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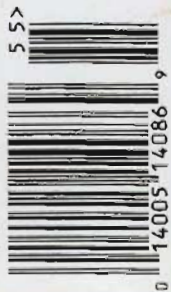
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OUR EDITOR'S CHOICE

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MY
FAVORITE
PLACES

ZOAR

AS I TURN OFF THE INTERSTATE south of Canton and drive through an early evening cloudburst, I see new houses, businesses and even a fast-food drive-in. But the Cobbler Shop Bed & Breakfast Inn, an antiques-filled 1828 retreat with a big, screened-in back porch, reassures me. Zoar remains just about as I remember it.

The town's name is a biblical word for refuge, and it fits. Even so, I wonder how the Zoarites (and so many of our ancestors) found the courage to risk everything, betting on a new life in America. For the Zoarites, the motivation was lofty—the ideal of a communal utopia.

Some 200 brave German separatists, who opposed the state Lutheran church, were aided in their journey to freedom by sympathetic Quakers in England and Philadelphia. In 1817, they followed their leader, Joseph Bimeler, to this then-wilderness valley of the Tuscarawas River (at that time known as a branch of the Muskingum River).

Penniless and led by women, because many of the men had been imprisoned in Germany, the Zoarites hand-dug a seven-mile stretch of the Ohio & Erie Canal near their village to pay for their 5,500 acres. Self-imposed celibacy yielded to marriages only after the first years of brutal toil.

For many years, Zoar children were left to live in dormitories, rather than with their parents, so workers wouldn't be distracted. The community developed bountiful farms, thriving industries (baskets, straw hats, tin lanterns, wood-burning stoves) and a self-sufficient lifestyle.

The second day of my visit arrives dewy and misty, which only serves to fuel my imagination on a guided tour through the compact village, now protected on three sides by a giant levee. Green lawns and blooming gardens surround solidly built brick-and-timber homes that might have been occupied by one or several families during the

commune's peak years. There's a central kitchen where families picked up their "to-go" meals, a bakery that made all the village's bread and a dairy that supplied milk. Crafters are at work in the sewing and weaving houses and tinsmith shop.

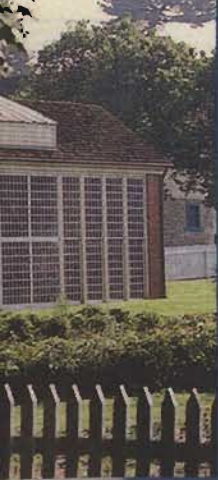
On a hilltop overlooking the village, a handsome cupola tops the Assembly House, where Zoarites gathered to receive their daily work assignments. I sit in a pew at the light-filled Meeting House, admiring the big, hand-painted organ pipes.

I love the romantic European architectural flourishes and embellishments on surviving furnishings: the cupolas, reddish tile roofs—even on log cabins, ornate headboards and hand-painted and -lettered wardrobes. The buildings themselves stand as monuments to the ingenuity of their designers: refreshingly cool, even on a hot morning.

I'm surprised to learn that Zoar was a tourist mecca as long ago as 1833, when the once-grand Zoar Hotel welcomed Ohioans who came via the Ohio & Erie Canal for the country air. Even President McKinley, a Cleveland resident, traveled to Zoar.

A white picket gate opens to the Garden of Happiness at the heart of the village. It fills the square with an allegorical arrangement of flowers, trees and shrubs that radiate from the central Tree of Life, a huge Norway spruce planted when the garden was re-created in the 1920s. Beside the garden stands the Zoar greenhouse, which was so advanced in its day that wealthy Ohioans sent their houseplants via the canal to winter there.

The communal way of life ended when quibbling Zoarites disbanded in 1898, having amassed more than \$1 million in assets. The Ohio Historical Society and preservation-minded residents rescued what remained. Only a few descendants of the original settlers are among today's 175 residents, but their legacy lives on just minutes—yet a world away—from that bustling interstate highway.



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(From left) Outside the Cobbler Shop Bed & Breakfast Inn. Costumed interpreters at historic Zoar village. The renowned Zoar greenhouse and garden. Antique furnishings gracing the interior of the greenhouse.



Ice cream treats at Saywell's in Ohio

the 1 tablespoon hot butter until tender. Layer mushroom mixture over green onions; sprinkle with cheese.

In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, mustard and black pepper. Carefully pour over layers in dish. Press mixture lightly with back of a large spoon. (This just fits the baking dish, so measure ingredients carefully.) Cover and chill for 4 to 24 hours.

Bake in a 325° oven for 30 minutes. In a small bowl, combine bread crumbs and the ¼ cup melted butter. Evenly sprinkle over casserole. Bake about 10 minutes more or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. *Makes 10 to 12 servings.*

North Dakota CREAMY PINK BORSCHT

The German-Russian immigrant legacy lives on in North Dakota, most notably in the food. Kröll's Diner in Mandan serves a sampling, along with diner fare of cheeseburgers and fries. One favorite is borscht, for which there are many recipes. Kröll's cooks approved this version.

- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2 medium onions, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground white pepper or ground black pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves

- 2 15-ounce cans small whole beets, drained and cubed
- 1 14-ounce can vegetable broth
- 1 cup whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- Snipped fresh dill

In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add chopped onions, brown sugar, salt, ground white pepper and ground cloves. Cover and cook for 10 to 12 minutes or until onions are tender, stirring often.

Transfer the onion mixture to a blender or food processor. Add 1 can of drained beets and ½ cup of the vegetable broth. Cover and blend or process until nearly smooth.

In the same saucepan, combine the remaining can of drained beets, the remaining broth, the whipping cream and lemon juice. Stir in the blended beet mixture; heat through (do not boil). Sprinkle each serving with dill. *Makes 4 side-dish servings.*

Ohio SAYWELL'S LEMON SHAKE

In a "shake," you can whip up this old-fashioned confection, one of the many ice cream specialties at Saywell's Drug Store in Hudson Village, Ohio (about 25 miles south of Cleveland).

- 2 cups vanilla ice cream (1 pint)
- ⅓ cup frozen lemonade concentrate

In a blender, combine ice cream and lemonade concentrate. Cover; blend until the mixture is smooth. Pour into a chilled tall glass. Serve immediately. *Makes 1 shake.*

GERMAN PUFFED OVEN PANCAKE WITH GLAZED APPLES

In Zoar, Ohio, The Cobbler Shop Bed & Breakfast, an antiques-filled 1828 retreat, serves this Old World favorite as part of the full breakfast (see story on page 6).

- 6 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 4 beaten eggs
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup milk
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Dash salt
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 3 medium apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- ½ cup raisins and/or dried cranberries
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)
- Powdered sugar or whipped cream

For batter: Place the 6 tablespoons butter in a 10-inch ovenproof skillet (preferably cast iron). Place in a 400° oven until butter melts. In a medium bowl, use a wire whisk or rotary beater to beat eggs until combined. Add flour, milk, ¼ teaspoon nutmeg and the salt; beat until mixture is smooth.

Immediately pour the batter into the hot skillet. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes or until puffed and well-browned.

For filling: In a medium saucepan, melt the 2 tablespoons butter. Cook the apples and raisins over medium heat in the hot butter until apples are almost tender, stirring frequently. Add the brown sugar and ¼ teaspoon nutmeg. Cook and stir until apples are well-coated and glazed. Remove from heat. If you like, stir in the nuts. Set aside.

To serve, transfer pancake to a large serving platter. Spoon filling into the center of the pancake. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or serve with whipped cream. Cut into wedges and serve immediately. *Makes 6 servings.*

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from when they arrived in 1804 to when they returned in 1806 (877/462-8535).

Lewis and Clark Riverboat Daily Missouri River cruises on an old-fashioned stern-wheeler. Departs from the Port of Bismarck. Ticket charge (701/255-4233).

Missouri River Lodge Bed and breakfast on a 2,000-acre working ranch north of Stanton. With trails along the river, boat dock and private sandy beach. From \$60 (877/480-3498).

North Dakota State Capitol Built in the early 1930s and known as the "Skyscraper on the Prairie." (701/328-2480).

North Dakota Heritage Center In Bismarck, museum chronicling North Dakota's history from the age of dinosaurs to the present. Highlights: a Native American camp, homesteader's yard and a *Mosasaur*, a prehistoric marine animal (701/328-2666).

OHIO ZOAR

Founded in 1817 as a Utopian community, now with a 12-block historic district (12 miles south of Canton). Among the restored buildings, costumed interpreters depicting lives of the settlers (800/874-4336). More information: Zoar Village (800/262-6195).

The Cobbler Shop Bed & Breakfast An antiques-filled 19th-century home with five guest rooms. From \$125 (800/287-1547).

The Zoar Tavern & Inn Five guest rooms with hand-hewn beams, brick-and-stone walls, and antiques. Also, a four-room guest house. From \$85 (330/874-2170).

The Zoar Tavern In Zoar, casual atmosphere for fresh seafood, steaks and hearty sandwiches (330/874-2170).

SOUTH DAKOTA BLACK HILLS

Natural wonders and man-made attractions abound in southwestern South Dakota, where the Black Hills stretch about 100 miles along the Wyoming state line. Deep pine forests, which appear black in the shadows and give the hills their name, climb craggy peaks that surround still, blue lakes. Rapid City is the area's hub, with shopping, dining and lodgings. For more information: Black Hills Badlands & Lakes Association (605/355-3600,

blackhillsbadlands.com).

Badlands National Park Vast 244,000-acre preserve of knifelike spires, steep canyons and buttes (60 miles east of Rapid City). With eight well-marked hiking trails along the Badlands Loop road, a scenic drive (605/433-5361).

Black Hills Central Railroad/The 1880 Train Round-trip ride between Hill City and Keystone in vintage cars pulled by a steam locomotive. Admission charged; kids 3 and younger free (866/367-1880).

Crazy Horse Memorial Mountain carving in progress of Oglala chief Crazy Horse astride a horse (four miles north of the town of Custer). Visitors now can view the 88-foot-tall face. When complete, the carving will be the world's largest sculpture. The memorial also includes the Sculptor's Studio Home and the Indian Museum of North America. Admission charged; children 6 and younger free (605/673-4681).

Custer State Park With four resorts (see below), four lakes, miles of trails, guided interpretive walks and kids' activities such as gold-panning excursions (20 miles south of Rapid City). Park resorts: Sylvan Lake, Blue Bell and Legion lodges and State Game Lodge. Lodge and motel rooms, plus cabins. From \$90 (800/658-3530). Also, boating, swimming, horseback riding, fishing and rock climbing. The park is home to about 1,500 buffalo, one of the world's largest herds, plus bighorn sheep, elk, coyotes and burros (605/255-4515).

Deadwood A historic gold-rush town, now a haven for gamblers with casinos along Main Street, plus Midnight Star, a restaurant and casino actor Kevin Costner owns (40 miles northwest of Rapid City). Attractions include panning for gold at a historic mine. Visitors can try their luck at more than 80 gambling halls (800/999-1876, deadwood.org).

George S. Mickelson Trail Crushed limestone hiking and bicycling path winding 109 miles from Deadwood to Edgemont (605/584-3896).

Homestake Gold Mine Once the largest underground gold mine in the Western Hemisphere, in Lead (45 miles northwest of Rapid City), with an observation deck, visitors center and guided tours. Admission charged for tours; children age 6 and younger free (605/584-3110).

Jewel Cave National Monument West of Custer, tours into the second-longest cave in the nation, with chambers lined

with jewel-like calcite crystals. Admission charged (605/673-2288).

Mount Rushmore National Memorial Sixty-foot-high sculptures of the faces of four U.S. presidents—Washington, Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Lincoln—carved into a mountain (20 miles southwest of Rapid City). With a visitors center, sculptor Gutzon Borglum's former studio and the President's Trail, which winds to the base of the monument (605/574-2523).

Spearfish Canyon National Scenic Byway Two-lane, 19-mile road winding from Spearfish to Cheyenne Crossing, past dramatic cliffs, waterfalls and canyon walls (605/642-2626).

Spearfish Canyon Lodge Log-and-stone inn in the canyon along Spearfish Creek. With a huge fireplace in the soaring lobby and guest rooms trimmed in pine. From \$159 (877/975-6343). The lodge's creekside Latchstring Restaurant for dishes such as pan-fried trout and buffalo steaks, plus a spectacular view (605/584-3333).

Wall Drug Sprawling stop along I-90, part drugstore and part carnival, with goods from souvenirs to food (605/279-2175).

Wind Cave National Park South of Custer State Park, tours of caves with displays of "boxwork," an unusual cave formation, along with prairie dog towns, bison and elk. Admission charged; kids 5 and younger free (605/745-4600).

WISCONSIN DOOR COUNTY

More than 300 miles of shoreline edge Door County, a narrow 75-mile-long peninsula between Green Bay and Lake Michigan in Wisconsin's northeastern corner (180 miles north of Milwaukee). White frame shops, cafes and artists' studios line the streets of New England-like harbor towns such as Fish Creek and Ephraim. Cherry orchards, open fields and deep forests cover the interior of this piece of land. Outdoor enthusiasts flock to the beaches, golf courses and state parks. More information: Door County Chamber of Commerce (920/743-4456, doorcounty.com).

Sievers Looms and School of Fiber Arts On Washington Island, an internationally known arts school (920/847-2264).

Washington Island A 30-minute ferry ride from the peninsula's northern tip. Washington Island Chamber of Commerce (920/847-2179, washingtonisland.com). ■