

CLOSE TO HOME.
A WORLD AWAY.

Bloomington
INDIANA



CONTENTS

PAGE 3 WHY BLOOMINGTON?

PAGE 4 CLOSE TO HOME, FAR FROM ORDINARY

PAGE 5 A MIDWEST ESCAPE

PAGE 6 LAKE LOVE

PAGE 7 BIKE IS LIFE

PAGE 8 ROADTRIPPER'S RETREAT

PAGE 10 BOOZE IN BLOOMINGTON

PAGE 14 FOODIE'S FAIRYTALE

PAGE 16 MUSIC TO ART TO

PAGE 18 ONLY IN BLOOMINGTON

PAGE 21 CAN'T MISS EVENTS

PAGE 22 OVER THE YEARS

PAGE 23 FOR THE RECORD

GET IN TOUCH

For more information, high-res images, or to schedule an interview, please contact Ellen Neiers.

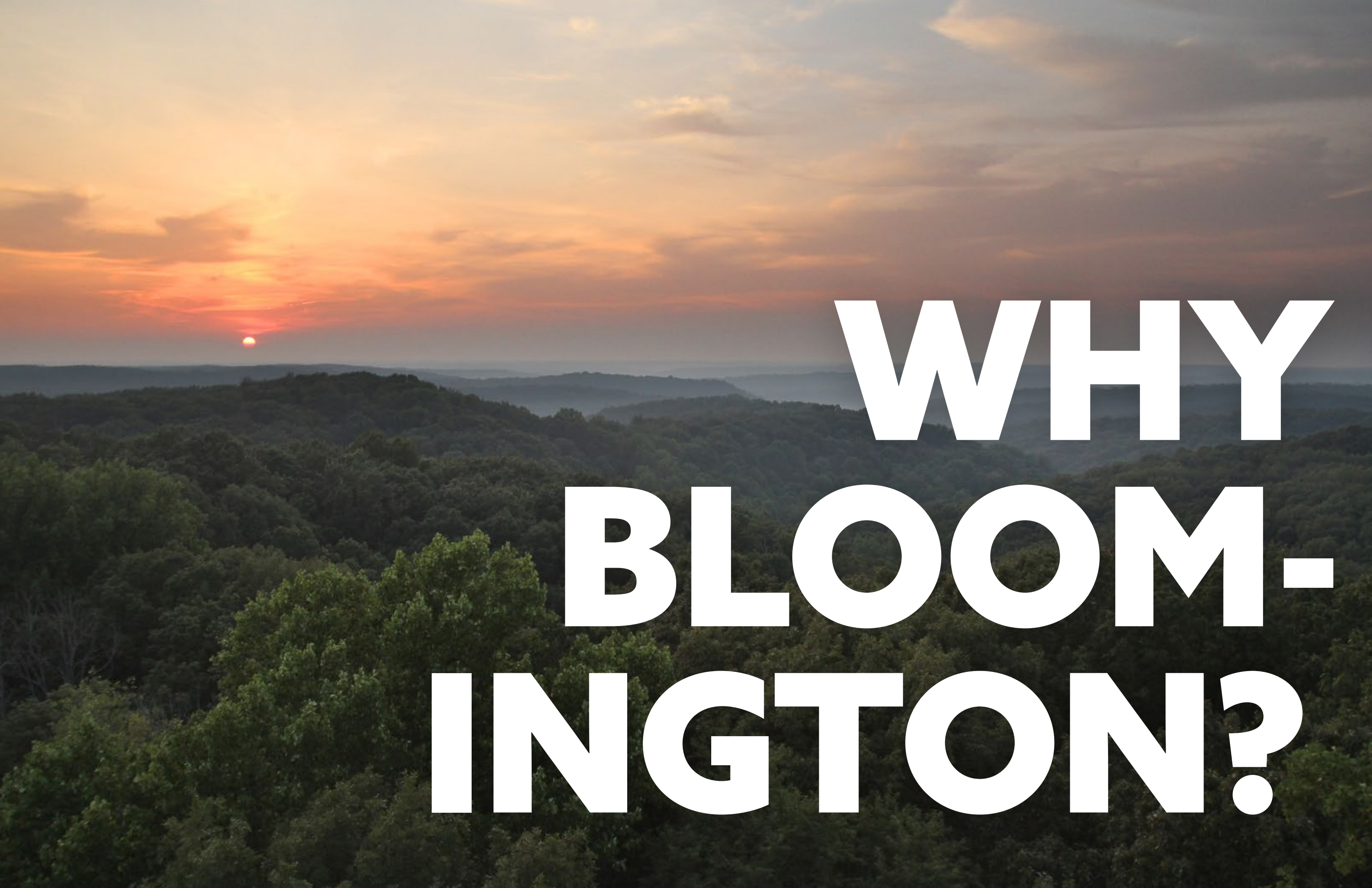
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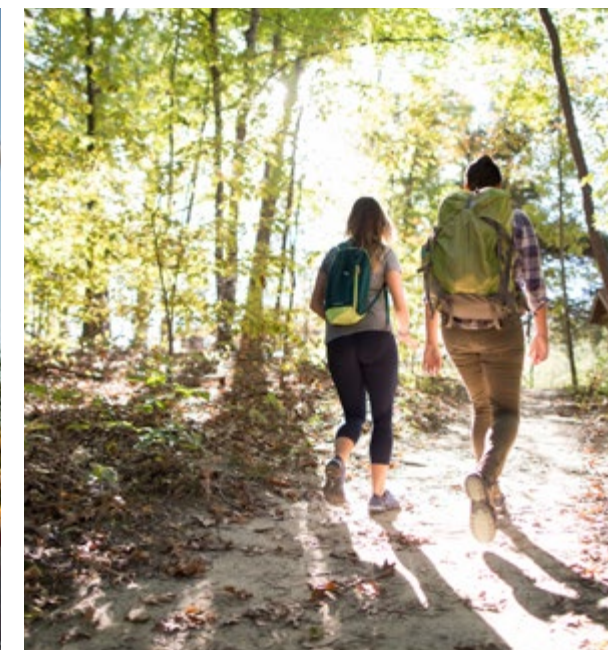
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**WHY
BLOOM-
INGTON?**

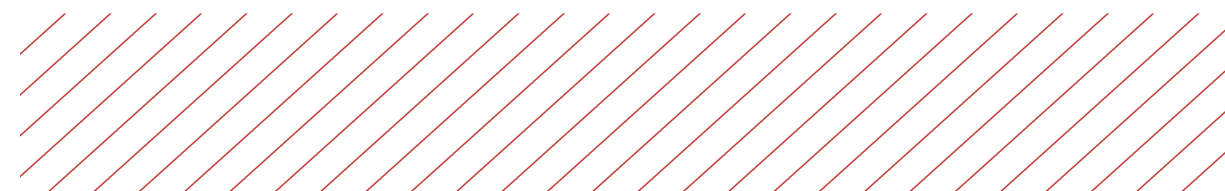


CLOSE TO HOME, FAR FROM ORDINARY



Located in the heart of the rolling hills of Southern Indiana and built around the prodigious Indiana University, Bloomington is a progressive city built by dreamers and doers. A place to nourish your intellect as well as your soul. An off-the-beaten-path escape that's inclusive, affordable, academic, and unpretentious—balancing both the charm of a small town and the cultural magic of a major city. It's a diverse destination that draws

some of the world's most industrious thinkers, creators, and adventurers to make not just their memories here, but their homes. And with the state's largest lake, the only National Forest, collegiate athletics, and nationally recognized music industry and comedy scene, it's not hard to see why this enchanting Heartland favorite keeps visitors coming back, year after year.



A MID- WEST ESCAPE

More than an idyllic college town, Bloomington has long been an unlikely Midwest escape for nature lovers—from casual explorers to adrenaline junkies. So, whether you're simply looking to unplug with a quick hike, share a weekend camping adventure with the family, or blaze the trail with some off-road biking, the rolling hills and lakes of Bloomington have you covered.

3

LARGE LAKES

5

MAJOR HIKING + BIKING TRAILS
(FOR ALL LEVELS)

8

CAMPGROUNDS
(FOREST AND LAKE)

38

CITY AND COUNTY PARKS*

200K

ACRE HOOSIER NATIONAL FOREST

*Including recently opened 62-acre
Switchyard Park (the largest in the town)

TOP URBAN TRAILS

B-Line Trail: 3.1 miles, asphalt paved, runs through downtown, great public art

Bloomington Rail Trail: 2 miles, gravel surface, tree-lined, a serene experience

Clear Creek Trail: 2.5 miles, paved path, along Clear Creek, wheelchair accessible

Limestone Greenway: 1.7 miles, asphalt paved, connects to Clear Creek Trail and Bloomington Rail Trail

Wapehani Mountain Bike Park: 5 miles of rolling single-track trails for mountain biking and hiking

CHOICE CAMPGROUNDS

Hardin Ridge Recreation Area: located in the Hoosier National Forest, 203 campsites, trails, swimming beach, and boat access

Paynetown State Recreation Area: 300 electric and non-electric camping spots, beach, and boat rental

TMBCC Yurts: isolated, yet fully equipped traditional yurts, perfect for solitude

Yogi Bear’s Jellystone Park at Lake Monroe: Yogi Bear’s Water Zone, pool, wagon rides, walking trails, and waterfall

MORE NOTABLE NATURE



Foraging season, best spots for mushroom hunting



Best places for leaf peeping on bike, boat, and foot



Top bird-watching areas, tours, and best places to spot bald eagles

LAKE LOVE



Griffy Lake

109-acre lake part of 1,200-acre nature preserve, great for hiking, fishing, non-motorized boating



Lake Lemon

1,650-acre lake, most popular for boating and fishing



Monroe Lake

10,750-acre lake, largest lake in Indiana, partially surrounded by the Hoosier National Forest



BIKE IS LIFE

Biking is ingrained in the culture of Bloomington. Rated a Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community by League of American Bicyclists (the only gold level BFC in Indiana), Bloomington features a vast network of city bike lanes and trails, including Indiana's first mountain bike park, as well as a variety of annual cycling events, such as the famous Little 500 and the Hilly Hundred. Bloomington is the perfect cycling destination for touring cyclists, professional riders or anyone who enjoys getting from here to there on two wheels.



4

BIKE SHOPS

9.2

CONTINUOUS MILES
OF URBAN TRAILS

WELCOME BIKE FANS

Little 500: largest collegiate bike race in the U.S.
(Featured in the 1979 Academy Award winning film, Breaking Away)

Hilly Hundred: two-day, 100-mile bicycle tour
through the scenic hills of Southern Indiana

Gravel Grovel: 20- or 60-mile mountain bike
race through the beautiful and rugged Hoosier
National Forest

45

ACRES AT
WAPAHANI

70

YEARS OF LITTLE 500 RACES
AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY



ROAD TRIP- PER'S RETREAT

Within six hours of most major Midwest cities, **Bloomington is ideal for family road tripping**, thanks to the many exciting, unexpected and even (don't tell the kids) educational activities for all ages. From rocking climbing to museums to boating and camping, Bloomington is home to a wide range of activities and a full list of [kid-friendly restaurants](#) to pick from.

INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT

WonderLab Museum: one of the Top 25 Science Centers in the U.S., hands-on exhibits, and new Sprout program for toddlers

Kids Play Gym: every piece of play equipment has a therapeutic property to it with sensory rooms

Hoosier Heights Bloomington: rock climbing facility with rental gear, instruction, and challenges for all skill levels, and free to kids 5 and under

Urban Air Trampoline and Adventure Park: jump, train, do the Warrior course, play dodgeball and slam dunk ball



OUTDOOR ESCAPADES FOR FAMILIES

Hoosier National Forest: 200,000-acres of stunning land to hike, bike, and camp

Little Africa Wildlife Viewing Area: 25-acre peninsula that's perfect for viewing wildlife at Lake Lemon

Beanblossom Bottoms Nature Preserve: scenic walking trails with secluded bird-watching

Paynetown State Recreation Area: camp, play on the beach, or rent a boat for tubing and water skiing

Lower Cascades Park: fully accessible playground, swings, slides, jungle gym, toddler play pin, and picnic area

Switchyard Park: various sports courts, concrete skate park, picnic areas, and free events throughout the year

Bloomington Community Farmers' Market: unique farmers' market finds every Saturday, April through September (the state's largest farmers' market)





BOOZE

IN BLOOMINGTON

Bloomington's distilleries, breweries, and wineries are known for their experimental approach to not just the craft but to collaboration—local brands and makers frequently team up here to create exciting, one-of-a-kind beverages and experiences that appeal to residents and visitors. All great additions to the college town's already classic dive bar scene.

6

BREWERIES

2

WINERIES

1

DISTILLERY

1

CIDERY

1

MEADERY

ALE TRAIL ADVEN- TURE



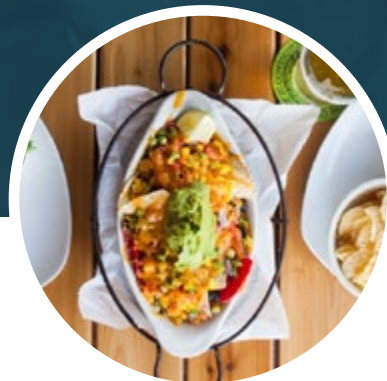
Six craft breweries
located in downtown
Bloomington—all within
walking distance of
one another.



**SWITCHYARD
BREWING COMPANY**



**FUNCTION
BREWING**



**BIG WOODS
BLOOMINGTON**



**THE
TAP**



**BLOOMINGTON
BREWING CO.**



**UPLAND
BREWING CO.**



TOP DRINKING DESTINA- TIONS



The Wood Shop

Upland's all-sours brewery



Cardinal Spirits

Award-winning craft distillery, cocktail bar, and scratch kitchen



Butler Winery & Vineyard

In-town and vineyard tasting room with garden patio and pond



Oliver Winery & Vineyards

Largest winery in the Midwest, known for innovative fruit-forward wines



Nick's English Hut

Legendary sports bar, famous since 1927

GO-TO DIVE BARS



Alley Bar

Cozy, cold beer, and “world famous” spicy peanuts



Atlas Ballroom

Table shuffleboard, Skee-ball, and quirky taxidermy



Bear's Place

Burgers, Thursday Jazz, home to the infamous Hairy Bear mixed drink



Office Lounge

Pub food, pool tables, and weekend karaoke



Orbit Room

Live music, pinball, late-night libations, and specialty hot dogs



Video Saloon

Drinks, darts, pop-a-shot, and pool tables



CREEKBEND BRANDY

Vintage 2015 collab,
Cardinal Spirits +
Oliver Winery



LA BOÎTE AMARO

Cardinal Spirits + La Boîte
spice shop in NYC



PAWPAW

Sour ale made with local
pawpaw fruit, Upland
Brewing Co.



PERSIMMON

Malty ale from Bloomington
Brewing Co. or the sour ale
from Upland Brewing Co.

ONE-OF-A-KIND CONCOCTIONS

FOODIE'S FAIRYTALE

If you were to ask a local to describe Bloomington's food scene, they would undoubtedly say "diverse and delicious." What does that mean? It means that Bloomington's spectrum of food options, from locally owned pizza and fresh-baked vegan pastries to California-style burritos and Afghan kebabs, make it a destination where foodies live happily ever after.

10+

VEGAN AND
VEGETARIAN VENUES

20+

PLACES TO
GET PIZZA

80+

INTERNATIONAL
RESTAURANTS

140+

LOCALLY OWNED
RESTAURANTS



VEGETARIAN/ VEGAN FRIENDLY

Laughing Planet Café: California-style burritos with organic, locally-sourced ingredients and vegan options

Rainbow Bakery: Bloomington's first vegan bakery, famous for colorful donuts and hand-pies

Runcible Spoon: a Bloomington staple with great eggs, veggie benedicts, and homemade pancakes to-die-for

The Owlery Restaurant: vegetarian comfort food, craft beer, and vegan baked goods

LATE-NIGHT EATS

Pili's Party Taco

food truck, authentic Mexican cuisine open until 3:30 a.m. (Sat.)

Baked! of Bloomington

fresh cookies and milk open until 4 a.m. (Thurs.-Sat.)

Do Asian Fusion Cuisine & Lounge

Korean and Japanese food open until 3 a.m. (Thurs.-Sat.)

Pizza X

IU favorite for fast pizza open until 4 a.m. (Thurs.-Sat.)

The Big Cheeze

food truck, grilled cheese open until 3:30 a.m. (Tues.-Sat.)

Z & C Teriyaki & Sushi

sushi and teriyaki bowls open until 3 a.m. (Tues.-Sat.)

FOODIE FAVORITES

Bloomington has one of the most diverse and international food scenes in the Midwest, encompassing everything from Irish comfort food to traditional Turkish and Tibetan cuisine. These are just a few of Bloomington's best:

Anyetsang's Little Tibet: authentic Tibetan, Thai, and Indian cuisine

Buffalouie's: wings & sandwiches in a historic setting

C3: chef driven cuisine and hand-crafted cocktails

FARMbloomington: modern, farmhouse-inspired cuisine

Feast Market & Cellar: gourmet comfort food and baked goods

The Irish Lion: nationally recognized Irish pub

Janko's Little Zagreb: best steaks in Bloomington

La Vie en Rose: authentic French café

Lennie's: gourmet pizza and craft beer

Mother Bear's Pizza: best pizza in town, family friendly

Poindexter Coffee: coffee and café offerings, including breakfast sandwiches

Samira Restaurant: fine Afghan cuisine

Trojan Horse: delicious gyros and falafels

Turkuaz Café: traditional Turkish cuisine

Two Sticks Bakery: small, from-scratch bakery

Uptown Cafe: New Orleans-style café



MUSIC TO ART TO

Bloomington's music and art scenes are as dynamic and diverse as its community. A hotbed for both musical innovation and revolutionary art—from historic venues and independent record labels to a recently renovated I.M. Pei-designed art museum. Where else can you see a Picasso, have a picnic in the park, and be wowed by impromptu musical performances, all in one day?

3

VINYL SHOPS

9

PERFORMANCE
THEATERS

11

MUSEUMS

10

DOWNTOWN
ART GALLERIES

8

RECORD LABELS*

15

SPOTS TO CATCH
LIVE MUSIC

*Including the nationally-lauded **Secretly Canadian**, **Dead Oceans**, and **Jagjaguwar**

MUST-SEE MUSEUMS

Eskenazi Museum of Art: designed by architect I.M. Pei, displaying over 45,000 works of art

Lilly Library: a library known for its collection of 450,000 rare books (currently undergoing renovations)

IU Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology: explore objects from all over the world (opening Fall 2021)

Monroe County History Center: certified dementia-friendly museum with genealogical library

WonderLab Museum: one of the Top 25 Science Centers in the U.S., hands-on exhibits, and new [Sprout program](#)

Wylie House Museum: historic home of IU's first president, Andrew Wylie, public tours 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tues. – Sat.



ART AROUND TOWN

Gallery Walk Bloomington: held on the first Friday of every month, tour ten downtown galleries that stay open after hours

IU Cinema: 260-seat, THX® Certified cinema with screenings almost daily

Public Murals: 40+ murals covering over 35,000 square feet across town

The Comedy Attic: Bloomington's first and only full-time comedy club with stand-up

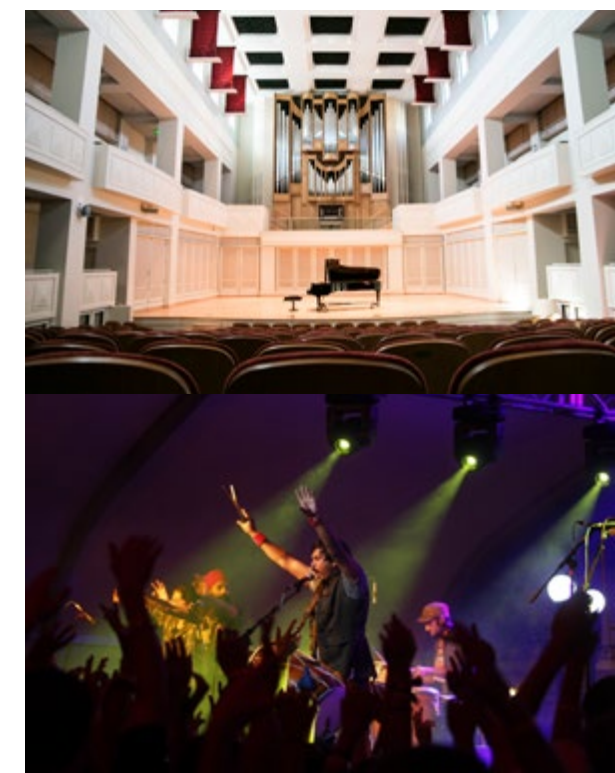
FOLLOW THE MUSIC

Blockhouse Bar: beer bar and music venue with weekly events, located in the alley below [The Back Door](#)

IU Jacobs School of Music: 1,000+ opera, ballet, and musical performances throughout the year

The Bluebird: historic music venue and bar, hosting cover bands, plus emerging and national acts

The Bishop Bar: musical mecca for bands before they make it big, craft beer, spirits, and no cover all week



ONLY IN BLOOM- INGTON

Bloomington isn't like other towns in Indiana, or even in the Midwest. It's a small, college town with a big, progressive attitude. Here, people are met with open hearts and open minds, no matter their interests or the length of their stay. Bloomington is inclusive, through and through—an LGBTQ-supporting city with small-town things people love and some things you won't find anywhere else. Oh, and we absolutely love dogs (with dog-friendly digs, patios, things to do, and places to go scattered across the city).



LGBTQ HAVEN

PRIDE Film Festival: Bloomington's only film festival devoted to the LGBTQ+ communities (turns 20 in 2022)

PRIDEFest: celebration of LGBTQ people and allies on last Saturday of August on Kirkwood Avenue, featuring live performances, music, food, drinks, educational workshops, and interactive activities

Hotspot For Same-Sex Weddings: great venues, catering options, and local designers (Liby Ball and Andrew Davis) specializing in attire for brides and grooms of all body types



ONE-OF-A-KIND ODDITIES

Brain Sculpture: outside the IU's Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences and made entirely of Indiana limestone; it's the world's largest anatomically accurate brain sculpture

Captain Janeway statue: celebratory monument to the Star Trek: Voyager character in her future birthplace of Bloomington, IN

Kinsey Institute: established in 1947, the trusted source for critical issues in sexuality, gender, and reproduction

Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center: home to the only two Tibetan Chortens in the nation

Zoom Flume: abandoned waterslide that is now a popular graffiti art space tucked away in the forests of B-Town

4TH

GAYEST CITY IN THE COUNTRY,
VOTED BY THE ADVOCATE

5^{OUT OF 5}

STARS ON CAMPUS PRIDE
LGBTQ-FRIENDLY COLLEGES
AND UNIVERSITIES INDEX

#19

ON LIVABILITY'S 2019 TOP
100 BEST PLACES TO LIVE

100 POINT

SCORE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMISSIONS' MUNICIPAL
EQUALITY INDEX SIX YEARS
STRAIGHT (2015-2020)



LIMESTONE LEGACY

Home to numerous limestone quarries, Bloomington prides itself on its long history of limestone. The Indiana Limestone industry got its start in the late 1820's when Richard Gilbert opened the first commercial limestone quarry in Stinesville. Dubbed the "nation's building stone," Indiana limestone quickly rose in popularity and helped establish Southern Indiana's legacy as builders of American history. In fact, some of the nation's most prominent buildings like The Pentagon and the Empire State Building go back to the small-town of Bloomington, Indiana.

LIMESTONE MONTH

Established in 2007, [Limestone Month](#) invites visitors to learn about the town's rich limestone heritage through various [events and activities](#) held throughout the month of June.

Furst Quarry Tour: guided tour of abandoned quarry site covering 30 acres

Empire Quarry Tour: rare opportunity to experience the real-time operations at quarry

Limestone Garden Tour: tour Oliver Winery's gardens and limestone installations

IU Campus Limestone Architecture Tour: explore unique architecture on campus

Vinegar Hill Walking Tour: guided walking tour through historical neighborhood

Indiana Limestone Symposium: view art exhibits and interact with artists/carvers

NOTEWORTHY BUILDINGS

- **National Cathedral**
- **Biltmore Estate**
- **Empire State Building**
- **Pentagon**
- **Lincoln Memorial**
- **27 U.S. state capitol buildings**



CAN'T MISS EVENTS

This is a community of big ideas, many of which manifest themselves into big, and little, events (see our robust [events calendar](#)). From January through December, visitors can experience everything from [sporting events](#) to [PRIDEFest](#). Laugh, dance, become inspired, or just have a good old-fashioned time with friends and family.

JANUARY

[Freezefest](#)

FEBRUARY

[Bloomington Music Expo](#)

[Devour Bloomington](#)

[PRIDE Film Festival](#)

MARCH

[Indiana Heritage Quilt Show](#)

APRIL

[Craft Beer Festival](#)

[Hoosier Half Marathon & 5K](#)

[Little 500](#)

MAY

[Bloomington Early Music Festival](#)

JUNE

[Arts Fair on the Square](#)

[Limestone Comedy Festival](#)

[Limestone Month](#)

[Taste of Bloomington](#)

JULY

[Fourth of July](#)

[Monroe County Fair](#)

AUGUST

[Bloomington Blues & Boogie](#)
[Woogie Piano Festival](#)

[Indiana Toy & Comic Expo](#)

[PRIDEFest](#)

SEPTEMBER

[Bloomington GarlicFEST](#)

[B'Town Jazz Fest](#)

[Bubblefest](#)

[Fourth Street Festival of
the Arts and Crafts](#)

[Kiwanis Indiana Balloon Fest](#)

[Lotus World Music Festival](#)

OCTOBER

[Great Glass Pumpkin Patch](#)

[Hilly Hundred](#)

[Indiana University Homecoming](#)

NOVEMBER

[Artisan Guilds Of Bloomington](#)
[Holiday Show](#)

[Bloomington Handmade Market](#)

[Canopy of Lights](#)

[Holiday Market](#)

DECEMBER

[Krampus Rampage](#)



OVER THE YEARS

- 1818** City of Bloomington and Monroe County are founded
- 1820** Indiana University (IU) is founded
- 1867** IU becomes one of the first state universities to admit women
- 1927** Bloomington's oldest restaurant, Nick's English Hut, opens
- 1940** The IU's men's basketball team wins first NCAA championship
- 1947** Alfred Kinsey founds the institute for sex research at IU
- 1950** Lake Lemon is created
- 1951** Inaugural running of the Little 500 race
- 1960** The Indiana Memorial Union Biddle Hotel opens
- 1963** Salt Creek dammed, creating Monroe Reservoir/Lake
- 1971** Assembly Hall opens at a cost of \$26.6 Million
- 1972** Oliver Winery opens
- 1973** The Bluebird Nightclub opens
- 1974** Will Shortz, editor of the New York Times crossword puzzle, graduates from IU
- 1979** Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center is established
- 1979** "Breaking Away" is released and wins an Academy Award
- 1987** IU's first gay and lesbian people's union, Out at IU, is founded
- 1994** First Lotus World Music Fest is held
- 1996** Record label Secretly Canadian is founded
- 2003** Pride Film Festival founded in Bloomington
- 2011** B-Line Trail opens
- 2018** Graduate Bloomington Hotel opens
- 2019** Re-opening of Eskenazi Museum of Art (3-year, \$30M renovation)
- 2019** Opening of Switchyard Park
- 2020** IU's Bicentennial

FOR THE RECORD

“This glorious Midwestern college town is home to [Indiana University](#), and the school is celebrating their bicentennial this year with several activities are planned throughout the year. Commonly regarded as the door to campus, the majestic [Sample Gates](#) sit between Franklin Hall and Bryan Hall, and is known as one of the most beautiful places to see in Bloomington.”

USA Today, by Erica Lamberg

“The visit-cation trip is certainly gaining traction across the country and is something that we’ve seen in Bloomington, Indiana, for years. Touring colleges is one of the last trips parents and their kids will ever take while they all still live under one roof.”

The Points Guy, by Jordi Lippe-McGraw

“The home of Indiana University doesn’t let Pride slip by without a proper party. Indiana-based queen Ruth N. Nasia is a big proponent of Bloomington Pride, which brings out Midwestern queens for a lovely experience.”

Thrillist, by Melissa Kravitz

“Bloomington is best known as the home of Indiana University, but there is so much more to this small, vibrant town seated amongst the limestone quarries and rolling hills of southern Indiana and the Hoosier National Forest.”

AAA, by Abby Gardner

“The best college towns have a mix of small-city charm and a worldly, cultural vibe. That’s what emanates from the idyllic campus of [Indiana University](#), celebrating its bicentennial this year.”

Chicago Tribune, by Lori Rackl

“About an hour southwest of town, the charming college town of Bloomington, IN makes for a scenic escape. When the great outdoors beckons, explore the rolling hills and trails of Hoosier National Forest or enlist in kayaking, fishing and boat rentals at Monroe Lake.”

Travel + Leisure, by Kate Donnelly



GET IN TOUCH

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