

IT'S EASY BEING GREEN IN CENTRAL MA

Visitors to Central Massachusetts can think green when they come to this beautiful region this spring. The St. Patrick's Day festivities each March bring out 40 shades of green as the city celebrates its Irish community with vibrant cultural celebrations. And the coming of spring brings a verdant splendor to the region's 32 cities and towns, from urban parks and town squares to miles of rich farmland and lush open space.

Central Massachusetts is a region where history, culture, and natural beauty come together to create an unforgettable experience," says Discover Central MA President Monique Messier Joseph. "From vibrant St. Patrick's Day celebrations to the lush landscapes of spring, visitors can immerse themselves in the rich heritage and scenic charm of the Heart of Massachusetts."



IRISH HERITAGE

Irish celebrations center around the 43rd Annual Worcester St. Patrick's Parade in downtown Worcester on Sunday, March 16, 2025. The two-mile parade begins at Noon at Mill Street and Park Avenue and ends at Highland Street.

Parade Chairperson Erin Zamarro says the non-profit parade committee raises funds for the event each year while also donating to local programs. Supporters of the Shriners are a big part of the parade's success, since their fundraising supports Shriver Hospital while underwriting marching bands, dance academies and bagpipers. This year's Grand Marshall is Kate McEvoy. Bud Sargent, popular radio host of the "Four Green Fields" program on WCUW 93.1, says his daughter, Cait Lubelczyk, is doing live commentary on Spectrum Local News during the parade.

On the cultural side, Hanover Theater welcomes the world-famous Irish Tenors on March 8. On March 12, acclaimed jazz vocalist Cassandre McKinley performs at historic Mechanics Hall, part of the Brown Bag Concert Series with WICN radio.

On March 15-16, Old Sturbridge Village holds a Celtic Celebration, featuring fiddle and pipe music, poetry, Irish dancing and tales of Celtic lore and local history. On weekends in March, the Village hosts "Maple Days," chronicling the history of maple sugaring with demonstrations of early New England sugaring techniques.

The Worcester Hibernian Cultural Centre on Temple Street has live concerts, traditional music sessions and a post-parade party in March. The Centre sponsors the 41st Annual Worcester Irish Festival on March 8 at St. Spyridon Greek Orthodox Church Hall on Russell Street.

For visitors seeking authentic products direct from Ireland, visit Erin Gift Store at Worcester Public Market in Kelley Square, a year-round retail clothing & gift store.

A TASTE OF IRELAND

St. Patrick's Day is a perfect time to sample classic Irish menus, a good pint of Guinness or one of Ireland's many fine whiskeys. Start your journey at O'Connor's Restaurant and Bar on West Boylston Street, an epicenter of Irish hospitality since 1989 that offers family-style dining. Quinn's Pub on West Boylston Street is a fun local spot for watching sports while enjoying Guinness Pot Roast or oversized fish and chips. Funky Murphy's on Shrewsbury Street offers a taste of Ireland in the heart of Webster Square, while the Galway Bay Irish Pub on Stafford Street serves Irish-style dishes, with live music and Irish sports matches on TV. The Arms by Abbey on Main Street is an award-winning gastro pub, specializing in seasonal farmhouse fare, craft beer, and handcrafted cocktails. And finally, Moynagh's Tavern on Exchange Street is Worcester's oldest tavern, founded in 1935, which holds a fun St. Patrick's Day Party each March to benefit St. John's Food Pantry.

SPRINGTIME BLOSSOMS

In spring, Central Massachusetts comes alive with stunning landscapes, rolling hills and peaceful lakes and canals from April through June, with plenty to do both outdoors and indoors.

The New England Botanical Garden at Tower Hill in Boylston presents the colorful Pixels + Petals: An Orchid Exhibition through April. It is a stunning fusion of digital art and live orchids, bringing nature and technology together in a breathtaking display.

At Moore State Park in Paxton, see the large plantation of newly planted chestnut trees, once endangered in Massachusetts. Lookout Rock, overlooking the winding Blackstone River between Uxbridge and Northbridge, offers a panoramic view of Central Massachusetts and beyond, while Blackstone Heritage Corridor preserves the region's natural beauty along with the rich industrial and immigrant heritage of the region.

The Museum of Worcester on Elm Street celebrates the diverse heritage of Central MA, fostering inclusion and connection among all visitors. Through engaging exhibits, interactive programs, and vibrant local events, visitors can explore and share their unique stories. The Museum offers free admission all year long.

You can learn more about visiting Central Massachusetts this spring, or any time of year, at DiscoverCentralMA.org.

