



Waterloo to Waverly

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Northeast Iowa is a mixture of rolling farmland, rivers, and industrial towns. Irish workers came in the 1860s to work on the railroad and were soon followed by Germans, Danes, and Norwegians. Italians and Greeks arrived in the 1890s and worked in railroad shops. Polish and Russian Jews arrived at the turn of the century, while African Americans started coming after 1912; large numbers of Blacks came in search of jobs in the 1930s. Croatians and Bulgarians settled in the region from 1900-1920. Vietnamese and Lao came in the 1970s and 1980s. And in the 1980s and 1990s, Mexicans and Bosnians arrived. Waterloo's 4th St., a Main Street renovation, is the front door to an international district that includes Bosnian and Mexican restaurants and stores interspersed with businesses such as a jewelry store, a craft shop, a pawn broker, as well as cafes and other restaurants.

Waterloo today is home to the largest per capita population of African Americans, the largest settlement of Bosnians from Velika Kladusa (NW Bosnia) outside of Bosnia, Asian Indians, and a variety of 4th and 5th generation residents whose ancestors hail from various parts of Europe. The result for foodies is a delightful choice of restaurants, bakeries, markets, cafes, and festivals with foods from all over.

La Chiquita Market & Restaurant

301 E. 4th St.

Waterloo, IA 50703

319/235-2947



The Fourth Street Bridge connects east and west Waterloo, which is bisected by the Cedar River. Start your day at La Chiquita Tienda Mexicana y Restorante on East 4th and Lafayette with a hearty breakfast of migas (scrambled eggs mixed with shredded and crisped corn tortilla pieces, chorizo [a spicy pork sausage], onions, and green peppers), or huevos rancheros (fried eggs topped with a spicy red sauce. Served with beans, rice, and fresh-made tortillas and a choice of salsas, this meal is a healthy and filling start for the morning. While you're there, explore the tienda (store) and pick up some jars of salsa or mole, packages of tortillas, queso fresca (farmers' cheese), and tomatillos (little peppers resembling tomatoes and used to make salsa verde, green sauce).

Waterloo Center for the Arts

225 Commercial Street

Waterloo, Iowa 50701-1313

Phone (319) 291.4490

Fax (319) 291.4270

museum@waterloo-ia.org

Next, take yourself over to the Waterloo Center for the Arts on Commercial Street. The Art Center houses one of the best and largest American museum collections of Haitian art. There are fascinating and changing exhibits in the main gallery, the youth gallery, and along the wide hallway leading to the Waterloo Playhouse and Blackhawk Children's theatre. The gift shop, which features Iowa artists, offers a wonderful selection of contemporary jewelry, pottery, paintings, and more as well as Haitian tin and canvas paintings, books, and art treats for children.

Caffe Bar Diamont
W. 5th St.
Waterloo, IA 50701
515/236-6163

Europa Market
301 W. 5th St.
Waterloo, IA 50701
515/236-6163

**Grout Museum of
History & Science**
503 South St.
Waterloo, IA 50701
319-234-6357
www.groutmuseumdistrict.org

Galleria de Paco
622 Commercial Street
Waterloo, IA 50701
319/833-7226(PACO)
www.paco-rosic.com



Rudy's Tacos
2401 Falls Avenue
Waterloo, IA 50701
319/234-5686
www.rudystacosqc.com



If you're feeling a bit peckish, take yourself over to the Caffe Bar Diamont on West 5th and have a cup of strong Bosnian coffee (made like Turkish coffee by boiling the grounds), served in a small cup, usually with a piece of candy on the side and gently mixed with heavy cream and lump sugar. Try a piece of baklava or fruit pita (strudel) as well. Next door to the café is the Europa (Bosnian) market, complete with a selection of smoked meats and cheeses in the refrigerator case, jars of ayvar (a red pepper-eggplant spread or relish) and jams, fresh-baked bread, videos, dvds, fruit syrups for drinks, teas, and a huge selection of sweets (cookies, candies, flavored chocolates, and more). You can also purchase a coffee service and pans for baking pita (the generic term for strudel-like pastries filled with meat, vegetables, cheese, or fruit).

Now that you're replenished, visit the Grout Museum district and explore the exhibits in the main museum (Engine of the Heartland, a changing textile gallery, and a science display), the Imaginarium, and the Rensselaer Russell House. Check in at the office for information about special programs and tours. The Grout is especially known for its attention to the rural-urban connection in northeast Iowa and focuses on farming, local businesses, and, most recently, veterans' histories.

Before you travel over to Cedar Falls, make sure to stop by Galleria de Paco. This white tablecloth restaurant features a variety of foods from shrimp and grits to beef filets as well as a few Bosnian specialties. Eating here is a treat, but its real draw is the art: Paco Rosic's amazing frescos cover the ceilings and walls of the main restaurant. Paco, who came to Waterloo with his family in the 1990s, started out as a graffiti artist. After gallery showings in Waterloo, he made his way to New York City, where his work was shown there. Paco kept his Iowa connection, and a few years ago, was inspired to use his spray-painting talents to create his vision of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling. You have to see it to believe it!

Have a quick drink or coffee, or eat here, or take yourself over to Cedar Falls and check out Rudy's Tacos and its amazing collection of marionettes, which adorn the ceiling of this small restaurant. Founded by owner Barry Eastman in 1987, Rudy's started sourcing local foods in 1997 and never looked back. Eastman wanted to improve the quality of his restaurant's ingredients. Neighbor Kamyar Enshayan (Cedar Falls City Councilman; regional Buy Fresh, Buy Local Coordinator; UNI faculty, and Director of the University's Local Food Project) hooked Eastman up with a local farmer raising free range chickens. "The taste blew me away," remembers Barry, who became committed to purchasing not only local chickens but also as much local and sustainably grown tomatoes, lettuce, peppers, and other produce as he could get. Although he now relies on three to four nearby tomato growers, when Eastman put the word out that he wanted to purchase

local products, “his phone started ringing off the hook,” and people would bring him two tomatoes at a time or a shoebox full.

Zippy’s BBQ Shack
2010 Main St
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
(319) 266-5655



If your taste buds aren’t in the mood for chicken tacos with fresh, homemade salsa, you could try Zippy’s BBQ shack. The fragrant smoke and large stacks of wood piled outside of this local favorite are a BBQ lover’s magnet. Zippy’s features pit-smoked ribs and slow-cooked brisket as well as grilled burgers, chicken, and rib eye with a range of sides, including coleslaw, baked beans, potato salad or baked potatoes. Open for lunch and dinner, this BBQ shack provides the option of take away or, for those who can’t wait, of devouring the succulent meats at on-site picnic tables.

Roots Market
21st & Main Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319/266-3801
www.rootsmarket.net



Now that your tummy is full again, do make sure to visit Roots Market, just across the street. This well-stocked full-service locally-owned market prides itself on carrying as much local, sustainably produced fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy products, cheeses, honeys, maple syrup, and breads as possible. Owner Rob Stanley, formerly an organic farmer, took over the market in 2003. He wanted to provide an outlet for local and organic produce as well as to encourage and support sustainable farming and farmers in the region. His store’s “buy local” philosophy also extends to using the services of other Cedar Rapids’ businesses. Roots Market emphasizes first looking to local and regional products before purchasing elsewhere. All produce is organic or chemical-free. Among the other items available at Roots are Sutcliffe (hard) cider, Tiny But Mighty Popcorn, Shellrock honey, Maasdam’s Sorghum, Sparboe Farms eggs, Crystal Bell Farms milk, and a variety of poultry, beef, and pork from local lockers.

Hearst Center for the Arts
304 W Seerley Blvd
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
(319) 273-8641
www.hearstartcenter.com

Continue your exploration of Cedar Falls with a visit to the Hearst Center for the Arts. This gem of an art museum features the work of local and nationally known artists in its galleries and especially the artwork of book illustrators. The Hearst also offers a variety of art classes, lectures, and events as well as a gift shop stocked with fine jewelry, cards, and more.

Blackhawk Hotel
115 Main St
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
(319) 277-1161
www.blackhawk-hotel.com

If you’re feeling in need of a rest and overnight accommodations, consider checking into the historic Black Hawk hotel in downtown Cedar Falls. The small but elegantly furnished and very reasonably priced accommodations feature rooms with claw-footed tubs (as well as showers) in tiled bathrooms. The Main Street businesses surrounding the hotel include galleries, coffee shops, fashion boutiques, a fair trade gift shop, and more in this northeast Iowa college town.

**Martin's Brandenburg
Restaurant**

215 E. Bremer Ave

Waverly, IA

319/352-9170

www.martinsbrandenburg.com



After your rest, take a scenic drive on up to Waverly for dinner at Martin's Brandenburg restaurant. German immigrant Martin Vollmer and his Iowa-born wife, Beverly, created a restaurant that features traditional Bavarian and other German specialties for lunch, dinner, and Sunday brunch. Over 50% of Iowan's have some degree of German background, and this restaurant caters to that heritage. As an added bonus, the Vollmers are committed to purchasing locally produced meats, vegetables, and fruits. Try the zarter schweinebraten mit kartoffelbrei (roast pork loin served with sauerkraut and mashed potatoes) and finish your meal with pflaumen kuchen mit sahne (plum cake with whipped cream).

Top off your northeast Iowa day with a performance at the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center back in Cedar Falls. This multi-function facility offers musical concerts, plays, and dance performances from national touring, regional, and local artists.

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http://www.iowaartscouncil.org/programs/folk-and-traditional-arts/place_based_foods/index.htm

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