

**Travel:**

**A Stimulating Drive-To Vacation Destination...**

**YORK, GETTYSBURG & HERSHEY, PENN.**

**by Don & Bonnie Woodland**

*23-acre Hershey Gardens overlooks the town of Hershey, Pa.*



*Yorktowne Hotel rises above beautiful tree-lined W. Market St. in historic downtown York, Pa.*

Vacationing, for many people, means planting yourself on a restful beach, curled up with a lengthy piece of fiction. However, if you're ready for a vacation that's considerably more stimulating, here's an opportunity to vacation while learning and seeing a lot -- like how things are made, the facts about a great Civil War battle, and about the life of one of America's greatest men. Along the way, you'll see some beautiful country. And you'll spend a lot of time wondering if the kind folks you meet along the way act more like "Midwesterners" or "Southerners." Truth is, they appear to be good-natured enough and have enough of a spirit of hospitality to be both.

#### **York:**

York County is the factory tour capital of America. You can tour any of the following: Harley-Davidson Motor Company, Perrydell Farm Dairy, Snyder's of Hanover, Lutz Quality Foods, Wolfgang Candy Company, Bluest Bros Violins, Family Heir-Loom Weavers (a working mill), Painted Spring Farm Alpacas and Susquehanna Glass. There are other tours as well. The good news is, all of these tours are absolutely free. And usually you leave with free samples as well. You'll also leave with your faith restored that indeed we still do make things in America. And you'll be forever impressed with the high-speed



*The factory tour entrance at the Harley-Davidson plant in York, Pa.*

equipment and robotics that are used in the larger factories.

The **Harley-Davidson** tour in York is at the company's biggest plant, which gets 60,000 visitors on the tour every year. Even if you don't ride, it is fascinating to watch them put a power train in a motorcycle. These are bikes that run \$7,000 - \$36,000. They made 300,000 of them last year. ([www.harley-davidson.com/experience](http://www.harley-davidson.com/experience))

The **Wolfgang Candy Company** is an opportunity to really see how chocolate is applied to things like pretzels or cookies on an assembly line, like CVS' Divine brand cookies. ([www.wolfgangcandy.com](http://www.wolfgangcandy.com))

**Bluett Bros Violins** is a small shop in York where you can meet owner/luthier Mark Bluett and his apprentice(s), and watch their work in progress, as they construct all manner of stringed instruments, including: violins, cellos, basses, mandolins, mandolas, guitars, etc. Guitars range from \$3500 to \$5000. A violin costs about \$6000.

Proprietor Mark Bluett says, "You have to make about 50 violins before you can call yourself a Master Luthier." He's made about 1200 instruments by hand so far. ([www.bluettbros-violins.com](http://www.bluettbros-violins.com))

**Perrydell Dairy Farm** is a family-



*Highly-mechanized pretzel-packaging equipment at Snyder's of Hanover*

operated operation that dates from 1923. You can do a walk-through tour of the Perry's dairy operation, see how the milking is done on the Perry's Holsteins. Then visit the store up front where the Perrys sell their own milk and cheese products. They use no Bovine Growth Hormones,



*Master Luthier Mark Bluett with some of his handmade string instruments at Bluett Violins, in York.*



*Great shops and restaurants line Chambersburg St. in downtown Gettysburg, Pa.*

and grow all their own feedgrains (no GM used) themselves. They sell raw milk as well as Homo/Pasteurized milk. (Raw milk can be sold legally in Pennsylvania.) And they also use real sugar in their chocolate milk, instead of High Fructose corn Syrup. ([www.perrydellfarm.com](http://www.perrydellfarm.com))



*The Dobbins House Restaurant on Steinwehr Ave. in Gettysburg*

Besides factory tours, York County is big into wine. There are, in fact, 15 wineries in and around York open for tour. ([www.yorkpa.org](http://www.yorkpa.org))

Those who appreciate architecture will probably find themselves gawking at the buildings in Historic Downtown York. Each one is unique -- particularly the handiwork along their rooflines. Even the row homes downtown are differentiated. There's also an architectural tour offered by York County Heritage Trust. Check with the CVB for scheduling.

As far as accommodations in York, if you want to be in the historic downtown, the **Yorktowne Hotel** is a restored downtown hotel on beautiful, tree-lined Market St. And you can also find many of the national chain hotels are on the east and north ends of town. ([www.yorktowne.com](http://www.yorktowne.com))

Preferred restaurants include the **Left Bank Restaurant & Bar** (<http://leftbanknyork.com>), the **White Rose Bar & Grill**. (Try their signature Crab Pretzel.) ([www.whiterosebarandgrill.com](http://www.whiterosebarandgrill.com)), or the very French **Blue Moon Restaurant**. (Try their Celeriac Salad, or the Bœuf Bourguignon. Outstanding!) (<http://bluemoonfresh.com>).

A half-hour south of York is Hanover,

where there are two potato chip and pretzel plants that offer fascinating tours: Utz Potato Chips and Snyder's of Hanover. Both have outlet stores that dramatize the amazing variety of potato chip and pretzel products now being made in those industries.

Founded in 1921, **Utz's Potato Chip & Pretzel** facility is 600,000 square feet. Their glass-enclosed observation gallery looks down on their production process from beginning to end. ([www.utzsnacks.com](http://www.utzsnacks.com))

**Snyder's Pretzel Bakery**, who have made the world's best-selling sourdough hard pretzels since 1909, offers a free in-house guided tour, which takes you through their raw material warehouse, finished goods warehouse (where you will see robotics at work), their state-of-the-art packing room, and the oven room. Snyder's owns 11 of the country's largest ovens. Those you see there are 150 feet long. Pretzel dough to packaged product only takes 40 minutes. Raw potatoes to packaged chips only takes 5 minutes. ([www.snydersofhanover.com](http://www.snydersofhanover.com))

There are a few things you should keep in mind about these tours:

- You should call ahead and find out when the tours are available (every hotel has brochures with contact information), and you should ask about tour times, and whether you need to make a reservation.
- You should also ask about your shoes. Some tours don't allow open-toed shoes like sandals.
- And you should be prepared to temporarily part with your camera, as none of the larger tours will allow you to bring them into the main plant.

## Gettysburg

Ever since the day after that bloodiest of Civil War battles, Gettysburg has been a huge tourist attraction...and deservedly

so. When you visit **Gettysburg train station**, you can relive the moment where Lincoln arrived to visit the battlefield. Lawyer **David Will's House** in the town center is where Lincoln spent the night writing the final draft from his notes of what would become known as the Gettysburg Address, which he gave the next day at the commemoration of the new Soldier's National Cemetery.

Indeed, history is everywhere in this town. So it's not surprising that this town of 7800 year-round population plays host to about 3 million visitors a year.

For those who may have visited years ago, there have been some changes that have really enhanced the experience.

For starters, the Cyclorama -- the 360-degree painting done by French artist Paul Phillippoteaux and a team of 20 artists in 1884, depicting the famous battle as seen from Cemetery Hill, is housed in an all-



*Shops along Gettysburg's Steinwehr Ave.*



*The Cyclorama, Film and Museum at Gettysburg*

new building -- **The Cyclorama, Film and Museum.** The Cyclorama is the largest painting in America – some 42 feet high and 377 feet around, and was originally shipped to Gettysburg in 20 pieces. It underwent a five-year, \$11.5 million restoration in 2008. Today, this colossal



*Chocolate Lab, at the Hershey Story, offers classes that explain tempering, molding, dipping and even making chocolate from scratch.*

experience is exhibited the way the artist originally intended—with the painting, a canopy that removes the building’s architectural features from your sight, and a three-dimensional diorama, which carries the painted scene into the foreground. All of these elements combine for an illusion of immersion - you feel as though you’re surrounded by the fury of Pickett’s Charge on the third and final day of the Battle of Gettysburg.

The film in the same building, narrated by Morgan Freeman, will introduce you to the Civil War and the Battle of Gettysburg—placing those monumental events into the larger context of American history.

The Gettysburg Museum in the same building houses 12 exhibit galleries featuring artifacts, interactive exhibits and hands-on displays that will engage visitors of all ages with content that places the Battle of Gettysburg into the larger context of American history. Multiple film experiences throughout the museum tell the story of the causes of the Civil War. ([www.gettysburgfoundation.org](http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org))

In addition, there’s a crew of trained guides who can join you in your car and give you a personalized 2-hour tour throughout this Civil War battlefield, giving you a real understanding of the three-day battle, and answering your questions. For Civil War enthusiasts, the \$55 fee is well spent. There’s also a recorded self-guided auto tour available for purchase. ([www.autotapetours.com](http://www.autotapetours.com)) Do one of these

tour options first (before you visit the Cyclorama), and you’ll get infinitely more out of the Cyclorama experience.

When you tour the Gettysburg battlefield, you’ll notice the roads lined with Memorials that were placed there by each regiment who fought. Of note is the monument commemorating the 12<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Regiment. The regiment was commanded by Senator Daniel Webster’s son, and Daniel Webster’s own likeness is carved into the face of the stone.

There has been a decided effort by the Park Service to change the landscape, including moving tree lines back to where they were during the 1863 battle. 500 acres of trees have been removed in the last five years. Also, land that had become private has slowly been purchased back by the Park Service for this purpose.

Today, the town is a lot more than just a battlefield, however. Downtown Gettysburg is absolutely charming, loaded with great, independently-owned places to eat, and quirky little shops like **Dirty Billie’s Hats**. There’s impressive entertainment year round at the **Majestic Theater**, so check their listings. ([www.gettysburgmajestic.org](http://www.gettysburgmajestic.org))

There’s also the historic site of the **Dwight Eisenhower farm** – the only home the president ever owned. It’s now owned by the National Park Service (<http://tinyurl.com/yewosxk>).

And for those who have the time, just north in Adams County along Rt. 34 is one of the most scenic and the fifth highest-producing apple-growing areas in the country.

There are lots of places to stay in Gettysburg. Chain hotels are well-represented along Rt. 30 outside of town. If you’d like to stay downtown, there are many historic Bed & Breakfasts. Or you can enjoy the fine dining in its Century on the Square restaurant, and excellent relaxed dining in



*The newest Hershey attraction is the Hershey Story, on E. Chocolate Blvd.*

McClelland’s Pub. The inn overlooks the town square, and is within walking distance of everything downtown. Ask about their special packages. ([www.hotelgettysburg.com](http://www.hotelgettysburg.com))

Many great places to eat are on Steinwehr Ave., including **The Dobbin House**. You need to reserve ahead, as the 1776 structure is a popular dining venue. You won’t be sorry if you ask to dine in its Springhouse Tavern downstairs. ([www.dobbinhouse.com](http://www.dobbinhouse.com)) Also, try the **Blue Parrot Bistro** on Chambersburg St. ([www.blueparrotbistro.com](http://www.blueparrotbistro.com))

## Hershey

An hour north of Gettysburg is the town that Milton Hershey built about a century ago. Before it was called Hershey, the town was known as Derry Church, named after the county’s earliest church, which is still there. Hershey has more chocolate factories than any other town in



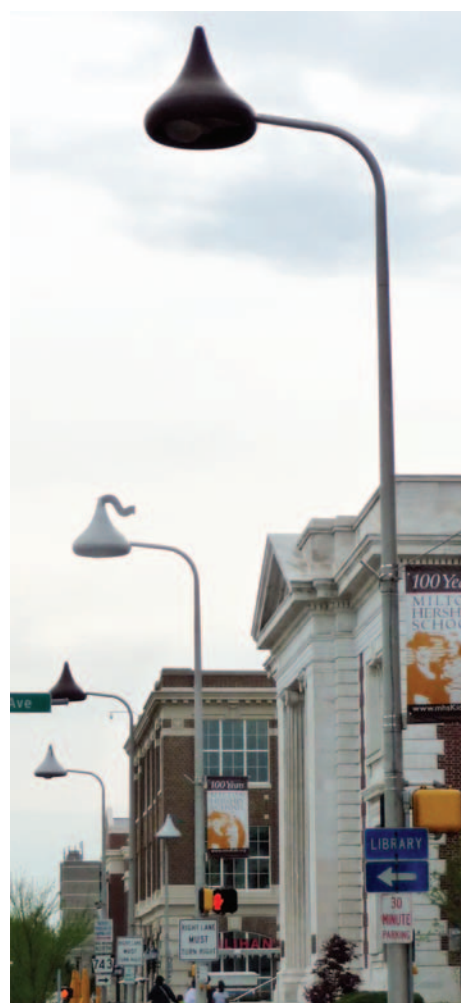
*Hershey rolls out the welcome mat on the grounds of Catherine Hall -- the middle school of Milton Hershey School*

America. It was Milton's desire to build a "family town", not a corporate town (not like the coal towns of W. Virginia). He wanted every home to be different, and he made it easy for employees to own one, not rent.

This idyllic town is its own reason for visiting, and it gets 3,000,000 visitors a year – which makes it the most-visited corporate visitors center in the U.S. The Hershey attractions have become extensive; there's even an amusement park now and a zoo. But learning the story of how Milton and his wife Katie turned their childless marriage into one supporting thousands and thousands of boys (in perpetuity) through the Hershey Trust's Milton Hershey School is gripping, and is the main reason to visit the town. The trust that operates the school is today worth in the neighborhood of eight billion dollars. And the boys (and also more recently girls) who are deemed needy enough will

be moved to Hershey, housed, educated, clothed, fed, and raised in the 10,000-acre Milton S. Hershey School. Students with a "C" average or above receive an \$80,000 scholarship to the college of their choice.

The story of Hershey, it turns out, isn't just all about the chocolate...it's about the school! (The school celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> year this year.) If you don't know the story, you'll want to visit and be inspired by this



*Even the street lights are Hershey (kisses)!*

man's legacy.

Your first stop in Hershey, in terms of getting oriented to the layout of the place and learning the history, should be the guided tour aboard the **Hershey Trolleyworks**. It's also incredibly entertaining. Plus there's free samples

of many of the Hershey products handed out during the tour, which departs from Hershey's Chocolate World daily several times a day, rain or shine. Tokens for specific departures can be purchased inside



*The magnificent Hershey Mansion*

the main lobby at the trolley counter. Seating is limited, so purchase your tokens early to reserve your seat.

While at Chocolate World, check out the new "Make Your Own Candybar" exhibit. This is a fun opportunity to literally do as the name suggests. You can pick out your own ingredients. Your candy bar is then cooled and wrapped in a personalized wrapper. This exhibit will open this summer. ([www.hersheyschocolateworld.com](http://www.hersheyschocolateworld.com))

**Hershey Gardens** is located just below beautiful **Hotel Hershey**, on a 23-acre spread overlooking the town. The tulip and rose gardens are spectacular. And many adore the Butterfly House.

**The Hershey Story: The Museum on Chocolate** is the newest structure in Hershey. Located on East Chocolate Blvd., you'll find yourself engrossed with the Museum upstairs. Downstairs, take advantage of the **Chocolate Lab**, a 30-minute "school" that will make you an expert on the different flavors of chocolate. Alternatively, try the \$9.99 sampler next door at the **Café Zooka**. Chocolate, it turns out, is like wine. It tastes quite different based on where it's grown. The sampler gives you a taste of liquid chocolate from six different countries. You'll be amazed at

the complexity of the taste from Mexican chocolate, versus the smoothness of chocolate from Java. And don't miss the new trompe l'oeil mural (which looks three dimensional) on the first floor, which

includes an astonishing likeness of Milton Hershey surrounded by six children from the Milton Hershey School. It was painted by William Cochran of Maryland. ([www.hersheystory.org](http://www.hersheystory.org))



*The magnificent restaurant at the Hotel Hershey*



*The Chocolate World Attraction*



*Two stainless steel cars on display at the AACA Museum in Hershey -- a 1960 Ford Thunderbird and a 1967 Lincoln Convertible*

One of the things you don't hear as much about in Hershey is the **Hershey Theater**, which is a magnificent structure completed in 1933, and plays host to wonderful entertainment. Check their performance schedule if you plan to be in Hershey ([hersheytheatre.com](http://hersheytheatre.com)). Also, the **Giant Center** hosts entertainment as well as sporting events, and visitors would be wise to check their listings. ([www.giantcenter.com](http://www.giantcenter.com))

A great discovery in Hershey is the **AACA Museum**. This 71,000 square foot antique auto museum has one of the coolest collections you'll ever see. It's like time travel back to the 1920's through the 1970's. Don't miss this automotive gem! ([www.aacamuseum.org](http://www.aacamuseum.org))

There are lots of restaurants in Hershey. Most have wide-ranging price scales, offering everything from sandwiches to steaks. The best value seems to be at

the **Hershey Pantry**, and you'll love their colossal dessert menu. ([www.hersheypantry.com](http://www.hersheypantry.com)) **Fenucci's** is Hershey's oldest free-standing restaurant, originating in 1935. Visiting theater people gravitate to it, so you'll see a wall of signed Playbills inside. ([www.fenuccis.com](http://www.fenuccis.com))

There are many wonderful places to stay in Hershey. If you stay in any of the Hershey properties, you can get discount tickets to area attractions ([www.HersheyPA.com](http://www.HersheyPA.com)). If you're watching your money, you'll love the **Hampton Inn**. You get a free breakfast, plus sleep on one of the most comfortable beds you'll ever experience. And they have special packages. (<http://tinyurl.com/y8k56kr>) You're also right next to the aforementioned Hershey Pantry. In addition, Hershey has one of the best-looking **Days Inn(s)** in the country.

**Tips:**

- Bring your golf clubs. This area is

loaded with great courses. Hershey alone has five, and is considered the golf center of Pennsylvania.

- Bring a cooler with you on this trip because you'll want to purchase food. There are farm markets everywhere. Also, between York and Hanover, there's a wonderful health food store you shouldn't miss, called **Sonnewald's Natural Foods**. Located in a country setting in Spring Valley, the store has practically every product available in the health industry, as well as locally-produced items and bulk items. But what's really interesting is their literature selection. It's the most extensive we've seen on the subject of health. There's lots of free literature on health topics as well. ([www.sonnewald.org](http://www.sonnewald.org))

- Been putting off buying a GPS? This trip is the excuse you've been looking for to buy one. Finding the York and Hanover factory tours is a mite tricky. At the very least, you should have a nodding acquaintance with [mapquest.com](http://mapquest.com), in order to find your way around.

- When in York, drive east to picturesque Wrightsville, Pa. on the Susquehanna River. The river drive south on Rt. 624 is magnificent. Overlooking the river is **Moondancer Vineyard & Winery**, whose main building looks like a French Chateau ([www.moondancerwinery.com](http://www.moondancerwinery.com)). Just east of the river is Columbia, Pa., which features interesting antique shops, **Susquehanna Glass** ([www.susquehannaglass.com](http://www.susquehannaglass.com)) and the **National Watch and Clock Museum** ([www.nawcc.org](http://www.nawcc.org))

- Also, don't miss the Central Market in downtown York. It's a classic farmers market, and is located right across from the White Rose Bar & Grill, a famous downtown lunch and dinner venue. ([www.centralmarketnyork.com](http://www.centralmarketnyork.com))

- Diners – something we don't have on Cape Cod -- are common to New Jersey and Pennsylvania, so look for them on your drive down and back – especially if you're a dessert hound.

- Don't avoid taking the Interstate (Rt. I-78 and I-81) coming back from Hershey. It's one of the prettiest sections of Interstate in the entire country.

- Gas is much cheaper in New Jersey than in Pennsylvania, New York, or Connecticut, so plan accordingly.

Your drive to York County, Gettysburg and Hershey should start early. From the Cape, the drive is 8-8 ½ hours, depending on if you hit traffic. By leaving at or before 6 am, you'll miss the Sagamore Bridge traffic, and both Providence and metro-New York rush hours. And you'll be able to put your feet up in your hotel room by mid-afternoon.

For more information about York, go to <http://www.yorkpa.org/>. For information about Gettysburg, go to [www.gettysburgtravel.com](http://www.gettysburgtravel.com), or [www.gettysburgfoundation.org](http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org).

For information about Hershey, go to [www.hersheypa.com](http://www.hersheypa.com), or <http://mshersheyfoundation.org/>.

Or for general travel information in Pennsylvania, go to [www.visitpa.com](http://www.visitpa.com).

And thanks for traveling!