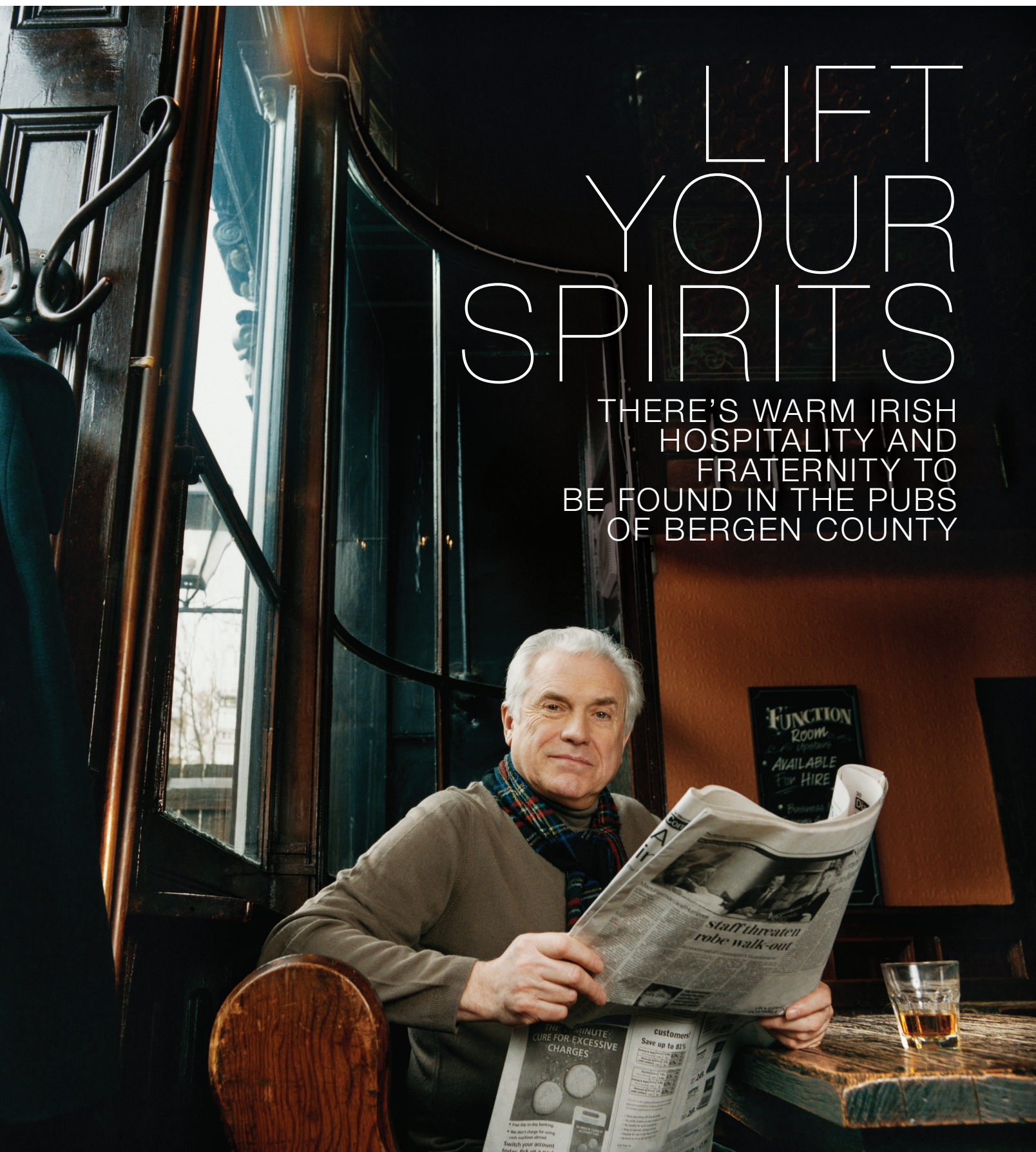


# LIFT YOUR SPIRITS

THERE'S WARM IRISH  
HOSPITALITY AND  
FRATERNITY TO  
BE FOUND IN THE PUBS  
OF BERGEN COUNTY



## HELLO, FRIEND. YOU LOOK WEARY.

Come and sit. We'll share a pint, talk and let our troubles fade away for a time.

There's a feeling of welcoming warmth that greets any patron to an Irish pub, where friends and strangers alike gather to enjoy libations—and lively conversation. Stories and gossip are exchanged against a backdrop of roaring soccer fans watching a game or amid the thwack of darts or, especially on a Sunday night, over rousing chords of live music.

You could be in the heart of Dublin, along the coast in Galway, up north in Belfast—or in Bergen County, which is an ocean away from the Emerald Isle in miles, but not in spirit. “Bergen County is a great place to find not just an Irish pub but one that is frequented by Irish people,” says Kevin Duffy, vice president of the Council of Irish Associations of Greater Bergen County. He says the county has seen an influx of Irish-Americans in recent decades as some of New York City’s once-Irish neighborhoods have become dominated by more recent immigrant groups.

In Irish culture, people congregate around community pubs as if they were the hearth in a home. Indeed, the word “pub” is short for “public house”; the owner is referred to as a “publican.” “Irish pubs are warm places; you should feel like you belong there,” Duffy says. “The pub serves a key social function in Irish society, and that is true here too. It’s a continuation of the parlor in a home: conversations, singing and dancing. And you don’t have to drink—you can come for the dancing and the music.”

Of course, to most people, Irish pubs are synonymous with their quintessential pour: Guinness. Guinness is categorized as a dry Irish stout, a type of ale. “Dry Irish stout is one of the indigenous styles; it’s the most prolific you’ll find,” says Shawn Connelly, a contributing editor for *Beer Connoisseur* magazine and an expert in world beer styles. And while there’s something exotic about ordering a Guinness draught with its frothy white head, the taste is the same as you get from a can. “The only difference between draught and bottle is the method in which it is served,” Connelly explains. “Most pubs that serve draught Guinness serve it on a nitrogen system. It’s a bit different from the standard forced-carbonated CO2 setup you find with other draught beer. It’s the nitrogen that creates the tiny bubbles that give Guinness its voluminous head and create a creamy mouth feel.” »

The ubiquitous Guinness



## WHERE TO INDULGE

### BLARNEY STATION IRISH PUB AND RESTAURANT

258 Park Ave., East Rutherford  
201.531.0001, [blarneystation.com](http://blarneystation.com)

### BRADY'S AT THE STATION

5–7 Main St., Ramsey  
201.327.9748, [bradysatthestation.net](http://bradysatthestation.net)

### THE COTTAGE BAR & RESTAURANT

178 Cedar Lane, Teaneck  
201.692.0016, [thecottagebar.net](http://thecottagebar.net)

### DAVEY'S IRISH PUB & RESTAURANT

Kinderkamack Rd. & Grand Ave.  
Montvale, 201.391.9356, [daveyspub.com](http://daveyspub.com)

### LAZY LANIGANS

604–606 Main St., Hackensack  
201.342.6677, [lazylanigans.com](http://lazylanigans.com)

### MAC MURPHY'S

8 Godwin Ave., Ridgewood  
201.444.0500

### PJ FINNEGAN'S

274 Fairview Ave., Westwood  
201.664.7576, [pjfinnegansnj.com](http://pjfinnegansnj.com)

### POITIN STILL

774 Main St., Hackensack  
201.487.0660, [poitin-still.com](http://poitin-still.com)

### THE PORTER HOUSE

125 Kinderkamack Rd., Montvale  
201.307.6300, [porterhouseusa.com](http://porterhouseusa.com)

### SEAN O'CASEY'S

Marriott Park Ridge Hotel  
300 Brae Blvd., Park Ridge  
201.307.0800, [marriottmodules.com](http://marriottmodules.com)

### THE SHANNON ROSE

1200 Route 17 North, Ramsey  
201.818.4669, [theshannonrose.com](http://theshannonrose.com)

### TOMMY FOX'S PUBLIC HOUSE

32 S. Washington Ave., Bergenfield  
201.384.0900, [tommyfoxs.com](http://tommyfoxs.com)



The bar at Lazy Lanigans, Hackensack



That said, Guinness can be as varied as the people who drink it. If you have visited a pub in Ireland, you've noticed that the Guinness poured there is markedly different from what you're served in the United States. The reason: Guinness has produced dozens of variations of its stout, and only a handful of these are available here. "In the U.S., one very robust version is Guinness Foreign Extra Stout," Connolly says. "It is somewhat higher in alcohol and more aggressive in its hops profile, and thus is more bitter. It's a dialed-up version of the draught

Guinness that is so ubiquitous." Also available in the U.S. is Guinness Extra Stout and the recently released Guinness Black Lager, a lighter brew that marks a deviation from Guinness' tradition of producing dark stouts; it was designed to attract consumers whose tastes skew more toward the likes of Miller. (Pssst: If you're a fan of Harp Lager or Smithwick's, an Irish red, you might be interested to learn that your brand is actually a Guinness product.)

And speaking of Irish red, this variety of ale is also very popular in both Ireland

and the United States. If you crave authenticity, Connolly recommends branching away from the mass-produced Killian's Irish Red—"It's a bit more homogenized and processed in terms of flavor," he notes—and selecting O'Hara's or Murphy's instead.

There's more than beer poured at Irish pubs in Bergen County. If you prefer a fruitier taste, try Bulmers Irish Cider in one of the flavors marketed here under the Magners label. Fancy a whiskey? Ask your publican for a shot of Bushmills or Jameson—and if you want to pronounce the latter as if you were in Dublin, call it jemmison. ("Whiskey," always spelled with an "e" when it refers to the Irish variety, is an Anglicization of the Irish language term *uisce beatha*, which translates as "water of life.") If you want to warm your bones, take that good shot of Irish whiskey, add steaming strong black coffee, and top it off with thick double cream poured over the back of a spoon for an invigorating dose of Irish coffee.

Whatever your drink, don't knock it back without clinking your glass to those of your companions and shouting "Sláinte" (*slawn-cheh*)—"Cheers to your health!"

Irish pubs are known as much for their inexpensive and hearty "pub grub" as for their pints, and Bergen County's locations are no exception. "If you have meat, potatoes and veg on one plate, that's the idea," says Thomas O'Reilly, proprietor of Tommy Fox's Public House in Bergenfield, which also hosts live Irish music. "The food is hearty, comfy, all about home." On any self-respecting Irish pub menu you'll find fish and chips, deep-fried fish (usually cod or haddock) in a crispy batter with fat golden "chips" (fries); shepherd's pie, made traditionally with lamb (but which also can contain ground beef) with peas, carrots and mashed potatoes, all baked until golden brown; corned beef and cabbage; bangers and mash, a plate of Irish sausage and mashed potatoes; and Irish soda bread. If you want to venture off the beaten track yet remain authentic, try the Galway-style mussels at Davey's in Montvale—the seafood is simmered with garlic, scallions, butter, wine and herbs and served over pasta in the tradition of this county on Ireland's West Coast.

Now, with your belly full, come 'round to me at the next stool and raise your glass—filled with whatever—for this time-honored toast: "For every wound, a balm. For every sorrow, cheer. For every storm, a calm. For every thirst, a beer." —PATTI VERBANAS