



WELCOME TO NOTRE DAME & SOUTH BEND!

Things to Do During Your Visit

Conference Dates: July 27–29, 2026

Whether you're extending your stay before or after the conference, or simply looking for activities between sessions, the South Bend region offers a variety of cultural attractions, dining experiences, outdoor recreation, and nearby destinations.

CONFERENCE HOST FAVORITES

If you only have a few free hours, start here:

Café Navarre

South Bend's signature dining destination. The wild mushroom soup alone has converted many self-proclaimed mushroom skeptics.

*"Café Navarre is my go-to spot for elevated dining without the sticker shock. And trust me, even if you think you don't like mushrooms, the wild mushroom soup might just change your mind." – **Laura Bellis***

Dainty Maid Food Hall

A modern brunch and lunch destination known for creative dishes, excellent coffee, and an inviting atmosphere.

*"If you are looking for a brunch spot, look no further than Dainty Maid Food Hall. From world cuisine inspired dishes like the must-try breakfast ramen, to excellent coffee and pastries, there is something for everyone. And do not skip the smashburgers, easily some of the best in town." – **Alyssandra Howe***

Howard Park Public House

A welcoming gastropub that offers an inviting atmosphere and a diverse menu of delicious food and drinks.

“Howard Park Public House is a great restaurant with incredible burgers and amazing Asian tots, and a bevy of dinner items that all taste incredible! The drink selection is also fantastic, with many craft beers as well as a nice selection of wines.” – KJ Freeman

Salvation Bar

South Bend's newest nightlife destination.

“My favorite is the newest cocktail bar in town, Salvation Bar. I love their elderflower spritz! On Tuesdays, they have \$8 margaritas. Great vibes all around.” – Colette Whitton

EXPLORE THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Campus Landmarks

Basilica of the Sacred Heart

One of the finest collegiate churches in the United States, featuring stunning stained glass windows and Gothic Revival architecture.

Clarke Memorial Fountain (“Stonehenge”)

Dedicated in 1986, Clarke Memorial Fountain (“Stonehenge”) commemorates the approximately 500 Notre Dame alumni who gave their lives in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Each Veterans Day, Notre Dame ROTC students honor them with a ceremonial vigil.

Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes

A peaceful devotional site inspired by the original grotto in Lourdes, France.

Hesburgh Library (“Touchdown Jesus”)

The university's primary library, famous for the massive “Word of Life” mural visible from Notre Dame Stadium.

Main Building (Golden Dome)

The iconic symbol of the University of Notre Dame and one of the most recognizable landmarks in higher education.

[Notre Dame Stadium](#)

Home of the Fighting Irish and one of the most storied venues in college athletics.

[St. Mary's Lake & St. Joseph Lake](#)

Scenic lakes connected by walking and running paths that provide some of the most picturesque views on campus.

Arts & Culture

[DeBartolo Performing Arts Center](#)

Notre Dame's premier venue for theater, music, film, and cultural programming.

[Raclin Murphy Museum of Art](#)

A free art museum featuring collections that span centuries and cultures.

DINING & EVENING ACTIVITIES

Upscale & Special Occasion Dining

[Cafe Navarre](#)

One of South Bend's premier dining destinations, offering French- and Italian-inspired cuisine in a beautifully restored historic bank building.

[Cascade](#)

An elegant steak and seafood restaurant offering a polished dining experience for celebrations and professional dinners.

[Corndance Tavern](#)

An upscale American tavern known for locally sourced ingredients, premium steaks, and a warm atmosphere.

[No. 6 Scratch Kitchen](#)

A seasonal bistro focused on fresh ingredients and innovative dishes.

[Roselily](#)

A chef-driven farm-to-table restaurant emphasizing seasonal ingredients and creative cuisine.

Yesterday's Food & Spirits

A South Bend institution known for classic American cuisine and one of the area's most impressive dessert selections.

Local Favorites

Fiddler's Hearth

A lively Irish pub featuring traditional Irish fare, live music, and a welcoming atmosphere.

Howard Park Public House

Located adjacent to Howard Park, this restaurant serves elevated comfort food, craft beverages, and seasonal specials.

Nick's Patio

A classic 24-hour diner serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner around the clock.

Scoobie's

Casual counter-service sandwich shop offering a broad menu of subs, hot sandwiches, burgers, and comfort-food favorites, including vegetarian options.

Sun King Brewery

An Indiana-based craft brewery featuring a rotating selection of beers and a casual social atmosphere.

The General Deli & Café

Known for creative sandwiches, house-made pastries, and specialty coffee drinks.

The Lauber

A neighborhood favorite known for artisan pizzas, craft cocktails, and a lively yet relaxed atmosphere.

International Cuisine

Cambodian Thai

One of the area's most beloved international restaurants, serving Thai and Cambodian dishes with bold flavors and generous portions.

Caracas Bistro

A Venezuelan restaurant known for arepas, empanadas, and authentic South American cuisine.

Carmela's Italian Restaurant

A local favorite serving traditional Italian dishes and classic comfort foods.

Kate's African Cuisine

Offers a diverse menu inspired by African culinary traditions in a warm and welcoming environment.

Koto Japanese Steakhouse & Sushi

Offers hibachi-style dining alongside sushi and Japanese favorites.

KPOT Korean BBQ & Hot Pot

An interactive dining experience where guests prepare Korean barbecue and hot pot dishes directly at the table.

Noku Asian Fusion & Sushi

A contemporary restaurant serving sushi, Asian-inspired dishes, and creative specialty rolls.

On Campus & Eddy Street Commons

Bibibop Asian Grill

Customizable Korean-inspired rice bowls with fresh vegetables and proteins.

JINYA Ramen Bar

Known for rich broths, handcrafted noodles, and Japanese-inspired small plates.

Krak Boba

A favorite stop for bubble tea and specialty drinks.

Legends of Notre Dame

A longtime Notre Dame gathering place offering casual dining, drinks, and live entertainment.

O'Rourke's Public House

A neighborhood Irish pub serving comfort food and a wide selection of beer and whiskey.

Purely Pressed

Fresh juices, smoothies, acai bowls, and healthy grab-and-go options.

[Rohr's](#)

Located inside the Morris Inn, offering upscale American dining in the heart of campus.

[Tous les Jours Bakery & Café](#)

A Korean-French bakery featuring pastries, breads, cakes, and specialty coffee drinks.

COFFEE, BREAKFAST & SWEET TREATS

Breakfast & Coffee

[Cat Lady Café](#)

Part coffee shop and part cat lounge, this unique café allows guests to enjoy coffee while spending time with adoptable cats. A memorable stop for animal lovers and anyone looking for something a little different.

[Chicory Cafe](#)

A New Orleans-inspired café serving beignets, gumbo, sandwiches, coffee, and specialty drinks. Depending on the evening, visitors may also find trivia nights or live music.

[Cloud Walking Coffee](#)

A modern café known for thoughtfully sourced coffee and a minimalist atmosphere. Popular with students, faculty, and local coffee enthusiasts.

[Dainty Maid Food Hall](#)

A popular brunch and lunch destination featuring specialty coffee, pastries, and globally inspired dishes. The breakfast ramen and smashburgers have developed a particularly loyal local following.

[Morning Mule](#)

A popular brunch destination known for creative breakfast dishes, specialty cocktails, and a lively atmosphere. Great for groups looking to start the day together.

[Original Pancake House](#)

A longtime local breakfast favorite serving German pancakes, omelets, waffles, and traditional breakfast fare.

[South Bend Chocolate Café](#)

Part café, part chocolate shop, and part local attraction, offering sandwiches, desserts, coffee drinks, and handcrafted chocolates. Be sure to browse the chocolate selection while you're there.

Steelyard Coffee Co.

A locally owned coffee roaster serving expertly crafted coffee drinks and fresh pastries. A favorite among locals looking for high-quality coffee in a relaxed setting.

Uptown Kitchen

One of the area's most popular brunch spots, serving elevated breakfast and lunch fare in a bright and welcoming setting. Particularly well-suited for larger groups.

ICE CREAM & BAKERIES

Bonnie Doon Drive-In

A Michiana institution famous for its orange-vanilla shakes, classic drive-in fare, and nostalgic atmosphere. For many locals, it's a rite of passage and a summer tradition.

Crystal Springs Creamery

A local creamery offering fresh dairy products and handcrafted ice cream. A great stop for those interested in farm-to-table experiences.

Marci's Bakery

A beloved local bakery known for cakes, pastries, cookies, and seasonal desserts. A favorite stop for sweet treats and special occasions alike.

Murphy's Ice Cream

Located in Eddy Street Commons, Murphy's serves premium ice cream just steps from campus. An easy and popular stop after dinner or an evening walk around Notre Dame.

PaddyShack Ice Cream

Frequently cited by locals as one of the area's best ice cream shops. Known for generous portions, creative flavors, and its signature "Paddy Scoop" sample.

Ritter's Frozen Custard

Specializes in rich frozen custard, sundaes, and rotating flavors. A dependable choice for dessert throughout the year.

Talking Horse Ice Cream

A locally owned shop offering unique flavors and a welcoming atmosphere. A favorite stop for families and ice cream enthusiasts.

The Chief

A seasonal ice cream destination in nearby Goshen that has attracted generations of loyal customers. Worth the drive for anyone exploring Elkhart County.

MUSEUMS & ATTRACTIONS

East Race Waterway

The first artificial whitewater rafting course in North America. During the summer season, visitors can experience guided rafting adventures right in downtown South Bend.

Indiana Dinosaur Museum

Features fossil displays, interactive exhibits, and educational programming focused on prehistoric life. A fun stop for families and anyone with an interest in natural history.

Potawatomi Zoo

Indiana's oldest zoo, home to hundreds of animals from around the world. The zoo offers a family-friendly experience with exhibits, train rides, and seasonal events.

South Bend Chocolate Company Factory & Museum

Learn about the chocolate-making process while sampling some of the area's most famous sweet treats. Visitors can tour the facility and browse an extensive selection of chocolates and gifts.

South Bend Cubs Baseball

The South Bend Cubs provide an affordable and entertaining Minor League Baseball experience at Four Winds Field. The team regularly hosts themed promotions, fireworks nights, and family-friendly events throughout the summer.

South Bend Museum of Art

Located in downtown South Bend, the museum showcases contemporary and regional art through rotating exhibitions and community programming. Admission is free.

Studebaker National Museum

One of the region's signature attractions, showcasing South Bend's automotive heritage through historic vehicles, presidential carriages, and interactive exhibits.

The History Museum & Oliver Mansion

Explore the stories, industries, and families that shaped South Bend through exhibits and a tour of the beautifully preserved Oliver Mansion.

PARKS, NATURE & OUTDOOR RECREATION

Bendix Woods County Park

A beautiful natural area featuring hiking trails, picnic areas, and one of Indiana's remaining stands of old-growth forest.

Howard Park

A popular community gathering space featuring green space, walking paths, seasonal programming, and nearby dining options. One of downtown South Bend's most active public spaces.

Mishawaka Riverwalk

A scenic riverside pathway connecting parks, restaurants, and public spaces throughout downtown Mishawaka. Particularly enjoyable for morning walks and evening strolls.

Potato Creek State Park

One of northern Indiana's most popular state parks, offering hiking, kayaking, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Shiojiri Japanese Garden

A peaceful garden celebrating Mishawaka's sister-city relationship with Shiojiri, Japan. A quiet retreat tucked away along the river.

St. Patrick's County Park

Known for wooded trails, river access, and beautiful natural scenery. A favorite destination for outdoor recreation close to Notre Dame.

Gardens & Nature Centers

Fernwood Botanical Garden

A peaceful botanical garden and nature preserve located just across the Michigan border. Features walking trails, native plants, and seasonal displays.

Wellfield Botanic Gardens

A beautifully maintained collection of themed gardens and water features located in Elkhart. One of the region's hidden gems.

SHOPPING & ANTIQUING

Shopping

[Downtown Mishawaka](#)

A walkable district along the St. Joseph River featuring restaurants, parks, public art, and community gathering spaces.

[Downtown South Bend](#)

Home to many of the area's best restaurants, museums, coffee shops, and nightlife destinations. Easy to explore on foot and well worth an afternoon or evening visit.

[Eddy Street Commons](#)

Located adjacent to Notre Dame, this mixed-use district features restaurants, cafés, shops, and entertainment options within walking distance of campus.

[University Park Mall](#)

The region's primary shopping destination, featuring national retailers, specialty shops, and dining options.

Antiquing & Vintage Shopping

[Downtown Goshen](#)

A charming downtown district known for independent retailers, antique shops, local restaurants, and a thriving arts community.

[Downtown Niles, Michigan](#)

A favorite destination for antique enthusiasts, featuring numerous antique stores and vintage shops within a historic downtown setting.

[Shipshewana](#)

One of the Midwest's premier destinations for antiques, handcrafted furniture, quilts, and Amish-made goods. Visitors can easily spend an entire day browsing shops and markets.

Regional Antique Malls

[Northern Indiana](#) and [southwest Michigan](#) are home to numerous antique malls and vintage markets that attract collectors from throughout the Midwest.

FARMERS MARKETS & SEASONAL EVENTS

[South Bend Farmers Market](#)

Open year-round and especially vibrant during the summer season. Features local produce, baked goods, flowers, specialty foods, and artisan products from regional vendors.

[Mishawaka Market](#)

Held on Sundays, this community market features local produce, baked goods, artisan products, and seasonal offerings.

[Battell Park Summer Concert Series](#)

A seasonal outdoor concert series held in one of Mishawaka's most beautiful parks. A relaxing way to spend a summer evening.

[Elkhart ArtWalk](#)

A monthly celebration of local art, music, culture, and small businesses throughout downtown Elkhart. Particularly enjoyable on summer evenings.

[Elkhart County 4-H Fair](#) (Saturday, June 27 - Saturday, August 8, 2026)

One of the largest county fairs in the nation, featuring livestock exhibitions, concerts, carnival rides, food vendors, agricultural showcases, and family-friendly entertainment. A longstanding Northern Indiana tradition, the fair offers a unique opportunity to experience the region's agricultural heritage and community spirit.

Conference attendees arriving early may wish to visit during the fair's opening weeks.

[South Bend Cubs Promotional Nights](#)

Throughout the summer, the South Bend Cubs host themed events, giveaways, fireworks, and special promotions that add to the game-day experience.

LAKE MICHIGAN & REGIONAL DESTINATIONS

Lake Michigan Beaches

[Indiana Dunes State Park](#)

One of the Midwest's premier natural attractions, featuring towering sand dunes, hiking trails, and expansive Lake Michigan shoreline.

New Buffalo Beach

Combines beautiful Lake Michigan beaches with a walkable downtown filled with restaurants, shops, and wineries. One of the easiest and most popular beach day trips from South Bend.

Silver Beach County Park (St. Joseph)

Often considered the premier beach destination in southwest Michigan, offering sandy shoreline, a nearby carousel, and easy access to downtown St. Joseph.

Warren Dunes State Park

Known for its dramatic sand dunes and panoramic Lake Michigan views. Popular for hiking, swimming, and photography.

Washington Park Beach

Located in Michigan City, this beach offers easy access, a historic lighthouse, and family-friendly amenities close to downtown attractions.

Weko Beach

A quieter alternative to some of the region's larger beaches. Visitors appreciate its relaxed atmosphere and natural beauty.

Southwest Michigan Wine Country

Dablon Vineyards

A boutique winery known for estate-grown wines and a scenic tasting room. Offers a relaxed atmosphere and beautiful vineyard views.

Round Barn Winery & Estate

One of the region's most popular winery destinations, combining wine, beer, spirits, live music, and outdoor events. Particularly appealing for groups and first-time visitors.

St. Julian Winery

Michigan's oldest winery, offering a wide variety of wines and tasting experiences. A great introduction to the region's wine industry.

Tabor Hill Winery

Combines award-winning wines with a full-service restaurant and scenic vineyard setting. A popular destination for both tastings and dining.

[Lemon Creek Winery](#)

A family-owned winery producing wines from estate-grown fruit for multiple generations. Known for its welcoming atmosphere and agricultural heritage.

Shipshewana Amish Country

[Shipshewana](#)

One of the Midwest's best-known Amish communities, featuring flea markets, antique stores, handcrafted furniture, bakeries, and traditional Amish dining. A uniquely Northern Indiana experience and one of the region's most distinctive day trips.

Downtown Elkhart

[Downtown Elkhart](#)

A revitalized downtown district featuring restaurants, breweries, museums, public art, and riverfront amenities. Summer visitors can also enjoy the popular ArtWalk series and nearby Wellfield Botanic Gardens.

NEARBY CITIES

[Chicago, Illinois](#)

Approximate Drive Time: 1 hour 45 minutes–2 hours

One of the world's great cities, Chicago offers renowned museums, iconic architecture, theater, dining, and shopping. Popular attractions include Millennium Park, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum Campus, the Chicago Architecture River Cruise, and the Magnificent Mile. Chicago is also accessible via the South Shore Line commuter rail from South Bend.

[Fort Wayne, Indiana](#)

Approximate Drive Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

Indiana's second-largest city features the nationally recognized Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, Promenade Park, the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, and The Landing entertainment district. Fort Wayne is an excellent option for visitors interested in outdoor spaces, local dining, and family-friendly attractions.

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Approximate Drive Time: 1 hour 45 minutes

Known as "Beer City USA," Grand Rapids combines a thriving brewery scene with outstanding cultural attractions. Visitors often enjoy Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, the Grand Rapids Art Museum, downtown riverfront districts, and a diverse collection of restaurants, breweries, and shops.

Indianapolis, Indiana

Approximate Drive Time: 2.5–3 hours

Indiana's capital city offers professional sports, museums, arts districts, and major attractions such as Newfields, White River State Park, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum, and the Bottleworks District. Indianapolis is an excellent destination for visitors extending their stay before or after the conference.

Kalamazoo, Michigan

Approximate Drive Time: 1 hour

A vibrant college town known for Bell's Brewery, the Air Zoo Aerospace & Science Museum, and a lively downtown filled with restaurants, shops, and cultural attractions. Home to both Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo offers a unique blend of higher education, craft beverage culture, and small-city charm.

NEARBY COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Bethel University

A private Christian university located in Mishawaka and known for its undergraduate and graduate programs.

Holy Cross College

Part of Notre Dame's tri-campus community, Holy Cross offers a close-knit liberal arts educational experience.

Indiana University South Bend

The largest public university campus in the region and a key component of South Bend's higher education landscape.

Saint Mary's College

A nationally recognized Catholic women's college located adjacent to Notre Dame and known for its beautiful campus.