

Ethnic Traditions

GERMAN

German traditions are emphasized in hearty comfort foods: sauerkraut, pork, sausage, and beer. The sauerkraut ball, an appetizer of deep-fried sauerkraut and ground meat, is a German-American adaptation.



EASTERN EUROPEAN

Culinary traditions from Polish and Hungarian immigrants are evident in fine, flaky pastries. Heartier meals include cabbage rolls or "pigs in a blanket."

HISPANIC

Migrant workers, usually from Texas, settled here in the 1940s, bringing new ingredients and spices. Today, Tex-Mex dishes and heat levels are modified for the Midwest palette. Family-run tortilla and tamale shops still provide an authentic taste of Hispanic-influenced foods.



ASIAN

By toning down spicy ingredients and fishy flavors, modified Asian foods have been adopted by Midwesterners. Most buffets offer Cantonese-American variations, but Japanese sushi and some Korean and Thai specialties are gaining popularity.



MIDDLE EASTERN

The auto industry of the 1940s brought a high concentration of Middle Eastern immigrants to nearby Toledo and Detroit. Foods such as gyros, pita bread, and hummus are common in Bowling Green.

More than just food...

Our community boasts some notable historic sites regarding foodways:

Wood County Historical Center & Museum
13660 County Home Road • 419.352.0967
www.woodcountyhistory.org

Take a self-guided culinary tour of the former county poor house. Exhibits include *Northwest Ohio Foodways Traditions*, the Ice House, Reed General Store, and the *Homemaker's Guide to the Kitchen*.

Site of the former Heinz plant
N. Enterprise St. between Ridge and Reed streets
Thousands of regular and seasonal employees helped make tomatoes and ketchup big business in Bowling Green from 1920 to 1975.

Site of the former Cains potato chip facility
121 Lehman Avenue/425 Napoleon Avenue
Operated in Bowling Green from 1936-1977. Emerson Cain introduced the "Marcelled" potato chip, a thicker, wavier chip inspired by the popular 1930s women's hairstyle.

Agricultural Incubator Foundation
13737 Middleton Pike • 419.823.3099
www.agincubator.org

Northwest Ohio respects its past, but also looks toward the future. The incubator helps advance organic farming, and provides a starting place for local small-scale food processors.

Want to learn more about place-based foods?
www.woodcountyhistory.org/foodways

For a complete list of Bowling Green food establishments or for a Foodways itinerary:



BG Convention & Visitors Bureau
888.866.0046
www.visitbgohio.org

Many thanks to our supporters:



BOWLING GREEN, OHIO

Culinary Tourism Trail

Juicy tomatoes grace outdoor markets.

Enjoying a pork-a-lean at a summer festival.

Fresh apple pie worth singing about!

YOUR GUIDE TO THE FOOD CULTURE OF BOWLING GREEN, OHIO.

A Taste of Food is a Taste of Place



A shredded chicken sandwich, sauerkraut, walleye, apple butter, corn -- these are PLACE-BASED foods tied to the history and culture of Bowling Green, Ohio.



Midwest cooking might not seem all that interesting at first glance, but a closer look can reveal how it reflects our cultural history... and learning more about the culture makes the food more interesting.

In the early 19th century when settlers (predominately German and British) were taming this area, they would never have believed that the muddy Great Black Swamp would one day give way to some of the richest farmland in the nation. Abundant natural resources, Native American traditions, and the ethnic heritage of the settlers are the foundation for the foods we eat today.



This guide encourages "exploratory eating" by pointing out different ways to think about foods that may already be familiar to you. The next time you try a new restaurant or revisit an old stomping ground, we hope you enter curious, and leave fulfilled.

Restaurants come and go, but our foodways traditions carry on. For a complete list of current Bowling Green food establishments, visit the BG Convention & Visitors Bureau website at www.visitbgohio.org.

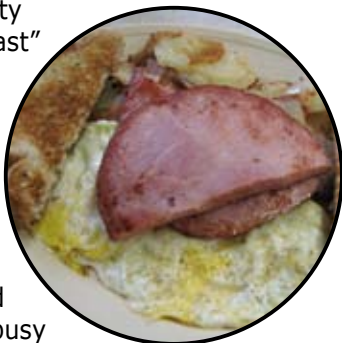


Breakfast

Whether it's your first visit or you have a regular haunt, you'll find that our small community boasts a number of locally owned and operated restaurants which carry distinctive and representative foods of Bowling Green.

FARMER'S BREAKFAST

A huge and hearty "farmer's breakfast" reflects the agricultural character of Northwest Ohio. Eggs, meat, potatoes, and bread commonly fueled farmers for the busy day ahead.



APPLEBUTTER

Johnny Appleseed's trek across Ohio left behind an abundant crop of apples. German settlers would boil down the fruit into a jam-like spread for preservation through the winter.



COFFEE

Do you smell the Black Swamp Blend wafting into the streets? Although coffee beans are not grown here, they are roasted and blended for a taste tailored for the local community. Coffee and homemade pastries are frequently an excuse for a social gathering.



Lunch

Order something from the "today's special" sandwich board at your local diner; it's likely a time-honored family recipe.

PERCH OR WALLEYE SANDWICH



Northwest Ohio is home to a wide variety of fish species. Especially popular are battered, deep-fried perch from neighboring Lake Erie and walleye from the Maumee River.

SHREDDED CHICKEN SANDWICH

Local traditions emphasize high-starch foods and cream sauces, which are filling yet inexpensive. This tasty sandwich of long-simmered shredded chicken on a hamburger bun is popular at social gatherings.



THE PORK-A-LEAN



In the late 1970s, Bowling Green's Belleville Brothers Meat Market developed a 100% pork patty. Like the name suggests, it is lean and healthy, and has made its way onto the lunch tables of local eateries as well as picnic tables at summertime fairs and festivals.

Dinner

Home cooking and handed-down recipes still grace many family dinner tables and family-style restaurants.

CHICKEN DINNER

Like the hearty farmer's breakfast, this "Sunday Special" has fried or roasted chicken, potatoes, gravy, vegetable, and bread. Variations of this German tradition of "stacking up" on starches can also be found in similar dishes such as chicken potpie, which piles chicken, gravy, and homemade noodles atop mashed potatoes.



POT ROAST

A pork or beef pot roast is traditionally a favorite family dinner because it can serve many family members plus any unexpected guests ... and left-overs can last all week long. It's both efficient and tasty!

BRATWURST AND KIELBASA

For early pioneers, sausage was a common way of preserving meats. German, Polish, and Hungarian immigrants brought a variety of recipes and techniques to Northwest Ohio.



CORN

Boiled or roasted on the cob, creamed, or popped - corn reflects our Native American foundation. It's a favorite vegetable often served in a casserole, as are tomatoes or green beans.

Snacks

Foods are often emotionally satisfying because we associate them with a familiar place or memory.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Socializing often revolves around food: church suppers draw together congregations; business groups and friends have "pot-luck" meals; VFW halls host fish fries; and pancake breakfasts raise funds for local organizations. Fairs and festivals also bring in a variety of mobile vendors who often serve family recipes.



FARMER'S MARKET

These weekly festive community gatherings are the perfect way to connect with the bounty offered by our local farmers.



SNACKS AND SWEETS

Native blackberries, raspberries, and apples are traditional Midwest pie fillings, but generations have flocked to Bowling Green State University for a taste of their renowned coconut cream pie. While in Bowling Green, step back in time at a mercantile candy counter complete with penny candy, homemade fudge, or Ohio's pride: a chocolate-peanut butter confection known as the Buckeye.

