

Town Hopper Visits...Mount Pleasant

From spelunkers to scrap bookers to swing dancers to sports collectors...all will find pleasantries in Hawthorne, Thornwood and Valhalla

BY NANCY A. SHENKER

Just head south on 117, zoom past Pleasantville, and you'll discover three hamlets in the Town of Mount Pleasant that boast an eclectic mix of residences, corporate parks, industrial services, and retail businesses. The area just south of Chappaqua is a real find for shoppers and foodies.

Chow Down Towns

In the inaugural Town Hopper article, we established that people will often travel outside their town for new eats. You'll find plenty of varied dining options in these three towns. Ace on Commerce Street in Thornwood is a great spot for French/Asian cuisine. This tiny treasure contains just a few precious tables and a sushi bar, so you're best visiting in off-hours or making reservations.

Swadee House of Thai Food offers a lunch buffet for \$11.95 as well as a complete menu of Thai specialties—a perfect spicy midday boost.

A strip of restaurants across from the Valhalla train station includes a veritable international feast, including the Indian Mughal Palace, and So Damn Hot, a funky little lunch spot with a mean cup of chili and an impressive display of hot sauce bottles. Winzig's Deli in Hawthorne has been preparing sandwiches for more than 75 years and its proprietor, Lillian "Lilly" Winzig Windsor used to be a renowned opera singer. The deli displays a picture of Commerce Street when it was still a dirt road.

With the cold weather approaching, carb-laden options hold special appeal. Trotta's of Thornwood (also on Commerce Street) is a pasta-lovers paradise. Just in time for the holidays, this amazing little Italian specialty shop is featuring homemade pumpkin ravioli. Fresh mozzarella is always on hand, as is a freezer case packed with "take home and heat up" Italian favorites.



The Cliffs at Valhalla is a hot spot for fun and challenging birthday parties and for children and adults honing their climbing skills.

If you have any room left, you can top it off with a self-assembled cannoli with Trotta's homemade filling.

After all this great food, you are bound to have worked up a thirst. Berlin Imports of Thornwood sells more than 100 varieties of beer (like Blithering Idiot Ale and Rogue Shakespeare Stout), exotic coffee beverages and soda. They've been in Thornwood since 1975.

Collector's Corner

Sports fans and collectors have two very different options. Last Licks in Thornwood is a slick and contemporary sports collector's paradise. (And the kids can eat homemade ice cream while you browse.) But just

up the road in Hawthorne sits Let's Deal/The Great Scoop Cafe, where old comics and action figures (like Mole Man) are piled high and stuffed into nooks and crannies. Jim has owned the shop for 16 years and makes his own ice cream sandwiches and egg creams.

Rainy Day Diversions

Whether you're an action-seeker or a table-sitter, you'll find something to entertain.

In the mood to rappel? The Cliffs at Valhalla is an indoor climbing facility with more than 13,000 square feet of "terrain" and classes that include a two-hour family climbing class for beginners.

Are colorful clippings more appealing to you than cliffhanging? The Creative Cul-de-Sac on Elwood Avenue in Hawthorne offers classes for kids (4 and up) and adults and boasts one of the largest collections of rubber stamps and stickers in the area.

Of course, most Chappaqua residents have discovered The All Westchester Saw Mill Multiplex in Hawthorne and its choice of eight newly-released films.



Or, put on those dancing shoes, town hop and start hop-pin' all over the dance floor. All three towns seem to have an abundance of dance studios—from beginner tap dancing for tots to ballroom dancing for late-life Freds and Gingers.

A kids' cooking school will soon be opening at the Rose Hill Shopping Center in Valhalla too. Rachael Ray...your competition is coming!

Odds and Ends

Every conceivable appliance—from an old fashioned percolator and pop-up toaster to the latest flat-screen TVs and ultra-cool wine fridges—line the floors and shelves of Berger's Appliances of Hawthorne. And, rather than making the trek to a "big box" office supply store, you can visit Office Essentials of Thornwood. You might just find the ribbon for that old manual typewriter you refuse to trade in for a PC or MAC.

Enjoy your pleasant Mount Pleasant town hop! And be sure to send YOUR suggestions for towns and businesses to: townhopper@insidechappaqua.com

Did You Know...

Several famous people are buried in the Kensico Cemetery in Valhalla, including Billie Burke who played Glinda the Good Witch in the 1939 film classic, *The Wizard of Oz*; bandleader Tommy Dorsey; *New Yorker* cartoonist Peter Arno; CBS-TV News President Fred Friendly; baseball star Lou Gehrig; film star Danny Kaye; pianist and conductor Sergei Rachmaninoff; and author and philosopher Ayn Rand.

The town of Hawthorne was named after Rose Hawthorne, daughter of author Nathaniel Hawthorne. She established the Rosary Hill Home to care for people suffering from cancer. (A Rosary Hill Home facility still stands in Hawthorne.)

The 1987 movie "Fatal Attraction" was filmed in Valhalla.

Want still more town trivia? Visit <http://epodunk.com/>.

Nancy A. Shenker is a confirmed town-hopper. A resident of Chappaqua/ Briarcliff Manor/Mount Pleasant, she runs a marketing consultancy called the ONswitch® in Thornwood and hops all over Westchester and the tri-state area—wherever her clients or her daughter's soccer opponents happen to be.



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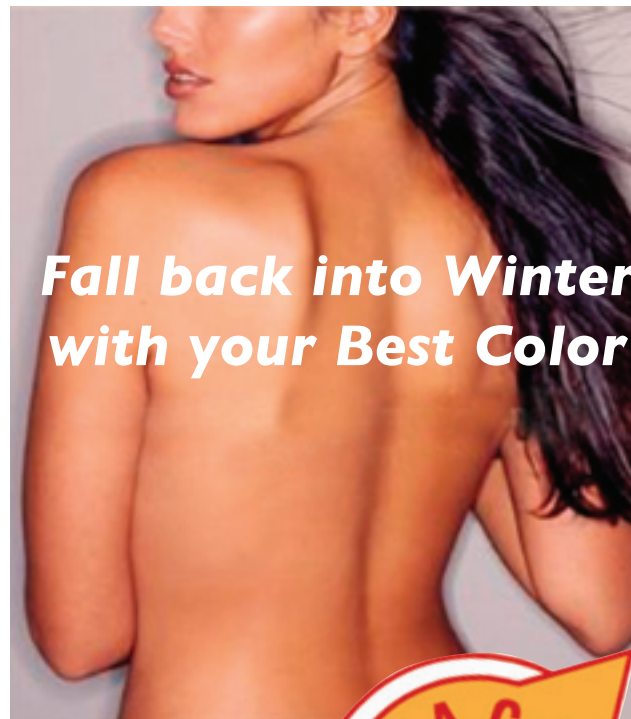
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