



**American Adventure**  
Milwaukee, WI



**Harley-Davidson's Juneau Avenue headquarters stands ready and waiting to welcome the legions of faithful for its 110th Anniversary Celebration.**



# HARLEY'S HOMETOWN

## Things To Do In The Motor Company City

BY PAMELA COLLINS

Quick! I say Milwaukee and you say?

Harley-Davidson, of course. How else could any self-respecting motorcyclist answer this question? Like Abbott and Costello, or Astaire and Rogers, Harley-Davidson and Milwaukee claim a spot on the list of famous partnerships. This year, hundreds of thousands of riders from around the world will trek like pilgrims to Brew City — Milwaukee's other famous product — to celebrate H-D's 110th anniversary, naturally flocking to Harley's famed Juneau Avenue

headquarters, factories, and museum to pay homage. But this vibrant city, which showcases the best of old-world tradition and new-world vision, offers much to explore outside the realm of motorcycles.

## A Tasty Brew Of Old And New

Milwaukee, a proverbial melting pot, became the new home for immigrants from a host of European countries like Poland, Italy, Germany, and Ireland during the 1800s. As they settled here, the newcomers established their own neighborhoods, imbuing them with the traditions of their home countries. Even today, a ride through these neighborhoods transports visitors to a time when people first arrived from faraway shores. Colorful awnings, flower boxes, strolling residents, small shops, and the scents from bakeries, delis, and restaurants enliven Milwaukee,

grounding its history and enriching its culture. Though reminiscent of days gone by, these neighborhoods still thrive, blending the best of the old with the new.

Some stalwart enterprises still stand as sentinels, guarding and preserving these traditions so they won't fade to mere memories. Turn your handlebars and twist your throttle to enjoy this ride into the past. You'll know that you've arrived in the German neighborhood of old-world Third Street because you'll smell the sausages and spices scenting the air of these cobblestoned roads. Usinger's Famous Sausage has been stuffing its sublime wursts, wieners, and sausages since 1906 while, across the street, the aroma-filled Spice House has been selling its herbs and seasonings since 1957. At the corner, stop by the bar there — the Wisconsin Cheese Bar in the Wisconsin Cheese Mart, that is — to taste samples and wander through the aisles of this Milwaukee institution that dates back to 1938. Across from there, North America's most famous German restaurant, Mader's, can serve you a mouthwatering meal the way they've been prepared since 1902.

From the cannoli at Peter Sciortino's Bakery in the Italian neighborhood to the pierogi of the Polish section on Brady Street, a trip through Milwaukee's colorful, historic, tasty ethnic neighborhoods will make your stomach happy that some traditions have still remained intact.

## See The World Without Leaving The City

If this neighborhood tour whets your appetite for seeing more of the world, you can do so without even leaving Milwaukee. How about trekking through a desert or wandering a rain forest? Point your two wheels toward the Mitchell Park

### STOPS

In story order; all addresses in Milwaukee, WI

- 1 **Brew City**  
Grand Ave. Mall, 275 W. Wisconsin Ave.  
(414) 347-1811; BrewCityOnline.com
- 2 **Convention and Visitor's Bureau**  
548 N. Plankinton Ave., #425  
(800) 554-1448; VisitMilwaukee.org
- 3 **H-D Corporate Office**  
3700 W. Juneau Ave.  
(414) 343-4680; Harley-Davidson.com
- 4 **Iron Horse Hotel**  
500 W. Florida St.  
(888) 543-4766; TheIronHorseHotel.com
- 5 **Mader's**  
1041 N. Old World Third St.  
(414) 271-3377; MadersRestaurant.com
- 6 **Milwaukee Public Market**  
400 N. Water St.  
(414) 336-1111; MilwaukeePublicMarket.org
- 7 **Peter Sciortino's Bakery**  
1101 E. Brady St.  
(414) 272-4623; PeterSciortinosBakery.com
- 8 **The Spice House**  
1031 N. Old World Third St.  
(414) 272-0977; TheSpiceHouse.com
- 9 **Usinger's Famous Sausage**  
1030 N. Old World Third St.  
(800) 558-9998; Usinger.com
- 10 **Wisconsin Cheese Mart**  
215 W. Highland Ave.  
(888) 482-7700; WisconsinCheeseMart.com
- 11 **Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory**  
524 S. Layton Blvd.  
(414) 257-5611; CountyParks.com/Horticulture
- 12 **Gilman Triangle**  
2475 N. Lake Dr.
- 13 **Sheridan Park (not on map; in Cudahy)**  
4800 S. Lake Dr.
- 14 **Big Bay Park**  
5000 N. Lake Dr.
- 15 **Warrimont Park**  
5400 S. Lake Dr.
- 16 **Schlitz Audubon Nature Center**  
1111 E. Brown Deer Rd.  
(414) 352-2880; SANC.org
- 17 **North Point Lighthouse**  
2650 N. Wahl Ave.  
(414) 332-6754; NorthPointLightHouse.org
- 18 **Bartolotta's Lake Park Bistro**  
3133 E. Newberry Blvd.  
(414) 962-6300; LakeParkBistro.com
- 19 **Milwaukee Art Museum**  
700 N. Art Museum Dr.  
(414) 224-3200; MAM.org
- 20 **Discovery World**  
500 N. Harbor Dr.  
(414) 765-8620; DiscoveryWorld.org



A ride through Milwaukee's diverse ethnic neighborhoods brings old-world traditions to life.

Horticultural Conservatory (known to locals as the Domes) just a short ride from downtown. Think of these as some really big terrariums. Completed in 1967, three geodesic domes let you wander through a variety of landscapes.

Explore the prickly, barren beauty, and see the intriguing flora and fauna as you wander the arid landscape of the Desert Dome. Then switch to the humid lushness of extreme green and the bold palette of colors typically found in a rainforest when you cross the hall to the Tropical Dome. The Floral Show Dome offers a seasonal theme garden landscape bursting with flowers and whimsical themes.

If this tour of worldly landscapes leaves you yearning for some more outdoor sights, treat yourself to a ride along the city's famous North Lincoln Memorial and North Lake Drive, roads that wind along the beautiful shoreline of Lake Michigan, one of the five Great Lakes. The city and the lake share an inseparable history, and Lake Michigan is still integral to Milwaukee's existence.

Enjoy the panoramic views of the expansive lake. Feeling old-fashioned? Then try an ice cream cone at one of the concessions stands in four of the county parks lining the lake (Gilman Triangle, Sheridan, Big Bay, and Warnimont). And make sure to take a breather while enjoying the lapping of the lake's waves on the shoreline. Continuing your ride, you'll roll through neighborhoods of elegant homes displaying unique architecture and manicured, large lawns. Eventually, signs will point you to the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center on East Brown Deer Road.

Situated amidst towering trees next to the Lake Michigan shoreline, the 185-acre center feels like an oasis in the middle of the city's hustle-bustle. This state-of-the-art, certified environmentally green facility provides the latest in education about the surroundings you're in, but the best part about this place involves wandering the six miles of easy walking trails that snake through its property. Here you can experience varying eco-systems while meandering through lush grasses and trees, eventually winding your way to Lake Michigan's sandy beach and gorgeous view. Located just 15 minutes outside of town, the Schlitz Audubon Center feels worlds away.

## Water, Water Everywhere

Now head south, retracing your tracks on North Lake Drive and then turn left onto Wahl Drive in about five miles. On your left, you'll find the 74' North Point Lighthouse standing guard over the bay as it has been since 1855. Decommissioned



The city's famous lakeshore parks offer places to stop and enjoy the view.

in 1994 and fully restored in 2007, the handsome two-story, wood-framed Keeper's Quarters and steel tower illustrate a time when waterways served as our nation's highways, when maritime commerce played a more important part in the economy. Now on the National Register of Historic Places, visitors can traipse the grounds, tour the house, and climb up the tight circular staircase inside the tower to garner some incredible views of the lake and surrounding neighborhood.

While there, take a stroll through neighboring Lake Park, a beautiful urban recreational area designed and built in 1893 by one of the country's premier landscape architects, Frederick Law Olmsted, who also designed New York City's Central Park. Make sure to grab a bite at the park's Victorian restaurant, Bartolotta's Lake Park Bistro and imagine life 100 years ago in this urban escape.

Take note of the gorgeous mansions across the street. This neighborhood garnered the moniker Brewer's Hill many years ago, serving as a home for the families who worked there and whose names also became synonymous with Milwaukee's other famous product — beer. Blatz, Pabst, Schlitz, and Miller are only the four most famous beer-families in Milwaukee. The city is now undergoing a beer renaissance of sorts as new microbrews enter the marketplace. Check out one of the city's old-fashioned beer gardens to return to the era when beer was king in Milwaukee.

About three miles south of the lighthouse lies one of the city's crown jewels, the Milwaukee Art Museum, which offers a grand show even if you don't go inside. Just viewing this contemporary building is literally a moving experience on its own: every day at 10 am, the museum spreads its wings when two extensions expand sideways, giving it a "wingspan" equaling that of a Boeing 747. The wings "flap" at noon, then finally return to their normal positions when the museum closes.



Holland in Milwaukee? Yep, when you visit The Domes you can tour a desert landscape, tropical rain forest, or European garden without having to leave the city.

Should you go inside, you'll enjoy a fine collection of American and European art — including the works of Warhol, Picasso, and Monet — as well as one of the world's largest collections of works by Georgia O'Keefe, a Milwaukee native.

From here south, the lake's shoreline bustles with activity. Next to the art museum, you'll find Discovery World, where science and technology merge with the Great Lakes' resources, providing an understanding of the nearby waters' richness. Docked outside floats the S/V Denis Sullivan, a 137' re-creation of a Great Lakes three-mast schooner, which offers us two-wheeled landlubbers a taste of life on the high seas. (Excursions are available daily, check for a schedule).

Should hunger strike, head over to the nearby Milwaukee Public Market. It opened in 2005 in the city's historic Third Ward, and promotes local foods and flavors. Sample olive oils, enjoy the fresh catch (especially the fish fry, for which Milwaukee is

famous), grab a custard cone, or sip a cup of coffee. It all resides under one roof in this historically reminiscent marketplace.

Of course, seeing as this will be the 110th anniversary of Harley-Davidson, you'll probably have motorcycles on the mind, so a great place to stay during your visit is the motorcycle-themed Iron Horse Hotel. Though it caters to riders with amenities like bike parking and gear storage in the rooms, this leather-laced boutique hotel offers details to please the most finicky traveler. At one time, this 100-year-old building earned its keep as a warehouse; now it offers 102 rooms for riders and non-riders alike. It sits just blocks away from downtown Milwaukee and the Harley-Davidson Museum.

Milwaukee and Harley-Davidson. You just can't have one without the other. So if your travels take you to Brew City, don't forget to take time to roll through and explore the city that Harley-Davidson calls home. **RB**

**The Milwaukee Art Museum — with its wings open — should be on every visitor's to-do-list.**

## SOURCES

### Visit Milwaukee

#### Convention and Visitor's Bureau

VisitMilwaukee.org  
The Visitor's Bureau can provide brochures, arrange tours of neighborhoods, and answer any question about Milwaukee.

#### Denis Sullivan Sailing Ship

DiscoveryWorld.org/DenisSullivan

#### Iron Horse Hotel

TheIronHorseHotel.com

#### Milwaukee Art Museum

MAM.org

#### Milwaukee Public Market

MilwaukeePublicMarket.org

#### Mitchell Park Horticulture Conservatory "The Domes"

CountyParks.com/horticulture

#### North Point Lighthouse

NorthPointLighthouse.org

#### Schlitz Audubon Nature Center

SANC.org

