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tastebudz

with Steve Cook

TasteBudz brings you all the news that's fit to eat. Let's start right here in Midlothian.



More Than Margaritas

If you're looking for space for your end-of-year party, Lalo Macias tells me that there's still some availability in his two private rooms at **Two Compadres Taqueria Bar & Grill** (13830 Village Place Drive) Speaking of the season, the restaurant has added some new seasonal specialties to the bar menu, such as their cinnamon apple mule, featuring Tito's Vodka, homemade apple cider, ginger beer, and topped with a smoky cinnamon stick. There's also the "Amber Kiss, "a combination of Tito's Vodka, muddled raspberry, cranberry juice, Cointreau, sour

mix, and agave nectar. And, yes, if you want a Margarita, Lalo has one of the best around.



Belly Up to the Buffet

Heading west into Powhatan, let me tell you about a great upcoming event at **County Seat Restaurant** (3883 Old Buckingham Road). As you know, the restaurant offers delicious all-you-can-eat buffets on the weekend. But the big daddy of buffets will be served on Thanksgiving Day from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. It features such favorites as a turkey carving station, crab cakes, honey-baked ham, thin-sliced eye of round, and much, much more. Owner Tracy Ciphers advises making reservations now.

Of course, their other big draw is the live music. Check their website (TheCountySeat.com) for the full schedule.



Getting An A+ From A Bee

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Chef Vito Bellantuono was born in Italy and raised in New York. Vito lives and breathes classic Italian cuisine. At La Cucina, you can taste the love for Italian

I discovered the newly opened **Honey Bee Bakery** (17 W. Hundred Road) in Chester. This fabulous bake shop is owned and operated by Jasmine Bartley. She and her husband met while both were stationed at Fort Lee. While he continues on active duty, Jasmine is devoting her time to running the bakery



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while home-schooling their five-year-old son.
What makes the Honey Bee so popular?
Jasmine explains, "As my momma says, 'It's quality you can taste.' We've had all positive reviews. I put my heart and soul into everything I bake.

My personal favorite is the maple bacon biscuit, served with a maple drizzle," she adds. That's served on Sundays only. The Honey Bee also offers custom cakes for virtually any occasion.





To discover more tasty treats, visit their Facebook page. There's plenty to love at the Honey Bee, including some delicious flavored coffees, which were recently added to the menu.

Taste the Love

Have a hankering for good old-fashioned, homemade soul and comfort food? It may be worth heading to Ashland and the **Around the Table** restaurant (155 Junction Dr.). "You come in as a guest, you leave as a member of the family," says Ammie Mines-Derricott, who owns this fabulous eatery with her cousin Kelly Q. Jackson. Ammie says the whole operation is a labor of love. "You can taste the love," she says.

This year the restaurant is opening on Thanksgiving day and will be offering a full buffet from 11 a.m. 'til 4 p.m. If you want a chance to sample a variety of their scrumptious delights, all made from scratch, this would be the perfect opportunity.



Share your restaurant's news with our readers. Email us at info@acimonthly.com.



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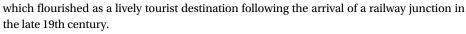
Small Towns of Virginia – Take a Day Trip to Gordonsville

by Kaitlyn Bruce

rirginia is renowned for its rich history, particularly reflected in its many small towns. Exploring these charming towns contributes to the state's character, and we aim to help you discover them. We hope you enjoy exploring these towns as much as we have!

Nestled near the mountains along Route 33, about an hour west of Richmond's West End, lies a hidden gem: the charming town of Gordonsville. This town gives the warm feeling of returning home after a long absence. It promises a welcoming atmosphere, but what truly makes Gordonsville special?

Gordonsville boasts a rich history that dates back to its founding in 1787, when Nathaniel Gordon opened a tavern that attracted notable visitors like Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. By 1813, the area was officially named Gordonsville,



Tragedy struck in 1916 when a devastating fire swept through the town, leading to its decline as people shifted their attention to nearby Barboursville's new rail line. However, the resilient residents of Gordonsville were determined to restore their beloved community. Through their hard work, they revived the town, infusing it with character and charm.

Today, Gordonsville stands as a testament to its rich heritage, captivating visitors with its intriguing architecture and warm atmosphere, inviting all to appreciate its storied past.

Main Street is truly enchanting. Twinkling lights adorn the trees, creating a perfect atmosphere for after-dinner walks or photoshoots with friends. There's an abundance of charming shops to explore. Krecek Kakes Bakery & Coffeeshop (105 S Main St.; KrecekKakes.com) is sure to satisfy your sweet cravings, especially when you indulge in their flavorful carrot cake. Pair it with a European-style coffee, and you'll be ready to continue your adventure through

If you're looking to take someone special out for dinner, Well Hung Vineyard (300 S Main St.; WellHungVineyard.com) offers a delectable menu with options that can be perfectly paired with their range of wines, from light to full-bodied. For a more rustic atmosphere, complete with local brews and live music, visit Patch Brewing Co. (10271 Gordon Ave.; PatchBrewingCo. com). Additionally, you can savor tender Southern-style barbecue at BBQ Exchange (102 Martinsburg Ave.; BbqEx.com).

This town is brimming with treasures just waiting to be dis-













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Southern Sweet Potato Casserole and Baked Cranberry Sauce

veryone has their favorite sweet potato casserole and so do I. However, Great Grandma Rawls always served hers in a cored orange half with a whole pecan on top. I prefer them crushed, but the orange presentation is stunning. Add your own twist to delight friends and family. *Cindu*

Southern Sweet Potato Casserole

INGREDIENTS:

Sweet Potatoes:

3 cups sweet potatoes, cooked and mashed 3/4 cup sugar

1/3 cup butter, melted

2 eggs

1 tsp vanilla

1 tsp cinnamon

1/2 tsp nutmeg

6 to 8 oranges, cut in half and cored 1/2 cup orange juice, freshly squeezed

1/4 cup heavy cream

Topping:

3 tbsp butter, melted

1 cup brown sugar

1/3 cup flour

1 cup chopped pecans



DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 325 F. Mix sweet potatoes, sugar, spices, butter, eggs, vanilla, and orange juice. Beat with an electric mixer until smooth. Add heavy cream and mix well.

Mix the remaining butter, brown sugar, flour, and nuts. Put the sweet potato mixture into the cored halves of the oranges and top with the nut mixture. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

I have been making this cranberry sauce for over 30 years and have even been asked if I would be willing to sell it. That's how different and delicious it is. I hope you enjoy this unique take on a classic dish.

Baked Cranberry Sauce

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups fresh cranberries

2 cups sugar

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

113 oz jar orange marmalade

3 tbsp lemon juice

1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 F. Wash and drain cranberries and place in a large bowl. Add sugar, cinnamon, marmalade, lemon juice, and walnuts to bowl with cranberries and mix well. Spoon into a 9-inch square pan and cover with foil. Bake for 45 minutes. Refrigerate and serve cold.











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Fun Things TO DO List

Sponsored by the Perkinson Center Looking for something fun to do? Here are a few ideas.



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST @ 2 P.M

PAWTY WITH THE PUPS

Join us for our biggest pawty yet. **Pawfect Sweets GRAND OPENING** will have delicious quality handmade oven-baked dog treats! We love our fur babies and want to extend that love through treats from our

home to yours. Come out to 8906 W. Broad St. Ste. B, Glen Allen, and see all we have to offer and enjoy our giveaways. (www.pawfectsweets.com)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12 AT 7 P.M.

TAKE A STRING BAND JOURNEY

Deadgrass takes you on a string band jamgrass adventure through Jerry Garcia's musical world. Matt Turk and C Lanzbom join forces with bassist Dave Richards, banjo player Boo Reiners, and fiddler Kensuke Shoji to explore the life works of Jerry Garcia on the instruments that first inspired him. It's



an unforgettable evening at the Cultural Arts Center in Glen Allen. (ArtsGlenAllen.com)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21 FROM 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

TAKE A NIGHT HIKE

Ever wonder who stays awake while you sleep? On Maymont's **Adult Night Hike** (21+) discover some of the gardens' nighttime residents and learn about their nocturnal adaptations through experiments, games and a hike of the **Maymont grounds**. (Maymont.org)



GAELIC

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22 @ 8 P.M.

COME IN FOR THE STORM

Gaelic Storm, an American Celtic band founded in Santa Monica, California, appears on stage at the **Tin Pan**. The group's musical output includes pieces from traditional Irish music, Scottish music, and original tunes in both the Celtic folk and Celtic rock genres. (TinPanRVA.com)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22

GET KOZY

The **Kozy Cats** come to the **County Seat Restaurant and Gathering Place** for their signature blend of smooth jazz, swing, funk, and soul. (TheCountySeat.com)



A MILES

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23 @ 7 P.M.

HERE, TRY A SAMPLE

The Samples, an American rock band, brings their unique blend of music, which has been described as reggae influenced "rock/pop" and a cross between The Police and the Grateful Dead, to the **Tin Pan**.

The band's name came from the members' early sustenance of food samples from the local grocery store. (TinPanRVA.com)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8 @ 7 P.M.

ENJOY A HARE-RAISING ADVENTURE

Enjoy *Harvey*, as one of the greatest motion pictures of all times comes to the **Ashland Theatre**. Featuring Jimmy Stewart and his six-foot invisible puca., the film tells the heartwarming story of Elwood P. Dowd. All tickets



are just 75 cents. This is one you don't want to miss. (AshlandTheatre.org)



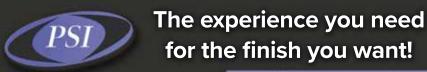


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