

SMALL TOWNS OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY

Hidden gems in your own backyard

The Lehigh Valley's character lives as much in its small boroughs as in its cities.

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EMMAUS

Lehigh County (just south of Allentown, at the base of South Mountain) — A Moravian-rooted borough repeatedly recognized among Pennsylvania's best small towns (including Money magazine's 'Best Places to Live'). Its tree-lined Main Street offers independent shops, restaurants, a strong craft-beer scene (Funk Brewing, Illumination Brewing, and beer mecca Shangy's The Beer Authority), the year-round Sunday Emmaus Farmers' Market at Triangle Park, and Shelley Park along the Little Lehigh Creek.

NAZARETH

Northampton County (founded by Moravians in 1740) — Home to the world headquarters and factory of C.F. Martin & Co. guitars, where you can take a guided factory tour and tour a free museum of 200+ vintage instruments. Downtown clusters around walkable Central Square, which hosts a Saturday farmers market in the warm months. (Note: the former Nazareth Speedway, which helped launch the Andretti racing dynasty, closed in 2004 and was demolished — it survives only as local racing lore.)

HELLERTOWN

Northampton County (just south of Bethlehem) — Home to Lost River Caverns, an open, year-round natural cave attraction (52F inside) with five crystal-lined chambers, gem panning and a gift shop. Hellertown's reviving Main Street anchors the northern trailhead of the flat, 7.5-mile Saucon Rail Trail, ideal for walking and biking south toward Coopersburg.

BANGOR

Northampton County (in the Slate Belt of the northern valley) — A classic Slate Belt town that grew on quarrying and still nods to that industrial heritage. Its beloved annual tradition is the Blue Valley Farm Show (marking 80 years in 2026), a family farm fair with rides, agricultural exhibits, food and entertainment each August.

BATH

Northampton County (at the head of the Monocacy Creek, on the Lehigh Valley limestone plain) — A small borough northwest of Bethlehem best known for its lively annual Halloween Parade each October and a slowly growing downtown dining scene. (Bath sits near, but is not part of, the Slate Belt, and is about 14 miles from Bangor with Wind Gap roughly between them.)

MACUNGIE

Lehigh County (southwestern Lehigh Valley) — A storybook village of tree-lined streets and historic homes centered on Macungie Memorial Park, host to Das Awkscht Fescht — one of the nation's largest antique and classic car shows (2,500+ cars, 63rd annual in 2026, typically the first weekend of August) — plus a summer concert series.

SLATINGTON

Lehigh County (on the banks of the Lehigh River, Northern Lehigh) — Laid out in 1851 by the Lehigh Slate Company, this quiet former quarry town offers Lehigh River access and a direct connection from its trailhead to the D&L Trail and the Slate Heritage Trail, with a Main Street beginning to draw new businesses.

TIPS & PLANNING

Plan around the signature events: Das Awkscht Fescht in Macungie and the Blue Valley Farm Show in Bangor both fall in early-mid August, while Bath's Halloween Parade is a late-October draw. For year-round options, Lost River Caverns (Hellertown) is open daily and Martin Guitar (Nazareth) offers weekday factory tours — call ahead or reserve. Many of these towns connect to regional trails (Saucon Rail Trail from Hellertown; D&L and Slate Heritage Trails from Slatington), so bring a bike. Sunday mornings are ideal for the Emmaus Farmers' Market at Triangle Park. Most highlights are 20-40 minutes apart by car, so two or three towns make a comfortable day trip.

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