

ST. PATRICK'S DAY

It's a fine time for an Irish tour of Toledo

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It's St. Patrick's Day in Toledo and you feel like celebrating. You've got the luck of the Irish. Your "Kiss me, I'm Irish" button stands at the ready. Make no blarney about it, you are ready to roll. But once you've had your fill of traditional Jiggs dinners, Irish bands, and people dressed in green, you may be ready for something different. Consider this Irish-inspired tour of the area to get you started.

1. Historic Church of St. Patrick, 130 Avondale Ave.

This Gothic downtown structure, where Mass was first celebrated in 1899, has a beautiful interior marked by a floor inlaid with shamrocks. Its counterpart in Dublin, St. Patrick's Cathedral, is considerably older, dating back to the 13th century. St. Patrick is believed to have baptized converts at a well once existing in the neighboring park, which is why a church has stood at the site since the 5th century.

2. Toledo Leprechauns Soccer League, 3215 West Sylvania Ave.

Some of the kids who play in this recreation league for ages 3 through 14 may be about the same size as the tiny figures of Celtic folktales. Catch one of these little soccer players, though, and you're unlikely to end up with a pot of gold. There are other differences too, as you'll learn if you go to the National Leprechaun Museum, which opened in Dublin this month.

3. Toledo-Lucas County Public Library Main Branch, 325 North Michigan St.

Want to start learning a little Gaelic, an official language in Ireland? Head over to the library and check out *The Gaelic-English Dictionary*. When you're done poking through the book, you can celebrate by toasting "Slainte!," the way the Irish say "cheers." It means "health."

4. Shamrock Drive, West Toledo

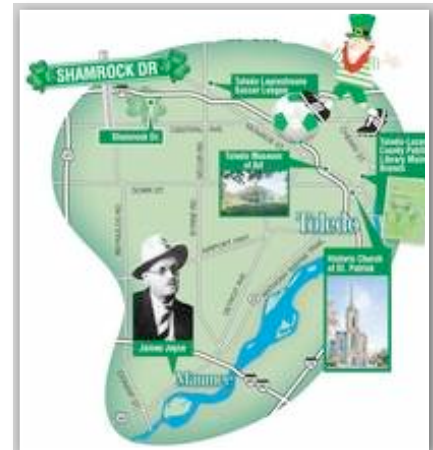
Ireland may be known as the Emerald Isle, but Toledo has its own emerald aisle (in the summer, at least, when things are green around here) providing access through one West Toledo neighborhood. Just make sure that you don't drink and drive when you visit - keep that Shamrock Shake in the cup holder.

5. James Joyce, Maumee

What are the odds that Ireland's most esteemed novelist has settled in northwest Ohio? Not good, given that the author of *Finnegans Wake* died in 1941, but at least several area residents carry his name. One of them, a 72-year-old whose son also is a James Joyce, has all the bona fides, including Irish ancestry and familiarity with some of the author's works. Just don't ask him to explain *Ulysses*.

6. Toledo Museum of Art, 2445 Monroe St

If your hunger for all things Ireland still hasn't been satisfied, the solution may be crystal clear. At the museum's Glass Pavilion you can contemplate American Dale Chihuly's strange chandelier *Campiello del Remer #2*. It may not sound Irish or look Irish, but the glass elements of the sculpture were made at the Waterford Crystal Factory in Ireland.



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