

# Guide to Worcester

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## Things To Do (in Worcester?!)

It may sound like an oxymoron, but if you look around you'll find a bunch of fun ways to fill a night. What follows is a short list of suggestions; explore Worcester and make a few discoveries of your own.

### *The Palladium*

Worcester's own version of a dance club would make a better art-house movie theater. Unless you're looking to be picked up by a pre-teen or a middle aged man, go to Boston.

### *The Espresso Bar*

This is Worcester's only club that is usually 18+ (and occasionally all ages). This place specializes in punk, hardcore, and ska bands, mostly from the Worcester area. A fun spot to see a show.

### *Gillian's Pool Hall*

More than just a place to play pool; there's also a large arcade, a bar, a bunch of large screen TVs, and every once in a while, live music. Before you leave, be sure to drop a card in the jar by the cash register: A notoriously high percentage of people win free "office parties." ROCU and Wheat Bread have already both won a couple of times. The party includes free buffalo wings and two hours of pool for twenty five people, so you can't go wrong.

### *Worcester Art Museum*

The museum has a fairly large collection of pieces from various places and periods. It also has special exhibits, events, and houses an extensive art library. Although it may not be the MET, it's worth checking out.

### *Higgins Armory*

Lots of armor and plenty of hands-on exhibits. Use your imagination.

## Movie Theaters

### *Showcase Downtown*

A great old vaudeville theater turned movie house. The recently upgraded sound system and large screens make this an interesting place to see a movie. If you're lucky, your movie will be showing in the upstairs theater.

### *Elm Draughthouse Cinema*

An awesome place to see second-run movies. Waitress service (!) and it's BYOB.

### *Webster Square*

Small screens and a mediocre sound system combine to make this a last resort for those nights when you can't afford a cab, and your friends with cars are all out of town.

### *Showcase North*

A fourteen screen monsterplex with all the fixings. Reasonably close by car but tough to find; a good choice.

### *Hoyt's Cinema*

Another monster theater which features stadium seating and credit card purchases. The only drawback is that it's a good half hour away in the brand new Solomon Pond Mall. The best place to see a movie in the area.

### *Paris Cinema*

Not that we would know, but we hear the movie playing right now is pretty neat. Great for parents weekend.



The restroom at Da Lat: Worcester is full of interesting attractions.

## Restaurants

### *Da Lat*

Woo hoo! Virtually a local legend, depending on who you ask. This Vietnamese joint features a large menu of recognizable, unrecognizable, pronounceable and unpronounceable dishes that are all inexpensive and worth trying. Service is, ahem, unique and don't mind the Icecats practicing upstairs. Especially good is the bun: a rice vermicelli dish with a surprise ending. Fried rice, egg rolls, crunchy frog with runny nose sauce, and the specialty drinks on the last page are worth every penny. An anonymous source highly recommends the Jackfruit shake.

### *Saigon*

Nearly identical to Da Lat in both menu and atmosphere, Saigon does have better service and is closer to Clark. The debate rages on as to whether or not the food is better than Da Lat, but you can't go wrong either way.

### *Acapulco*

Open 'til 4 AM, this BYOB Mexican restaurant attracts a large student crowd from the WPI neighborhood. The food is pretty

good and they have a lot of things that will fill you up for five to ten dollars. Try the fajitas, nacho plate, burritos, virgin margaritas, and "fried" ice cream.

#### *Tortilla Sam's*

When you order your food, be sure to watch your language. Hot means hot. This quick serve, inexpensive Mexican restaurant changes its menu on a regular basis but doesn't tamper with the excellent fajitas, quesadillas, and burritos. The enormous small nacho plate and the fajitas by the pound are worth a try. Best of all, they deliver. Give it a shot, it's even good for vegetarians.

#### *Cactus Pete's*

A Tex-Mex steak house on Park Ave. A nice place to bring your parents or for special occasions. A little expensive for your budget, but worth the price. You can't go wrong with traditional grilled items like steak or chicken, and Tom Roy loves the ribs.

#### *Sioux City*

We actually wrote most of this guide during the one week that they were open, which explains why we were planning on including Sioux City in this guide. Oh well.



If the act of eating was "knowing" and a sandwich what was "what was up," you'd be "eating a sandwich"... like this guy (see above).

#### *Fantastic*

With Lloyd's Pizza sadly gone, this is the closest and best choice

for grinders and pizza. The owners are really nice guys, the sandwiches are large, the pizza is good (for Worcester) and everything is low priced. The buffalo wings are a personal favorite. They also deliver.

#### *Golden Pizza*

Very cheap but greasy. Delivery is unreliable (many have reported waiting one hour) but they'll deliver almost anything. Stick with the pizza.

#### *Wendy's Clark Brunch*

Every time we leave this place, someone says, "Wow, that was good." Maybe it's the unassuming atmosphere that always leaves us surprised at how tasty the food is. The menu is small but dependable, and the specials are usually very good. Go there often and Annie will become your second mother. Beware stray professors hiding in the dark corners.

#### *Park Ave Sandwich Shop*

Has, to our knowledge, never been open.

#### *Boulevard Diner (a.k.a. Jamie Farr Diner)*

Deserves its nickname for a suspicious painting hung prominently over the door. This family-owned diner is an after-hours favorite because of the small but satisfying menu, interesting atmosphere, and low prices.

#### *Kenmore Diner*

Another late night diner, somewhat larger and more crowded than the Boulevard. Slightly better food with a larger menu. Often a line out the door at three in the morning.

#### *Mac's Diner*

One of the better bargains in Worcester. Expect odd looks from the regulars and inconsistent ser-

vice, but good food and lots of it. Small menu but interesting daily specials; good choice.

#### *Scanos Bakery/Diner*

The food's pretty good and, if you ask, they'll tell you anything you'd ever want to know about Worcester.



*Gilreins and Gentle Lentil on Main Street.*

#### *Gentle Lentil*

A real find for those who enjoy a truly good meal. The menu changes daily, but you can always find something you like. Entrees run for six to ten dollars, and are masterfully prepared by the owner. Great place for vegetarians.

#### *Miss Worcester Diner*

The first diner ever, or something. If you can figure out the hours, let us know (maybe it hurts that none of us are normally up before noon).

#### *Corner Lunch*

A little off the beaten path, but a great pick. Surprisingly large menu. Basically a morning diner, good food and coffee.

#### *Johnny B Goode*

Late night dive on Grafton Street. Decent food, good spe-

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cial, and horror movies on the VCR.

#### *Eleni's Midnight Cafe*

Surprise! Your favorite night spot went out of business while you were home this summer. If you're a freshman, you'll never know what you missed.

#### *Chopsticks*

An okay Chinese food restaurant. Large portions (take some home) at reasonable prices and a convenient location make this a good choice. Check out the lunch buffet.

#### *Peking Wok*

Perhaps the best Chinese Food in Worcester (which isn't saying much). Standard fare at unusual prices.

#### *Tin Tin*

The buffet at \$8.95 for dinner and less for lunch is all they offer here. They have a wide selection which often varies in quality. Price includes beverage, coffee and dessert, just like Bon Appetit. Atmosphere is 1950's cafeteria.

#### *Panda King*

Cheaper buffet than Tin Tin, but smaller selection. Also has menu items. Food may be a little better than Tin Tin. Price does not include beverages or dessert, but eat here once and skip your next eight meals.

#### *Ho Toy*

Not terrible, but you can do better.

#### *King Chef*

Great Prices, but you can taste the Worcester Water.

#### *Chinese Food*

Oddly titled, considering it's actually Vietnamese. They have a karaoke machine. Fear for your pets.

#### *Bickford's and Denny's*

Stay away from both; try one of the diners instead. College is supposed to be a learning experience. Learn that corporate franchises are both more expensive and (usually) worse than local businesses.

#### *Webster House*

Old people food. Good breakfasts, so-so everything else.

#### *The Sole Proprietor*

Pricey but very good. Always expect a crowd (reservations are a good idea). Stick with fish and you'll be a happy camper. Great place for parents weekend.

#### *Arturo's*

Two restaurants in one. The cheaper pizza side is not that cheap, but the food is excellent. A good choice for Italian food. The other side is supposed to be very nice, but we wouldn't know.

#### *East Side Mario's*

Great faux New York ambiance, lousy food. Surprisingly popular but tell your friends you'd rather go somewhere else.

#### *Angela's*

Another popular choice on Park Ave. Quality is sporadic but some people love it. Moderately priced.

#### *Picnic on Park*

Arguably the best clam chowder in Worcester (they won an award, but we'd like to argue with the judges). Sandwiches are excellent and the options are extensive. A good lunch spot.

#### *Coney Island*

A Worcester experience not to be missed. Hot dogs are just about the only option, but they know how to make them. Interesting atmosphere straight outta Brooklyn, and... hot dogs.

#### *Tatnuck*

A little expensive for Worcester, but the food is good. Tatnuck is also the best bookstore you'll find in Worcester, and worth visiting for that reason alone. Bring your parents and they'll be impressed. They like you to hang out in bookstores.

#### *House of India*

Good Indian food at reasonable prices. Don't let the claustrophobic dining room turn you away.



Good for vegetarians, as might be expected. Try the specialty drinks.

## Shopping

### *Shaws & Price Chopper*

The two supermarkets within a half hour walk or a 5 minute drive of Clark. Shaws is a little bigger and a little cheaper than Price Chopper, but either will have anything you might need from the grocery store.

### *Spag's*

The place to buy anything and everything you ever wanted, and a lot of stuff you never thought you need and probably don't. Spag's has everything from tools to food to books; all at really decent prices. Be sure to bring your own shopping bags— they don't provide them. Also, stick with your friends... it is way easy to get lost.

### *Ames*

Ames is pretty much your basic department store. Although maybe not a great place to go for fun, it is good for picking up all those odds and ends you forgot when you were packing.

### *Worcester Common Fashion Outlets*

Located in beautiful downtown Worcester, this recently reopened (it reopened when I was a freshman, which actually makes it three years old) mall is essentially a bunch of factory outlets for a bunch of chain stores that are overpriced to start with. This is a good place to pick up some back to school clothes (if you're into that sort of thing) but don't expect any great bargains. The main reason to visit is Media Play, which has a good selection and cheap prices for CD's, books, videos, and computer games.

### *Greendale Mall*

A medium sized, reasonably

nice mall on the outskirts of Worcester (about ten minutes from Clark, straight down Park Ave.). Expect your typical mall stores at the usual prices. Now that Lechmere's is going out of business, the main reason to visit is to hit The Gap and other mall stores that WCFO overlooks.

### *Solomon Pond Mall*

Located off I-290E, exit 25B, the mall is about 25 minutes away from Clark. Although it is a drive, it is the biggest mall around with a pretty good selection of stores. If you get tired of shopping, you can always eat at TGI Friday's (but beware of the really long wait), or check out a movie at Hoyt's Cinema.

### *Al Bums*

One of the few independent record stores in Worcester; unfortunately, it's nothing special. The used CD selection is best in Worcester, but there's not much competition. The new CD selection is also so-so, but at least it's got vinyl.

In fact, the most interesting thing about the place is the following story: Al Bums was apparently owned by two brothers, but they had a falling out. One brother decided to out-do the other by opening a competing store, Revolution Records, on the other side of town. The first brother then moved Al Bums from it's convenient location down the street from Clark to Highland Street, next to his brother's store. Al Bums eventually drove Revolutions out of business. Revolutions was, in my opinion, the better store.

It's sad how these things happen. Two good record stores which could have coexisted on opposite sides of town had to drive each other into the ground, leaving one out of business and the other horribly disfigured. Some say that it is the result of the capitalist regime that we Americans are subjected to every

waking moment of our lives, but I disagree. I think the problem lies more in a fundamental element of human nature. The unyielding drive to be better than your neighbor has caused many disasters throughout history, not the least of which is the travesty of which I speak. One would have hoped that the sons of the same father could have resolved their differences, or at least avoided a socially and culturally devastating war. This bastardization of justice, corruption of fraternity, and desecration of society has left the greater Worcester area without a suitable used music store for well over a year. I am thoroughly disgusted with the whole affair.

### *Auburn Mall*

Currently under renovation to make it look like the Natick Mall. What this means to you: nothing. It will have the same stores that the mall in your home town does. This, however, is a huge improvement from what it was before: a glorified shopping center.

### *Easy Pieces*

This store is one of the largest thrift shops around. They have a good selection, especially of

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You too can be like this young hipster by buying clothes that poor people are forced to wear.

Levi's jeans. The prices aren't exactly cheap, but you can nearly always find something you want.

*Salvation Army (the one on Cambridge Street)*

A very good spot to find quality used blue sweaters, plaid green suits, and children's soccer jerseys. A seriously large selection always makes for an entertaining day out. A student ID gets you half-off on wednesdays.

*Starship Video*

This local flick shop features many favorites and some lesser-known shlock. Starship doesn't feature as many copies of the more main-stream movies, but has a good collection of the almost-B-movies (Planet of the Apes, Jackie Chan, etc.). In addition, the foreign, arthouse, and porn movie sections make this a more interesting place than Blockbuster.



*Strawberry's is a New England record chain that offers your favorite mainstream stuff as well as old women at discount prices,*

*Another Story*

Another Story is a whole 'nother show when it comes to used book stores. Can we just say that this place rocks? Not only does it have the best/lowest prices in the town for used books, but it is just a fun and funky place. Talk about a varied & fully stocked selection

*Blockbuster Video*

You know the deal.

*Newbury Comics*

Comic books and music in one place! Cheap! If only it weren't twenty minutes away... [Ed note: Mac is morally opposed to this place's marketing strategies.]

*Strawberries*

Good with whipped cream and chocolate fondue. As for the store, there are four things I can say about it:

- 1.) At least they sell concert tickets (even if they aren't a ticketmaster).
- 2.) WAAF's "Yank 'em and crank 'em" rack, because we really need boneheads deciding what we should buy.
- 3.) This chain of stores is owned by a Clark graduate.
- 4.) It's your basic overpriced, generic, mall chain type of music store, like Record Town, Sam Goody, Coconuts or any number of other chains found in other parts of the country.



*A satisfied customer finds what he was looking for at Tatnuck Bookseller.*

*That's Entertainment*

A warehouse-sized comic book/toy/role playing game shop. If this sounds appealing to you, it's there. If not, you've been warned.

*C.C. Lowell*

For those artsy flakes among us, this is your place. Good selection, near Clark (on Park Avenue, behind Thai Cha Da) and decent prices.



*Another Story is located on the corner of Park Avenue and Main Street in Worcester.*