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Best of Erie 2025

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(SELECT LOCATIONS)





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US Brig Niagara

Erie: A City for All Seasons

So many visitors come to Erie in the summertime to experience our award-winning beaches and sunsets (the third-best in the world, so it has been said), our creative food scene, our outdoor music festivals, and waterfront amenities. What a lot of people don't realize is that Erie is a stand-out in all four seasons. What's the best way to make the best of our storied, snowy winters? Embrace them and enjoy the season! The Erie area offers a vast slate of winter-related activities like skiing, snowboarding, curling, hockey, sledding, ice fishing, and more. Autumn offers the outstanding beauty of Erie's forested areas turning into oil paintings of gold, orange, purple, and red. With plenty of warm days well into fall, Erie offers a colorful backdrop to pumpkin farms, haunted tours, wine tastings, and hiking. And springtime in Erie is one of our most welcomed seasons, with opportunities for birdwatching, fishing, and

gardening – you'll never find a population more appreciative of the spring sunshine.

Within this guide, you'll find plenty of activities to enjoy any season in Erie – additionally, we list all of Erie's favorite year-round eateries, guiding you towards the best spots for any kind of cuisine you seek, from greasy spoon diners (yes, the spelling is intentional. It's an Erie thing) to our finest fine dining spots and everything in between. And of course, our crown jewel, Presque Isle State Park, Erie's more than 3,000-acre peninsula – a natural wonderland of sandy beaches, woodland trails, lagoons, bays, and historic landmarks – is available to visitors and locals alike for recreation any time of the year.

We hope you enjoy your visit, whenever that happens to be, and that Erie becomes a place you hold in your heart and find as special as those of us who live here know it to be.

How to use this guide

An annual tradition instituted in 2014 by the Erie Reader – Erie's only independent, locally-owned alternative newspaper – Best of Erie polls Erieites on their favorite people and places, cultural and nightlife activities, and food and drink options, with over 100 categories to voice their opinions. Both nominations and voting are open to the public, making the year-end list a genuinely crowdsourced product.

Hundreds of thousands of votes were cast for the 2024 Best of Erie awards and those results form the foundation of this 2025-26 Best of Erie City Guide, a locally and publicly curated guidebook to all the best to eat, drink, see, and do in Erie. As you peruse these pages, use the icons indicated in the legend as a starting point for your explorations. They'll definitely show you the best Erie has to offer.

Best of Erie Winner – ★

Best of Erie Runner Up – ◆

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Erie's Bicentennial Tower

Waterfront Activities

Erie, perfectly situated on the gorgeous Great Lake of the same name, boasts 77 miles of shoreline for waterfront recreation, adventure activities, romantic strolls, and dining with gorgeous views of the sunset. When you're done with your day at the beach but not ready to give up the water, check out one of our many waterfront options!

Tom Ridge Environmental Center ◆

Headquarters for the PA Department of Conservation of Natural Resources (DCNR), Tom Ridge Environmental Center (TREC) is a great place for visitors to stop and learn about our natural landscape, native species, birdwatch, or enjoy the natural playground. Take the steps or an elevator to the top of the tower for a bird's eye view of the lake and neighboring Waldameer. Take a class or sign up for a guided hike, then be sure to stop in the gift shop (Presque Isle Gallery and Gifts) for some locally made art and gifts.

301 Peninsula Dr.

The Maritime Museum and U.S. Brig *Niagara*

Get to know a little bit more about the history of Lake Erie, including but not limited to the Battle of Lake Erie in which Oliver Hazard Perry's flagship, the Brig *Niagara*

sailed. Tours of the tall ship are included with the price of museum admission.

100 Blasco St.

Bicentennial Tower

Standing at the end of Dobbin's Landing since 1995, the tower is an iconic point of reference for any Erieite. Travel up the tower to take in one of the best views of the bay and Presque Isle, or turn your sights toward the city and take in our modest skyline and the public art gracing the deck – tickets available weekends from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (first Tuesdays of the month are free)!

1 State St.

Boating Adventures

Whether it's for a romantic getaway around the bay, for educational purposes, or just for some family fun, Erie is not lacking in options for getting out on the water. Enjoy a dinner cruise at sunset onboard the

Victorian Princess, or an education in maritime history on the tall ships Brig *Niagara* or *Lettie G. Howard*, learn about the natural landscape of Presque Isle aboard the *Lady Kate* or through its recurring Lagoon by Pontoon sessions, or get soaked and silly on the pirate-themed adventure boat, *The Scallywag*.

Erie's Lighthouses

If you're visiting Presque Isle, you're likely aware of the Presque Isle Light Station that is open for tours all summer long, but Erie has two other lesser known but just as impressive lighthouses: the Erie Land Lighthouse (which was the first lighthouse lit on the Great Lakes) and the North Pier Light. Stop by all three for some photos and a great historic experience.

**Presque Isle Light Station, Leslie Beach
Erie Land Lighthouse, 2 Lighthouse St.
North Pier Light, near Beach 11**



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Hidden Harbor Water Rentals

12 E. Dobbins Landing

Port Erie Sports

402 W. Bayfront Pkwy.

Presque Isle Boat Rental

Thompson Dr. on Presque Isle

Sun Life Marinas

726 W. Bayfront Pkwy.

Waterfront Dining

When it comes to dining in the summertime, nothing is better than a beautiful restaurant on the water. The sun setting, the gulls fly-

ing overhead, a boat off in the distance – it's idyllic, it's romantic, it's beautiful. It's Erie.

Oliver's Rooftop Restaurant and Beer Garden ★

Once again the winner for Best Waterfront Dining, Best Patio, AND Best Romantic Restaurant, Oliver's is the place to be if you'd like to dine on the waterfront in Erie. Check out the rooftop for upscale fine dining with an incredible view, or make it more of a casual night in the Beer Garden while listening to some live music or catching a round of mini-golf.

130 E. Front St.

Bayhouse Oyster Bar & Restaurant ★

Winner for Erie's Best Seafood, what's better than oysters on the water? Offering stunning bay views alongside prime steaks, seafood, and creative cocktails – Bayhouse is a great spot for dining al fresco along the water.

8 Sassafras Pier

Pier 6 Rooftop Bar and Grill ◆

Pier 6, with huge picture windows inside or outdoor rooftop seating, is a gorgeous spot for viewing the sunset while enjoying upscale casual dining with the freshest seafood around.

6 Sassafras Pier

Sloppy Duck Saloon ◆

An Erie icon, Sloppy Duck has a spot for everyone: whether it's sitting on the back deck with a refreshing Long Island iced tea and enjoying the bay view, inside by the bar with a burger, enjoying the view from the floor to ceiling windows, or on the front patio listening to some live music.

726 W. Bayfront Pkwy.

Smuggler's Wharf ◆

Smuggler's Wharf is a mainstay of Erie's waterfront restaurant scene. With intimate outdoor patio seating, covered with natural greenery all summer long, diners experience all the activity of the waterfront in a private outdoor setting.

3 State St.

Sunset Grill ◆

Aside from the majorly *Great Lake*, there are other lakes in Erie County that offer the unmistakable ambiance that comes with dining on the water. Sunset Grill in Edinboro offers seasonal outdoor dining on Edinboro Lake, with live music on Thursdays through Sundays throughout the season.

12670 Edinboro Rd., Edinboro

The Cove Bayside Restaurant and Tavern

2 State St.

Harbor View Grill

3730 Harbor Ridge Trail

Rum Runners

133 E. Dobbins Landing

Sara's Restaurant

25 Peninsula Dr.

Shoreline Bar and Grille

2 Sassafras Pier

Two45 Waterfront Grille

55 W. Bay Rd.

Woody's Backwater BARGE and Grill

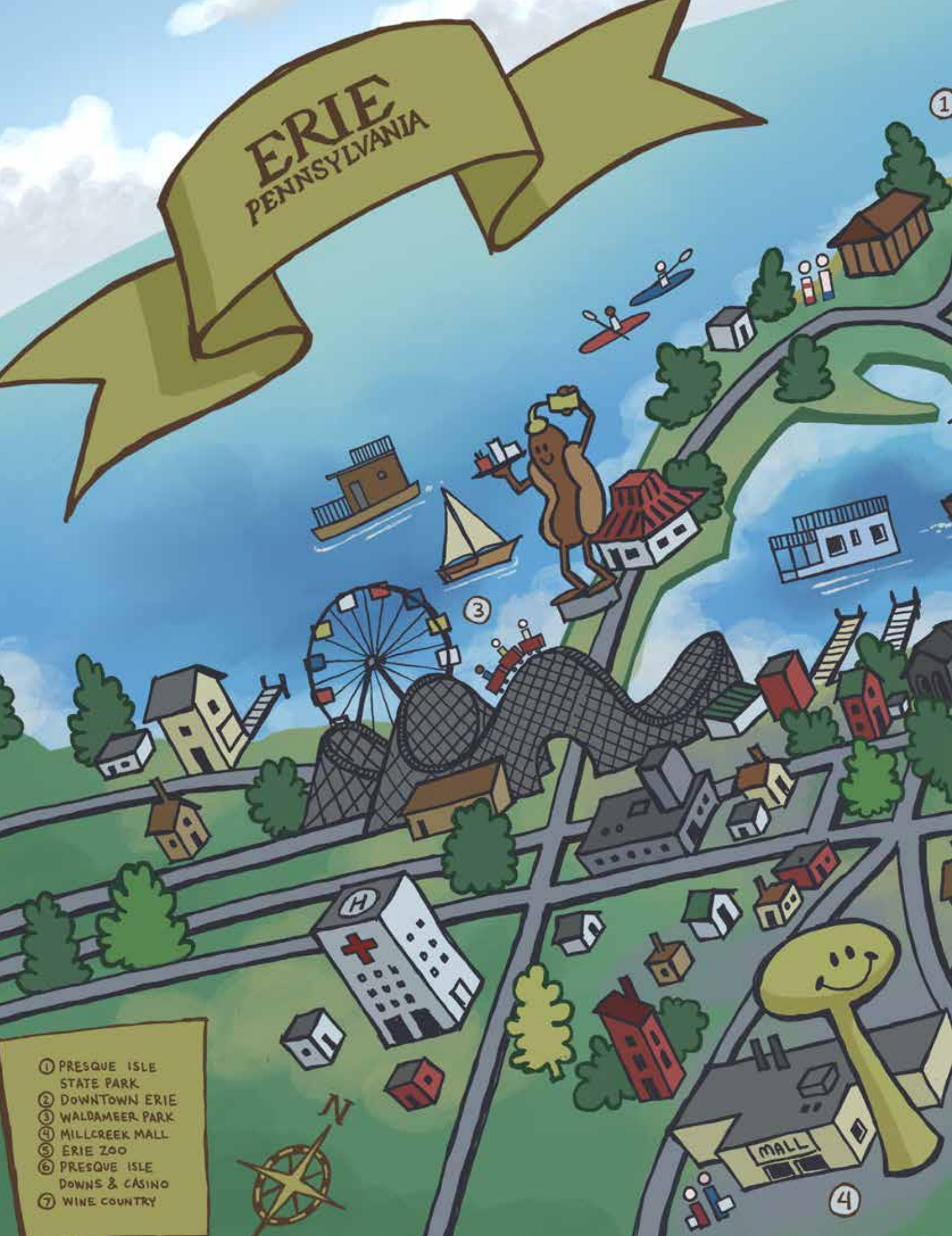
110 E. Dobbins Landing



Jessica Hunter

Bay House Oyster Bar and Restaurant

ERIE PENNSYLVANIA



- ① PRESQUE ISLE
STATE PARK
- ② DOWNTOWN ERIE
- ③ WALDAMEER PARK
- ④ MILLCREEK MALL
- ⑤ ERIE ZOO
- ⑥ PRESQUE ISLE
DOWNS & CASINO
- ⑦ WINE COUNTRY



Erie's Historic Sites

Erin Phillips



The Scott Mausoleum at the Erie Cemetery

Erie has a rich history, most of which involves our location on the lake – from the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812 to our advantageous positioning near Canada in facilitation of the Underground Railroad and everything in between. We've got lighthouses, Nationally Registered Historic buildings and districts, museums (art, history, maritime, natural history), monuments, cemeteries, and plenty of adaptively reused vintage buildings that lend Erie its unmistakable character. For the history buff (seasoned or budding), you'll find lots to pique your interest.

Lighthouses

Being situated on a body of water can only mean one thing: lighthouses! And Erie has three open for viewing throughout the warmer months. Check out all three in one go with a combination tour available for purchase at the Presque Isle Light Station.

Erie Land Lighthouse

Erie's lesser known lighthouse was actually the first lighthouse lit on all of the Great Lakes in 1818. With tours to the top with a view unlike any other in Erie (with the North Pier lighthouse and Perry Monument in view), as well as a playground nearby, it's a nice place to spend a summer afternoon. // **2 Lighthouse St.**

Jessica Hunter



The Hagen History Center

North Pier Light

Not quite a light "house," per say, the North Pier light sits at the channel between the lake and the bay, guiding vessels safely into harbor. Its iconic black and white stripes are great for photo ops, and nearby Beach 11 boasts a natural playground and some peaceful beaches. **Near Beach 11, Presque Isle State Park**

Presque Isle Light Station

Still an active guide to navigation as well as a historic site in Erie, the Presque Isle Light Station is a must-stop for all history lovers (or just those who appreciate a great view of the lake). The recently restored attached keepers house now reflects its history. Tower climbs are available every 20 minutes and a nearby gift shop takes care of all your souvenir shopping.

Presque Isle State Park

Museums

Hagen History Center

The Hagen History Center campus contains multitudes in terms of local history: a restored Gilded Age Richardsonian Romanesque masterpiece of a manse, expansive archives for research, a new wing that includes "The Story of Us" exhibit which examines local Erie history through our people and manufacturing, the restored Wood-Morrison House which holds Erie military artifacts, as well as the complete reconstruction of Frank Lloyd Wright's office open for touring.

356 W. 6th St.

Erie Maritime Museum

Our Maritime Museum, located on the bay adjacent to the Blasco Memorial Library, is also the home port of the U.S. Brig *Niagara*, a replica of the vessel Oliver Hazard Perry sailed into the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812. Learn about this battle as well as Erie's rich maritime history during your visit.

150 E. Front St.

The Erie Art Museum ◆

The original portion of the Erie Art Museum that faces State Street and was originally

the 1839 Customs House is undergoing a massive restoration beginning this year. Enjoy the historic charm of this portion of the building while exploring the 80,000 square feet of the museum, which houses their impressive permanent collection and temporary exhibits. // **20 E. 5th St.**

The Tom Ridge Environmental Center ♦

Situated at the entrance to Presque Isle State Park, The Tom Ridge Environmental Center (TREC) features specimens, artwork, films, interactive displays, and a fluctuating seasonal exhibits, while housing employees of the PA Department of Conservation of Natural Resources, the Regional Science Consortium, and Presque Isle Gallery and Gifts (stop in for that perfect souvenir). // **301 Peninsula Dr.**

Firefighters Historical Museum

Tucked away in a West Bayfront neighborhood, the Firefighters Historical Museum is housed in a former historic fire station and features a large collection of artifacts involving Erie's firefighting heritage.

428 Chestnut St.

Lake Shore Railway Historical Society

If rail history is your thing, you have to stop by the Lake Short Railway museum. Established in 1956, the railroad museum was built on the grounds of the former New York Central Railroad passenger depot and includes historic locomotives, artifacts, and equipment.

31 Wall St., North East

Many of the smaller municipalities in Erie County have their own regional historical societies that are within historic buildings, contain township archives, memorials, and artifacts of local significance. The volunteers for these establishments often advocate for local historic buildings and aid in their restoration.

Corry Area Historical Society

945 Mead Ave., Corry

Edinboro Area Historical Society

126 Water St., Edinboro

Elk Creek Historical Society

50 Harthan Way, Albion

Fairview Area Historical Society

4302 Avonia Rd., Fairview

Fort LeBoeuf Historical Museum

55 High St., Waterford

Harborcreek Historical Society

5661 Buffalo Rd.

Lawrence Park Historical Society

4230 Iroquois Ave.

North East Historical Society

25 Vine St., North East

Union City Museum & Historical Society

11 S. Main St., Union City

Wattsburg Area Museum

14438 Main St., Wattsburg

Other Historic Sites

The Erie Cemetery

This historic cemetery that spans 75 acres in the heart of the city was incorporated in 1851 and contains the graves of most of Erie's early residents, many of whom were significant to our local (and national) history like General Strong Vincent, Daniel Dobbins, and Sarah A. Reed. // **2116 Chestnut St.**

Perry Monument

The lighthouses aren't the only historic structures on Presque Isle. Perry Monument, an obelisk overlooking Lake Erie, was erected in 1926 on the shores of Misery Bay to commemorate Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry in his victory in the Battle of Lake Erie in 1812.

Presque Isle State Park

Covered Bridges

Erie County has two remaining historic covered bridges: the recently restored and reopened **Waterford Covered Bridge** (699 Niemeyer Rd., Waterford) and the **Harrington Covered Bridge** (Barney Road in Albion). Nearby Ashtabula County, Ohio boasts an incredible 19 remaining covered bridges. Take a short drive west and go back in time!



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Art Galleries and Creative Spaces



Grounded Print and Paper Shop

Erie's art scene is diverse, inspiring, and always beautiful. Whether you're patronizing some of the many unique spots listed to appreciate and support local art, take a class to learn a new skill, or purchase a piece as a memento, Erie boasts plenty of art galleries, spaces, studios, and museums. Long established museums and retail galleries exist alongside newer collectives and media art facilities to paint a colorful swath of creative energy in Erie.

Glass Growers Gallery ★

Celebrating their 50th year of existence, Glass Growers Gallery has staying power and for good reason. Consistently voted Erie's Best Gallery, Glass Growers offers a gorgeous variety of locally made art, gifts, ceramics, and glasswares while always highlighting a local artist in their gallery space. // 10 E. 5th St.

1020 Collective ◆

1020 Collective wears a lot of arty hats – at once a spacious gallery it is also a performance space, concert venue, comedy club, record store, instructional space, and community gathering point. // 1020 Holland St.



The Erie Art Museum

City Gallery ◆

City Gallery was born from the creative entrepreneurial spirits of local artists Lena Logvina and Steve Trohoske. Featuring an ever-changing display of local art with live jazz music on the regular, you'll want to stop in for a dose of creative energy. // 1503 State St.

Erie Art Museum ◆

The Erie Art Museum is a true gem in the Erie cultural scene. A world-class art museum, combining the space of Erie's historic Customs House with a newer, more modern addition. With classes and workshops available year-long, they host Second Sundays which provides a family-friendly art activity with free admission to the galleries. // 20 E. 5th St.

1020 at the Bastion // 2016 Peach St.

5fishcreative Art Gallery
4060 W. Lake Rd.

Allen Stoneware Gallery // 2602 W. 8th St.

Bruce Library Gallery // 200 Tartan Rd.,
Edinboro

D' Hopkins Denniston Gallery // 4960
Pittsburgh Ave.

Dovetail Gallery // 352 E. 18th St.

Erie African Arts // 13 E. 13th St.

Erie Center for Arts and Technology
(ECAT) // 650 East Ave.

Erie Clayspace // 1505 State St. 3rd Floor

FEED Media Arts Center // 1307 State St.

Grounded Print Shop // 1902 Cherry St.

Historical Institute of Culture
& The African American Experience
315 E. 9th St.

Kada Gallery and Frame Shop
2632 W. 8th St.

Main Street Art // 138 Main St. W., Girard

Neighborhood Art House // 201 E. 10th St.

Painted Finch Gallery
32 N. Center St., Corry

Performing Artist Collective Alliance
(PACA) // 1505 State St.

Presque Isle Gallery & Gifts
301 Peninsula Dr.

Relish Studio & Gallery // 3835 W. 12th St.

RLB Art Studio // 2016 Peach St.



Glass Growers Gallery

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lz.orty.326@gmail.com

Local Eats

Let's eat! Erie is always ready to feed our guests and we want to feed you well! Our regional fare runs the gamut: we've got fine dining, greasy spoons, American favorites, and some of the best barbecue in the region. Our scene reaches all corners, from Downtown Erie, the waterfront, and all our neighborhoods throughout the city and county – wherever you are, you'll find something delicious waiting for you around the corner.



Bar RONIN ★

Winner of Best Restaurant 2024, Bar RONIN is about creating an unforgettable dining experience. This modern Japanese restaurant boasts inventive, gorgeous dishes and interesting cocktails. // **948 W. Erie Plaza Dr.**

Bay House Oyster Bar ★

Winner for Best Seafood Restaurant in 2024, Bay House Oyster Bar capitalizes on its location right by the bay to get you in the seafood mood and then delivers with its award-winning, upscale dishes. // **6 Sassafras Pier**

Bro-Man's Sammiches ★

2024 winner of (deep breath) Best Chef, Best Burger, Best Sandwich Shop, and runner-up for Best Taco – Bro-Man's is worthy of the hype. Starting as a food truck, they've since expanded to two brick-and-mortar locations from which to serve their unapologetically sloppy, undeniably delicious burgers and birria tacos. **8228 Peach St.** // **2614 Glenwood Park Ave.**

Erie Food Co-Op ★

Winner for Best Vegan or Vegetarian Food, the Erie Food Co-Op offers great lunch options like delicious, fresh, healthy sandwiches, wraps, salads, smoothies, juices, daily

soups, and bakery items. // **1341 W. 26th St.**

Federal Hill Smokehouse ★

Federal Hill has (definitively) the Best Barbecue in Erie and (quite possibly) some of the best barbecue in the country. There's really no contest. Federal Hill Smokehouse presents unpretentious, gratuitous slabs of smoke in meat form. Also voted runner-up for Best Restaurant, get your barbecue favorites like brisket, pulled pork, and ribs or go non-traditional with some vegetarian wings or smoked shrimp. // **2609 Peach St.**

Odis 12 ★

Ask anyone where you can get the best wings in town, the answer is almost invariably Odis 12. // **3702 W. 12th St.**

Oliver's Rooftop Restaurant ★

Voted Best of Erie 2024 in three categories: Best Patio, Best Waterfront Restaurant, and Best Romantic Restaurant, Oliver's is an overall vibe favorite. Serving upscale fare rivaled only by the view (book a table at sunset, trust us), Oliver's will not disappoint. // **130 E. Front St.**

Plymouth Tavern ★

Voted Best Bar in 2024, The Plymouth is like the Erie version of *Cheers*, somehow

you always see someone you know and all the faces are friendly. With great beer specials and seriously tasty bar food (the fried pretzels and Reuben sandwiches are tops), the Plymouth has staying power for a reason. // **1109 State St.**

BIGBAR ♦

BIGBAR does everything big! The bar is big! The food is big! The music is big! So bring a big appetite. // **14 E. 10th St.**

Juice Jar ♦

With freshly squeezed juices, custom smoothies, bowls, wraps, vegan fare, and baked goods, Juice Jar has a fresh, healthy option for everyone. // **2620 W. 8th St.**

Lavery Brewing Company ♦

Known equally for their incredible, locally made beers and their inventive, tasty pub menu, Lavery's is a must-stop when in Erie. // **128 W. 12th St.**

One Way Inn ♦

This neighborhood staple is open 365 days a year and offers some award-winning wings. // **4344 Peach St.**

Park Tavern ♦

Runner-up for Best Wings, snag some Herbie XX Cajuns (extra sloppy) and thank us later. // **4205 E. Lake Rd.**

Picasso's ♦

Turning sandwich making into an art, Picasso's consistently delivers masterpieces. // **960 Millcreek Mall Blvd.**

Pier 6 ♦

Enjoy some of the best lakeside views and a fresh, tasty, menu featuring a full bar with some seriously creative cocktails. **6 Sassafras Pier**

Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro ♦

If you're looking for a low-key, off-the-beaten-path restaurant whose food is mind-blowingly flavorful, find Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro, tucked away on 10th Street. Upscale American Southern meets Caribbean flavors. // **1402 W. 10th St.**

Que Abides Pit Stop ♦

Runner-up for Best Barbecue, the Que

(with their *Big Lebowski*-themed menu) will have you licking your fingers while you take down some smoky goodness and that's not just, like, our opinion, man. **6990 W. Lake Rd., Fairview**

Smuggler's Wharf ♦

A classic favorite for seafood right on the water, Smuggler's Wharf is an Erie staple that has remained great for a reason. **3 State St.**

Sullivan's Pub & Eatery ♦

Sullivan's is the seventh-oldest Irish pub in America and truly authentic. Located in the heart of Downtown Erie, it's got a cozy historic atmosphere and an ample menu. **301 French St.**

Sunset Grill ♦

Located on Erie County's other lake – Edinboro Lake – Sunset Grill offers gorgeous waterfront dining with an approachable menu and live music right on the shore. **508 Erie St., Edinboro**

Teresa's Italian Deli ♦

Teresa's Italian Deli is a classic mainstay Italian deli that has been a part of the cultural fabric of Erie for over 75 years. Teresa's also provides some incredible catering options for your next event. **810 E. 38th St. // 3201 Greengarden Blvd.**



Bar Ronin

Jessica Hunter



New York Lunch - East Avenue

Underdog BBQ ♦

Runner-up for Best Barbecue, you're sure to be rooting for the Underdog. **2714 W. 8th St.**

Andy's Pub // 3866 Peach St.

Avanti's // 1662 W. 8th St.

Butch's Place // 3330 W. 26th St.

The Cab // 5442 W. Ridge Rd.

Calamari's Squid Row // 1317 State St.

**Chippers Seafood and Southern Fusion
1023 State St.**

**Colony Pub & Grille
2670 W. 8th St.**

The Cork 1794 // 900 W. Erie Plaza Dr.

The Cove // 2 State St.

**Dina's Authentic Dominican Kitchen
22 N. Park Row**

**Edinboro Hotel Bar
100 Meadville St., Edinboro**

**Engine House 39
1000 Washington Dr., Edinboro**

**Fat Willie's Wing House
205 Waterford St., Edinboro**

**Firebirds Wood Fired Grill // 680
Millcreek Mall**

Firestone's // 4823 Peach St.

Franco's Cafe // 1001 State St. #106

Hook's Catfish Kitchen // 38 N. Park Row

Jekyll & Hyde's Gastropub // 8 E. 10th St.

**John Russell Brewing Company Brew
House & Restaurant // 7520 Peach St.**

**Lorie's Wildridge Restaurant
5455 W. Ridge Rd.**

Lucero // 940 W. Erie Plaza Dr.

**McGarrey's Oakwood Cafe
1624 W. 38th St.**

**New Harvest Restaurant & Pub
11019 Sidehill Rd., North East**

**New York Lunch
1005 Parade St. // 1525 Peninsula Dr.**

**New York Lunch East Ave.
922 East Ave.**

**Outlaw Barbecue Revolution
3802 Elmwood Ave.**

**Presque Isle Downs and Casino
8199 Perry Hwy.**

**Pub 20 / The Ruffed Grouse
10326 W. Main St., North East**

**Rosco's Sports Bar and Grill
4646 Buffalo Rd.**

Shoreline Bar and Grille

2 Sassafras Pier

The Skunk and Goat Tavern

17 W. Main St., North East

Sloppy Duck Saloon

726 W. Bayfront Pkwy.

Syd's Place // *2992 W. Lake Rd.*

Two45 Waterfront Grille // *55 W. Bay Rd.*

Ugly Tuna Tavern // *1010 Peninsula Dr.*

U Pick 6 Harbor House // *4454 Buffalo Rd.*

U Pick 6 Public House // *4575 W. Ridge Rd.*

U Pick 6 Tap House // *333 State St. #110*

The Vine Bar and Grille

11884 E. Main St., North East

Waterford Hotel // *213 High St., Waterford*

Woody's Backwater BARge & Grill

110 E. Dobbins Landing



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SHERATON
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ASIAN, INDIAN, AND NEPALI CUISINE

Erie boasts a wide range of Asian restaurants featuring cuisine from Thailand, Vietnam, India, Nepal, China, Japan, and more. Flavor is king and the options are numerous, so let's eat!

Like My Thai ★

Winner of 2024's Best Asian Restaurant, Like My Thai is a Downtown Erie staple, great for a quick, spicy lunch or an intimate or celebratory dinner. With an open kitchen offering bar seating, as well as private tables, the experience at Like My Thai is as multidimensional as the cuisine's flavor profiles.

827 State St.

Samurai Kitchen + Sushi ★

Winner for Best Sushi, Samurai Kitchen + Sushi should definitely be a stop on your culinary tour of Erie. Fresh, flavorful, and award-winning.

2767 W. 12th St.

Bar RONIN ★

Go for the sashimi and raw bar, stay for the theatrical, impressive drink menu. Runner-up for Best Sushi, Bar RONIN is a full-on experience.

948 W. Erie Plaza Dr.

Ichiban ◆

Runner-up for Best Sushi restaurant, Ichiban is known for its quality, fresh ingredients, friendly atmosphere, and excellent service. With a full menu that offers

everything from sushi and sashimi, classic entrees, hibachi, tempura, bento boxes, and dessert, you're sure to find something to satisfy.

4041 Buffalo Rd.

Cathay Express // 3 E. 18th St.

China Jade // 14 E. Main St., North East

China Royal Buffet // 9139 Ridge Rd., Girard

China Star // 566 Millcreek Mall

Chopstix Express // 3842 Liberty St.

Erie Curry House // 3740 Peach St.

Everest Restaurant

222 W. Plum St., Edinboro

F & F Hibachi Express // 709 W. 38th St.

F & F Poke Bowl

2501 W. 12th St. // 6831 Peach St.

Fine Restaurant & Bar // 2330 E. 38th St.

Fortune Garden // 1210 W. 26th St.

Golden Wok // 3202 Pittsburgh Ave.

Great Wall Restaurant

1326 E. Grandview Blvd.



Thai Taste Cuisine

Gurkha Grill // 1214 E. 38th St.

Happy Garden // 418 State St.

Happy Wok // 1537 W. 38th St.

Hibachi Japanese Steak House
3000 W. 12th St.

Hong Kong Chinese Restaurant
2887 W. 26th St.

Imperial Buffet // 7200 Peach St.

Imperial Palace // 4646 Buffalo Rd.

Jade Garden // 2034 E. 38th St.

Kadhai Kitchen // 5901 W. Ridge Rd.

Kang's Steak & Grill // 605 Parade St.

Kebab Master // 2720 Peach St.

Kirin Court // 5624 Peach St.

Ling Ling // 1526B W. 26th St.

Maggie's China Inn

201 High St., Waterford

Noodlelove // 22 N. Park Row



Samurai Kitchen + Sushi

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ANTIQUE SHOW
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 10am – 4pm

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Jessica Hunter

noodlelove

Noodles Station 3 // 506 State St.

2605 Washington Ave.

Ocean Buffet // 220 W. Plum St., Edinboro

Tasty Bowl // 7400 Schultz Rd.

Peking // 5526 Peach St.

Thai Eatery // 5641 Peach St.

Royal Chopstix // 3444 W. Lake Rd.

Thai Taste Cuisine // 35 Peninsula Dr.

Saigon Nights // 2430 W. 8th St.

Wooden Ladle Ramen and Rice Bowl
 4753 W. Lake Rd.

S&S Super Buffet // 1960 Rotunda Dr.

Yummy Bowl // 2421 Asbury Rd.

Tandoori Hut Indian Cuisine

ERIE'S SWEETEST SPOT

Voted an Erie favorite over and over,
 our donuts are handcrafted fresh daily—
 fluffy, glazed, filled, and made with love.

Whether you're a classic glazed fan or crave a variety,
 there's a donut here with your name on it.

Stop in.
Pick from over 50 donuts...
Taste why Erie loves us.



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ROOFTOP

Atop Hampton Inn Bayfront | 130 East Front Street



B E E R G A R D E N

Behind Hampton Inn Bayfront | 130 East Front Street



Mi Scuzi ★

700 Millcreek Mall Blvd.

Colao's Ristorante ♦

2826 Plum St.

Valerio's Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria ♦

Valerio's has been a mainstay in Erie for decades. With a wide-spanning menu and three area locations, Valerio's also offers catering. // **2179 W. 32nd St. // 1803 E. 38th St. // 724 Powell Ave.**

A. Francisco's // 1201 State St.

Barbato's // 7472 Perry Hwy.



La Nuova Aurora Club // 1518 Walnut St.

Michael's Restaurant & Pizzeria

20 S. Lake St., North East

Mike N' Dangelo's Italian Restaurant

and Pizzeria // 137 Main St. E., Girard

Peppino's Italian Chop House

6590 W. Lake Rd., Fairview

Ricardo's Restaurant // 2112 E. Lake Rd.

Ringside Restaurant // 3202 Sterrettania Rd.

Roma's Italian Kitchen // 2933 W. 12th St.

Skippereno's // 1604 W. Grandview Blvd.

Bistro 26 ★

Mediterranean food is the specialty at Bistrot 26, a consistent winner for Best Mediterranean Restaurant. Lots of herbs and citrus, with fresh, flavorful meals including hummus plates, Caprese salad, kabobs, and whole branzino, you'll be feeling like you're dining in Mykonos.

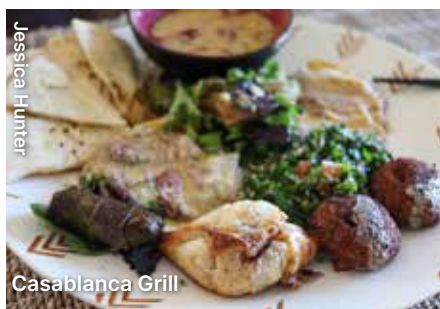
3557 W. 26th St.

Casablanca Grill ♦

Casablanca is one of the longest operating Syrian spots in Erie. With an eclectic menu that spans lighter lunch dishes like shawarma and tabbouleh to more elaborate, slow-stewed dinner options with varying countries of origin, you'll get a true taste of the Middle East at Casablanca. // **2174 W. 8th St.**

Habibi Mediterranean Cuisine ♦

Traditional Mediterranean dishes meet up with a cozy, intimate vibe in this Union



Station restaurant. Fresh, light, vegan-friendly, and flavorful dishes are sure to satisfy. // **127 W. 14th St.**

Ariana Halal Kitchen // 1315 Parade St.

Fadak International Food Market

2601 Parade St.

KEBAB Master // 2720 Peach St.

Krazy Kitchen // 1018 State St.



2702 Parade St.

Shawarma King // 1042 W. 26th St.

Shish Kabob Restaurant // 1023 State St.

Souq Market // 760 E. 12th St.



Mexican Restaurants and Tacos

El Amigo Mexican Grill ★

Conveniently located in the heart of Downtown Erie, El Amigo took home the win for Best Mexican Restaurant AND Best Taco. You can't go wrong with the Street Tacos – they are simple perfection in taco form. // **333 State St.**

Bro Man's Sammiches ◆

Runner up for Best Taco, Bro Man's has become something of an Erie sensation. Their birria tacos with accompanying dipping sauce are top notch!

8228 Peach St. // 2614 Glenwood Park Ave.

El Canelo ◆

Erie loves El Canelo. With three different locations, each offering a plethora of authentic and Tex Mex dishes at reasonable prices, El Canelo is fresh, fast, and casual.

// **4236 Peach St. // 2709 W. 12th St. // 4459 Buffalo Rd.**

Torero's ◆

Consistently in the top three Mexican restaurants, Torero's offers up fast, delicious, generous portions of your Tex-Mex favorites. Conveniently located off the highway on upper Peach Street, it's an easy family favorite. // **1940 Douglas Pkwy.**

Amigo Taqueria & Botanas // 5630 Peach St.



El Amigo Mexican Grill

Casa Cafe // 3505 W. 26th St.

Compadres Mexican Restaurant

220 W. Plum St., Edinboro

Francisco's Mexican Taqueria

2301 Broad St.

Julius // 1607 State St.

La Chona Movil // 1512 Poplar St.

La Cocina Coqui (Puerto Rican)

653 W. 26th St.

Los Primos Mexican Store and Taqueria

1962 W 26th St.

Lucky's Mexican Food // 1719 Parade St.

Pueblo Real // 9155 W. Ridge Rd., Girard

Taco Distro // 83 Peninsula Dr.

Pizza

John's Wildwood Pizza ★

John's Wildwood Pizza is well-known in Erie as being difficult to beat. A staple in Edinboro since 1979 with a second location at Knowledge Park in Harborcreek right off I-90, John's has consistently won the Best Pizza category year after year – their fresh dough is hand-stretched for that perfect thickness and chew. One bite and you'll be a loyal customer. // **105 Erie St., Edinboro // 6008 Knowledge Pkwy.**

ippa Pizza Napoletana ★

Winner of Best New Restaurant in 2024, ippa has taken over the downtown pizza scene with their fresh, oven-fired pies



ippa Pizza Napoletana

sporting those crispy, burny bubbles, and bursting with flavor. // 22 N. Park Row

Valerio's Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria ♦

With multiple convenient locations, this full-service Italian restaurant offers traditional pie options in addition to their Old Italian Style. // 2179 W. 32nd St. // 1803 E. 38th St. // 724 Powell Ave.

A. Francisco's // 1201 State St.

Alfee's Pizza & Sub Shop

3001 Glenwood Park Ave.

BIGBAR // 14 E. 10th St.

Colony Pizza & Catering // 2666 W. 8th St.

Crazy Oven

3701 W. Lake Rd.

Firestone's // 4823 Peach St.

La Casa De Pizza // 13 E. Main St., North East

Lucky Man's Pizzeria // 3651 W. 12th St.

Mama Mia's Pizzeria // 1529 W. 38th St.

Maria's Pizza // 2340 W. Grandview Blvd.

MC's Pizzeria // 1400 E. Lake Rd.

Meeker's Main Street Pizza

9003 Main St., McKean

Mike N' Dangelo's Italian Restaurant & Pizzeria // 137 Main St. E., Girard

My Dad's Pizza & Deli // 4535 Buffalo Rd.

Passalinqua's Pizza

3515 McClelland Ave.

Patti's Pizza

3403 W. 38th St. // 3700 Pine Ave.

Pizza Pete's // 2823 W. 26th St.

Porky's Pizzeria // 302 W. 8th St.

Presque Isle Pizza

3150 W. 32nd St.

Skippereno's

1604 W. Grandview Blvd.

Steel City Sandwich Company

4801 Peach St.

Sticks and Bricks Wood Fired Pizza

1301 E. Grandview Blvd.

Stevo's Pizza // 1019 State St.

Vintage Wood Fire Restaurant

3826 W. 26th St.

Waterford Pizza and More

208 High St., Waterford

Coffee Shops, Cafes, & Dinors

There's nothing quite like that dark elixir that makes getting out of bed in the morning a little bit easier. Erie has a ton of great local spots for all coffee tastes and preferences. And there's no better place to enjoy a mug of a great local brew than next to a hearty dinor breakfast (yes, the misspelling is intentional – here in Erie, it's a tradition based on a mystery). Erie really knows how to do breakfast!



Flip Cafe ★

This Edinboro dinor takes home the win annually for Best Brunch – it's really no contest. Flip's creative spin on classic dinor fare has everyone coming back for more (make sure to get a side of their signature cinnamon flips). With vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options.

103 Meadville St., Edinboro

Gem City Dinor ★

Gem City is the clear favorite for Best Dinor – interesting, creative fare for breakfast and lunch. Flavorful and hearty at the same time, with a seriously good cup of coffee, this place serves the Gem City right. // 3545 W. 12th St.

Tipsy Bean ★

Voted Erie's Best Coffee Shop in 2024, Tipsy Bean helps to define its Federal Hill neighborhood by providing interesting coffee concoctions, locally made pastries, and a chill vibe. // 2425 Peach St.

Werner Books and Coffee ★

Winner for Best Business, Best Bookstore, and Best New Business, Werner Books is a community favorite in all ways. And their coffee gives everyone another reason to love this great local spot. // 3608 Liberty St.



Flip Cafe

Brew Ha Ha at the Colony ♦

Always a great place to grab something to-go, or sit and read the paper with a tasty espresso, a treat, or some tea.
2612 W. 8th St.

The Cork 1794 ♦

Runner-up for Best Brunch, The Cork presents a classy, elevated vibe with food to match. Grab a mimosa flight to go with your Quiche Lorraine.
900 West Erie Plaza Dr.

The Dinor at Lawrence Park ♦

This historic prefab train car-style dinor finds itself famous on the National Register of Historic places and famous for its updated homemade, stick-to-your-ribs yumminess.
4019 Main St., Lawrence Park

Ember + Forge ♦

Ember + Forge has become an “anchor” business in the downtown district – built within a historic ship chandlery, come for the crazy good coffee and stay for the artful, chill vibe. // 401 State St.

Pressed Books and Coffee ♦

Runner-up for Best Bookstore, Pressed has an impressive cafe attached. Grab a coffee and peruse the shelves. // 1535 W. 8th St.

All Aboard Dinor // 2203 Rice Ave., Lake City

Avanti's // 1662 W. 8th St.

Bakes and Wakes Super Secret Coffee Shop and Cereal Bar // 664 W. 26th St.

Bakery on 5th // 502 State St.

The Bean Coffee House

12 S. Lake St., North East

Bean & Bear Cafe

222 W. Plum St., Edinboro

The Breakfast Place // 4108 Peach St.

Butch's Diner
10651 W. Main St., North East

Butch's Place // 3330 W. 26th St.

Buzz at Copperleaf Cafe
2900 Copperleaf Dr.

The Buzz of Union City
64 N. Main St., Union City

Cafe 7-10 // 7 W. 10th St.

Casa Cafe // 3505 W. 26th St.

Erie Food Co-op Cafe & Bakery
1341 W. 26th St.

Give A Crepe - LaCrepeErie
1909 Chestnut St.

Jo's Brooklyn Bagel // 833 W. 38th St. // 22 N. Park Row

Lorie's Wildridge Restaurant
5455 W. Ridge Rd.

Lucky Bean // 3741 W. 26th St.

Main Street Cakery Cafe
7403 W. Ridge Rd., Fairview

The Outpost // 991 Rt. 19, Waterford

Panos Restaurant // 1504 W. 38th St.

The Park Coffee and Bread Company
4007 Main St., Lawrence Park

Purrista Cat Café // 30 W. 8th St.

Romolo Cocoa Cafe // 1525 W. 8th St.

Rose Garden Cafe // 815 State St.

Russ' Dinor // 2902 Buffalo Rd.

Shirley's // 5924 Old French Rd.

Tsaocaa Bubble Tea // 506 State St.

Zodiac Dinor // 2516 State St.



Jessica Hunter

Ember + Forge

The Sweet Spot: Bakeries, Donut Shops, and Confectioners



Jessica Hunter

Sara's Restaurant

Everyone knows the best part of any meal is the end – and Erie has you covered with desserts ranging from casual, roadside stands to high-end, master confectioner-made chocolates – not to mention some of the best donuts in the tri-state area.

Art's Bakery ★

Art's has won Best Bakery for over a decade, but their approachable baked goods speak for themselves – pies, cookies, breads, and pastries. // **4380 W. Ridge Rd.**

Mighty Fine Donuts ★

The unequivocal best, Mighty Fine is a generational mainstay on Parade Street. A classic glazed twist, a Boston Cream, or a seasonal special – they're all perfect. **2612 Parade St.**

Romolo Chocolates ★

Romolo is the consistent favorite for Best Chocolates in Erie and for good reason – the quality is top notch and they have something for everyone. From handmade, delicate chocolates to homemade ice cream, artfully poured espresso treats, and even jelly beans – Romolo is the Best of Erie. // **1525 W. 8th St.**

Whippy Dip and Whippy Dip 2 ★

Two locations serving up traditional soft-

A chocolate-covered cake pop, a chocolate cake, and a chocolate dip.

divinely
decadent

ROMOLO®
CHOCOLATES

1525 West 8 Street, Erie, PA 16505
814.452.1933 RomoloChocolates.com



serve, Perry's hard scoop ice cream, sundaes, treats, and snacks. They even have a vegan option, with Dole Whip on the menu regularly.

2527 Chestnut St. // 3100 W. 12th St.

Bakery on 5th ♦

Runner-up for Best New Restaurant, the Bakery on 5th offers patisserie-style, artfully constructed desserts that are just as beautiful as they are delicious. Grab an authentic Turkish coffee while you're at it! // **502 State St.**

Fuhrman's Cider ♦

The historic cidery that has been bringing local apples' golden elixir to the people of Erie for generations is also award-winning for their donuts. // **8270 Peach St.**

Herb & Honey Bakery ♦

This boutique bakery in the heart of Erie has captured the hearts of Erieites. Otherworldly, light, flaky, buttery, and as local and seasonal as possible with all of their ingredients – you'll really miss out if you miss stopping at Herb & Honey. **516 Cherry St.**

H&K Donuts ♦

A local spot for a Sunday dozen, H&K is a westside institution. // **3712 W. Lake Rd.**

Pulakos Chocolates ♦

Pulakos continues their historic legacy of providing the people of Erie with fantastic chocolates and confections with three convenient locations.

380 Millcreek Mall Blvd. // 2530 Parade St. // 2580 W. 8th St.

Straw Hat Sundae Shop ♦

Nothing beats a drive along the lakeshore to North East, but if you need an excuse there's always Straw Hat Sundae Shop, featuring Penn State Creamery ice cream and creative confections like ice cream stuffed Mighty Fine Donuts.

207 S. Lake St., North East

Stefanelli's Candies ♦

With three shops spread across Erie County, your chocolate dreams are never out of reach. // **2054 W. 8th St. // 7200 Peach St. // 4500 Buffalo Rd.**

Ye Olde Sweet Shoppe ♦

Ye Olde Sweet Shoppe is a Downtown Erie staple with their classic, dome-shaped cookies, dainty cupcakes, custom cakes, and a selection of drip coffee. **402 State St.**

Bill's Bakery // 1825 W. 26th St.

Boro Sweet Spot // Inside the Edinboro Market, 211 Mill St., Edinboro

Cafe 7-10 // 7 W. 10th St.

Casa Cafe // 3505 W. 26th St.

Castle Custard // 7334 W. Lake Rd., Fairview

Connie's Ice Cream // 3150 W. 32nd St.

**Creamland Drive In
6621 W. Ridge Rd., Fairview**

**Denny's Ice Cream Stand
929 Parade St.**

The Double Dipper // 5320 Buffalo Rd.

**Edinboro Chocolaterie
114 Erie St., Edinboro**

The Freezerie // 4393 W. Ridge Rd.

**Finney's Chocolate Shoppe
116 Spring St., Cambridge Springs**

International Bakery // 610 W. 18th St.

**Lake Erie Candy Company
Village West, 3330 W. 26th St.**

**Little Shop of Donuts
45 E. Main St., North East**

**Main Street Cakery Cafe
7403 W. Ridge Rd., Fairview**

Majestic Baking Company // 1501 Walnut St.

Maria's Tasty Delights // 1701 W. 26th St.

Niagara Creamery // 804 E. 38th St.

Rex Brothers Bakery // 3558 W. 26th St.

**Rita's Italian Ice
1406 W. Gore Rd. // 427 State St.**

Sara's Restaurant // 25 Peninsula Dr.

**Sontheimer's Country Bakery
3720 Sterrettania Rd.**

**Thelma's Tasty Temptations
Blasco Library Lobby, 160 E. Front St.**

West Lake Bakery & Deli // 3443 W. Lake Rd.



Let's Go for Drinks: Cocktails, Distilleries and Brewpubs



You're in Erie, which happens to be on the Lake Erie Ale Trail, which is a collection of 17 breweries located within 40 miles of Downtown Erie. And they all happen to be some of the most notable craft breweries around. For those of you who prefer more mixability to your drinks we offer a growing number of craft distilleries, specializing in creative and flavorful cocktails. Cheers!

Craft Breweries

Lavery Brewing Company ★

Lavery Brewing Company was voted Best Brewery and Best Locally Made Beer (for their signature IPA Dulachan) and it is not a spot to miss. With food as good as their award-winning, ample selection of beers, it's got a great atmosphere with tasty sips and bites.
128 W. 12th St.

Erie Ale Works ◆

A craft brewery with a heart, Erie Ale Works makes undeniably tasty beer in their intimate brewery with seating that occasionally spills into the parking lot. Grab a Tattooed Lady blonde ale and bring a chair – Erie Ale Works has a neighborhood bar vibe with top-tier suds. // **416 W. 12th St.**

Erie Brewing Company ◆

With two locations, The Erie Brewing Company has made its mark on Harborcreek, Millcreek, and all of Erie in between. Their Railbender Scottish Ale

is always a crowd favorite. // **6008 Knowledge Pkwy.** // **4102 W. Lake Rd.**

Voodoo Brewery Erie ◆

Expanded to Erie from their flagship brewery in Meadville, Voodoo resides in the former historic Boston Store building and makes the place their own with microbrews and live music on their spacious patio. // **101 Boston Store Pl.**

Arundel Cellars and Brewing Company

11727 E. Main Rd., North East

Big Rail Brewing Company

2158 Mercer Butler Pike, Grove City

Black Monk Brewery // **3721 W. 12th St.**

The Brewerrie at Union Station

123 W. 14th St.

Fat Chad's Brewing

113 South Franklin St., Titusville

John Russell Brewing Company

7520 Peach St.

Nostrovia Brewing Co. // **415 E. Lake Rd.**

Rising River Brewing

115 S. 1st St., Conneaut Lake

Riverside Brewing Company

1 Fountain St., Cambridge Springs

Orr's Brewing Company

109 S. Franklin St., Titusville

Poverty Knob Farmhouse Ales

2055 Stone Quarry Rd., Waterford

Timbercreek Tap & Table

11191 Highline Dr., Meadville

Twisted Elk Brewery

10139 W. Lake Rd., Lake City

Distilleries

Altered State Distillery ★

Altered State Distillery has wholeheartedly become Erie's jam – both for its handcrafted spirits (consistently Erie's Best Distillery winner) and its live music schedule. With bands and entertainment virtually every night – savor some of Erie's most artful cocktails while soaking in the sounds. // **1535 W. 8th St.**

Erie Distillery ◆

Conveniently located close to Presque Isle State Park, Erie Distillery serves up artfully crafted, award-winning spirits, perfect for sipping after a day at the beach. // **1101 Peninsula Dr.**

Luminary Distilling ◆

Small-batch, artisan distilling in a combined space with a restaurant, bakery, and Erie's historic Furhman's cider mill on upper Peach Street with a convenient cocktail and bottle shop located in the heart of Erie's Downtown.
8270 Peach St. // 34 N. Park Row

Before The Barrel Distillery

8651 Wattsburg Rd.

Cart/Horse Distilling

12030 Edinboro Rd., Edinboro

Five & 20 Spirits & Brewing

8398 W. Main St., Westfield, N.Y.

Wine Country



Welcome to Wine Country! The gorgeous expanse of Erie's lakeshore, which comprises most of Harborcreek and North East, extends eastward into New York State and is known as the Lake Erie Wine Trail. With dozens of local wineries to choose from, you can make a day of it, hop on a bus tour, and try out a number of spots in one go; or pick one, grab a cheese plate, and settle in for a sunset over the vineyards.

Arundel Cellars and Brewing Co. ★

Selected as Erie's Best Winery, Arundel Cellars in North East feels like a Tuscan vineyard on the shores of Lake Erie. Also offering homebrewed beer and small plates of gourmet selections, Arundel always impresses. *11727 E. Main St., North East*

Mazza Vineyards ◆

When an Erieite thinks of local wine, Mazza is the first name that comes to mind. *11815 E. Lake Rd., North East*

6 Mile Cellars, Inc. ◆

These winemakers are considered the "west gate" of the Lake Erie Wine Trail. Known for their small batches of wines and hard ciders, all housed in a renovated 1850s barn. // *5727 Firman Rd., Harborcreek*

21 Brix Winery

6654 W. Main Rd. Portland, NY

Arrowhead Wine Cellars

12073 E. Main St., North East

Burch Farms Country Market & Winery

9210 Sidehill Rd., North East

Cellar '54

9368 W. Law Rd., North East

Courtyard Winery

10021 W. Main Rd., North East

Driftwood Wine Cellars

20 E. Main St., North East

Full Circle Winery

12 Main St. E., Girard

Heritage Wine Cellars

12160 E. Main St., North East

Ironstone Meadery

9333 Tate Rd.

Jade Winery

11267 Donation Rd., Waterford

Johnson Estate Winery

8419 W. Main St., Westfield, NY

Kingview Meadhouse & Winery

7895 Buffalo Rd.

Lakeview Wine Cellars

8440 Singer Rd., North East

Liberty Vineyards & Winery

2861 US-20, Sheridan, NY

Noble Winery

8630 Hardscrabble Rd., Westfield, NY

Presque Isle Wine Cellars

9440 W. Main Rd., North East

South Shore Wine Company

1120 Freeport Rd., North East

Sparkling Ponds Winery

10661 W. Lake Rd., Ripley, NY

Willow Creek Winery

2627 Chapin Rd., Silver Creek, NY

Yori Wine Cellars

18 S. Lake St., North East



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Night-Life and Music Venues



We like the night life, baby! Let's go! There is no shortage of live music planned for the summer of 2025 in Erie. We've also got plenty of live music venues with weekly or monthly music series to keep you entertained throughout the year. Erie has a thriving music scene that covers many genres: acoustic, dance, jam, indie, punk, metal, and cover bands of all sorts.

Altered State Distillery ★

This award-winning distillery hosts bands all summer long on their ample patio. Their lineup typically features jam bands interspersed with jazz and rock – grab a fancy, well-prepared cocktail, an artfully prepared snack, and settle in for a night of music in the fresh air. // 1535 W. 8th St.

The Bunker at Lavery's ★

With Lavery's award-winning beer on hand, the Bunker venue is a recent extension of the ever-expanding local business. Located just north of the building (behind their main brewery) this raw, open space is perfect for local (and visiting) rockers. 128 W. 12th St.



Oliver's Beer Garden ★

Oliver's Beer Garden – adjacent to Oliver's Rooftop Bar & Grill located at Hampton Inn & Suites – has become a favorite for those looking to enjoy a drink outdoors or some live music. It's the perfect venue to bask in the glow of our picturesque Lake Erie sunsets. During the warmer months, guests can play a round of mini golf on their new course. // 130 Front St.

1020 Collective ◆

This gallery and venue space hosts live music, open mic nights, circles, and more in its ample adaptively reused space.

1020 Holland St.

BIGBAR ◆

Catch big bands playing to big audiences in this big bar with big drinks and big food. It's a big deal. // 14 E. 10th St.

City Gallery ◆

City Gallery's Harmony and Blessings Music Series keeps the jazzy tunes flowing all summer long. Providing a space for local and nationally touring jazz, experimental, and world music, guests are surrounded by stunning art pieces from local artists and handmade gifts and jewelry. // 1503 State St.

Centennial Hall (formerly Basement Transmissions)

This ultra-indie, all-ages venue in Erie hosts the region's best original artists, as well as national touring acts. Centennial Hall is reminiscent of big city clubs where listeners can catch unique acts right before they get their big break. The venue also hosts various art nights, all-ages activities, swap meets, and more.

145 W. 11th St.

The King's Rook Club

One of the longest running venues in Erie, The King's Rook Club is a private club (that's easy to join), opening its doors to the public for live music. The Rook, as it is referred to locally, embraces the jam band and DJ crowd, with the occasional indie rock band. Dance into the wee hours with local talent, billed alongside national touring acts. // 1921 Peach St.

Dave Schroeder



Performing Artists Collective Alliance (PACA)

The Erie Playhouse ★

Warner Theatre ★

from the impressive Erie Philharmonic.
811 State St.

**Mercyhurst University's
Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center** ◆

Erin Phillips



Warner Theatre

Performing Artist Collective Alliance ♦

A welcoming black box-style theater, Erie's Performing Artist Collective Alliance (PACA) hosts top-level productions that raise their DIY ethos to the next level – with a variety of plays, musicals, and special events all year round.

2430 W. 8th St.

Academy Theatre

Meadville's gorgeous space is home to a slate of fully-produced musicals from every part of the theater world.
275 Chestnut St., Meadville

All An Act Theatre Productions

All An Act is a grassroots theater program historically housed in Erie's Little Italy. After their theater suffered a fire, they've been working to restore it while the show goes on at a satellite host location, the Station Dinner Theater.

Temporarily at 4940 Peach St.

**Corella Productions Children's Theatre
Academy and Dinner Theatre
2539 W. 12th St.**

Diebold Center for the Performing Arts
// 217 Meadville St., Edinboro

Dramashop // Location TBD

**Footlights Theatre Performing Arts
Center // 1505 State St.**

Meadville Community Theatre
400 N. Main St.

Schuster Theatre
Gannon University, 620 Sassafras St.

The Station Dinner Theatre
4940 Peach St.

Studio Theatre
Penn State Behrend, 4701 College Dr.

Taylor Little Theatre
Mercyhurst University, 501 E. 38th St.

Walker Recital Hall
Mercyhurst University, 501 E. 38th St.



Think Globally, Learn Locally: The Jefferson Educational Society



The Jefferson Educational Society (JES) describes itself as Erie's Think Tank. The organization continually promotes creative problem-solving to local and global issues and has made their mark on the Erie community through their well thought out programming, events, and outreach.

The organization accomplishes their mission, which is to "promote civic enlightenment and community progress for the Erie Region through the study, research, and discussion of those ideas and events that have influenced the human condition," through various programs and events (like their annual **Global Summit**, which brings speakers from around the world to Erie for months of open-to-the-public educational opportunities).

The events listed below represent a selection of the vast slate of engaging, intellectually stimulating, and culturally relevant speakers and presentations scheduled by the JES (and their satellite locations) this season. Check their website at jeserie.org for more events and details.

Exploring the Role of Public Libraries in Addressing the Loneliness Crisis

Thursday, June 19 at 7 p.m. at ECAT, 650 East Ave.

The Erie Accent: What is It, and How has It Changed Over the Past Century?

Wednesday, June 25 at 7 p.m. at the JES, 3207 State St.

A Journey of Perseverance: An Evening With Jim Kelly

Wednesday, Oct. 22 at 7 p.m.

This Just In: Latest Discoveries in the Universe with Neil DeGrasse Tyson
Wednesday, Oct. 29 at 7 p.m.
at the Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafra Pier

The Medium Is The Message: Media's Impact on National Politics with Dr. Larry J. Sabato
Friday, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m.

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Can't-Miss Events in Erie 2025

Live music festivals, heritage celebrations, and family-friendly events all summer long

814 Photo by Patrick Grab



Erie's community events always feel special. Neighbors from all walks of life come together to celebrate our city and culture all throughout the summer with live music, incredible food, educational events, heritage festivals, and so much more. We always make the most of Erie's best and most beautiful season. Nearly all of the events listed below are free and open to the public: all you need to bring is a lawn chair, blanket, and a willingness to enjoy yourself. Erie will take care of the rest.

Monday Music in the Woods

Stop by the familiar but always awe-inspiring Asbury Woods on Monday evenings through July and catch your favorite local act – featuring original songwriters alongside fan-favorite cover bands. // **Mondays, June 2 - July 28, 6 to 8 p.m. // Celebration Garden, 4105 Asbury Rd. // Free**

Goodell Gardens Summer Music Series

Spend an evening among the fireflies on the lawn of the historic Goodell Gardens and Homestead for their Summer Music Series, featuring laidback tunes in the countryside. Bring your own blanket or lawn chair and enjoy a beautiful summer night of free performances. // **Select Fridays, June 6 - Aug. 29, 7 to**

9 p.m. // Goodell Gardens and Homestead, 220 Waterford St., Edinboro // Free

West Bayfit

Spend a summer evening in Erie's hidden gem of a public park at Bayview for the weekly West Bayfit events hosted by Our West Bayfront. With farmers market produce, kids physical challenges, crafts, and more – come for the fitness and fun, stay for the splash pad. // **Wednesdays from June 11 - July 30 // Bayview Park, 598 W. 2nd St. // Free**

UPMC Sunset Music Series ♦

A favorite among Erieites and visitors alike, there is no better venue than Erie's most stunning natural resource. Enjoy a night on the beach with

live, local music Wednesdays through July. // **Wednesdays, June 18 - July 23, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. // Free // Beach 11, Presque Isle State Park**

Summer Concerts at the Gazebo

Enjoy the quaint Main Street feeling of an old fashioned gazebo park as you take in the sounds of local, family-friendly, singalong music. // **June 19, July 17, and Aug. 21, 7 to 9 p.m. // Beute Park, Iroquois Ave. // Free**

Chautauqua Institute Summer Concert Series

The Chautauqua Institution continues its 150 year legacy of bringing impressive talent to our region and their Summer Series this year is stacked with nationally touring music

and comedy acts like Counting Crows, Guster, the Mountain Goats, The Avett Brothers, Los Lobos, Lewis Black, and Roy Wood Jr. Take advantage of this great cultural resource just 45 minutes away. // **Select dates throughout the summer with concerts beginning Saturday, June 21 // Chautauqua Amphitheater, 31 Roberts Ave., Chautauqua, NY**

Erie Art Museum Gallery Night

Happening four times each year and twice during the summer, Erie Art Museum's Gallery Night offers local art fans and patrons the perfect opportunity to visit a number of local galleries in the same night – with special shows, food and drink, and lots of live



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music throughout the community – think of it like a pub crawl but with art! // **June 27 and Sept. 19** // *Multiple galleries throughout region* // **Free**

Erie Pridefest: Pride on the Bay

This year's celebration will mark the second annual Pride on the Bay at Liberty Park which will allow ample safe space for participants. With vendors, entertainment, and more, the regular Pride Parade will take place the following day, Sunday, June 29 at 1 p.m. on State Street from 11th to Perry Square. // **Saturday, June 28 // 12 to 6 p.m. // Liberty Park, 828 W. Bayfront Pkwy.** // **Free**

8 Great Tuesdays ★

Winner of 2024's Best of Erie's Best Music Series category, 8



Great Tuesdays is back and ready to rock Liberty Park. With local headliners like the Erie All Stars, Smilo & the Ghost, and New Wave Nation alongside touring acts like Taj

Farrant, The Lao Tizer Band, and Cory Marks – nothing says summer like 8 Great! // **Tuesdays in July and August, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. // Highmark Amphitheater at Liberty Park, 828 W. Bayfront Pkwy** // **Free**

Lights Over Lake Erie

The city's annual Fourth of July celebration features a fireworks display over the bay. Find your vantage point anywhere along the East or West sides of the bluff on Erie's waterfront or on Presque Isle, for a free, unobstructed view of the works. // **Thursday, July 3 // Dobbins Landing, 1 State St.** // **Free**

Great Blue Heron Festival

Great Blue Heron is back again in 2025, celebrating over 30 years of music in Sherman, New York. Beginning in the '90s by featuring Americana and old-timey mountain music, their lineup has grown to include the genres of funk, jam, soul, roots-rock, reggae, Celtic, afrobeat, zydeco and more. Go for one day or stay for the weekend with on-site camping available – featuring 35 artists on three stages. // **July 4 - 6 // The Heron Farm and Event Center, 2361 Waits Corners Rd., Sherman, NY**

North East Firemen's Cherry Festival

Come for the cherry pie and sausage sandwiches, stay for the rides and games at North East's Heard Memorial Park. // **July 9 - 12 // Wednesday through Friday, 5:30 to 11 p.m., Saturday, 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. // 40 N. Lake St., North East**

WQLN

Sounds Around Town

Tucked away in a clandestine copse adjacent to the WQLN studios, Sounds Around Town is a unique, free concert experience. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, and snacks, and enjoy! The performances are all recorded by the WQLN crew and later broadcast on their station. // **Fridays, July 11 - Aug. 1, 7:30 p.m. // Outdoors, adjacent to the WQLN Studios, 8425 Peach St.**

Panegyri Greek Festival ◆

An Erie summer tradition, Panegyri, now in its 36th year, features a plethora of Greek foods, dinners, and pastries, as well as music, dancing, jewelry, and more at Assumption Greek Orthodox Church. // **July 11 - 12 // 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. // Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, 4376 W. Lake Rd.**



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Waterford Heritage Days

Since 1974, Waterford has been celebrating its history, working with businesses and local organizations for a community-forward event.

July 18 - 20 // Gazebo Park, Waterford

The AmeriMasala

The AmeriMasala is Erie's first multi-disciplinary celebration of ethnic arts, food, and performances from around the world. // **Saturday, July 19 // 11 a.m. // Perry Square, 601 State St.**

Discover Presque Isle

Even if you've lived here your whole life, I'd wager a guess that you'll learn something new at Discover Presque Isle. The annual weeklong celebration of our defining natural resource, you'll find food, crafts, vendors, kids activities, lessons, guided

tours, birdwatching, live music, and more. // **July 21 - 27 // Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr. // Free**

Lake Erie Cyclefest

The annual Cyclefest, brought to Erie through the Erie Sports Commission, is a celebration of all things cycling. If you're more of a casual, around-town cyclist, join in the family-friendly Downtown Slow Roll or the Presque Isle Sunrise Ride. If you're ready to tap into your inner Lance Armstrong, check out the Tour de West County or the Grape Escape Rides (that rolls you up to 50 miles throughout the county). **July 24 - 27 // Various locations throughout Erie County**

The Gathering at Chaffee's

The fact that folks have been gathering at Chaffee's for 45

years is a testament to the vibes that this yearly festival brings. With jam bands alongside jazz acts, folk songwriters, rock, hip-hop, and trance, camping, food, and always a little bit of mud – if you haven't yet, be sure to make their 45th year your first! // **July 25 - 26 // 8296 Mill St., Girard**

Beer on the Bay

A beautiful day on the bay made better by a bunch of local beers! Sample the suds of a wide variety of local and regional brewers while enjoying the sunshine sparkling on the water. // **Saturday, July 26, noon to 7 p.m. // Liberty Park and Highmark Amphitheater, 828 W. Bayfront Pkwy.**

Dan Rice Days

The Borough of Girard celebrates dynamic circus ring-leader Dan Rice (whose fame and wealth greatly contributed to the town's growth in the mid-1800s) with all manner of family fun. // **July 31 - Aug. 2 // Downtown Girard, 34 Main St. W.**

Erie's Blues and Jazz Festival

Hitting its stride again after a brief hiatus two years ago, the Erie Blues and Jazz Festival is continuing its 30+ year-long mission to promote blues and jazz music and to bring locals and visitors together to enjoy an art-filled, peaceful weekend spent amidst free creative entertainment with family and friends. // **Aug. 2 - 3 // Frontier Park, Bayfront Parkway & W. 8th St. // Free**

Presque Isle Triathlon

An annual fundraiser for the Presque Isle Partnership, this tri features a 13-mile bike race around Presque Isle, a 3.1-mile run, and a 0.35-mile swim. See all that our state park has to offer, while physically challenging yourself, and raising some much

needed funds. // **Aug. 2 // 7:30 a.m. // Presque Isle State Park, 301 Peninsula Dr.**

St. Paul's Annual Italian Festival

St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church celebrates its heritage all weekend long, with Italian food like pasta fagioli and spaghetti, live entertainment, and more. // **Aug. 8 - 10 // St. Paul Parish, 1617 Walnut St.**

Celebrate Erie ★

Consistent Best of Erie winner for Best Festival, it always feels good to Celebrate Erie. With family-friendly music (featuring a multitude of local acts alongside nationally touring mainstage performances), dance, food, art activities, the always-anticipated chalk walk, local vendors, and organizations all interspersed within different districts throughout downtown – Celebrate Erie

gives everyone a chance to show love for our beautiful city. // **Aug. 15 - 17 // Downtown Erie // Free**

Tall Ships Festival 2025

The tall ships return to Erie's harbor this summer for a spectacular parade of historic ships from around the world, including Erie's own *Lettie G. Howard*, as they convene for a few days in our bay. Experience deck tours, day sails, food and drink vendors, kids activities, live music, and lectures and discussions. // **Aug. 21 - 24 // Bayfront Convention Center, 1 Sassafras Pier**

Zabawa Polish Festival ★

This festival, set at Holy Trinity in Erie's historically Polish east side, features all the favorites, including polka, pierogies, and paczki. // **Aug. 22 - 24 // Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 2220 Reed St.**

Erie County Fair

The 140th iteration of this weeklong celebration caters to all ages – with a rodeo, truck and tractor pulls, a demolition derby, animals, a pageant, musical acts, and more. // **Aug. 24 - 30 // 13993 State Hwy. 8, Wattsburg**

German Heritage Festival

German food, music, dancing, merchandise, and of course, copious amounts of beer, all in honor of celebrating German culture. // **Aug. 30 - 31 // Saturday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. // St. Nick's Grove, 5131 Old French Rd.**

Erie Irish Festival ◆

A favorite in Erie's historically Irish neighborhood, this popular festival features Irish music, food, art, kids entertainment, and historic St. Patrick's church tours. // **Sept. 2025 (exact dates and times**

TBA) // St. Patrick's Church, 130 E. 4th St.

North East Wine Fest

What better place to taste over 100 varieties of wine than in North East, Erie County's grape-growing, wine-making capital? Enjoy tasting the many varieties of reds, whites, roses, champagnes, ice wines, and more while you peruse the various vendors and enjoy the early autumn atmosphere. // **Sept. 26 - 28 // Gibson Park, Lake and Main Streets, North East**

Peek'n Peak Fall Fest ◆

Closing out the summer season, Erie loves the annual Peek n' Peak Fall Fest with pumpkins, cider, kids activities, craft fairs, seasonal food, live music, and more. // **October 10 and 11 and 17 and 18 // Peek'n Peak Resort, 1405 Old Rd., Clymer, NY**

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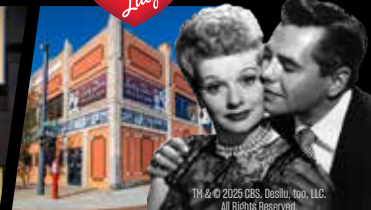
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Presque Isle State Park

Planning Your Presque Isle Getaway 2025

There's a reason Presque Isle State Park is the most visited park in Pennsylvania. It offers a complete range of attractions: beaches, forested trails, diverse recreational opportunities, and stunning natural beauty. Millions visit the park each year, but even on the most crowded beach weekend, quiet corners can be found and explored.

This recurved sandspit has six discrete ecological zones – the shoreline, sand plains and new ponds, dunes and ridges, old ponds and marshes, thickets and sub-climax forests, and climax forests. Because of the diverse habitats, Presque Isle is home to more than 100 rare species of plants and animals, more than any

other area of comparable size in Pennsylvania.

Birding enthusiasts come from all over the world to this Important Bird Area (IBA) as designated by the Audubon Society. More than 340 species of birds have been recorded at the park, including state and federally endangered birds like the piping plover, which have again started nesting at **Gull Point**.

Rightly known as a beach destination, Presque Isle's lakeside boasts seven miles of sandy shoreline. Visit **Beach 6** for a game of beach volleyball, pack a picnic for **Beach 7**, or stop by the western end of **Beach 10 (aka Sunset Point)** to see kites swirl in the sky. Swimming is permitted only at the eight guarded beaches from Memorial Day to Labor Day. But come back in winter to see the impressive ice dunes that protect the shoreline from winter storms.

The waters of Presque Isle Bay and the lake offer abundant opportunities to play. Registered motorboats and jet skis are both permitted, although no internal combustion engines are allowed in the interior lagoons. However, you're welcome to rent a canoe or kayak from the **Presque Isle Canoe and Boat Livery** or enjoy any of several daily free pontoon boat tours. Depending on wind conditions, the waters may be ideal for sailboarding, skimboarding, paddleboarding, and even surfing.

As the "Fishing Capital of Pennsylvania," Lake Erie and Presque Isle Bay offer numerous opportunities to wet a lure. Bank fishing is available in many parts of the park and four boat launches serve various sizes of watercraft. Fuel, bait, and food are available at the Marina. Anglers can also try their luck on the frozen bay in winter, too.

The 13.5-mile **Karl Boyes Multi-purpose National Recreation Trail** winds all the way around the park and is utilized by walkers, joggers, cyclists, surreys, and inline skaters. Bike and surrey rentals are available at the concession in the **Waterworks** area.

In the interior are 11 miles of hiking trails. Watch beavers tend



Kayaking the lagoons at Presque Isle State Park

their lodges or find deer, mink, and eight species of turtles. Be prepared for ticks by wearing long pants with your socks tucked and keep the bug repellent handy. For adventurous souls, a walk out to the natural area of Gull Point is a must. Views from the observation platform include newly forming sand plains and the eastern end of Erie's cityscape and bay. In winter, these trails become cross-country skiing or snowshoeing pathways or just a tranquil walkway through a sleeping forest.

History buffs can learn more about Erie's part in the War of 1812 at the **Perry Monument**, where Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's fleet overwintered in 1812-1814. Be sure to discover why the adjacent water to **Misery Bay** is called **Graveyard Pond**. Near the monument you can also catch a ride on the 65-foot Great Lakes vessel *Lady Kate*, which offers a 14-mile, 90-minute narrated tour that ventures out onto the open waters of Lake Erie.

The **Presque Isle Light Station**, which went into service in 1873 and is still an active guide to navigation, offers tours that explain the long history of the house and keepers (May-September), as well as a gift shop. The **North Pier Light** is accessible from Beach 11 on Coast Guard Rd. While not a lighthouse in the traditional sense, the 1858 navigational guide, with its black and white stripes, makes for great photo opportunities. A smaller beacon, the **Erie Land Lighthouse**, which was the first lighthouse lit on the Great Lakes, is open for tours on the mainland (off of Presque Isle) on the north channel (2 Lighthouse St.)

Presque Isle recently celebrated its 100th Anniversary, having been set aside as a state park in 1921. Come see this enduring treasure.





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Local Bird Watching Spots



Barred Owl

Erie has some gorgeously scenic spots for scoping, searching, photographing, and learning about our native and migratory feathered friends. Our natural waterways and the ecosystems that surround it make for very diverse birding experiences, from shorebirds to forest-dwellers and everything in between.

Presque Isle State Park ★

The crown jewel of birding in Erie is Presque Isle State Park, a 3,200-acre recurved sandspit jutting out into Lake Erie and forming Erie Bay on which the City of Erie sits. With seven types of habitats, the park welcomes a wide variety of avian life at all times of the year.

Within Presque Isle, great spots for bird watching include:

Fry's Landing, Pine Tree Trail, and Dead Pond Trail (especially the area around **Thompson Circle**). **Graveyard Pond** and Long Pond trails have access to the lagoon system for waders in the spring, summer, and fall and waterfowl in fall, winter, and spring. **Gull Point**, a designated natural area, is partially closed April 1 through Oct. 31 but there is a roped trail leading to two observation decks for spotting migrating and nesting shorebirds. In winter, snowy owls may also be found at Gull Point and sometimes on the

beaches and breakwaters of the park.

For a full map of the trails at Presque Isle, visit: eriebirdobservatory.org/local-birding-hotspots.
301 Peninsula Dr.

Other Regional Birding Locations

Pymatuning State Park

Pymatuning has the largest concentration of bald eagles in

Pennsylvania, along with great opportunities to see waterfowl, especially in the spring and fall. Nearby are PA Game Commission Wildlife Management Areas off of Hartstown Rd. that offer habitat for a wide variety of migratory and nesting shorebirds, waterfowl, and forest birds. Entrance to the Management Areas is restricted but roadside spots and parking lots are open for safe viewing. // **2660 Williamsfield Rd., Jamestown**

Erie Bluffs State Park

Part of Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation of Natural Resources and a perfect spot for woodland warblers, sparrows, and bank swallows.
11100 W. Lake Rd., Lake City

Edinboro Lake

Waterfowl, songbirds, and predators abound in this smaller lake south of Erie.
12690 Edinboro Rd., Edinboro

For more information on Erie's birding community visit eriebirdobservatory.org or eriebirdobservatory.org/local-birding-hotspots



Bald Eagle

Year-Round Kids Activities



Summer fun

If you've come to Erie with your family, you're in luck. Erie is traditionally known as a great place to raise kids and we're in agreement. With easily accessible spots – many of which are free or low-cost – there's no shortage of fun activities for any age range that will ensure happy, worn-out kiddos and plenty of fond memories made. If you're looking for indoor activities on a rainy (or snowy) day, you can find those in our winter section!

Asbury Woods Nature Center

The 216 acres of conserved property that makes up the gem of Asbury Woods is free to use and always spells adventure. Whether you hike the varying degrees of trails, visit the nature center to meet their animal ambassadors, or register for a class or guided walk, Asbury always has something fun to offer. // **4105 Asbury Rd.**

Erie SeaWolves at UPMC Park

Take me out to the ball game! Nothing says summer in Erie like heading to UPMC Park to watch the Erie SeaWolves

back-to-back Eastern League Championship baseball team in action. Peanuts, Cracker Jacks, meet-and-greets with mascot C. Wolf, bounce houses, contests, entertainment between innings, fireworks, cheers, and a culminating fun run around the bases: a SeaWolves game is a howl of a good time! // **831 French St.**

Erie Zoo

The historic Erie Zoo is the perfect size to enjoy an easily walkable hour or two, or take your time and spend all day. With many newly renovated areas (including new otter and monkey exhibits), our zoo

has a wide variety of animals to experience, a carousel, train ride, adventure center, playground, hands-on areas, concessions, and a gift shop featuring art created by the animals themselves.

423 W. 38th St.

Peek'n Peak Resort

A short drive to Clymer in New York state will give you a whole new vibe – for the summertime enjoy golf, a giant zipline and adventure course, and food and drink festivals.

1405 Old Rd., Clymer, NY.

Presque Isle State Park

Aside from an expected trip to the beach, there is so much more for kiddos to discover on our peninsula. Stop at Sara's for lunch and an orange vanilla twist cone and snag some photo ops with the props and vintage decor. Hop on board the *Lady Kate* for a family-friendly, educational boat ride around the bay or take a pontoon ride around the lagoons. Rent a

bike from Yellow Bike and see Presque Isle at a slower speed, climb up the steps of the Presque Isle lighthouse, search for beach glass at Beach 3, and – of course – spend the day in the sand, surf, and sun! // **307 Peninsula Dr.**

Public Parks

Erie has no shortage of public parks for recreation with playgrounds, picnic areas, and hiking trails. Standouts include: **Bayview Park** (598 W. 2nd St.) which has a free public splash pad and photo ops at the famous Erie sign and **Frontier Park** (1501 W. 6th St.) which is an official arboretum with a playground, Griff Slides (three 40-foot metal sliding boards built into a natural hill), trails, Cascade Creek, and a meditation labyrinth.

Scallywags Pirate Adventure

YARRRR matey! Swashbucklers climb aboard for a wet and wild summer boating adventure on the bay. Secure the treasure from the villainous Captain Skull and have a blast in the process. **2 State St.**

Waldameer Park and Water World

Established way back in 1896, this world-class amusement and water park keeps growing and upgrading each year. Featuring modern rides like roller coasters, flying swings, and a gondola Ferris wheel with the best view in town, there are also rides for the youngest ones, as well as classics like the Whacky Shack and Pirates Cove (which are vintage "dark rides" designed by Bill Tracy). Water World features an ever-growing plethora of water rides for all ages and thrill levels.

220 Peninsula Dr.

Winter adventures

Don't let dreary Erie days get you down – there's plenty of entertainment for the little ones at the many indoor venues around town or through an outdoor adventure. Attend a sporting event, a philharmonic concert, get the wiggles out (while actually learning something) at the award-winning expERIENCE Children's Museum, or bounce away the blues at one of the many indoor jump parks or playgrounds.



ASCEND Erie

Kids driving you up the walls? Redirect that energy toward the ASCEND Erie climbing gym, where youngsters can learn the foundations of this exhilarating and confidence-boosting athletic pursuit. // **426 State St.**

Erie Art Museum ♦

If you happen to be in Erie on the second Sunday of the month, you're in luck. Our impressive art museum offers families free admission on that day, as well as a guided art activity that relates to one of their current exhibits. Get those kids creating // **20 E. 5th St.**

Erie Otters at the Erie Insurance Arena ★

If you're visiting Erie in the winter, stop by the Erie Insurance Arena for a rousing game of hockey, presented by our lo-

cal Erie Otters. Winner of Best Team to Root For 11 years in a row, we're all pretty big fans. **809 French St.**

expERIENCE Children's Museum ★

The expERIENCE Children's Museum is a newly renovated and expanded kid's paradise – so much so that it was voted Best Museum in 2024. With exhibits focusing on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), but always made to be hands-on and tons of fun, your kids will never want to leave (or realize how much they're learning). **420 French St.**

Erie County Public Library

Our local library and its numerous branches offer fun programming year round for all age groups, as well as children's book sections that are

the stuff of dreams (for little bookworms). // **160 E. Front St.**

Erie Maritime Museum

Located within the same footprint as our local library, the Erie Maritime Museum offers a glimpse at the rich sea-faring history of Lake Erie. Included with the price of admission is a tour of the historic U.S. Brig *Niagara*, a ship that served Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry in the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812.

150 E. Front St.

Erie Phil Pops Series

The Erie Philharmonic presents a Pops Series on their schedule each year that includes beloved classic childhood films with music performed live by the orchestra. The docket for 2025-26 includes kid hits like *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the iconic compositions of John Williams, an orchestral tribute to Billy Joel, and their hallmark *Come Home For the Holidays* performance. The Warner Theatre, where the Philharmonic performs, is worth a visit all on its own: a grand, historic, Art Deco masterpiece – it's the

kind of building that wows children and adults alike. // **Warner Theatre, 811 State St.**

Five Iron Golf

Whether you're getting back into the swing of having antsy kids at home or you're just looking to prevent a crummy day from going completely off-course, the whole family is sure to enjoy Five Iron's golf and multi-sport simulation technology. // **1000 State St.**

Peek'n Peak Resort ♦

A short drive to Clymer in New York state will give you a whole new vibe. With skiing, snowboarding, and tubing in the winter and their ever popular fall fest – the Peak is year-round fun.

1405 Old Rd., Clymer, NY

Play Port or Round 1

Rainy day? No worries. Play Port has 100+ vintage arcade games, virtual reality, laser tag, glow golf, and more. And Round 1, located within the Millcreek Mall, is conveniently located for lots of indoor fun. **2730 W. 12th St. // 825 Millcreek Mall Blvd.**



Splash Lagoon

It's always summertime at Splash Lagoon indoor water park. With tons of slides and water play features for kids of all ages, there's also an arcade, bowling alley, shopping, and dining. // **8091 Peach St.**

Trampoline, Inflatable, Tumble Gyms, and Indoor Playgrounds

Bounce out that endless energy at any of the following trampoline/bounce parks: Elevate ♦ (1338 E. Grandview Blvd.), Vertical Jump Park ★ (2088 Interchange Rd.), Jumpin' Jungle ♦ (2626 W. 12th St.), Tumble 84 (4504 W. Ridge Rd.), or The Erie Gymnastics Center (3622 Liberty St.). Or visit an indoor playground like the Widget Kidz Zone (654 Millcreek Mall Blvd.), We Rock the Spectrum (2167 W. 12th St.), DreamBuilders Playspace (4108 Main St., Lawrence Park), That Play Place (4423

Buffalo Rd.), or Polliwogs Gym (2558 W. 8th St.).

Tom Ridge Environmental Center (TREC) ♦

Stop by Erie's natural history center and learn about native birds, wildlife, and plants, catch a film on the Big Green Screen, birdwatch, or run around outdoors at the natural playground. **301 Peninsula Dr.**

Werner Books and Coffee ★

With a well-stocked, casual and welcoming kids lit section, regularly scheduled kids crafts, storytimes, and activities, Werner Books and Coffee is a great place to pass some time on a rainy day or otherwise! // **3608 Liberty St.**

Yahn Planetarium

Catch weekly kid-themed planetarium shows on Penn State Behrend's campus. **4205 College Dr.**



Splash Lagoon

Hiking Trails



Asbury Woods

Asbury Woods ★

The winner of 2024's Best Hiking Trails category, Asbury Woods offers a well-maintained nature experience. With multiple entry points (at Asbury Barn, near the Andrew J. Conner Nature Center, or at Brown's Farm) and different terrain (including accessible

boardwalk areas), Asbury provides great opportunities to explore, learn, and revel in nature. // **4105 Asbury Rd.**

Presque Isle State Park ♦

While most know Presque Isle for its gorgeous sandy beaches, our state park offers much more than a day of lounging in

the sun or swimming. With approximately 11 miles of hiking trails, not including a 13.5-mile multi-use path, the microclimates and varied ecosystems within the park offer plenty of options for a vigorous hike.

301 Peninsula Dr.

Wintergreen Gorge Trails ♦

The wilds of Wintergreen Gorge, near Penn State Behrend, are always a fun adventure. With views of the incredible, eponymous gorge, swimming holes, creeks, and plenty of local flora and fauna, the whole family will be one with nature. // **3399 Cooper Rd.**

Edinboro Lake

Edinboro Lake is a 250-acre glacial kettle lake that is a popular summer spot for locals and tourists. On the west side of the lake, there is Pat Crawford Beach and the uniquely

designed Billings Park Playground. On the eastern side of the lake is Edinboro Lake Resort where you can snag some grub at the Sunset Grill overlooking the water, hear some live music, and rent kayaks, canoes, or pontoon boats. **12670 Edinboro Rd., Edinboro**

Erie Bluffs State Park

This state park, officially established in 2004, is located just past Lake City and only 12 miles west of Erie. The nearly 600-acre park has a full mile of undeveloped shoreline that includes vertigo-inducing bluffs nearly 100 feet high overlooking Lake Erie. You can explore the old growth forest, dip your toes into Elk Creek, and look for some of the dozens of species of birds, mammals, plants, reptiles, amphibians, and fungi while on your journey. // **11100 W Lake Rd.**



Headwaters Park

This 72-acre park is located off Route 8 on Wager Road, nestled, of all places, between an industrial park and Interstate 90. Made up of streams, wetlands, woods, and meadows, it's a little taste of reclaimed forest paradise only a few minutes from the city. The park gets its name for containing the headwaters of Mill Creek.

1927 Wager Rd.

Howard Eaton Reservoir

Just shy of the New York line, nestled between Ashton and Findley Lake roads is the Howard Eaton Reservoir, sometimes referred to as Bull Dam. This nearly 250-acre reservoir was built in 1941 on a tributary to French Creek to provide water for North East residents.

Today, it has an easy and relaxing 3.2-mile trail around it called Bull Dam Loop along with numerous other wooded trails to the north and south of the reservoir.

9843 Black Rd., North East

Lake Pleasant

The 61-acre glacier-made, groundwater-fed Lake Pleasant is located in Venango Township just past the Greene Township line. There's a boat launch for non-motorized boats, great spots for fishing, or you can merely find a spot to sit down, relax your brain, and take in the flora, fauna, and fresh air.

9188 Lake Pleasant Rd.

Picnicana Park

In 1966, Summit Township purchased Picnicana Park from

the Klaus family, who had first established it as a picnic area in 1951. Today, it still offers up 34 acres of woods to explore with 1.5 miles of trails added in 2014. The park also includes a great playground, as well as a softball field and basketball, volleyball, pickleball, and horseshoe courts.

9260 Old French Rd.

Shades Beach

If you're looking to walk some serene beaches on Lake Erie, but want somewhere different than Presque Isle, give Shades Beach off of East Lake Road a visit. There is, of course, the beach where you can walk and search for the lake's famous beach glass, but there are also wooded trails on the bluffs overlooking the glistening lake, as well as a boat launch, rental pavilions, and a well-maintained playground.

7000 E. Lake Rd.

Six Mile Creek Park

Past Harborcreek but before North East off of Clark Road is the 425-acre Six Mile Creek Park, gifted to Harborcreek Township by the county in 2011. It has a short and sweet 0.7-mile loop, a handicap accessible trail, the peaceful Six

Mile Creek, and plenty of scenic views that would look great on your Instagram.

7725 Clark Rd.

Union City Dam

While Crawford County has the popular Woodcock Dam, Erie County has its own dam located between Union City and Waterford, a short distance off Route 97 on Middleton Road. The dam's gate is open from 7 a.m. to dusk all year to soak in the tranquil views, take a hike, bird watch, or fish. Picnic tables, grills, and restrooms are also available.

1438 Middleton Rd., Waterford

Scott Park

Trails, a playground, picnic pavilions, baseball fields, BMX tracks, and more – a day spent at Scott Park is always a good day. // **W. 6th St. and Lowell Ave.**

West Branch French Creek Conservation Area

Only a couple of miles past Seneca High School on Wattsburg Road is the West Branch French Creek Conservation Area. This preserve is over 1,000 acres of uplands and wetlands and includes over six miles of frontage along French Creek. // **Rt. 8, near the village of Lowville**



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Pumpkin Farms and Spooky Spots



If you find yourself in Erie during spooky season, you're in luck! We've got a number of fun spots to grab a pumpkin, enjoy some local cider, challenge yourself to a corn maze, go on a hay ride, or give yourself a good fright.

Pumpkin Farms

Port Farms

One of the area's largest pumpkin farms, enjoy feeding goats, go-kart races, slides, bounce pads, hay rides, and an epic corn maze. // **2055 Stone Quarry Rd., Waterford**

Sissons' Pumpkin Patch

Pumpkin launching/smashing, corn mazes, pedal carts, slides, and more. Sissons' is the West County's spot for fall fun. **11244 Springfield Rd., Girard**

Pumpkintown at Mason Farms

Local farmers market store Mason Farms get into Halloween—with multiple bounce houses and a huge slide with a (not too hard) corn maze, goat, pig, and alpaca feeding, and a huge selection of locally grown pumpkins and gourds. **839 Peninsula Dr.**

Fedei Farms

7785 Maple St., Fairview

Finnell Farms

7840 Buffalo Rd., Harborcreek

Wooden Nickel Buffalo Farm & Corn Maze

5970 Koman Rd., Edinboro

Spooky Spots and Haunted Tours

Zoo Boo

Every October, the Erie Zoo goes all out for Halloween, with decor, special displays, DJs, and trick-or-treat at different stations— it's a cool way to get into the spooky season that isn't too scary for the little ones.

423 W. 38th St.

Erie Abyss Factory of Terror

This (wheelchair accessible) haunted house offers tours all year round, not just at Halloween. Make your way through the former historic Griswold factory as you face over a half-mile of shockingly spooky jump-scares.

1053 W. 12th St.

Eerie Horror Fest

Every October the Warner Theatre is transformed into a film festival featuring all things horror. With a spooky family film featured each year alongside plenty of grown-up gore, it's the perfect venue for a scare. // **Oct. 10 and 11, Warner Theatre, 811 State St.**

Eerie Stories, Legends, and Lore Walking Tour

Mother and daughter team Heather and Lauren Cass team up as TourErie all year round and during Halloween they offer a downtown walking tour featuring spooky spots, ghostly legends, and historic lore.

toureriepa.com

Erie Cemetery Ghost Tours

The historic Erie Cemetery, incorporated in 1851, houses thousands of local souls and has amassed a number of legends and spooky tales over the centuries like the Vampire Crypt, the witches circle, or the Scott Mausoleum grave robbery.

2116 Chestnut St.

The Brewerie Haunted History Tours

One of Erie's first brewpubs is housed in the historic Union Station building. Every fall, the staff of the Brewerie offers Haunted History Tours of their underbelly – uncovering legends and sending chills down your spine.

123 W. 14th St.

Candlelight Ghost Walks

Led by author Stephanie Wincik, who has published multiple books on the ghosts of Erie County, take a walking tour of Girard and learn all about the local lore.

candlelightghostwalks.com

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Farmers Markets

When visiting a new place, the best way to get to know it is through their food. And we'd like you to start at the source. Erie features robust local farming and agricultural heritage – from more than 100-year-old family farms to newly plotted urban farms. Taste the seasonal greatness and support our local farmers at the same time.

Bayview Park Farmers Market // Wednesdays, June 11 - Aug. 20 // 6 to 8 p.m. // Bayview Park, 598 W. 2nd St. // ourwestbayfront.org

LEAF Open Market Biweekly on Saturdays, June 14 - Sept. 20 // 8th Street side of Frontier Park // leaferie.org/openmarket

North East Gibson Park Open Market Saturdays from June 7 - Sept. 6 (excluding July 12) // 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. // Gibson Park, Lake

and Main streets, North East // nechamber.org

Sisters of St. Joseph Little Italy Farmers Market Mondays, June 23 through Sept. 22 // 3 to 6 p.m. // 331 W. 18th St. // ssjnn.org

Pay What You Can Farm Stands // Weekly from July 7 through early October // builderie.org/hope/pwyc
The idea behind these farmers market stands is to provide fresh produce to those most in need. The farmers



Pay What You Can Farm Stands

involved ask that patrons take only what is needed and any funds raised through the sale of their wares helps to

ensure produce is available throughout the season. // *The locations and times of these markets vary.*



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13 Friday	CARVING KICK OFF 9:00 AM VENDORS OPEN 11:00 AM - 9:00 PM CRUISE IN 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM GEEK ARMY 7:00 PM	
14 Saturday	CARVING KICK OFF VENDORS OPEN 11:00 AM - 9:00 PM DOWNTOWN PARADE 11:00 AM BLACK WIDOW 7:00 PM	
15 Sunday	CARVING KICK OFF 9:00 AM VENDORS OPEN 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM FIREWORKS AT RT 6 PLAZA DUSK	

Winter Sports in Erie



If Erie is famous for anything (besides our sunsets), it's our super snowy winters. Rather than hole up and hibernate, we offer plenty of opportunities to make the most of our longest season. With skiing, ice fishing, curling, and more, get out and be active – you just might find that winter isn't so bad.

Skiing, Snowboarding,
and Tubing

Peek'n Peak Resort ♦

Nearby in Clymer, New York, you can drive to what feels like a Swiss chalet for a day of skiing or stay for a while in one of their many on-site lodging options. With skiing, snowboarding, and tubing available on dozens of slopes, with freshly made snow (if nature doesn't want to provide), state-of-the-art lifts, lessons, and, of course, a lodge with plenty of hot cocoa flowing, it's a winter getaway that will have you coming back again and again. // **405 Old Rd., Clymer, NY**

Mount Pleasant of Edinboro

**14510 Mt. Pleasant Rd.,
Cambridge Springs**

Cross Country Skiing
and Snowshoeing

The winter woods can often be more peaceful and beautiful than they are at the height of summer. See the local forests during the winter

season on skis or snowshoes for a totally different natural experience.

Asbury Woods ★

Offering cross-country ski and snowshoe rental and introductory classes, explore the 234 acres of the winner of 2024's Best Hiking Trails in a totally different way.

4105 Asbury Rd.

Presque Isle State Park ★

Erie's favorite park is tired of being ignored in the wintertime. Rent some skis from the Tom Ridge Environmental Center and learn the best spots to glide through the state park. // **301 Peninsula Dr.**

Erie Bluffs State Park

11100 W. Lake Rd., Lake City

Wilderness Lodge

**13448 Weeks Valley Rd.,
Wattsburg**

Ice Fishing

If you come to Erie after the bay has frozen over, you

can't miss those ice-fishing huts, colorfully dotted on the solid water. With walleye, yellow perch, and crappie up for grabs, check in with local charter guides and bait shops to stay safe while you're out on the ice.

Ice Skating

Downtown Erie Skating Rink

Each winter, the Erie Downtown Partnership constructs an outdoor skating rink in Perry Square to bring a little of the wintertime magic of Rockefeller Center to Erie.

601 State St.

Flo Fabrizio Ice Center

Erie's classic go-to for a wintertime skate, the newly renovated Flo Fabrizio Ice Center offers the best ice in town. Open for public skating, figure skating, birthday parties, and hockey practice, lessons are available from November through February. // **527 W. 38th St.**

LECOM Sports Park

8159 Oliver Rd.

Mercyhurst Ice Center

501 E. 38th St.

Curling

French Creek Curling Club

Open to anyone, beginners and experts alike, the French Creek Curling Club is a volunteer-run organization pursuing their passion for the sport. **LECOM Sports Park, 8159 Oliver Rd.**

Altered State Curling Club

A street version of the game, local distillery Altered State has made their mark on the local curling scene. **1535 W. 8th St.**

Flagship City Sports & Sips Curling League

The folks of the Erie Downtown Development Corporation bring a yearly curling tournament to Downtown Erie. **Perry Square, 601 State St.**



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Yoga and Fitness



Stay on track with your fitness goals while vacationing at any number of the following fitness clubs or yoga spots. Erie has a number of studios and gyms designed to help keep you on the path to wellness – to either relax and calm the mind and body, or get your heart rate up and break a sweat.

yogaErie ★

A winner for Erie's Best Yoga studio for 11 years in a row, yogaErie is a clear favorite. Their studio is conveniently located close to Presque Isle State Park in the Shops at the Colony. yogaErie specializes in hot power yoga guaranteed to help you get a great stretch and break a sweat. // 2560 W. 8th St.

YMCA ★

Winner of Best Fitness Club, the YMCA has been keeping families fit for generations. Featuring group classes, a pool, childcare, and other amenities, you're sure to find something here for the entire family. // 3727 Cherry St. // 31 W. 10th St. // 2101 Nagle Rd. // 12285 YMCA Dr., Edinboro

ASCEND Erie ◆

Indoor rock climbing is Erie's latest fitness craze due in large part to ASCEND Erie's incredible facility right in the heart of Downtown Erie. The 25,000-square-foot space boasts a 50-foot climbing wall, in addition to other climbing features, a yoga studio, and more. // 426 State St.

Barefoot Buddha ◆

Located in Millcreek, this studio features yoga therapists teaching vinyasa, chair yoga, and therapeutic movement, and also offers live-streamed or Zoom sessions to fit any schedule. // 3910 Caughey Rd.

Dreaming Tree Yoga ◆

Dreaming Tree, which offers all levels of yoga, while specializing in hot yoga, will have you working up a healthy sweat while you calm your mind. 3347 W. 12th St., Ste. 102



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