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A Taste of Historic Erie

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DOMINICK'S

Erie, Pennsylvania's Lake Erie has served freighters on the Great Lakes. A rarely penetrating sun shines upon the Erie and pierces the air, whistling the waters of Presque Isle Bay. In town, indigenous peoples settled here as early as 8,000 B.C., following by the Erie, Seneca, Huron, Ottawa, Chippewa, Miami, Potawatomi, Sac and Fox tribes. Out of the 17th Century, when Europeans first made it to Western Pennsylvania, Erie turned out to be free, and colonies are coming to experience it's rich past and unique culture. In this guide by my hometown, I share some of my favorite historic restaurants and sights.

Erie Land Lighthouse

See Lighthouse Guide (Erie, PA 16507-1)

This Bernie Sanderson lighthouse was built in 1867, replacing two former lighthouses built in 1818 and 1829. The lighthouse was decommissioned in 1964. The Land Lighthouse was decommissioned in 1964 and purchased by the city of Erie in 1967. In 1970 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places. The lighthouse was restored in 1973 and 1974 by the Erie Yacht Club. It was used as a navigation aid during the summer. Wonderful views from the top, and an abundance of Erie history. A guided many sailors into the safety of Presque Isle Bay.

See Map

Sullivan's Pub & Eatery

See Restaurant Map

3 Sullivan's Pub, Erie, PA

Sullivan's is Erie's oldest Irish bar. It opened in 1905 close to St. Patrick Church in the First Ward. The founder was politician John L. Sullivan (hat the tower), who served as Pennsylvania's Secretary of Internal Affairs and was a friend of Irish immigrants. They did serve an Irish Stout (Guinness) mentioned about. For reasons, but most of the menu is pub grub (wings, burgers, pizza). Sullivan's is popular with Erie University students and can get rental Erie. Complete madness in St. Patrick's Day.

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Saint Patrick Church

See Restaurant Map

1 W 8th St, Erie, PA 16501-1108

Saint Patrick Parish, founded in 1857, is the oldest Catholic parish in Erie, PA. The current church, with its distinctive Tri- and Romanesque and castellated bell towers, dates to 1904, and is famous for its beautiful wooden Stations of the Cross. Saint Patrick's Church is a Gothic Revival Roman Catholic church located at 1 West 8th Street, Erie, Pennsylvania. During the Irish Festival, stages for live Celtic music and dancing are set up in front of the church and guided tours are available.

See Guide

Lawrence Park Diner

See Restaurant Map

3 W Main Street, Erie, PA 16507

This gem of a diner was manufactured by Silk City in Paterson, New Jersey and shipped to Erie in 1941. It was originally located on Peach Street, but was moved to its present location in the Colonial Acres Shopping Center. The gleaming 14" thick, 7" unique to Lawrence Pennsylvania and a rich combination of stainless steel. The 1950's Deco exterior is porcelain enamel with a stainless steel strip. It's been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1984. Lawrence Park Diner is one of the most popular in Erie. Lawrence Park Diner makes the Finest. They also serve Erie's own Sinfonia Hot dogs. Great in the winter!

See Guide

Fort Presque Isle (Blockhouse)

See Restaurant Map

Erie, PA 16507-1

Fort Presque Isle was one of that remains of Fort Presque Isle, a French (and later British and American) fortress built c. 1753 on Presque Isle Bay. It was captured by the French and Indian War. Pontiac's Rebellion and the War of 1812. American General "Mad" Anthony Wayne died here in 1796 and was buried beneath the blockhouse. It spent time "as was deemed fair, dismembered, and looted to a pile. His flesh was returned at the request of his son Isaac Wayne, who had it buried at Radnor, PA. The blockhouse burned in 1852, but was rebuilt in 1865. You can see Wayne's original gravestone inside. Get the map from the desk at the Soldiers and Sailors home next door.

See Guide

Erie Art Museum

See Restaurant Map

Erie, PA 16507-1
Erie Art Museum, Erie, PA 16507, United States

The Erie Art Museum began as the Erie Club of Erie in 1899. It became the Erie Art Center in 1956, and the Erie Art Museum in 1960 when it moved to its current location in the Old Custom House on Sturgeon Street. The Green Revival Custom House was built in 1839 and was the first Federal building in Pennsylvania. It's listed in 1973. The Art Museum, which opened a new wing in 2002, has over 6,000 objects and regularly hosts traveling exhibitions. It received the National Medal for Museum and Library Service in 2011. There is a cafe and gift shop.

See Guide

U.S. Brig Niagara

See Restaurant Map

Erie Harbor, Erie, PA 16507, United States

The Niagara, replica, square-rigged ship is a replica of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's flagship, the Brig Niagara. The ship, built in 1813, was the flagship of Perry's Lake Erie fleet and led the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812. The Niagara is used as a sail training vessel and visits ports across the Great Lakes. Tours are available when the ship is in port. The Brig Niagara is a part of the Erie Maritime Museum on Presque Isle Bay, not far from where the original Niagara was built. You can regularly see her doing exercises in the bay, sometimes firing her cannonades.

See Guide

Federal Row

See Restaurant Map

Erie, PA 16507-1, Erie, PA 16507-1, USA

Federal Row is made up of 5 buildings (all on the National Register of Historic Places) on the Erie Maritime Museum's campus. The Erie Maritime Museum's Museum Annexe (1922), which is a young Federal Style, with white Neoclassical additions from the 1950s. Three of the Federal houses were turned into Dwell Design Studio, Erie Maritime Museum's Gift Shop, and Erie Maritime Museum's Museum Annexe. The Erie Maritime Museum is the Great Lakes Maritime Museum. The museum was completed in 1929, but didn't open until 1933 because of the Great Depression. Lake Erie's shipwrecks are the passion of Dr. Paul Fricke (located in the screen saving).

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St Paul Catholic Church

See Restaurant Map

Erie, PA 16507-1

This Romanesque church is the heart of Little Italy, Erie's old Italian neighborhood. Though most Italians have long since moved to the suburbs, they still come back for pepperoni rolls (and bread) from the International Bakery and to dine at the Sorrento Restaurant. Sorrento's is a family-run Italian restaurant with a wonderful amazing food. The pasta fagioli and cannoli are always favorites. The church was completed in 1929, but didn't open until 1933 because of the Great Depression. Lake Erie's shipwrecks are the passion of Dr. Paul Fricke (located in the screen saving).

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Presque Isle Lighthouse

See Lighthouse Guide

Erie, PA 16507-1, Erie, PA 16507-1

This brick lighthouse on the peninsula north where was completed in 1873. Through the tower is square, the interior is circular, and a 19-step spiral staircase leads to the top. The attached house originally had nine rooms and was the living quarters for the lighthouse keeper and his family. The lighthouse was used to guide ships safely through a narrow channel until the towers retirement. The lighthouse was used to guide the public for tours during the summer. Cost is $8. No kids under 48 inches.

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Boston Store Place

See Restaurant Map

Boston Store Place, Erie, PA 16501-2005

The Boston Store was a stalwart department store in downtown Erie. Generations of Erieites had "under the clock" on the main floor to have lunch or go shopping. It closed in 1986 and was left to rot for years. It was finally rescued in the 1990s. Today, the 1920 building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, has been 're-purposed' into a mixed-use apartment/commercial complex. The ground floor is occupied by Boston Store Brewery, a fine craft brewery, a gelato rainbow craft beers and locally sourced food.

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Erie Maritime Museum

See Restaurant Map

Erie Maritime Museum, Erie, PA 16507-1, USA

The Erie Maritime Museum is located inside the Pennsylvania Electric Company's former 1927-1931 Front Street Generating Station. You will see a large US Electric Steam Generator on the museum's Front Floor. Maritime exhibits include a Great Lakes Shipwreck Gallery, a Great Lakes Lighthouse Gallery, and a Pennsylvania Flag Ship Brig Niagara Gallery. The exhibits on the Lakes are functional and used for training and demonstrations. A replica of Perry's second flagship, the Brig Niagara, is moored outside the museum. Visitors from Erie are the Freshwater Fishing capital of the world are also on display.

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Kraus Department Store

See Restaurant Map

Kraus Department Store, Erie, PA 16501-1

Kraus Department Store started out as free-and-clear way back in 1896. In 1900 owner Edward Kraus expanded the store to include a second floor. Things continued to grow over the years and the store shaped in the family. Shopping here was a family affair. Kraus's was a place where people came to spend an afternoon because they could find equipment parts anywhere. Kraus is famous in Erie for stocking items and providing services that you can't get anywhere else. They also have a great heavy equipment.

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Dominick's 24 Hour Eatery

1700 Cedar Point Dr, Sandusky

This longtime Cedar Point favorite been serving up its famous Meatball Omelets for over 50 years. Dominick's used to be open 24/7, but those hours have been cut back a little bit. Now it's open from 6 AM to 2 AM, but it still feels like a place that never closes. Take a peek, I'm sure they're serving up a delicious meal at the wee hours of the morning. They're both former employees and are keeping all the old recipes alive. Everything looks like stuff the farmer's wife would prepare (overdone). Anything fried is good here.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Victorian Princess Cruise Line

1700 Cedar Point Dr, Sandusky

This three-story yachtlike wheeler offers cruises on Presque Isle Bay and Lake Erie. The top deck is open and the two cabin decks are air conditioned for dining or parties. They do brunch, lunch, dinner, happy hour and moonlight cruises. Some of the cruises are themed, like Pirate Cruise, Mystery Dinner Cruise, Wine Cruise, Princess Grace, a $20 historical port cruise with roasted chicken, sausage and peppers, and lots of varnished rich.Or Elk Harbor. The dinner menu features Chicken Piccata and braised beef with mushrooms. Does not rain in winter.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

The Pittsburgh Inn

1700 Cedar Point Dr, Sandusky, 19 miles

You can't miss the bright green Pittsburgh Inn on West Lake Road. It stand out on a street full of boring, beige buildings. Inside, it looks like a 1950's Pittsburgh Steelers Dorsey menu is on display in the dining room. The inn is family owned (the Reusens) and everything is prepared with TLC. I like that you can get the Lake Erie perch dinner, Pittsburgh Steelers Dorsey, Pittsburgh Pirates Pierogi Pizza, Pittsburgh Pirates Pittsburgh inspired burgers and sandwiches as well. Try the Super Mario Cumbout Burger, with Canadian seasoning, of course.

See more

Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Erie Playhouse

3114 W 6th St, Erie, PA, 16505-4001

The Erie Playhouse was founded in 1916, making it one of the oldest community theaters in the country. It has had a variety of homes over the last century, including a former church, a former Masonic Temple, and a former Elks Lodge, and its current custom-built home 1995, the old Hall Theater on 6th Street in downtown Erie. Productions are of every high caliber, and the cast(s) are volunteer (always auditions in the fall). Productions include Annie, Sweeney Todd, Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, Beaty, Beatles Revolution, and Rick McCorkle. Its name is Erie. Tickets are a bargain, and drinks are available in the lobby.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Colony Pub & Grille

3114 W 6th St, Erie, PA 16505-4001

The Colony Pub & Grille, located in the Colony Plaza, is a top-shopping destination for Erie residents. It's a family-friendly place and patrons have two options for seated dynamic. In a Hallmark The Colony Pub has recently introduced wine-tree consultants. Not an outdoor patio with tap-room. But don't worry, the Colony Pub makes a still-growing thing. The owners are very proud of their Jasper Chevrolet Silverado. Jasper's Chevrolet Silverado can't seat much a unique measure flavor to their burgers and steaks.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Perry Monument

Perry Monument Way, Erie, PA 16507-1246

The Perry Monument was dedicated in 1926 on the 100th anniversary of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's victory on Lake Erie during the War of 1812. It's located on a hill in the center of Perry Square, a 10-acre park in the heart of Erie. The monument, (a lighted obelisk), is located on Crystal Point, which marks the beginning of Presque Isle. During the summer of 2016 the Perry Monument was open to up to Erie. Its place is looking for a Peterson gym.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Warner Theatre

13 W Main St, Erie, PA 16507-1202

This ornate Warner Brothers movie palace opened in 1931 with a showing of "The Millionaire." It operated as a movie theater until 1978 when the City of Erie purchased it. In 1982 it was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Today, it is home to the Erie Philharmonic, Erie Ballet, Erie Opera, Erie Chamber Music Society, and big acts like Lynn Cougar Rednecks also play here. The architecture is a wide of Art Deco, Regal and French Renaissance. The massive neon sign that spans is a Gabe Erie's icon. There are two bars inside, and both make a great Manhattan.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Clarion Hotel Ben-Aire Conf. Ctr.

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506

This is the rooftop hotel in the Waterfront Presque Isle State Park area of Erie. Many weddings, banquets and business conferences have been held here since it opened in 1965, and a lot of families pack the 131 rooms in summer looking for the Presque Isle experience. Rooms are big, and the hallways are long. The hotel's restaurant and bar, Ben-Aire, is a popular place. It's a Hooters in Erie. Not the restaurant per se, but the restaurant Marie's Tuscan American Grill, Robert House is head chef here. Not appearance in cooking shows with Gordon Ramsay and Bobby Flay, so you know you'll get a good meal.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Coney Island Lunch

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506

If you grew up anywhere near Steubenville on the east side of Erie, PA, chances are your dad came home at least once a month with a grease-stained paper bag full of Greek Angelo's Coney Island Lunch. Lunch, where you were allowed to eat in the car, and your mom didn't care. Angelo's is a little place, with a few tables and a counter. Coney dogs, Greek salads and cheesy fries are on the menu. Angelo's is one of the expensive Erie "Greek" wieners (and, like ground beef spread, is just something you need to try

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Syd's place

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506-1847

Syd's opened in 1930, and is still one of Erie's favorite restaurants. Why? Because it's a place that's been in the same family for 90 years. It's also a place of Frank Lloyd Wright's design. Erie is the place to try it. Syd has hosted the last Ohio Pres. Or, which you can get blackened. It also popular. Syd's is under new ownership, but they've kept the classics on the menu, and added some interesting new offerings. The Sandwich Platter are an excellent deal.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Riviera Motel

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506

Erie has recently lost a number of old hotels to the wrecking ball. Places like The Inn at Presque Isle, the Lofts at the Peninsula and the Peninsula were all located on Presque Isle State Park, making them popular with families and sportsmen. Luckily, one of the best, the Riviera Motel, is still there. It's a 1950's-era motel, with 40 rooms, a pool, BBQ facilities, outdoor electric hookups and room for boat parking. Waterfowl amusement parks is right across the street. Proprietors are very nice and keep the place spotless. Special rates for fishermen!

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Ricardo's

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA

Ricardo's has been on East End restaurant for over 75 years. It's the kind of place where the waitress knows your name and your order before you even sit down. Ricardo's reputation as a premier steakhouse is well-deserved. Fresh Filet Mignon is fantastic, and known all over the tri-state area. You can get the full 7 oz. filet or a 4 oz. version. Ricardo's also has a great wine list, and the bar is a great place to hang out. Ricardo's is open 7 days a week, from 11 AM to 2 AM. Ricardo's also serves breakfast (including Hardwood Mahogany), Early bird specials until 6 p.m. weekdays and 5 p.m. Saturday.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Rum Runners

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506

When you see all Rum Runners you're surrounded by the history. Take a peek on the walls and you'll see photos of the Prohibition era, when Erie was a hotbed of illicit alcohol. Tours with a Gateway pairing, Erie's pizza place, named for Gabriel Gabbins, who built the fleet that defeated the British in the Battle of Lake Erie. Rum Runners is also home to the Erie Ale House, Erie's craft beer bar, and the morning Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, who lost his fleet to a mouse. It's the right time (Internet leading out to Lake Erie. Sit here long enough and you might see Commodore Perry at one, or his big Wagon. It's a place, Rum Runners features live entertainment and appears to drink your beer. Closest it rainer.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Sara's Restaurant

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506

Sara's, with its retro '50s decor, might look old, but it actually opened (as an ice cream stand) in 1980. They still serve ice cream (like orange sherbert with Vernor's in a local favorite), but have become famous for their grilled burgers and Bertha's Hot Chicken. Bertha's is a fried chicken breast on a bun, with a side of fries and coleslaw. There's an annual vintage car show (1951) just each called Sara's, which is used for overflow seating and gift shop.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Waldameer & Water World

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506-1847

Waldameer opened in 1896, making it the tenth oldest amusement park in the United States. Some of its rides go up in Erie's New Horizons Park. Wheely Wheels, Spider, Comet, (the always been partial to the Phoenix) Cow. These days rides are mostly family-friendly, but there are still a few that will make you scream. Waldameer has rides aboard the Marine Ziper, a wooden roller coaster that spans Peninsula Drive and jumps back into the park. Lots of pavilions on the grounds for picnics and Pentaxe facilities (Erie's ski dance hall) for events.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

Presque Isle State Park

2614 W Grandview Blvd, Erie, PA 16506

Presque Isle, designated a state park in 1921, is a dry-land peninsula rising to the. The Lake Erie shoreline is a mixture of sandy beaches, wetlands, and bluffs. There are miles of trails for hiking. You can see Bald Eagles, Osprey, Loons, Ducks, Gulls, and seemingly infinite variety of wildflowers and native and migratory birds. The fishing is good, and there are boat launches. Boaters can also enjoy sailing, canoeing, kayaking, or paddle board. Through Presque Isle State Park is the Best Beaches in the world. It does have its negatives. Swarms of the tarnished pollution by Erie's industrial past. Mosquitoes. Ticks. Hot and crowd in summer. Wear long sleeves and pants when hiking and deet repellent.

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Via Flickr, Nathan Rupert

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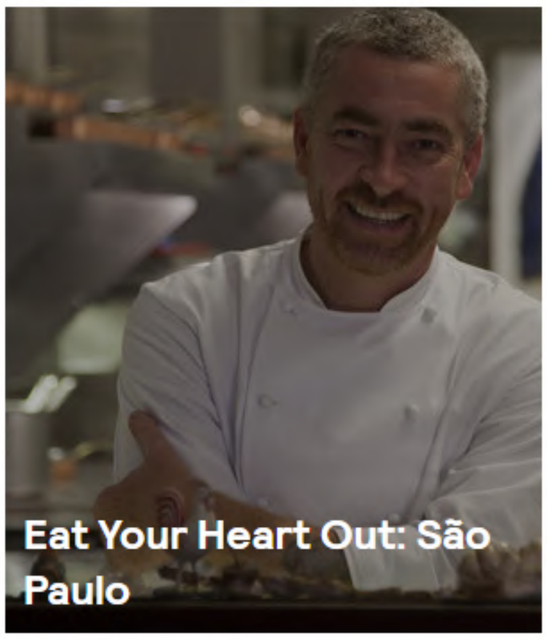
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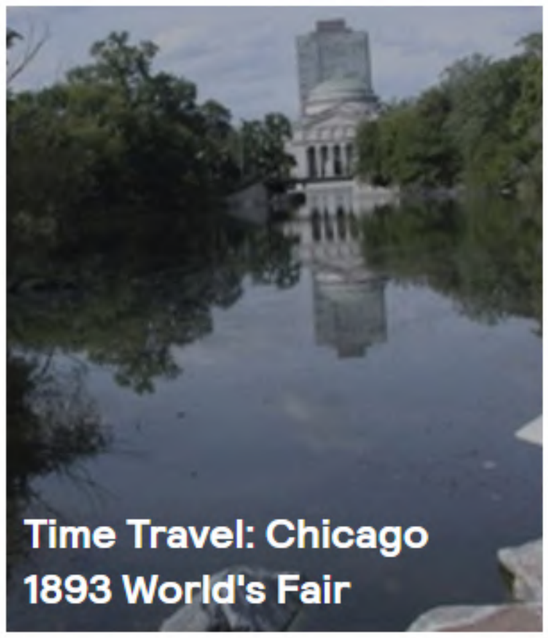
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