

Midwest Living

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S'more to love!

34 gooey takes on a summer favorite

THE TOP
25
BURGER
JOINTS

FIND YOUR
PERFECT LAKE
VACATION

Plus!
FARMERS
MARKET
RECIPES

RESTFUL
LAKE-HOME
DECORATING



I ♥
BURGERS



Everyone claims their burger as the best. But is it really? We researched Midwest award winners, ★ asked our 📞 travel writers for the best they'd tried (you'll see their quotes throughout), nominated our own and came up with 130 finalists. 🗑 Then we crafted a report card, ✓ hit the road and rated each one. The competition was fierce, but these 25 places earned top scores. ★ Try 'em yourself, then tell us what you think at facebook.com/midwestlivingmag.

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PERFECT MARRIAGE

Curly fries snuggle alongside the Patty Melt at Westport Flea Market Bar and Grill in Kansas City, Missouri.



Redamak's NEW BUFFALO, MICHIGAN

The **Hamburgers** are cut, ground and pattied on-site then pan-fried, blanketed in Velveeta and wrapped in waxed paper (\$5). They're not organic or artisanal, and the only toppings are ketchup, mustard, pickles and onion. We're addicted, and we're not alone. Along Lake Michigan, seasonal Redamak's seats 400; you'll still have to wait for a table (269/469-4522; redamaks.com).

Roquette Burger Bistro CHARLEVOIX, MICHIGAN

With its **Bacon Jam Burger**, this lunch-only cafe tops a lean-yet-flavorful patty made of locally sourced beef and bison with a slab of Brie, a smear of bacon-onion compote and a thatch of peppery arugula (\$10). So in one bite, you get smoky-sweet-peppery-creamy perfection inspired by the farms that surround this popular tourist town (231/237-9016).



Oof. I'm full again just thinking about this place. It was HAPPY food.

HANNAH AGRAN @ STACK'D BAR

Scotty's Lakehouse FISHERS, INDIANA

Meat, eggs and produce from nearby farms flavor 15 specialty burgers (\$12-\$13.50 each) at this family-friendly spot on Indianapolis' northeast side. The **No. 9** boasts sauteed red onions, local baby Swiss, Scholars End Bakehouse sourdough and chipotle-Thousand Island dressing. Wash it down with a Hoosier-made brew, and finish it off with the Lemonheads that come with your check (317/577-2900; scottyslakehouse.com).

Stack'd Burger Bar MILWAUKEE

Pack breath mints or order a crème de menthe-spiked grasshopper shake if you're trying the **German Stack**: a beer-brat patty stuffed with jalapeños and blue cheese, topped with tangy sauerkraut and stone-ground mustard, and served on a chewy pretzel roll (\$10). Skip the fries in this Third Ward restaurant in favor of Harry's Fried Potent Pickle Coins, a salty, greasy revelation dunked in spicy ranch dip (414/273-7800; stackedbar.com).

The Thurman Cafe COLUMBUS, OHIO

Try to think of the two-hour wait for a table in German Village as time to work up your appetite for the \$9.99 three-quarter-pound **Thurman Burger**, known for its sliced ham, sauteed mushrooms and onions, mozzarella and American cheeses, banana peppers and mayo (614/443-1570; thethurmancafe.com).

Westport Flea Market Bar and Grill KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

Interior decor is not its claim to fame—calling it weathered would be accurate—but for 30 years, patrons have flocked here to order one of three burgers: a 5.5-ounce **Mini** (\$6.49), a 10-ounce **Burger** (\$7.99) or a **Patty Melt** (\$7.65). Pick from five cheeses and fall for the McGonigle beef with the first hot bite (816/931-1986; westportfleamarket.com). **ML**

WE ♥ MESSY BURGERS THAT OOZE CHEESE.

WE CAN'T STOP AT 25! WE TESTED 130 BURGERS FOR THIS STORY; THESE 9 BEG FOR TOP SPOTS, TOO

Erwin Cafe
In Chicago, garlic and pepper flavor pâté-like meat (773/528-7200; erwincafe.com).



The Greenhouse Tavern
Melted raclette reigns in Cleveland (216/443-0511; thegreenhouse-tavern.com).



Rusty Duck
Juicy charbroiled ground steak satisfies in small-town Dexter, Iowa (515/789-4142).



The Cozy Inn
Oniony sliders in Salina, Kansas, are a 90-year-old tradition (785/825-2699; cozyburger.com).



Stella and G
for great in Belle (402/25 stellastab)