

Top Ten Restaurants in Ohio

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Top Ten Restaurants in Ohio

All 10 are pinned on the map above. Each row also links straight to its own location in Google Maps.

The MICHELIN Guide has announced an American Great Lakes selection that covers Ohio through Cleveland, but its first ceremony is not until 2027 and nothing has been awarded yet, so this list leads with James Beard Foundation recognition.

The ten

#	Restaurant	City	Distinction	Cuisine
1	Camp Washington Chili	Cincinnati	James Beard America's Classics (2000)	Cincinnati chili
2	Golden Lamb	Lebanon	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; National Register of Historic Places listing (1978); trading since 1803	American
3	Bender's Tavern	Canton	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; National Register of Historic Places listing (1987); trading since 1902	Seafood and American
4	The Hamburger Wagon	Miamisburg	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; trading since 1913	Hamburgers
5	Guarino's	Cleveland	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; trading since 1918	Italian American
6	Tony Packo's Cafe	Toledo	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; trading since 1932	Hungarian American
7	Swensons Drive-In	Akron	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; trading since 1934	Drive-in burgers
8	The Pine Club	Dayton	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; trading since 1947	Steakhouse
9	Skyline Chili	Cincinnati	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; trading since 1949	Cincinnati chili
10	Marion's Piazza	Dayton	Fourth rung: carries its own Wikipedia article; trading since 1965	Dayton-style pizza

Why these ten

Ohio is inside the announced MICHELIN Guide American Great Lakes edition, reached through Cleveland, but that guide has not held its first ceremony and is not scheduled to until 2027. No Ohio restaurant holds a star, a Bib Gourmand or any other MICHELIN distinction as of August 2026, so the first two rungs of the ladder are empty.

The third rung is thinner than Ohio's food reputation would suggest, because the open-for-business test removes most of it. Michael Symon won James Beard Best Chef: Great Lakes in 2009 for Lola in Cleveland and Jonathon Sawyer won the same award in 2015 for The Greenhouse Tavern, and both restaurants closed in 2020. Sokolowski's University Inn in Cleveland, named an America's Classic in 2014, also closed in 2020. That leaves Camp Washington Chili, an America's Classic since 2000 and still open in Cincinnati, as the state's only currently trading James Beard winner.

The other nine come from the fourth rung, restaurants documented well enough to carry their own Wikipedia article, ordered oldest first. Two of them carry a second named distinction: the Golden Lamb in Lebanon and Bender's Tavern in Canton are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Skyline Chili and Swensons are Ohio-founded chains rather than single-site institutions, and they are on the list because the fourth rung is a notability test they pass, not because they outrank the one-of-a-kind rooms above them.

The close call worth naming is very recent. Three Ohio chefs were finalists for Best Chef: Great Lakes at the 2026 James Beard Awards on 15 June 2026: Vinnie Cimino of Cordelia in Cleveland, Sarah Dworak of Sudova in Cincinnati and Jeffery Harris of Nolia in Cincinnati. The award went to Jake Potashnick of Feld in Chicago, so none of the three enters this list yet.

Sources

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