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S'more to love!

34 gooey takes on a summer favorite

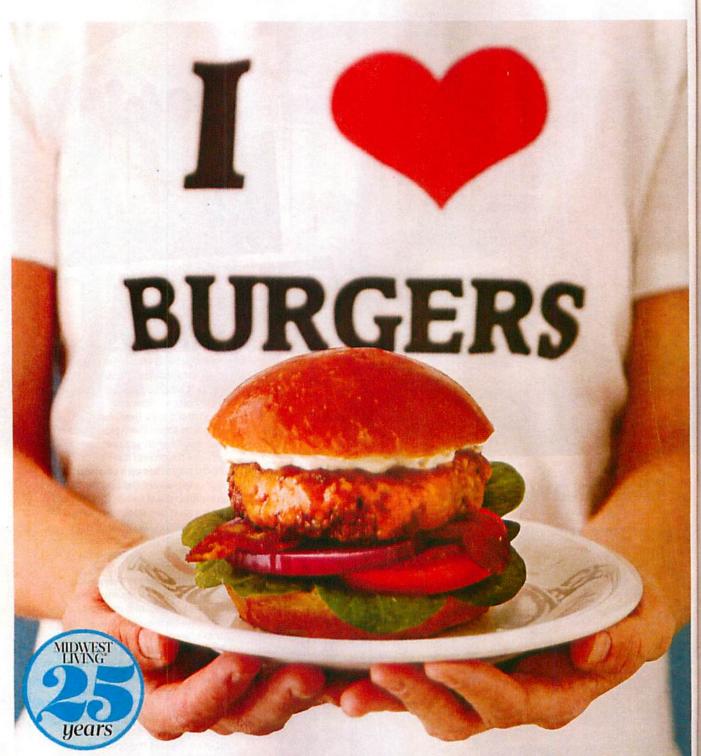
BURGER JOINTS

FIND YOUR
PERFECT LAKE
VACATION

Plus! FARMERS MARKET RECIPES

RESTFUL LAKE-HOME DECORATING





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.

PRODUCER Kendra L. Williams PHOTOGRAPHER Jay Wilde



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 threequarter-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). MAL

Roquette Burger Bistro CHARLEVOIX,

seasonal Redamak's seats 400; you'll still have to wait

for a table (269/469-4522; redamaks.com).

(\$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,

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-pepperycreamy perfection inspired by the farms that surround this popular tourist town (231/237-9016).

WE MESSY BURGERS THAT OOZE CHEESE

WE CAN'T STOP AT STORY, THESE 9 BEG FOR TOP SPOTS, TOO

We Use McGonigle's Beef

d to Order & Dressed by You!

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

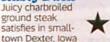


The Greenhouse Tavern Melted raclette reigns in Cleveland (216/443-O511; thegreenhouse tavern.com).



Rusty Duck Juicy charbroiled ground steak satisfies in small-

(515/789-4142)



The Cozy Inn Oniony sliders in

Salina, Kansas, are a 90-year-old tradition (785/825-2699: cozyburger.com).



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