

weekend escapes in northern indiana

amish adventures

Horse-drawn buggies... Handcrafted quilts and furniture...Hearty Amish food... Luxurious lodgings in tiny towns... Live theater with rousing musicals and big-name entertainers. Fill your weekend with all Amish culture has to offer and some extra surprises in the compact area of Elkhart and LaGrange Counties, home to the nation's second-largest Amish population.

(Check ahead if your visit includes a Sunday—many Amish businesses are closed that day.)



Day 1: Shipshewana

THINGS TO DO:

- **Visit The Menno-Hof Interpretive Center** (Photo 1): Life-size dioramas and lively exhibits tell the story of the Amish.
- **Hit the shops!** There are more than 100 in this busy little community. The Yoder name promises Amish goods at their complex of shops. But you'll also find smaller places with their own specialties, such as David Arment Photography and Kathy McClanahan's Oil Painting Studio. VisitShipshewana.org
- **Take a buggy ride** (Photo 2): Several companies offer buggy rides around town and into the countryside past Amish shops, schools and homesteads. (800) 254-8090 VisitShipshewana.org
- **Catch a show:** Performances by top entertainers and an Amish-themed musical make the Blue Gate Theatre a top destination. Included in this year's lineup of stars are Merle Haggard and Pat and Debbie Boone. Don't miss Josiah for President, a musical about an Amish farmer running for president.

LODGING:

- **The Blue Gate Garden Inn, Shipshewana:** Newest hotel in town with full breakfast, indoor pool, family suites and theater packages.
- **Farmstead Inn & Conference Center, Shipshewana:** Modern hotel modeled after an Amish farmstead; pool, breakfast and theater packages.
- **Essenhaus Inn and Conference Center, Middlebury:** Amish decor in classy hotel with 95 guest rooms, indoor pool and delicious buffet breakfast.

DINING:

- **Bread Box Bakery & Café/Scherger's Kettle, Shipshewana** (Photo 3): Homemade soups, sandwiches, and a wide array of baked goods (pick up some to take to your hotel).
- **Blue Gate Restaurant and Bakery, Shipshewana:** From-scratch Amish favorites and 29 pie choices.
- **Rise 'n Roll Bakery and Deli, Middlebury:** Donuts, sweet rolls and delicious box lunches to take on the road with you.
- **Das Dutchman Essenhaus, Middlebury** (Photo 4): Indiana's largest restaurant, for traditional Amish favorites by menu or on their expansive buffet.

Day 2: Middlebury and the Countryside

THINGS TO DO:

- **Shop the Shingle Shops:** Shingle (or cottage) shops—small businesses on Amish homesteads that are identified by a sign or “shingle”—pop up along back roads throughout the area. You'll find Amish handcrafts, quilts, and food at businesses such as Little Helpers Quilt Shop and “B” Honey (both located between Shipshewana and the town of Middlebury, just seven miles to the west). Download a map at <http://www.backroads.org/maps-and-travel-tools>.
- **Follow the HeritageTrail** (Photo 5): With the help of a free audio guide, complete with historical tidbits, you easily can devote a day to this 90-mile route discovering the region's rich, diverse heritage (AmishCountry.org/things-to-do/HeritageTrail).
- **See Gardens in Bloom** (Photo 6): Some 20 huge garden plots planted with thousands of blooms in quilt designs pop up throughout the region from May 30-October 1 on the Quilt Garden Trail. Download a map of the gardens and quilt murals on buildings at QuiltGardens.com.

Day 3: Nappanee

THINGS TO DO:

- **Amish Acres** (Photo 7): In the town of Nappanee, about an hour southwest of Shipshewana, this living history destination celebrates the Amish culture. Tour the Amish Farmstead and take a horse-drawn wagon ride where you'll learn plenty of history.
- **Amish Acres Round Barn Theatre:** This venue in a vintage reconstructed barn.
- **Countryside Shop Showcase:** The Countryside Shop Showcase map will direct you to shops in and around Nappanee. Download it at CoppesCommons.com or pick one up at Coppes Commons, an 1887 building where once “Hoosier” kitchen cabinets were made. Today the downtown building is filled with shops.

DINING:

- **Amish Acres:** Dine under hand-hewn timbers in a massive reconstructed 1870s barn and fill up on hearty Amish fare, including the restaurant's famous Threshers Dinner.

Amish Acres is now The Barns at Nappanee

Extend your Northern Indiana stay by traveling to other stops on the Art and Earth Trail,

