or-treating. Town businesses and community organizations participate by giving out candy. Pettit said about 2,500 people are expected.

Places to Celebrate Your Romance this Fall

By ZACK FURR

Page County, surrounded by the beautiful Shenandoah Mountains, offers many great opportunities for any couple looking to celebrate their love. Whether it be great local restaurants or hikes and walks, the natural beauty of Page County and its friendly faces offer many great places to surprise your loved one.

Taste of Home Downtown

Located right on Main Street in Luray, Taste of Home Downtown is a newly opened, locally owned restaurant, which also features a buffet. The restaurant opens at 6 a.m., offering a home-style breakfast menu, and stays open till 8 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday, and closes at 9 p.m. on Friday and



SHUTTERSTOCK

Saturday. The restaurant primarily serves comfort food and stays open later than most restaurants in the county. The restaurant will also be adding a sports bar in the basement, upon obtaining a liquor license.

55 E. Main St., Luray
540-860-5058

Gathering Grounds

Gathering Grounds is a locally owned coffee shop and restaurant situated in the heart of downtown Luray. The restaurant offers an espresso bar that includes a drink of the week, gourmet sandwiches, salads, pies, cakes and pastries, all of which are cooked or baked in the restaurant fresh. The restaurant also makes all of its dressings.

24 E. Main St., Luray
540-743-1121
ggrounds.com

Love and Sweets Bakery

Love and Sweets Bakery is a recently opened, family-owned and operated bakery in Stanley. The sweets and other baked goods are baked right in

the storefront. It features a fairly open interior, allowing patrons to see baked goods being made, and to interact with those who work there.

804 B.W. Main St., Stanley
540-669-7958

Luray Hawksbill Greenway

The Luray Hawksbill Greenway is a 2-mile, 10-foot-wide, paved walking and biking trail that is handicapped accessible and runs along the Hawksbill Creek. It features 24 benches and eight picnic tables, and is close to downtown Luray, offering many opportunities to admire the natural beauty.

45 E. Main St., Luray
540-669-0318
hawksbillgreenway.org

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5 Things to Do With the Family

By MICKEY POWELL

Berryville and Clarke County are full of adventures for families to pursue in just one day. Here are five recommendations:

1 Long Branch Historic House & Farm

Almost unbelievable natural beauty can be observed from the 400-acre estate, which dates to the early 1800s. Take a guided house tour, visit the art gallery and/or walk your dog on the pristine grounds at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The grounds are open daily from dawn to dusk.

830 Long Branch Lane, Millwood
540-837-1856
visitlongbranch.org

2 Downtown Berryville

Stroll the charming, locally-owned boutique shops while drinking a hot cup of coffee from a restaurant. The district is dotted with intimate eateries serving farm-to-table cuisine, as well as a couple of bakeries. Find your vintage treasures at several antique shops. Enjoy a British-style afternoon tea at The Tea Cart. Snap Instagram-worthy photos alongside murals at Homespun and Hogan's Alley.

540-313-6246
berryvillemainstreet.com

3 Wayside Farm Fun

This attraction, open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sept. 20 until Nov. 2, offers a variety of fun experiences for youth as well as those young at heart. They include pick-your-own-pumpkins, a 10-acre corn maze, hayrides, pumpkin smashing, a "jumping pillow," farm animals, an "apple blaster" and more. Grab a bite at the Food Trough for a picnic in the farmyard afterwards. Season passes and daily tickets are available.

5273 Harry Byrd Highway, Berryville
540-539-3276
waysidefarmfun.com



COURTESY PHOTO

Check out Locke's Mill, a historic grist mill in Clarke County.



JEFF TAYLOR

Michelle Ridings, Clarke County's director of Economic Development and Tourism, at the Bear's Den Overlook, which is one of six Appalachian Trail hikes in Clarke County.

4 Autumn hikes

Stunning fall and winter scenery awaits at Bear's Den Overlook, Raven Rocks and Buzzard Hill along the Appalachian Trail as well as at Cool

Springs, a Civil War battlefield site now hosting trails along the Shenandoah River.

experienceclarkecounty.com/explore-outdoors/hiking-biking

5 Burwell-Morgan Mill and Locke's Mill

Watch historic grist mills grind grains into flour on weekends through November. The Burwell-Morgan Mill has a beautiful park with weeping willow trees, suitable for picnics, along a tributary of the Shenandoah River. Gourmet food, coffee and wine for picnics can be purchased nearby at Locke Store.

Burwell-Morgan Mill
15 Tannery Lane, Millwood
540-955-2600
clarkehistory.org
Locke's Mill
1600 Locke's Mill Road, Berryville
lockesmillgrains.com

5 Can't-Miss Cool Weather Events

By MICKEY POWELL

For a small, rural community, Clarke County has an abundance of special events to enjoy this fall and winter. Here are five recommendations.

1 The Big Flea

The semiannual flea market along streets in the central business district typically attracts more than 100 vendors selling a variety of unique finds, including arts and crafts and household items. Visitors are also encouraged to stop by local stores and restaurants to experience what they have to offer customers.

8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sept. 13
Downtown Berryville
540-313-6246
berryvillemainstreet.com

2 Art at the Mill

The art exhibition, held twice a year, is the Clarke County Historical Association's largest fundraiser. Funds go toward the historic grist mill's upkeep. Most of the works for sale are created by regional artists. They include oil, acrylic, pastel and wa-



JEFF TAYLOR

tercolor paintings, as well as pottery, wood-turning, glassware and more.

Sept. 20 to Oct. 5
Burwell-Morgan Mill, 15 Tannery Lane, Millwood
540-955-2600
clarkehistory.org

3 Haunted Historic Berryville

The walking tours, which start

every half hour, will begin at the offices of the Clarke County Historical Association and then will travel to various locations throughout Downtown Berryville believed to be haunted. At the very least, they're spooky.

6:30 to 8 p.m. Oct. 16 to 18
540-955-2600
clarkehistory.org

This little boy tries "driving" a tractor at Wayside Farm Fun.

4 Luckett's Fall Market

The market, which draws people from throughout Northern Virginia and beyond, features items for sale by more than 200 "vintage hip" vendors along the East Coast. Live music, food and beverage vendors and workshops to enhance your creativity skills also are available.

Oct. 17 to 19
Clarke County Ruritan Fairgrounds,
809 W. Main St., Berryville
703-779-0268
luckettsmarkets.com

5 Christmas activities in downtown Berryville

Activities include Holiday Meters on Parade, which is a parking meter decoration contest beginning Dec. 2; the Christmas tree lighting at Rose Hill Park on the evening of Dec. 5 and the Clarke County Christmas Parade at noon Dec. 6.

540-313-6246
berryvillemainstreet.com

Where to Leaf Peep

By MICKEY POWELL

For those who love to see the leaves change colors in the fall, there are two can't-miss locations in Clarke County.

One is the **Blandy Experimental Farm and State Arboretum of Virginia**, off U.S. 50 (John Mosby Highway) between Boyce and Millwood. America's largest public Ginkgo Grove has more than three acres and 300 trees with fan-shaped leaves that turn a glorious golden hue to create a lush carpet of leaves.

Late October and early November are excellent times to experience and take photos of one of nature's most

spectacular autumn shows.
400 Blandy Farm Lane, Boyce
540-837-1758
blandy.virginia.edu

The other suggested location is the **Twin Oaks Tavern Winery**, nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The winery's deck and tasting room provide spectacular views of the Shenandoah Valley's colorful fall foliage. And, leaf-peepers can sip craft wines and nibble on charcuterie while enjoying the scenery.

18035 Raven Rocks Road, Bluemont
980-333-5579
twinoakswinery.com



JEFF TAYLOR

Visitors enjoy an autumn visit to the Ginkgo Grove at Blandy Experimental Farm and State Arboretum of Virginia in Clarke County.

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5 Fun Family Adventures

By CHRIS SLATTERY

Making memories together doesn't have to be complicated, because in Hardy County, family fun is always right around the corner. Here are some autumn activities that everyone can enjoy together.

1 Go leaf peeping, Southern style.

Why go all the way to New England to see the autumn leaves when charming, unspoiled Hardy County is so much closer? Lost River State Park is fun to visit any time of year, but fall means crisp breezes, fresh mountain air, and explosions of color as the spectacular foliage does its thing across 23 miles of trails, some of which are suitable for horseback riding with professional guides.

Lost River State Park
321 Park Drive, Mathias
304-897-5372
wvstateparks.com [Search the park.]

2 Become a glass artist.

At Dakota Glass Works, you can explore the craft of glassblowing and create your own art, too. This small-scale glass production and teaching studio offers live demos, workshops and classes for budding glass artists 8 years old and up—no experience required. The studio is open Thursday through Sunday, and there's a gallery that's open weekends.

273 E. Main St., Wardsville
farmworkwonders.org/dakota-glass-works
304-401-6733

3 Rock the schoolhouse trail.

Wind through the wilderness and rural roads of Hardy County on a historic-schoolhouse scavenger hunt, using a list of 22 historic structures that once were part of the county's education system. Visit the one- or two-room community schoolhouses where 19th- and early 20th-century children received an education, and



COURTESY HARDY COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Why trek all the way to New England when nearby Hardy County boasts foliage that rivals that of any of our northeastern neighbors?

where villagers and townspeople gathered for worship, meetings and country dances. See the website for a list of schoolhouses.

Curated by Mountain Heritage Trails, Inc.
theclio.com/tour/2291

4 Celebrate art and artists.

Get a jump on your holiday shopping while supporting local artisans with a visit to Lost River Artists Marketplace. Here you'll find one-of-a-kind artwork and carefully crafted gifts, from pottery and prints to handmade soap, candles and even glass. Artists Marketplace is a nonprofit organization where artists display and sell their wares and art lovers take classes, watch demonstrations, and snap up unique treasures. Open weekends.

8937 WV 259, Lost City
304-897-7242
lostrivercrafts.com



HARDY COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Learn to blow glass at Dakota Glass Works in Wardsville.

5 Hop on your bike.

Fall is a great time to hit the bike trails at Lost River State Park, where scenic vistas abound. Mountain biking here challenges the body and rewards the senses, and you'll find bike trails that take the whole family through the park's 3,934 wooded acres.

321 Park Drive, Mathias
304-897-5372
wvstateparks.com [Search the park.]

3 Fall Outings

By CHRIS SLATTERY

Autumn is awesome in Hardy County, where small-town living and natural wonders combine to offer a day trip or weekend to remember. Celebrate history and heritage, savor country cuisine, enjoy live music, local crafts, vintage cars — even a ride on a fire truck!

1 The 72nd Annual Heritage Weekend

From quilt shows and historic home tours to Civil War re-enactments, Hardy County's Heritage Weekend is the only countywide festival of its kind in West Virginia, according to its website. Launched in 1953 to raise funds for the Hardy County Public Library, the festival celebrates history, community and heritage. Offering live music, delicious food, walking tours, a car show and traditional crafts, it's a perfect way to celebrate autumn in the open air. The event is held throughout the county. See the website for specific locations.

Sept. 26 to 28
heritageweekend.com

2 The Wardsville Fall Festival

Bluegrass, barbecue, bingo and a ride on a fire truck — the Wardsville Fall Festival highlights the simple joys of small-town living in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. From the Saturday afternoon parade to the classic car show, there really is something for everyone.

Oct. 10 to 12
Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.;
Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Carnival Grounds, East Main St., Wardsville

3 Saddle Up!

Get a new perspective on the magnificent fall foliage when you take to the trails on horseback. Hidden Trails Stables in Lost River State Park offers gentle horses, expert guides, and panoramic views of the season's changing colors. Rides range from half an hour to two hours, and there's even a pony ride for the little ones.

6849 Dove Hollow Road, Mathias
304-897-5627

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SAVANNAH ADVENTURE

Sunday-Friday October 26-October 31 \$1599 per person (double occupancy) 6 day/ 5 nights Savannah Adventure includes five nights lodging, 10 meals Billy Graham Library, tour of Jekyll Island (including tram), tour of St. Simons Island, informative tour of Savannah, Low Country Tour, free time on River Street, show at the Savannah Theatre, storyteller in Mount Airy, tour of Mount Airy, and Andy Griffith Museum!



ATLANTIC CITY MARGARITAVILLE AT RESORTS HOTEL CASINO OVERNIGHT

Sunday-Monday, October 25-26: \$179 per person (double occupancy). Includes overnight lodging at Margaritaville at Resorts Hotel Casino, located along the world-famous Atlantic City Boardwalk. Per Person Bonus Package: \$20 Bonus, \$20 Meal Credit



LAS VEGAS

5 Days/ 4 Nights, Monday -Friday, November 10-14, 2025 \$879 per person (double occupancy) Includes: Round-Trip Motorcoach to BWI, Round-trip non-stop air to Las Vegas, Round-trip Airport to Hotel Transfers, 4 nights accommodations at the fabulous Excalibur Hotel & Casino.



NASHVILLE COUNTRY CHRISTMAS AT GAYLORD OPRYLAND RESORT

Sunday-Wednesday December 14-17, 2025, \$2099 per person (double occupancy). Includes roundtrip airfare, roundtrip bus to BWI, 3 nights lodging at Gaylord Opryland Resort., 6 Meals, four shows including Christmas Dinner show in ballroom at Gaylord Opryland (The Frontmen) **Amy Grant & Vince Gill** at the Ryman, General Jackson Showboat Luncheon Cruise with entertainment., Grand Ole Opry Christmas, Country Music Hall of Fame, Studio B guided city tour of Nashville, Delta Flatboat ride, Treasures for the Holidays, Ice.



CHRISTMAS IN NEW YORK

Friday- Sunday, December 19-21: \$779 per person includes two nights lodging at the Sheraton New York Times Square and a Four-Hour Guided Tour of New York City and the Statue of Liberty. This fantastic mid-town location at 7th Avenue and 53rd Street is close to Times Square, Central Park, and Rockefeller Center. It is also located in the heart of the theater district, a short walk to many New York City attractions.



KEY WEST, FLORIDA

Monday-Thursday, January 19-22, 2026- \$2079 per person (double occupancy) round trip air to Key West, round-trip airport transportation, round trip trolley transportation to and from hotel. 3 nights in Key West at Florida Keys and Key West Lodging Association's "Property of the Year", the Doubletree Grand Key Resort located a mile from the airport. Complimentary transportation from hotel to Duval Street and the beaches.



NEW ORLEANS PRE MARDI GRAS 2026

February 9- Friday, February 13, 2026 \$2199 per person (double occupancy), Roundtrip motorcoach to BWI, Roundtrip airfare to New Orleans, 5 days , 4 nights accommodations in French Quarter 7 Meals New Orleans School of Cooking, comprehensive city tour of New Orleans, Mardi Gras World Museum, National World War II Museum (including 4D film), Steamboat Natchez Harbor Cruise, Louisiana Swamp Boat tour, and reserved parade bleacher seating for four parades in New Orleans.

OCEAN CITY SUNFEST

Saturday, October 25 \$85 per person

1 DAY TRIPS

DODGERS AT ORIOLES 7:05 p.m. Saturday, September 6 \$159 per person 2131 Cal Ripken

Anniversary. All You Can Eat Club Seats

YANKEES AT ORIOLES 1:35 p.m. Sunday, September 21 \$159 per person All You Can Eat Club Seats

WIND CREEK CASINO Saturday, September 27 \$59 per person, \$30 Bonus

NEW YORK CITY Saturday, October 11, November 29, December 6, 13, 20 \$99 per person

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR Monday, December 1 \$219 per person

5 Places to Celebrate Romance

BY TONI MILBOURNE

Romance abounds within Morgan County and those searching for just the right spot to share a romantic experience will not be disappointed in the offerings available. There are options for those who enjoy nature as well as those who prefer a quaint in-town visit or a bit of pampering at the local spa.

1 Cozy Spa Escape in Berkeley Springs

Warm up with a private soak in mineral baths and a couples' massage at the historic spa in Berkeley Springs State Park — especially inviting as fall's crisp air arrives. Berkeley Springs State Park is the only state-run spa in the U.S., rich in both history and soothing mineral treatments.

wvstateparks.com/parks/berkeley-springs-state-park

2 Strolls Through a Charming Downtown

Wander through downtown Berkeley Springs amid autumn décor as you pop into art galleries, antique shops and cozy cafés.

Discoverberkeleysprings.com

3 Autumn Hikes & Sunset Views at Cacapon Resort State Park

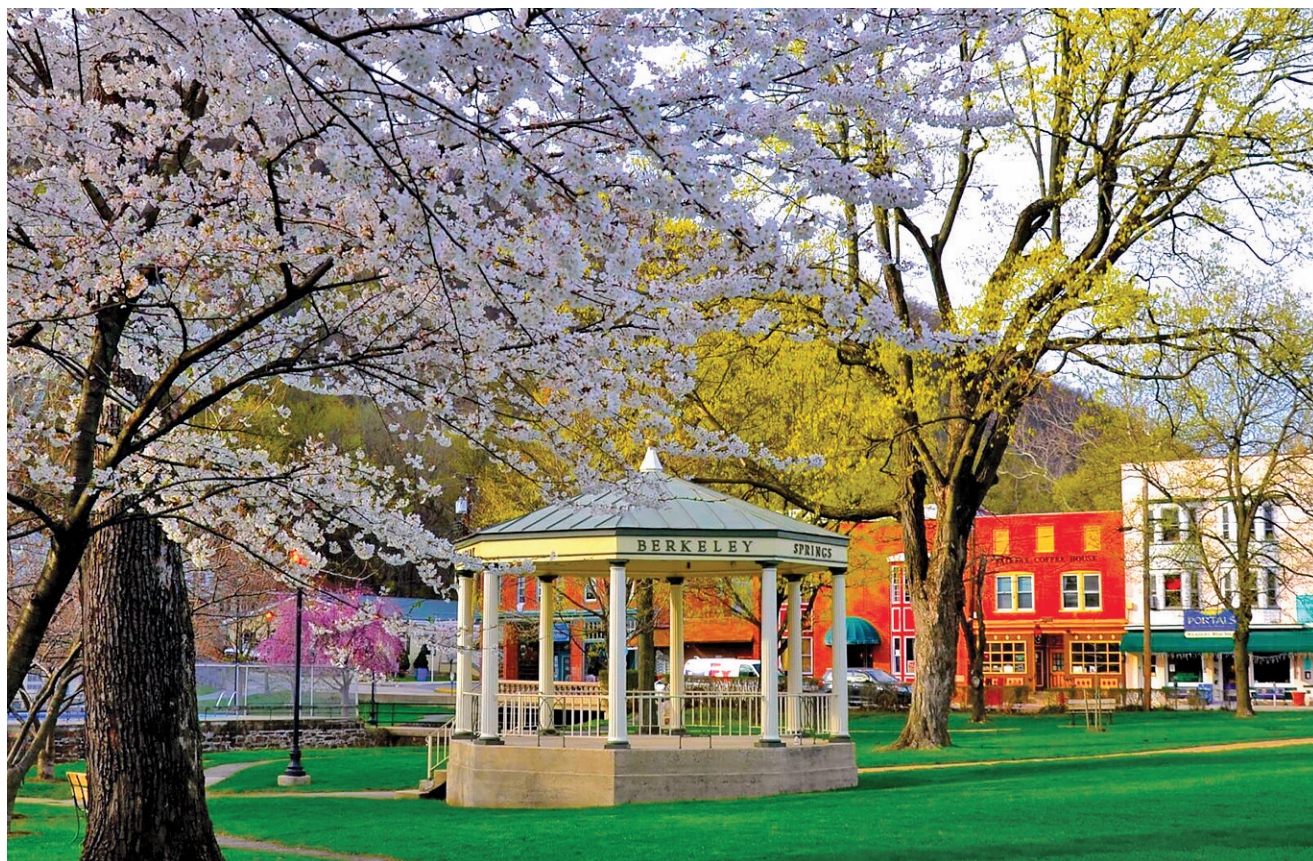
Hike forested trails framed by golden leaves, then catch a romantic sunset at Panorama Overlook, the highest point in Morgan County.

wvstateparks.com/parks/cacapon-state-park

4 Apple-Orchard Sweetness & Wine Tasting

In peak fall, enjoy apple or pumpkin picking at a local orchard (seasonal) followed by a tasting at Cold Run Valley Winery for a truly seasonal, intimate experience. Cold Run Valley Winery is a family-run farm winery crafting 100% natural fruit wines, a short drive from Berkeley Springs.

coldrunvalleywinery.com



COURTESY WV STATE PARKS

ABOVE: Berkeley Springs State Park was recognized as the top hot springs destination in the East.

RIGHT: Enjoy the taste of delicious fruit wines at Cold Run Valley Winery.

5 Mountain Laurel Gallery

Take an afternoon to peruse the art featured at Mountain Laurel Gallery, located in the historic spa town of Berkeley Springs. The gallery has been promoting, marketing and selling the works of American artisans for more than 15 years. Selected as a Niche Magazine Top 100 retailer of American Craft, the gallery offers a wide selection of ceramics, fashion accessories, jewelry, glass, metal, wood and more. Each handcrafted piece is selected based on its unique blend of function, design, beauty and quality.

mountainlaurelartisans.com



COURTESY COLD RUN VALLEY WINERY

3 Top Hot Spots for Nightlife

BY TOM MARKLAND

The lights might dim a little earlier in Morgan County than in a big city, but there's no shortage of places to enjoy an evening out. Here are three local favorites that keep the good times going after dark.

The Historic Star Theatre

Standing proud on North Washington Street, the Star Theatre remains a hometown favorite. It hosts everything from current films to vintage classics and occasional live performances.

The theatre is located at 49 N. Washington St., Berkeley Springs, and is open for showings Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m. and on Sunday at 3 p.m.

The Naked Olive Lounge

Just a short stroll from the springs, The Naked Olive Lounge brings a bit of modern flair to downtown with speakeasy-style vibes, modern American small plates and creative



TOM MARKLAND

cocktails served in a cozy, stylish setting. Weekly food and drink specials keep things fresh, and the friendly crowd gives the lounge an easygoing, conversational feel.

The lounge is located at 87 N. Washington St., Berkeley Springs, and is open

Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m.

Berkeley Springs Brewing Co.

Those who enjoy their nights with a cold craft beer and a side of entertainment will want to check out

The historic Star Theatre remains a hometown favorite, hosting popular films and local live performances.

Berkeley Springs Brewing Co. This brewpub doubles as a full restaurant and taproom, and on many nights, you'll find live music or trivia to pair with your pint. The space blends local flavor with the laid-back atmosphere of a neighborhood hangout.

The brewery is located at 110 Michigan Lane, Berkeley Springs, and is open Monday from noon to 7 p.m., Thursday through Saturday from noon to 9 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 8 p.m. It is closed Tuesday and Wednesday.

Whether you're catching a film in a historic theater, sipping cocktails in a warmly-lit lounge, or swapping stories over a fresh pour at the brewery, Berkeley Springs proves you don't need a big-city skyline for a memorable night out.

Budget-Friendly Stops for Day-Trippers of All Ages

BY TOM MARKLAND

When the leaves start to turn shades of red and orange, Morgan County offers a season's worth of things to do that don't require a big budget, or any budget at all.

For those who like to take in fall colors from a high perch, **Cacapon Resort State Park** is a must. The drive up to the Panorama Overlook is free, and on a clear day, you can see into three states. The park's 6,000-plus acres offer trails ranging from gentle strolls to more rugged hikes, each framed by the changing leaves.

When you want more solitude, try the **Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area**, which is about as off-the-beaten-path as it gets. Nearly 23,000 acres of forest, a quiet lake and plenty of wildlife make it a good spot to watch leaves fall, take photos or just enjoy a quiet afternoon away from the bustle.

History buffs can take the **Washington Heritage Trail**, a National Scenic Byway that threads

through Morgan County. The route ties together early American history and autumn scenery, making it a scenic drive that costs nothing more than a tank of gas.

Of course, fall in Berkeley Springs wouldn't be complete without its festivals. The annual **Apple Butter Festival** fills downtown with the smell of boiling kettles and the sounds of bluegrass, craft vendors and community chatter. Smaller harvest events pop up through the season, offering live music, baked goods and a chance to catch up with neighbors.

Even a simple walk through downtown Berkeley Springs can be an event this time of year. The historic brick storefronts and the warm colors of surrounding hills make for a postcard scene, perfect for a leisurely afternoon.

Whether it's a trail, a festival, or just a slow drive through the county, Morgan County in the fall offers plenty to see and do without spending much more than your time, and maybe a few dollars for a cup of cider.



COURTESY TRAVEL BERKELEY SPRINGS

Cacapon Resort State Park is a must-see spot for leaf-enjoyers this autumn.



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5 Instagram-Worthy Stops for Leaf Peeping

BY ASHLEY MILLER

Fall turns the Northern Shenandoah Valley into nature's very own firework display. Here are five spots in Shenandoah County to explore.

1 Strasburg's Riverwalk

As the leaves begin to change throughout the Northern Shenandoah Valley, consider taking a stroll or jog along Strasburg's Riverwalk Trail. Considered an easy route, the gravel walkway beside the Shenandoah River offers beautiful views of Signal Knob, part of the Massanutten Mountain Range.

295 Park Road, Strasburg
540-465-9197
strasburgva.com/parksrec

2 The George Washington and Jefferson National Forest

The national forest stretching along the border of Virginia and West Virginia is an ideal spot for travelers seeking not only vibrant leaves but also great places to hike and backpack. Snap photos of the changing hues, as well as waterfalls, picturesque scenes and the occasional wildlife.

Lee Ranger District Office:
102 Koontz St., Edinburg
540-984-4101
fs.usda.gov/r08/gwj

3 Seven Bends State Park

Offering 9 miles of hiking trails, Seven Bends State Park allows visitors to take in the fall foliage. Or bring along a kayak or canoe and take in the stunning views from the Shenandoah River.

2111 Hollingsworth Road, Woodstock
800-933-7275
dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/seven-bends

4 Yellow Cliffs Mountain Overlook

Hike the Massanutten Trail near New Market for breathtaking views



RICH COOLEY



RICH COOLEY

of the Shenandoah Valley from Yellow Cliffs Mountain Overlook. This peaceful, sun-soaked hike is a

hidden gem — known only to locals. This short yet rewarding hike takes visitors through wildflower meadows

ABOVE: The Strasburg Riverwalk begins inside the Strasburg Town Park and ends at Strasburg High School on Ram Drive.

LEFT: Seven Bends State Park east of Woodstock offers 9 miles of trails — perfect for taking in the fall foliage.

to ultimately reveal an open summit perfect for an autumn afternoon.

Route 211, east of New Market
visitskylinedrive.org/itinerary/central-loop

5 Laurel Run Gusty Point Hike

A popular trail known for its stunning views, Laurel Run is a 2-mile trail located near Basye. Visitors can walk, run, bike or hike this trail while taking in gorgeous views and unique wilderness experiences.
visitshenandoahcounty.com
[Search the trail.]

Top Events: Goblins, Grilled Cheese, Good Times

BY ASHLEY MILLER

Edinburg Ole Time Festival

The oldest community festival in Shenandoah County, the Edinburg Ole Time Festival celebrates the time-honored traditions of years past. Packed into three days, from Sept. 19 to 21, this year's Ole Time Festival is sure to include demonstrations of such lost arts as blacksmithing, basketmaking and apple butter boiling.

Live music, living history and lectures by noted historians educate attendees on the Shenandoah Valley's history and culture.

edinburgoletimefestival.com

New Market Fall Festival

Celebrated annually, the New Market Fall Festival offers plenty of family fun for all ages on Sept. 27. Craft vendors and local businesses offer unique products and local food options, while live entertainers perform throughout the day. Designed to celebrate autumn and country living, this fall festival is a must-visit for anyone visiting the Northern Shenandoah Valley.

540-740-3432

newmarketvirginia.com/explore/page/festivals-and-events



RICH COOLEY

An artisan weaves a Jeremiah basket outside the Edinburg Mill at the 2024 Ole Time Festival.

Halloween on Court Square

Calling all goblins and ghouls! Join Woodstock for the town's spooktacular Halloween on Court Square from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Oct. 25. Trick-or-treat at local businesses, followed by themed crafts, magic shows and a petting zoo. Children ages 5 to 12 have the opportunity to win the honor of lighting the town's Christmas tree with the mayor on Dec. 5.

540-459-3621

woodstockva.gov/389/Halloween-on-Court-Square



COURTESY TOWN OF WOODSTOCK

Halloween on Court Square in Woodstock is a spooktacular family-friendly event. Trick-or-treat at local businesses before enjoying fun activities including face painting, a petting zoo and Halloween crafts.

Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup Festival

Mark those calendars for Nov. 1 to celebrate all things comfort food with Strasburg's Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup Festival. Expect to try grilled cheese and tomato soup in every style imaginable while shopping at local vendors and enjoying live music. Be sure to grab those tickets early — before they melt away.

540-465-9197

strasburgva.com
[Search the festival.]



RICH COOLEY

Dean Fadely of Woodstock stirs apple butter during Edinburg's 2024 Ole Time Festival.

Grab a Front Row Seat to The Valley's Music Scene

BY ASHLEY MILLER

Experience the Northern Shenandoah Valley's vibrant live music scene, from foot-stomping country tunes to high-energy rock to smooth jazz to timeless classical performances.

Box Office Brewery in downtown Strasburg offers live bands every Friday and Saturday from 7 to 10 p.m. Popular artists include Ryan Jewel, Clay and Gloria Arthur and Robbie Limon. For more information, visit boxofficebrewery.com.

Admission is free at New Market's

annual **Cross Roads Music Fest** on Sept. 12 and Oct. 10 in Rebel Park. Celebrating its 11th season, the festival allows music enthusiasts of all ages to pack their chairs and blankets and enjoy music under the stars. Visit newmarketvirginia.com and search the festival.

The Burn Barrel, a popular restaurant and bar in Basye, offers music on Saturday evenings with such local acts as Taylor LaFever, the Fever Project and Matt Palmieri. Learn more at basyeburnbarrel.com.



COURTESY PHOTO

New Market's Cross Roads Music Fest is celebrating its 11th season of offering local music for no cost.



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"THE CARPENTERS" • \$143
- **SUNFEST, OCEAN City** • Oct. 22-24 • Call for detail
Magic & Wonder • Winter Wonderland • Lancaster, Pa • Dec. 4 • \$141
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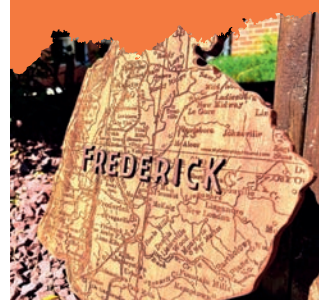
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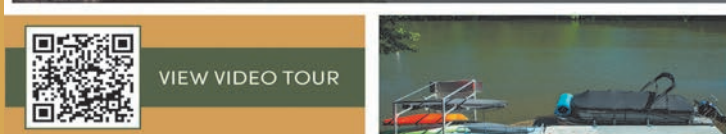
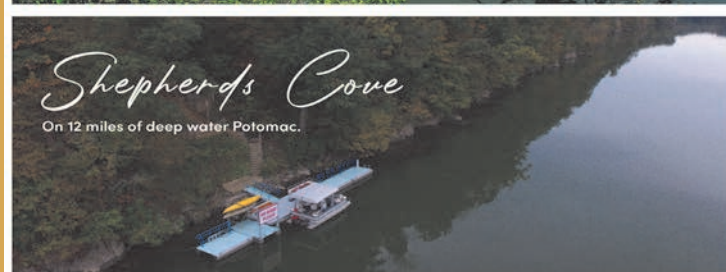
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5 Ways to Do Fall Right

By RICHARD H. HRONIK III

As the weather cools and the leaves turn from green to red, residents of Rockingham County are getting ready to celebrate the changing seasons.

1 Back Home on the Farm

Located just north of Harrisonburg, Back Home on the Farm offers family-friendly attractions like a pumpkin patch, corn maze, barn, carousel and garden. Visitors will be able to meet farm animals like horses, cows, rabbits and Buddy the farm dog, according to the farm's website.

In fall, the farm will also feature hot food like apple cider donuts and locally-sourced hamburgers, a country store with jams, pickles and more, and bonfires on cold nights.

2915 Willow Run Road, Harrisonburg
540-442-6493
backhome-onthefarm.com

2 Fear Forest

If you're a fan of Spooky Season looking for a fright, Fear Forest in Rockingham County is ready to chill you to the bone. Featuring three horror attractions at one location, monsters emerge as the sun sets, ready to show visitors true horror.

Attendees will be able to traverse three different horror attractions. The main attraction, Fear Forest, features a looping trail through haunted woods, stalked by creatures like zombies and witches, brought to life by actors and animatronics. Brave guests can also explore Fear Crops, a corn maze haunted by home-grown horrors, and Fear Factory, a decrepit structure where nightmares are made, according to the Fear Forest website.

In addition, guests can enjoy a hayride, concessions, bonfire and more.

6340 Oak Shade Road, Harrisonburg
540-638-0061
fearforest.net

3 White Oak Lavender Farm's Fall Festival

Situated near the small community of Cross Keys, White Oak Lavender Farm hosts seasonal festivals throughout the year. In fall, the farm will hold another celebration, this time to ring in the harvest season.

Vendors will be present from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with food trucks opening at 11 a.m. and closing at 8:30 p.m., according to the farm's website. Attendees will be able to enjoy food, cider, beer, wine,



DANIEL LIN

Guests at Back Home on the Farm pick pumpkins. The farm also has a corn maze and a carousel.



HARLEIGH CUPP

Skeletons tower over a path cut through the haunted corn maze at Fear Forest.

music and activities like stomping grapes to make into wine. Music will begin at 11 a.m.

2644 Cross Keys Road, Harrisonburg
540-421-6345
whiteoaklavender.com/pages/fall-festival

4 Skeleton Fest

For families who love Halloween and want to show off their costumes, Skeleton Fest is an opportunity to have fun and grab bonus candy before the big night. Held annually by Harrisonburg

Downtown Renaissance, the city's historic district will be closed to vehicle traffic, giving visitors the chance to walk down Main Street in costume.

The festival will feature trick-or-treating, costume contests, a sip and stroll, and more as the Friendly City celebrates fall on Oct. 25.

Downtown Harrisonburg
540-432-8922
downtownharrisonburg.org/skeleton-fest

5 Hiking trails

While Skyline Drive may get some close enough to the fall foliage, it just isn't the same for others. For anyone wanting to get up close and personal with the kaleidoscope of color created by the changing leaves, Harrisonburg and Rockingham County have a host of hiking trails ready to trek.

The Harrisonburg Tourism office has free guides for anyone who wants to run, hike, or bike through nature on 15 trails spanning a wide variety of skill levels. Hikers can see landmarks like High Knob fire tower, Fridley Gap, or Furnace Mountain as they get closer to nature.

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visitharrisonburgva.com/all-trails



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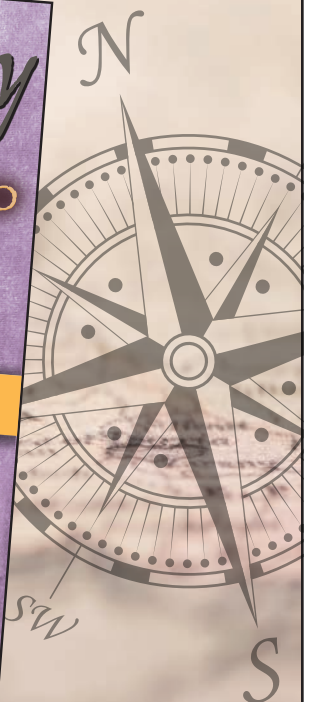
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Legends, Labyrinths & Late-Night Thrills

If you're looking for a fun fall experience, Warren County has you covered.

Perhaps best known for its vibrant fall foliage and the annual Festival of Leaves celebration, the county will offer two new events this fall that embrace the community's history and rural culture.

The Warren Heritage Society will host its **Haunted Front Royal** ghost tours starting Sept. 27. To be held on Friday and Saturday evenings through late October, the hour-long guided walking tours will feature spooky stories from Front Royal's historic district.

"We'll begin on the Warren Heritage Society grounds and then walk into the downtown area with stops along the way that correspond to haunted history, spooky stories, and legends," said Faye Cloven, marketing and outreach coordinator for the historical organization.

Cloven said that two tour times are planned per night, with multiple tour routes possible. Costumed interpreters will share stories rooted in local history, including the tale of Henry Rhodes, who was paraded down Chester Street to his death at the hands of a Union soldier during the Civil War and is

buried at Prospect Hill Cemetery.

"It's incredible to me that Front Royal, being as rich in history and being so old, hasn't had something like this. We're really excited to make it immersive, fun, and cool," Cloven said.

101 Chester St., Front Royal
540-635-1446
warrenheritagesociety.org

Reitano Vineyards will host a **hay bale maze** on Friday evenings and Saturdays through the month of October with designated times for kids to explore. In the evenings, spooky surprises will await adults throughout the maze.

The 88-acre vineyard will also host nighttime tastings in the vines.

On select weekends throughout the month, Reitano will host live music, apple butter making and visits with goats and Highland cows. Pumpkins will also be available for purchase.

"We're trying to do some fun things to get people to come out to the farm. I think this is going to be a great thing for our community," said Reitano owner Shelly Cook.

137 Lee Burke Road, Front Royal
540-550-0334
reitanovineyards.com



WARREN HERITAGE SOCIETY

Stories from the Belle Boyd Cottage, shown here in a spooky photo shared by the Warren Heritage Society, will be shared during some of the nonprofit organization's fall ghost tours.



COURTESY PHOTO

Mac's Roller Rink, located just north of Front Royal in Warren County, offers hours of fun on a budget.

Budget-Friendly Fun

By LAURA RUBY

There's loads to do around the town of Front Royal without breaking the bank.

At **Explore Art & Clay** (501 E. Main St.), kids and adults alike can try their hand at painting their own pottery. From simple serving dishes to intricate figurines, pottery pieces vary in price, starting at \$10. Check out exploreartandclay.com for workshops and events.

Just down the street, step into an old-fashioned video game and pinball

arcade at **Fireball Arcade** (218 E. Main St.), where the dollar still goes a long way. Packed with games from the 1980s and '90s, the arcade charges a \$10 entrance fee that allows gamers to play all day. Visit fireballarcade.com for details.

A short drive from downtown Front Royal, historic **Mac's Roller Rink** (5030 Front Royal Pike, White Post) offers fun physical activity, rain or shine. Skate for \$10 or upgrade to the skate plus arcade package for \$15. Find out more at macsrollerrink.shop.

Toast the Season Among the Vines

A pair of Warren County vineyards — one new and one seasoned — offer amazing views and relaxing environments for toasting fall foliage.

Reitano Vineyards is nestled on 88 acres of picturesque farmland with a special-events facility and a new tasting room scheduled to open in October. Originally the site of a cattle farm, the 16-acre vineyard went through eight years of soil cultivation before opening in 2024. The venue boasts a sweeping porch with fabulous views of the vineyard where guests can enjoy a wide selection of wines and a full menu. It also frequently hosts live entertainment, a monthly farm-to-table dinner and community events.

The new tasting room will include a wine bar with a piano, as well as a four-bay golf simulator. A more casual area with games like shuffleboard and checkers will offer beer from Reitano's new brewery. The tasting room will be open seven days a week, with food served Wednesday through Sunday.

137 Lee Burke Road, Front Royal
540-550-0334
reitanovineyards.com



RICH COOLEY

Tucked into the western flank of the Blue Ridge Mountains bordering Shenandoah National Park, **Glen Manor Vineyards** is a small family vineyard focused on offering excellent wine and a tranquil experience.

Shelly Cook walks along a row of grapevines in her 15-acre Reitano Vineyards in Warren County.

Currently featuring its 2024 white and rose wines and 2022-23 red wines, the tasting room and production facility opened in 2008 under the care of fourth-generation farmer Jeff White.

The vineyard leans into its steep mountain slopes and high elevation, providing ideal growing conditions for producing wines of concentration and precision.

In order to retain the peaceful mountain environment, Glen Manor welcomes groups of up to four (including minors and non-drinkers) without a reservation to its indoor and outdoor seating areas, where the mountain views are stunning.

Groups of up to six require a reservation and limousines and buses are not permitted. Glen Manor is open Wednesday through Sunday.

2244 Browntown Road, Front Royal
540-635-6324
glenmanorvineyards.com



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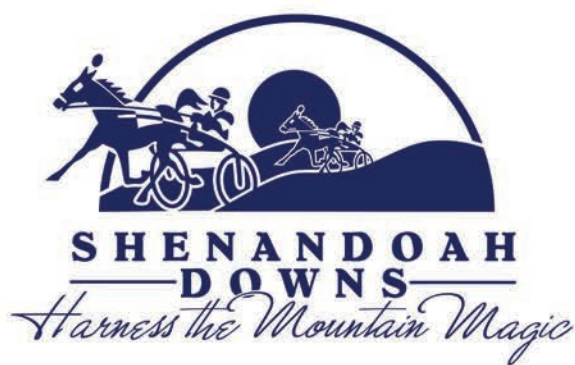
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