



# Westchester Magazine's Best

A curated guide to living, raising a family, and exploring Westchester County—covering food, schools, healthcare, activities, and community life.



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## BEST RESTAURANTS

### 1. Signature Standouts

- **The Cookery (Dobbs Ferry)** — long-running chef-driven Italian favorite
- **Goosefeather (Tarrytown)** — modern Chinese in historic setting
- **Harvest on Hudson (Hastings-on-Hudson)** — Hudson River dining + multi-category winner
- **O Mandarin (Hartsdale)** — award-winning Sichuan-style Chinese
- **RiverMarket Bar and Kitchen (Tarrytown)** — farm-to-table Hudson Valley cuisine

### 2. Casual Favorites

- **City Limits Diner (White Plains)** — classic diner winner
- **Posto 22 (New Rochelle)** — family-friendly Italian
- **Piper's Kilt (Eastchester)** — burger and pub staple
- **The Beehive (Armonk)** — consistent brunch winner
- **The Bagel Emporium** — multiple-location bagel winner
- **Bluestone Lane Larchmont Café** — all-day breakfast and lunch winner
- **Stanz Cafe** —salads and sandwiches

### 3. Fine Dining / Special Occasion

- **X20 Xaviars on the Hudson (Yonkers)** — skyline Hudson River views
- **Cenadou Bistro (North Salem)** — French bistro winner
- **Augustine's (Mamaroneck)** — house-made pasta-focused Italian
- **Red Hat on the River (Irvington)** — upscale river dining
- **Encore Bistro Francais** — Offers lunch, dinner, and outside patio dining
- **Lusardi's** — Mediterranean cuisine, handmade pastas, and seafood

### 4. Desserts & Bakeries

- **Lulu Cake Boutique (Scarsdale)** — celebration cakes winner
- **Beascakes Bakery (Armonk)** — classic bakery award winner
- **The Kneaded Bread (Port Chester)** — artisan bakery favorite
- **La Fenice (Rye)** — gelato winner

### 5. Pizzerias

- **Sal's Pizza Mamaroneck** — Sicilian-inspired pizza and Italian foods
- **Villa Maria Pizza** — Brick-oven pizzas
- **Wood & Fire Neapolitan Style Pizza** — Wood-fired brick oven pizzas

## HEALTHCARE

### 1. Major Hospital Systems

- White Plains Hospital
- Westchester Medical Center Health Network
- Northern Westchester Hospital
- Phelps Hospital
- New Rochelle Hospital

## PRESCHOOLS & EARLY CHILDHOOD (LOCAL FAVORITES)

- Anna & Jack's Treehouse
- Early Childhood Center at Sarah Lawrence College
- Alcott Montessori School
- Ann and Andy Child Care
- Scarsdale Friends Nursery School
- Bright Horizons
- Kiddie Academy of White Plains

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS (TOP-RECOGNIZED DISTRICTS)

- Scarsdale UFSD
- Bronxville UFSD
- Rye City School District
- Chappaqua CSD
- Byram Hills CSD
- Edgemont UFSD
- Mamaroneck UFSD

## SUMMER CAMPS (WESTCHESTER FAVORITES)

### 1. Nature & Education Camps

- Teatown Lake Reservation programs
- Greenburgh Nature Center camps
- Muscote Farm programs

### 2. Sports Camps

- Soccer academies (countywide)
- Tennis & swim clubs
- Town recreation programs

### 3. Arts & STEM Camps

- Museum-based camps (Hudson River Museum)
- Theater and music camps
- STEM enrichment programs



## PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS (BEST OF WESTCHESTER FUN & LEISURE)

### 1. Signature Parks

- **Kensico Dam Plaza** — flagship playground + events
- **Playland Park (Rye)** — historic amusement park
- **Saxon Woods Park** — pool, golf, playgrounds
- **Rockefeller State Park Preserve** — hiking destination
- **Tibbetts Brook Park** — water park + family recreation

### 2. Family Favorites

- Greenburgh Nature Center
- Memorial Park (various towns)
- Waterfront parks along Hudson River towns

## SPORTS PROGRAMS (LOCAL CORE ACTIVITIES)

- Town recreation leagues (soccer, baseball, basketball)
- Competitive club soccer programs
- Youth hockey leagues (Rye / Westchester rinks)
- Swim clubs & aquatics teams
- Tennis academies and private clubs
- Martial arts studios countywide

## ARTS & THEATER (WESTCHESTER CULTURE)

### 1. Major Venues

- The Capitol Theatre (Port Chester) — major concerts
- Emelin Theatre (Mamaroneck) — intimate performances
- Tarrytown Music Hall — historic theater venue
- Caramoor Center for Music & Arts (Katonah) — outdoor concerts

### 2. Museums & Cultural Sites

- Hudson River Museum (Yonkers)
- Lyndhurst Mansion (Tarrytown)
- Jacob Burns Film Center (Pleasantville)



## BIRTHDAY PARTY VENUES (KIDS FAVORITES)

### 1. Nature & Animals

- **Greenburgh Nature Center** — animal encounters, nature-themed parties, outdoor play.
- **Faraway Farm Alpacas** — unique farm experiences and alpaca visits.

### 2. Play Spaces

- **BounceU Elmsford Kids Birthdays and More** — inflatable playgrounds and fully hosted parties.
- **Kids U** — private gym-style parties popular with preschool families.
- **Westchester Children's Museum** — hands-on exhibits and workshop add-ons.

### 3. Active & Adventure Parties

- **LIFE the place to be** — laser tag, arcade games, climbing, bumper cars, and large-group events.
- **No Limit Ninja** — ninja obstacle courses and Nerf-themed parties.
- **Sky Zone** — trampoline park parties.
- **The Rock Club** — rock climbing birthday experience

### 4. High-Energy Experiences

- **Empire Ninja** — Ninja Warrior-style obstacle courses.
- **Spins Hudson** — laser tag, ropes course, arcade games.
- **Monster Mini Golf** — glow-in-the-dark mini golf and arcade fun.

## SEASONAL ACTIVITIES (WESTCHESTER YEAR-ROUND)

### 1. Spring

- Cherry blossoms + park openings
- Farmers markets return

### 2. Summer

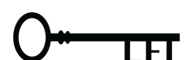
- Playland Beach
- Outdoor concerts & festivals
- Hudson River waterfront events

### 3. Fall

- Apple picking (North Salem, Yorktown)
- Pumpkin patches
- Haunted houses + fall fairs

### 4. Winter

- Ice skating rinks (White Plains, Rye)
- Holiday markets
- Indoor museums & theaters



## TOWN-BY-TOWN GUIDE

### 1 Hudson River Towns

- Hastings-on-Hudson — artsy, walkable
- Irvington — quiet upscale village
- Tarrytown / Sleepy Hollow — historic + lively
- Dobbs Ferry — restaurant-focused

### 2. Southern Westchester

- Scarsdale — top schools + luxury homes
- Bronxville — small-town feel
- Larchmont / Mamaroneck — waterfront + family life
- Rye — beaches + strong schools

### 3. Central Westchester

- White Plains — urban hub + dining
- New Rochelle — waterfront redevelopment
- Harrison — commuter-friendly

### 4. Northern Westchester

- Chappaqua — top schools + wooded suburbs
- Armonk — quiet upscale
- Mount Kisco — walkable downtown
- Katonah — artsy village



## MOVING TO WESTCHESTER (FAQ)

### 1. Why do so many families move to Westchester?

Westchester offers a combination of highly rated public schools, access to New York City, extensive parks and recreation, vibrant downtowns, and a strong sense of community. Many families move here when they want more space while maintaining access to Manhattan.

### 2. What are the best towns for families?

There is no single "best" town—it depends on your priorities.

#### Best overall family towns:

- Scarsdale
- Rye
- Bronxville
- Chappaqua
- Larchmont
- Armonk

#### Best value family towns:

- Pleasantville
- Tarrytown
- Mamaroneck
- New Rochelle
- Croton-on-Hudson

#### Best walkable downtowns:

- Bronxville
- Pleasantville
- Tarrytown
- Larchmont
- Rye

### 3. Which towns have the best schools?

Districts that are consistently recognized among the county's strongest include:

- Scarsdale
- Bronxville
- Chappaqua
- Byram Hills
- Rye
- Edgemont
- Mamaroneck

Each district has a different culture, size, and educational approach, so families should look beyond rankings alone.

#### **4. How expensive is Westchester?**

Westchester is one of the more expensive suburban counties in the United States.

Major expenses include:

- Housing
- Property taxes
- Childcare
- Commuting
- Recreation programs

Many families find that the quality of schools, amenities, and proximity to NYC justify the higher costs.

#### **5. Is it possible to live in Westchester without a car?**

In some towns, yes.

The most walkable communities include:

- Bronxville
- Larchmont
- Rye
- Tarrytown
- White Plains
- Mamaroneck

Most families still own at least one vehicle, especially if they have children involved in sports and activities.

#### **6. What are the best family activities in Westchester?**

Local favorites include:

- Rye Playland
- Kensico Dam Plaza
- Greenburgh Nature Center
- Hudson River Museum
- Caramoor
- Rockefeller State Park Preserve
- County pools and beaches
- Seasonal festivals and farmers markets