

Five Romantic Main Streets You'll Adore

By:
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photo by: Type A Images

Lovers cozy up outside the Northwoods Premium, a popular spot for sweet treats in Beloit, Wisconsin.

It's no secret that we love Main Streets. So, in honor of Valentine's Day, we're sharing the #MainStreetLOVE with a list of the most romantic ones we could find.

Whether you prefer cozy small towns or vibrant city neighborhoods, these amorous destinations will have you packing your bags for a romantic weekend getaway.

And behind each of these pretty faces is a [Main Street](#) [Link: /main-street] organization dedicated to keeping its historic downtown or urban neighborhood growing and glowing while preserving what makes it so special.

Without further ado, here's our list (which [first appeared](#) [Link: http://www.mainstreet.org/main-street/main-street-news/story-of-the-week/2017/most-romantic-main-streets.html] on MainStreet.org), complete with ideas for dream dates to remember.

Beloit, Wisconsin

A small town with urban flair, Beloit celebrates the arts and embraces its American Industrial history. Located on the Wisconsin-Illinois border, Beloit boasts a downtown full of early 20th century vernacular architecture, with plenty of seasonal plantings and artwork to add to the romantic charm. Downtown Beloit also offers access to the formerly industrial Rock River, offering walking, jogging, biking and kayaking opportunities, making it the perfect get-away for lovers of all kinds.

If you go: Start the day with a farm-fresh breakfast at [Bushel & Peck's](#) [Link: http://www.bushelandpecks.com/]—they also offer a selection of specialty groceries, including treats from their preservation kitchen. Explore a host of independently-owned boutiques downtown, then relax at the [WM Day Spa](#) [Link: http://wmdayspa.com/], which offers Valentine's Day couples packages. Check in to your industrial-chic room at the [Ironworks Hotel](#) [Link: http://ironworkshotel.com/beloit/]—as the name suggests, the building was originally home to a foundry. Then, head down to the hotel's handsomely-appointed [Merrill & Houston's Steak Joint](#) [Link: http://ironworkshotel.com/beloit/merrill-houstons/] for a romantic dinner if you're too relaxed to venture back out to one of the other 20+ dining options downtown.

Downtown Beloit Association [[Link: http://downtownbeloit.com/us/](http://downtownbeloit.com/us/)] is an Accredited Main Street America program.



photo by: Marilyn Vaca

View of Swanson's Ivanhoe Row on Orange Avenue.

Orlando, Florida

Orlando's Ivanhoe Village Main Street District, just outside of downtown along Interstate 4, is a lover's paradise—eclectic shops and maker's spaces, art-filled museums, Spanish moss-draped oaks and posh restaurants with patios. Ivanhoe Village also prides itself on being “open minded, artistic, friendly and multi-cultural.”

If you go: Nothing says romance like a love note—start your day at [Paper Goat Post](http://www.papergoatpost.com/) [[Link: http://www.papergoatpost.com/](http://www.papergoatpost.com/)] for everything you need to share your sweet nothings in style. (They also offer wedding planning services.) Creative juices flowing? Cozy up to some art at the [Orlando Museum of Art](http://omart.org/) [[Link: http://omart.org/](http://omart.org/)], or check out [Factor](http://www.factor.org/) [[Link: http://www.factor.org/](http://www.factor.org/)], Orlando's maker's space, to see creative projects, artwork, and business plans in the making. Be sure to plan a stroll in [Gaston Edwards Park](http://www.cityoforlando.net/fpr/new-paddleboard-dock-at-gaston-edwards-park/) [[Link: http://www.cityoforlando.net/fpr/new-paddleboard-dock-at-gaston-edwards-park/](http://www.cityoforlando.net/fpr/new-paddleboard-dock-at-gaston-edwards-park/)] to take in a sunset over Lake Ivanhoe before you head to a romantic tapas dinner on the patio at [Santiago's Bodega](http://www.santiagosbodega.com/) [[Link: http://www.santiagosbodega.com/](http://www.santiagosbodega.com/)]. Grab a nightcap at [Better Than Sex](http://www.betterthansexorlando.com/#homepage) [[Link: http://www.betterthansexorlando.com/#homepage](http://www.betterthansexorlando.com/#homepage)—this “dessert restaurant” also offers indulgent cocktails.

Ivanhoe Village Main Street [[Link: http://ivanhoevillage.org/](http://ivanhoevillage.org/)] is an Accredited Main Street America program.



photo by: Jessica Ruth

Wedding party on Derby Wharf in the Salem Maritime National Historic Site.

Salem, Massachusetts

Salem, just north of Boston, is one of the nation's oldest port cities. From the beautiful waterfront and harbor, to its vibrant streets, there is plenty to love about downtown Salem. The downtown district's square mile is incredibly walkable, making it perfect for strolling and exploring the classic architecture, artisan shops, and 60+ restaurants and food establishments. Not only that, Salem happens to be one of the most LGBT-friendly places in the country, having received a [perfect score in the HRC Equality Index](#) [Link: <http://www.hrc.org/blog/salem-massachusetts-achieves-perfect-score-on-2014-hrc-municipal-equality-i>].

Salem's recent Age-Friendly initiative also aims to ensure that couples continue to love and live here comfortably, no matter their age!

If you go: Wake up and enjoy a leisurely morning at [The Merchant hotel](#) [Link: <https://www.themerchantsalem.com/>]—this boutique hotel has fireplaces in every room. If you're there in the summer, grab some goodies at the [Cheese Shop of Salem](#) [Link: <http://www.thecheeseshopofsalem.com/>] and head to the waterfront for a picnic. If you're there for Valentine's Day, stroll through town to check out the ice sculptures at [Salem's So Sweet Chocolate and Ice Festival](#) [Link: <http://salemmainstreets.org/festivals/salem-so-sweet/>]. Later that evening, treat yourself to a romantic dinner at [Firenze Trattoria](#) [Link: <http://www.firenzesaalem.com/>], then sip a craft cocktail with locally distilled gin before hitting the dance floor at [Opus](#) [Link: <http://www.salemopus.com/>].

Salem Main Streets [Link: <http://salemmainstreets.org/>] is a *Standard Member of the National Main Street Center*.



photo by: City of Waxahachie

Couple dancing at the 2016 Crossroads of Texas Film Festival.



photo by: City of Waxahachie

This couple from Austin toured all 254 Texas courthouses before choosing Ellis County Courthouse in Waxahachie for their wedding.

Waxahachie, Texas

Waxahachie, located just 30 minutes south of Dallas, is home to stunning 19th-century architecture and one of the most beautiful county courthouses in Texas—and perhaps the country. The area surrounding the square has stately trees, cobblestone pathways, classic lampposts, and quaint shops and cafes, giving one the feeling of taking a step back to a more romantic time. But don't take our word for it—Waxahachie's charm has made it the backdrop for such films as *Tender Mercies* and *Places in the Heart*.

If you go: That beautiful courthouse isn't just for looking at—the [Ellis County Courthouse](http://www.co.ellis.tx.us/index.aspx?nid=460) [Link: <http://www.co.ellis.tx.us/index.aspx?nid=460>] performs weddings. (*Places in the Heart* actors Ed Harris and Amy Madigan were married in real life at the courthouse while they were filming in 1983.) Share a love of movies? Plan your visit during the annual [Crossroads of Texas Film Festival](http://www.crossroadsoftx.com/Festival) [Link: <http://www.crossroadsoftx.com/Festival>], which celebrates Waxahachie-made films, and those made in Texas or by Texans. Explore the side streets around the square for locals' hangouts—or check out [The Dove's Nest](http://www.thedovesnestrestaurant.com/index.html) [Link: <http://www.thedovesnestrestaurant.com/index.html>], which features New Southern Cuisine in its restaurant, and old southern treasures in its on-site antique store.

Waxahachie Main Street Program [Link: <http://www.waxahachie.com/>] is an Accredited Main Street America program.



photo by: The Susquehanna Photographic

A romantic ride on the York County Heritage Rail Trail, which runs through Downtown York.

York, Pennsylvania

History-lovers, or lovers with a history, will find plenty to do in York, located in south-central Pennsylvania. Not only were the Articles of Confederation written and adopted here in 1777, York is also the birthplace of—you guessed it—the Peppermint Pattie. And thanks to forward-thinking leaders, York has a beautifully preserved downtown dating back to the 18th century.

If you go: Sample local flavor at the 125-year old [Central Market](http://www.centralmarketork.com/#introduction) [Link: <http://www.centralmarketork.com/#introduction>], which features 50+ vendors. Open early three days a week, grab provisions for a picnic in Cherry Lane Park, or take your basket for a jaunt on the [York County Heritage Rail Trail](https://yorkcountypa.gov/parks-recreation/the-parks/heritage-rail-trail-park.html) [Link: <https://yorkcountypa.gov/parks-recreation/the-parks/heritage-rail-trail-park.html>], which runs directly through downtown. Quench your thirst afterwards at one of three local breweries, or the [Holy Hound Taproom](http://holyhoundtaproom.com/) [Link: <http://holyhoundtaproom.com/>], which boasts 30+ craft beers on tap in a charming 19th century building. Cap off an active day with a romantic dinner at [The Left Bank](http://leftbankyork.com/) [Link: <http://leftbankyork.com/>], then stroll back across Codorus Creek to your thoughtfully appointed room at the [Grace Manor Bed & Breakfast](http://www.gracemanorbandb.com/) [Link: <http://www.gracemanorbandb.com/>]*—the Mexican Room features a heart-shaped tub.*

Downtown, Inc. [Link: <http://www.downtownyorkpa.com/>] *is a Standard Member of the National Main Street Center.*

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