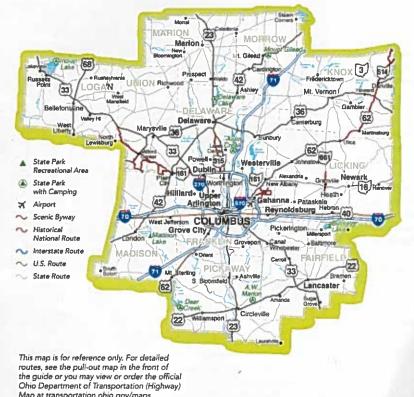
happiness. Gather with friends for dinner and one of the house microbrews at Wolf's Ridge Brewing in Columbus. 112 OHIO. FIND IT HERE. 🖈 IT IS ADVISABLE TO CALL AHEAD BEFORE TRAVELING.

CENTRAL OHIO

STORIES BY RICH WARREN

Columbus writer Rich Warren loves nothing more than pointing his car down Ohio's country byways or urban thoroughfares to discover the quirky and offbeat experiences that await around every corner.





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"This was one of those trips that filled my heart as much as it did my stomach (and aren't those the best kind?)."

Blogger Lindsay Landis of Nashville of her trip to Columbus





one region, four ways to Play

families

Splash away at Zoombezi Bay, a popular water park adjacent to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium in Powell. Get your heart pumping by racing down SoundSurfer, the nation's first water slide with built-in light shows and a personalized sound system.

Be awed by Cathedral Hall at the millions-of-years-old Olentangy Indian Caverns in Delaware. Descend 105 feet along the passages, miles of which have never been explored.

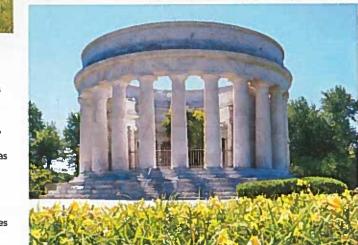
Lead your excited youngster down the garden path literally - when Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens' Children's Garden opens in May. With interactive areas designed to encourage budding green thumbs and stoke curiosity in nature, your little one is sure to be blooming with excitement.

culture buffs

Pay homage to Ohio's history as the home of eight U.S. presidents at Harding Memorial in Marion. This towering monument resembling a Greek temple is the burial site for President Warren G. Harding and his wife, Florence. It's as if the architectural grandeur found in Washington, D.C., were transported here to Harding's home town.

Get a sense of how Ohio's first residents lived. The ancient Hopewell culture held ceremonies at Newark Earthworks' Great Circle and the Octagon. You can't help but feel a sense of reverence, just one of the reasons these earthworks are being considered as an UNESCO Heritage site.

Walk into a painting at the Topiary Park in Columbus where 54 figures, eight boats and three dogs whimsically re-create Georges Seurat's "A Sunday Afternoon on the Isle of La Grande Jatte."





Experience a work of art in

a new way at the Topiary Park Columbus BELOW: Stand in awe

at the impressive Harding Memorial in Marion

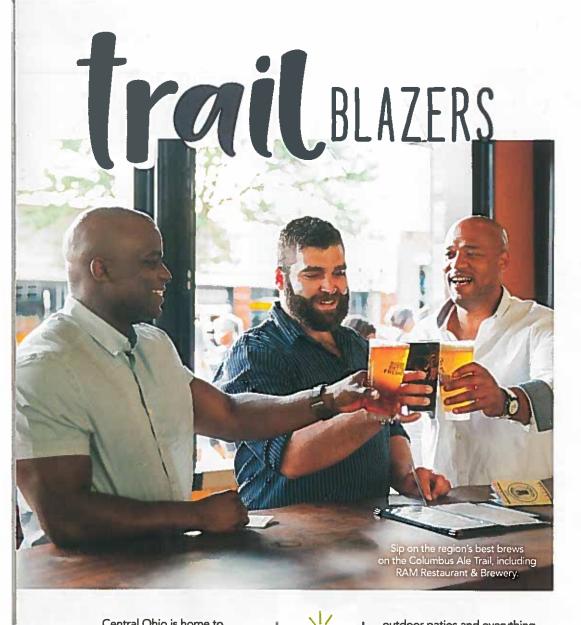


Scotland's uber-popular BrewDog (LEFT) opened its first U.S. brewery last year in Canal Winchester and is quickly making it a destination of choice for all beer lovers. Pick from its huge beer selection and feast on comfort food. Coming in 2018 are a hotel and dog park.

➤ Savor Mexican pastries, Vietnamese banh mi sandwiches and Somalian tea, without ever leaving the country. "Alt Eats," just one tour by Columbus Food Adventures, offers nibbles from ethnic restaurants, introducing each country's culture through its cuisine.







Central Ohio is home to dynamic coffee, craft beer and shopping scenes. Follow three different trails that quide visitors to the best places to find them.

Sip on lattes and pour overs along the Columbus Coffee Experience, with stops at more than 20 shops offering everything from cortados to cappuccinos. using beans as exotic as Kenya Windrush or Brazil Ipanema. Get tips from the baristas to use at home as you savor each cup.

The city's craft brew scene is exploding. Of the more than 40 breweries featured on the Columbus Ale Trail, more than half have opened in the last five years. Imbibe by the growler or the pint, enjoying live music,

Be sure to get stamps

provided passports to be

to tasting glasses.

on specially traded in for everything from T-shirts

Happy trails

from pizza to pinball at places as hopping as their brews.

Meet the area's creative types on the Made in CBUS Trail showcasing locally owned businesses ranging from makers of spirits to wearable art. This trail is the ultimate way to buy local.

outdoor patios and everything



Mark your calendar for these events. Get more ideas on ohio.org or by ordering the Ohio Calendar of Events.

May

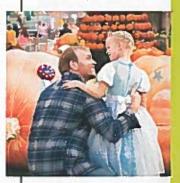
Experience an old-time ice cream social on a grand scale at the Utica Sertoma Ice Cream Festival, May 26-28. This event features a classic car show and, best of all, 15 decadent flavors of Velvet Ice Cream.

June

Meet the artists and be wowed by their creativity at the Columbus Arts Festival, June 8-10. Hundreds of artist booths will line the downtown riverfront, transforming it into an outdoor art gallery.

August

The Dublin Irish Festival, Aug. 3-5, bills itself as the largest three-day festival of its kind. With seven stages of world-class Irish musicians, Celtic dancing and plenty of Irish beer, it truly is the ultimate Irish experience.



October

Marvel at pumpkins bigger than you at the Circleville Pumpkin Show (ABOVE), one of Ohio's oldest and most popular festivals. From Oct. 17-20 you can sink your teeth into all things pumpkin, even a pumpkin burger.

CAN'T-MISS **MUSIC FESTS**

Get rocking at Rock on the Range, set for May 18-20 at Columbus' MAPFRE Stadium featuring 50-plus bands playing hard, alternative and punk rock as well as heavy metal.

Revel in the variety of the Lancaster Festival, an 11-day extravaganza set for July 18-28 with more than 60 mostly free events, featuring everything from funky Dixieland to reggae and classical string quartets.

Columbus' riverfront heats up July 20-22 along with the grills at the Jazz & Rib Fest. Kick back to the sounds of dozens of regionally and internationally renowned musicians on three stages, while savoring sizzling ribs from barbecue pit masters.

Musicians at the relaxing Covered Bridge Bluegrass Festival play everything from bluegrass to "newgrass" with an authentic covered bridge — one of five in Union County - as a backdrop Sept. 21-23. Find the fun at Pottersburg Bridge near North Lewisburg.



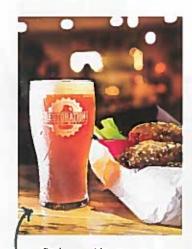
3 PLACES

Love

Roop Brothers Bar, Delaware: "Roop's," as the locals lovingly call it, has been packing them in for decades. As a sign by the door attests, "We're Serious About Music." It's posted alongside photos of former owners Al and Ed Roop with the likes of Smokey Robinson, Bo Diddley and Sheena Easton. Current owner, Josh Moore, follows in the Roops' footsteps, bringing rock and blues bands from around the country on weekends, with karaoke and an open mic night through the week. EXPRESS LIVE!, Columbus: Don't let rain scare you away from concerts at this downtown Columbus venue. The stage can simply pivot so the show is indoors instead of outside. Come for a packed schedule of nationally known acts. Papa Boo's, Buckeye Lake; There's good reason Papa Boo's is also known as "The Lake Place" — its stage is right on the water. There are even docks available, making it simple for boaters to step off, grab some brews and bites, and listen to tunes from mostly Ohio-based rock, country and blues bands — all while enjoying tranquil breezes off the lake.

RETAIL THERAPY

Spend a day exploring the shops in these charming towns.



Recharge with a stop at Restoration Brew Worx where you can pair a pint (or two!) of Worx-Toberfest with its garlic Parmesan chicken wings.

Delaware

Find quintessential Americana in downtown Delaware. Old-time antique stores stand side-by-side with chic bistros and hip boutiques in the 19th-century storefronts lining Sandusky Street, downtown's main drag. Decorations of days gone by add character, like the barber shop complete with a barber pole.

Stop in Stone and Sparrow for cozy home décor items and trendy women's apparel. Take an artist-led workshop at Honey and Abernathy, a boutique whose "Harvested and Home Spun" wares include honey products. Refuel at Delaware's microbreweries. Staas Brewing Company that specializes in Belgian styles and Restoration Brew Worx, with a full menu and several styles on tap.









Granville

Stroll the wide, inviting sidewalks of downtown Granville, meeting the shopkeepers along the way. Talk with area artists at Art@43023, a gallery featuring the work of Ohio artists, many from Granville. Farther down Broadway, the town's main street, The James Store carries an everchanging array of fashionable clothing and accessories

Nearby, drop in at Alfie's Wholesome Food where the sandwiches and pastries are all natural and made from scratch for guilt-free indulging. Or grab lunch at the recently renovated Buxton Inn, a former stagecoach stop in operation since 1812. Then, keep sauntering through other boutiques and an independent bookstore. You won't be the first person to find this town almost impossibly charming.



D813 o pop of flavor Enjoy a handful of K's Kernels popcorn flavor, Birthday Cake, that Gahanna creator Karen Smith describes as "a party in your mouth." Her other unusual flavors include cilantro lime, dill pickle, sriracha spice, peanut butter and snickerdoodle kettle corn. ks-kernels.com Special souvenirs to take back home. • pocket money Downsizing has never been more fun with this mini wallet that packs a • art you can eat ton of style and two to 10 cards. Avid biker Paul Chocolatier Michael Gillam from Bexley Westrick designed the zerOz wallet to avoid takes Belgian chocolate, carrying a regular-sized molds it in unusual wallet. The Columbusshapes (even spirals!), based shop has updated stuffs it with innovative his design to an endless made-from-scratch fillings array of colors that make like ghost chili caramel. a fashion statement when then splatters vibrant you're at the cash register colors on it by hand. Voilà! zeroz.com A work of art your sweet tooth will thank you for. **6** Woven wonders michaelsartisan chocolates.com Wear a work of art! Mikelle Hickmanø beer bath Romine's one-ofa-kind handcrafted Who knew beer could earrings and necklaces are help make your skin silky made with a combination soft? It can when it's made of hand-sewn beadwork by Glenn Avenue Soap and wire sculpture often Company in Columbus. accented with vintage Suds up with handcrafted glass, pearls, rubies, soap using beer from a turquoise or aquamarine half dozen or so Columbus 🤛 mikelle.net craft breweries, along with pure essential oils and organic ingredients.

SET YOUR TABLE

Take home these tasty memories of Central Ohio.

0 CaJohn's Flery Foods

"Caboom!" isn't on the label for nothing. CaJohn's award winning Picante Sauce X-Hot makes an immediate and intense explosion of heat in your mouth. Want to scale back on the fire? Try the black bean and corn salsa roasted garlic salsa or any number of CaJohn's other hot sauces, marinades,

Rockmill Brewery

It looks like whiskey. It tastes like whiskey But it's beer! Rockmill's Cask Ayed Tripel tastes like a much stronger spirit since it's been aged in Middle West Spirits' whiskey barrels. The flavorful beer, with notes of Ohio winter wheat, can be savored at Rockmill Tavern in Columbus Brewery District or the taproom in Larunster.

Watershed Distillery

The New York Times called it the "official drink of the nutcracker." There's that same warm holiday Nocino, a black walnut liqueur made with nuts marinated in vodka with cinnamon, citrus peel and sugar thrown in. The recipe has been passed down through the family, so it's like sharing in a family secret!

Krema Nut Company

Krema puts its own spin on traditional buckeye candies made of peanut butter and chocolate. Its Buckeye Crunch takes caramel popcorn, mixes it with house-made peanut butter, then drizzles chocolate over top. As it says on the bag: "One bite and this crunch will make you smile!"

6

Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams

Take milk from cows who spend many happy hours in the pastures of northern Ohio and throw in Ohio sourced fruits and flavors in imaginatively blended concoctions, and you've got the recipe for Columbus based Jeni's splendid array of flavors, like Middle West Whiskey & Perans. It's heaven in a cone



where's THE Lacon? folloW THE

First you see the series of signs along U.S. Rte. 23 north of Delaware with catchy slogans like "Put R Skill In Your Skillet" and "No Fatty In The Patty." Then you see the business itself — Mom Wilson's Country Sausage Mart, now in its third generation of family ownership. Here's what second-generation proprietors Sue Wilson Snavley and Denny Snavley and their son and daughter-in-law, Sam and Jillian Snavley, want you to know about their establishment:



Mom Wilson's a special place? Our recipes have

been handed down from generation to generation. We use recipes like your grandma ours, too!

your customers to experience? We want them

to feel like family friends who've stopped by for a visit. We want them to come back because they want to.

specialties?

We're known for our smoked pork products like sausage and bacon, but big sellers lately are our snack products like beef jerky and cracker sausage.

personal culinary favorites across Ohio? We love Andrew's

Pastries in Marion for doughnuts and strawberry pie, and G&R Tavern in Waldo for fried bologna sandwiches.

hidden gems

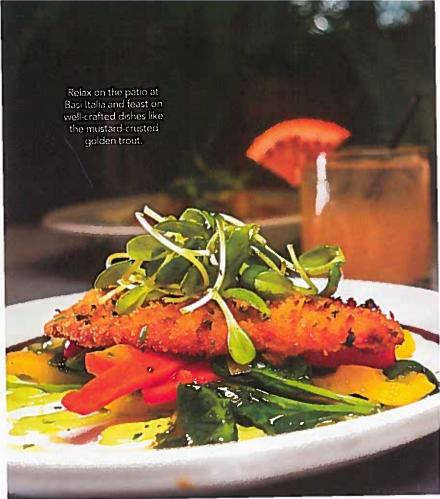
Be rewarded for going off the beaten path.

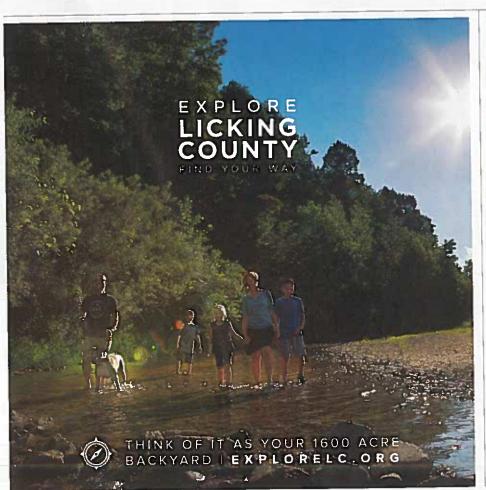
Leon's Garage: The car lift repurposed as a table is testament that this Marysville bar and restaurant was once indeed an auto repair shop. Its specialty is uncommonly good pulled pork and smoked brisket hand rubbed with the proprietor's secret seasoning and smoked for more than 13 hours. Be sure to check out the smoke ring on the meat!

Basi Italia: Travel down a brick alley among the homes in Columbus' Victorian Village to find Basi Italia's intimate dining room. It seats only 30-some people and is invariably filled with folks clamoring for ever-changing Italianbased dishes like baked ricotta gnocchi and Parmesan crème brûlée. The garden-like outdoor patio is one of the city's most secluded places.

Knotty Pine Brewing: With a friendly wait

staff and - surprise! knotty pine décor, this brewpub in the quiet Grandview neighborhood of Columbus serves its own house brews and tasty American fare. The homemade ice cream, made weekly, could be anything from mint chocolate to blueberry cheesecake complete with crust and berries.









SHANNON WILLIAMS, DOUGH MAMA; DOUGH MAMA, KE, CAFE BRIOSO; LAURA WATILO BLAKE, SAMES + CO

Coffee
Pastry Paired together they create

amazingly tasty memories.

Dough Mama

TREATS

Keep your eye on the pie at Dough Mama, a Clintonville bakery and café known for its desserts. Flavors include maple bourbon pecan, lemon lavender and the honey apple, all with thick homemade crusts.



Decadent desserts at this long-time Mount Vernon restaurant include Maureen's Apple Crisp with a substantially thick crumb topping and a scoop of Velvet Ice Cream, a local favorite.

Fox in the Snow

The pecan sticky bun at this Columbus bakery is sticky indeed - the icing practically oozes right off of it. The fragrant bakery is also known for its cinnamon rolls, with icing that looks like it's been ladled on.

Our CupCakery

Belly up to the cupcake bar at Our CupCakery in Dublin. Choose your own flavors not only of the cupcake, but also the filling and frosting.





Extremely friendly service prevails at this downtown Delaware establishment known for its artisan espresso drinks, served both hot and on ice.



Savor your cup knowing a portion of the proceeds at this Columbus shop goes toward fighting hunger, unclean water and human trafficking.

Roosevelt 4



Cafe Brioso

Made-from-scratch chai is just one of the ways Café Brioso attracts repeat visitors. This bustling downtown Columbus coffeehouse uses milk from Ohio cows in its swirled lattes with Ohio honey.



Smell the fresh roasted beans in a 19th-century hardware store complete with tin ceilings in Mount Gilead. Beans are roasted on site, making 23 varieties of flavored coffee and kid-friendly drinks.







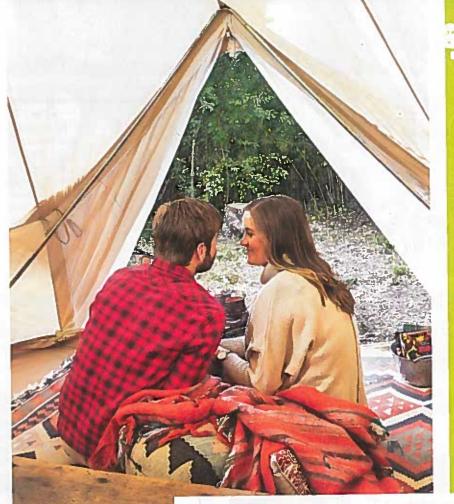


the INN crowd

Sleep inside or out at Orchard House B&B, an 1850s farmhouse near Granville blending contemporary furnishings and artwork with antiques from around the world. Pick one of the cozy rooms inside the residence, or opt for a "glamping" experience in the great outdoors. A large, yurtlike tent is set up adjacent to a peaceful grove of pine trees, complete with a queen bed and down comforter, and ves. electricity! Wake up to decadent, gourmet breakfasts using fresh ingredients from owners Dean Lowry and Jodi Melfi's farm and orchard.

Sit on the porch swing and enjoy the solitude at Escape Route 508, a bed and breakfast outside West Liberty. The rustic décor includes Amish-made beams, hand-hewn logs and cabinets from an old-time general store. Visit "The Lego Loft" to pass the time and bring back childhood building memories.

Hosts Rick and Julie Hidinger place special emphasis on their



ABOVE AND RIGHT: Get your glamp on in the luxurious private yurt at Orchard House B&B in Granville.

sumptuous breakfasts made in a spacious kitchen that even restaurant owners would envy. A key ingredient is their honey, made from the hives out back.

Ohio's state parks keep getting better and better. Bring Fido to the updated dog park in Delaware's **Alum Creek** State Park, where you'll also find new camper cabins and a renovated marina and beach house. Dive in the new pool at Indian Lake State Park

in Lakeview. iust one of the campground improvements.

Get details on ohiodnr.gov



happy camper

breakfast? Pick your own seasonal fruits and vegetables, gather eggs and even pluck fresh flowers as part of the back-to-nature experience at Grins & Pickin's Campfarm (LEFT) in Marengo. With 34 acres of hiking trails and a butterfly garden, there are plenty of farm-fresh camping experiences to bring your family close.



more places to set up camp:

Campground

Campground

Lake Campground

Stay at these campgrounds or visit ohiocampers.com for additional options.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

BELLEFONTAINE AREA

things to do

Big Darby Headwaters Nature Preserve County Road 152, East Liberty 43319. 614-717-2770, nature.org/ohio

Indian Lake State Park 12774 St. Rte. 235 N., Lakeview 43331. 937-843-2717, ohiostateparks.org/indianlake

Markin Farms - Zipline Adventures 550 Twp. Rd. 30 E., West Liberty 43357. 937-465-0358, markinfarms.com

Marmon Valley Farm 7754 St. Rte. 292 S., Zanesfield 43360. 937-593-8000, marmonvalley.com

Ohio Caverns 2210 St. Rte. 245 E., West Liberty 43357. 937-465-4017, ohiocaverns.com

CIRCLEVILLE AREA

local resources

PICKAWAY COUNTY



325 W. Main St. Circleville 43113. 740-474-3636

Pickaway County boasts outstanding lodging, a variety of dining and an array of independently owned retail establishments that offer a unique shopping experience. A county rich in history and agricultural heritage, a visit wouldn't be complete without taking in a museum or farm market for locally produced foods and merchandise. Spend a day make memories for a lifetime pickaway.com

things to do

A. W. Marion State Park 7317 Warner-Huffner Rd., Circleville 43113. 740-869-3124, ohiostateparks.org/awmarion

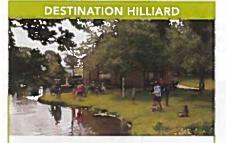
St. Rte. 361, Logan Elm Village 43113. 888-770-7425, ohiohistory.org/loganelm

Manchester Hill Winery 13160 Tarlton Rd., Circleville 43113.

614-571-0750, manchesterhill.com The Ted Lewis Museum 133 W. Main St., Circleville 43113. 740-477-3630, tedlewismuseum.org

local resources

Convention & Visitors Bureau of Worthington 777 High St., Worthington 43085. 614-841-2545, experienceworthington.com



5274 Norwich St. Destination Hilliard 43026.
Hilliard 614-664-3290

Hilliard ... where classic televisions retire and good memories never expire. Visit the and good interest explicit visit the authentic Historic Village at Weaver Park, the only early television museum in the U.S. and the second-largest First Responders Park in the U.S. Experience our parks and events, and dine at our 33 local restaurants.

Dublin Convention & Visitors Bureau 9 S. High St., Dublin 43017. 614-792-7666, visitdublinohio.com

EXPERIENCE COLUMBUS



COLUMBUS

Ste. 125, Columbus 43215.

Come see for yourself why Columbus is the No. 1 Midwest city on J.D. Power's 2016 Destination Experience Satisfaction Study There's an energy and excitement in Columbus that's going to hit you as soon as you arrive. Big things are happening here, and you're invited to join in. experiencecolumbus.com

Gahanna Convention & Visitors Bureau 167 Mill St., Gahanna 43230. 614-418-9114, facebook.com/visitgahanna

Revnoldsburg Visitors & Community Activities Bureau 1792 Graham Rd., Reynoldsburg 43068. 614-866-4888, visitreynoldsburg.com

Visit Grove City 3995 Broadway, Grove City 43123 614-539-8747, visitgrovecityoh.com

WESTERVILLE VISITORS & CONVENTION BUREAU

For detailed information on what to do in Central Ohio, visit ohio.org.

20 W. Main St., Westerville 43081.

You'll love our authentic, small-town feel and modern flair, relaxing places and opportunities for adventure, plus art galleries, theater performances, concerts and plenty of family events. Our Historic Uptown District is the perfect place to shop, dine, enjoy some wine, a microbrew, a snack or a cup of tea.

things to do

The Actual Brewing Co. 655 N. James Rd., Columbus 43219. 614-636-3825, actualbrewing.com

Anthony-Thomas Chocolates 1777 Arlingate Ln., Columbus 43228. 614-274-8405, anthony-thomas.com

Anti-Saloon League Museum 126 S. State St., Westerville 43081. 614-882-7277, westervillelibrary.org/antisaloon

Aquatic Adventures 3940 Lyman Dr., Hilliard 43026. 614-545-3483, aquaticadventuresohio.com

AR Workshop Grove City 2748 London Groveport Rd., Grove City 43123. 614-519-2094, arworkshop.com/grovecity

Barley's Brewing Company 467 N. High St., Columbus 43215. 614-228-2537, barleysbrewing.com

Battelle Darby Metro Creek Park 1775 Darby Creek Dr., Galloway 43119. 614-370-6254, metroparks.net/parks-and-trails/ battelle-darby-creek

Big Bounce

hrew-brothers

1645 Gateway Cr., Grove City 43123. 614-957-5382, bigbouncegrovecity.com

Big Splash Aquatic Park 2831 Southwest Blvd., Grove City 43123. 614-277-1818, grovecityohio.gov

Board and Brush Grove City 3306 Columbus St., Grove City 43123. 614-633-7293, boardandbrush.com/grovecity

6000 S. High St., Columbus 43207. 614-295-4700, sciotodowns.com/venue/restaurants/

Brothers Drake Meadery 26 E. 5th Ave., Columbus 43201. 614-388-8765, brothersdrake.com

Camelot Cellars 901 Oak St., Columbus 43205. 614-441-8860, camelotcellars.com

Capital City Cakes 4009 Broadway, Grove City 43123. 614-277-9338, capitalcitycakesoh.com

Century Village at Fryer Park 4185 Orders Rd., Grove City 43123.

614-277-3061, grovecityohhistory.org/century-village Circle S Farms 9015 London-Groveport Rd., Grove City 43123.

614-878-7980, circlesfarm.com

Columbus Art Walks 240 Parsons Ave., Columbus 43215.

614-645-5318, columbus.gov