

# MORRIS

## health & life

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The BEST of Morris



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# tasty treats & eats



Hot Rods BBQ

## BBQ

**1 HOT RODS BBQ** 19 N. Main St., Wharton, 973.361.5050. Residents rev their engines for this BBQ pit decorated with picnic-plaid tablecloths and race-car posters. Still, it's the smoked meat that's really hot, from pulled pork to baby back ribs. Your inner 10-year-old boy may drool over the décor, but even the most polished palate appreciates Rods' smoky flavor and tender texture.

**2 TEXAS SMOKE BBQ** 435 Green Pond Rd., Rockaway, 862.209.4078

**3 THE PIT BBQ** 178 Broad St., Bloomfield, 973.743.0086

**3 THE WOOD PIT** 108 Bloomfield Ave., Montclair, 973.954.4679

## CAKES

### 1 THE ARTIST BAKER

14-16 Cattano Ave., Morristown, 973.267.5540. The gene of baking brilliance didn't skip a generation here. At The Artist Baker, mother-and-daughter pastry chefs Andrea Lekberg and Fran Davidson bake cream scones, pear tarts and chocolate-chip cookies. Their celebration cakes, elaborate centerpieces for any occasion, won your vote.

### 1 PINK CAKE BOX

18 E. Main St. #101, Denville, 973.998.4445. Cake Boss, schmake boss. Pastry chef Anne Heap proves eggs, flour and girl power are key ingredients for designer delicacies. Her towering custom creations are sumptuous, with marzipan bows and glittery flowers. Need a cake shaped like a Yorkie or painted like your favorite Monet? This bakery's got you covered.

**2 BELLA'S BAKERY** 286 Essex St., Millburn, 973.921.1337

**3 MARA'S CAFÉ AND BAKERY** 25 E. Main St., Denville, 973.625.0901



Pink Cake Box

## BAGELS

**1 Mountain Lakes Bagel & Deli** 350 Route 46, Mountain Lakes, 973.627.4999

**2 Hot Bagels Abroad** 1129 Broad St., Bloomfield, 973.338.9616

**3 Bagelicious Inc.** 179 Route 46, Rockaway, 973.586.0194

## BURGERS

**1 Arthur's Tavern** 700 Speedwell Ave., Morris Plains, 973.455.9705

**2 Next Door** 556 Bloomfield Ave., Montclair, 973.744.3600

**3 The Second Half on Main** 5 E. Main St., Denville, 973.784.4040

**3 Smashburger** 15 Bloomfield Ave., Montclair, 973.433.7343

## CANDY

**1 Nagel's Candy Barn** 358 Route 10, Randolph, 973.361.1688

**2 Expressions** 32 Broadway #2, Denville, 973.625.0025

**2 Holsten's Brookdale Confectionery** 1063 Broad St., Bloomfield, 973.338.7091

**3 Enjou Chocolat** 8 DeHart St., Morristown, 973.993.9090

## COOKIES

**1 Calandra's Italian and French Bakery** 244 Route 46, Fairfield, 973.227.5008

**2 Viking Bakery** 34 First Ave., Denville, 973.627.7333

**3 Swiss Chalet Bakery** 176 South St., Morristown, 973.267.0092

## CUPCAKES

**1 The Stuffed Cupcake Place** 231 Franklin Ave., Nutley, 973.667.7778

**2 The Cupcake Corral** 410 Ridge-wood Rd., Maplewood, 973.327.2286

**2 Sugar Mommy Cupcakes** 60 Diamond Spring Rd., Denville, 973.625.6900

**3 Swiss Chalet Bakery** 176 South St., Morristown, 973.267.0092

## DIM SUM

**1 Hunan Taste Chinese Restaurant** 67 Bloomfield Ave., Denville, 973.625.2782

**2 Sogo Hibachi Grill** 248 Route 46, Denville, 973.784.4981

**3 Midori Japanese Restaurant** 3130 Route 10 West, Denville, 973.537.8588

## GELATO

**1 Mara's Cafe & Bakery** 25 E. Main St., Denville, 973.625.0901

**2 South Street Creamery** 146 South St., Morristown, 973.267.8887

**3 Gelato Giuliana NJ** 49 Church St., Montclair, 973.744.6464

## MILK SHAKES

**1 McCool's Ice Cream and Coffee Bar** 26 Main St., Madison, 866.506.6153

**2 Denville Dairy** 34A Broadway, Denville, 973.627.4214

**3 D'Lites of West Caldwell** 554 Passaic Ave., West Caldwell, 973.882.0080

**3 South Street Creamery** 146 South St., Morristown, 973.267.8887

by Lisa Robyn Kruse

## MORRIS

# Mix

Your guide to local trends, treasures and well-kept secrets

### LOCAL FLAVOR

#### Pit stop

It all started with a pig roast. "It was just one of those things," explains Anthony Sibona, co-owner of **Hot Rod's Real Pit BBQ** in Wharton. "The first pig roast I did for myself. The next, a friend asked me to do, and then it became a part-time job. I just kept going." The end result is a barbeque hotspot where, regulars say, the food rivals some of the best down-home cooking anywhere.

Sibona, who has an extensive background in the restaurant business, started Hot Rod's as a small neighborhood place in Mine Hill. It proved so popular, however, that he and his wife/co-owner Toby opted to expand to the current 60-seat location.

Though he may have stumbled into the barbeque business by chance, Sibona says that the popularity of his cuisine is no accident; it took plenty of trial and error, taste-testing and travel to the country's soul-food capitals to get the recipe just right. "What makes us special is that we try to keep our menu very simple," he says. "Everything is made fresh, and we cook everything on location."

Among the spot's must-have dishes are the pork ribs, smoked in-house (\$19.99 for a full slab); the pulled pork sandwich (\$8.29); homemade, made-to-order coleslaw (\$2.29) and warm cornbread with maple butter (complimentary in the dining room, or \$2.29 for an extra order). The barbeque sauce is made on the premises, as are all the dry rubs. You can also find a couple of Jersey twists: Southwestern lasagna, jambalaya, meatloaf—even a vegetarian wrap. "It's Yankee barbeque," Sibona notes. "Since I'm from New Jersey, I wanted to cook from my heart."

Because few Garden Staters know true barbeque when they taste it, the Sibonas train their staff to make sure each employee is knowledgeable. True to the "Hot Rod" name, the interior is chock-full of classic car and motorcycle memorabilia, and there are always crayons—as well as a miniature car—on hand for the kids.



"Yankee barbecue" awaits at Hot Rod's in Wharton.

"I love Hot Rod's," confesses Andy Hauschild of Morris Plains. "My husband loves the

ribs, and I love the chicken. It's all so good."

PS. If you want to taste how it all began, you can have Hot Rod's cater a pig roast for your next gathering. The basic roast costs \$650 and feeds up to 125 adults.

Hot Rod's Real Pit BBQ, 19 North Main Street, Wharton; 973-361-5050; [www.hotrodsbbq.com](http://www.hotrodsbbq.com) continued