



# FINDING SCOTLAND IN THE HOCKING HILLS

*The Glenlaurel Inn offers a  
Scottish-style retreat just 90  
minutes from Columbus*

BY JOHN MCLAUGHLIN  
PHOTOS PROVIDED





While Appalachian Ohio might not be the first place in the world travelers would think of heading to find an authentic Scottish atmosphere, the Glenlaurel Inn will likely have you speaking in a burr in no time flat. Glenlaurel Inn was originally opened in 1994 by Michael Daniels, who aimed to honor his heritage with an authentic Scottish Inn. Today the woodsy hideaway, sequestered away from the rest of the world in the Hocking Hills, offers world-class hiking, recreation, and dining, all within 10 minutes of downtown Columbus. ▶






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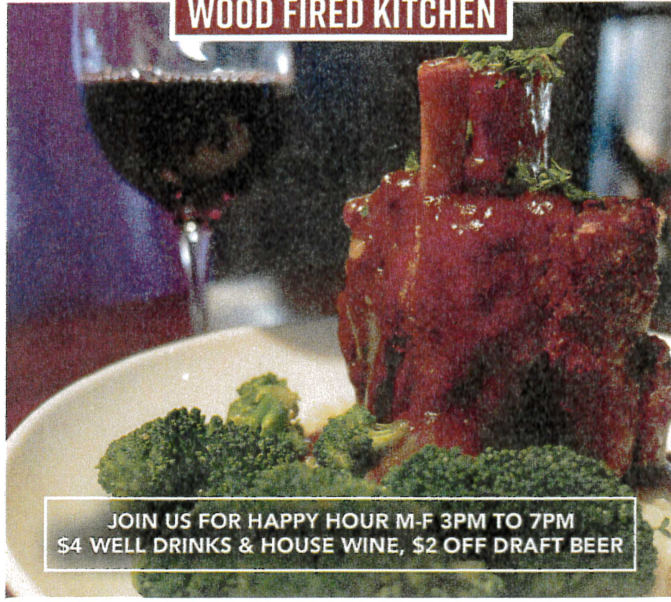
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Daniels eventually sold the establishment to a trio of new owners native to the Hocking Hills area, who had fallen in love with the authentic, antiquated inn well before purchasing it. To add a real touch of the Scottish Isles to the establishment, Jas Barbe was hired, whose lavish Scottish accent greets dinner guests with poetry recitals each night.

Make no mistake about it, Barbe's presence at the Inn is more than just an atmospheric touch. Before moving to Ohio to manage the Glenlaurel, the Scotsman managed some of the most coveted properties in the world—think Nice and the Italian countryside—as a contractor. He now resides at the inn full time. “I decided to come home,” he said wryly.

Nestled on 60 lush acres inside the Wayne National Forest, the Inn's property is rife with glens, waterfalls,





and miles of walkable trails ready to provide adventure. It's only a short drive from some of the area's more popular natural attractions, such as Ash Cave and Old Man's Cave.

One of the draws of unplugging in a national forest is the proximity to wildlife of all sorts, and Glenlaurel isn't wanting in this area. "We get so much of it here, and we love it," says Barbe. "Just this morning I watched a deer come right up to a couple of our guests outside their cabin."

And even though the retreat is a mere stone's throw away from some of the best outdoor recreation in the state, it may be hard to pull guests away from the Inn. One reason for this: a wholly authentic sand green links-style golf course.

The term links actually hails from the Scottish language, and refers to a course made up of longer, sandy grass that requires less upkeep. It is the oldest style of golf in the world. These courses are less refined, and thus golfers feel

uniquely engaged with the natural world around them while playing. Glenlaurel is no exception; a smattering of old stone fences and lush vegetation transport players into an era passed.

"We have the only long grass golf course in North America," Barbe says. "Our course was designed by [renowned golf course architect] Michael Hurdzon, and modeled after ancient Scottish courses. It's traditionally played with old hickory canes, and we have some from the 1800s for guests to use."

After a full day of taking in the Hocking Hills and hitting the links, guests will have no doubt worked up an appetite, and the cuisine at Glenlaurel is on par with the rest of its attractions.

Jean-Michelle Matos, a world-class chef with a Parisian culinary education, designed and oversees the Inn's menu. After cooking in France, Matos served as a chef in New York for a host of hotels, and eventually as the executive chef for Norwegian Cruise Lines. ▶



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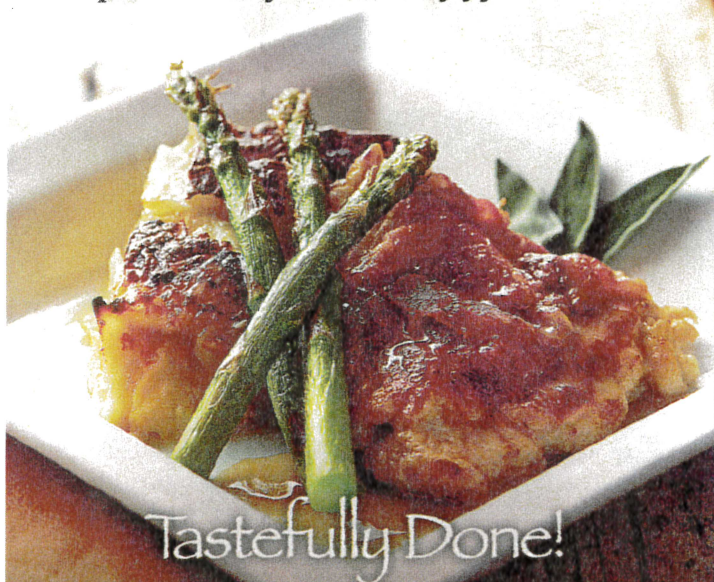
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"I'm going to say that my style of cooking is progressive, but with classical overtones," Matos said. His menu, which rotates dishes every single day of the year and features six and seven course meals, is highlighted by a host of strong entrées such as the rack of lamb. "A lot of preparation goes into the lamb," Matos said. "It's oven roasted and coated with a dried cherry and cranberry crust."

Following dinner, Glenlaurel visitors can retire to their authentic Scottish abodes for the night. The Inn offers a number of different lodging options to choose from, including wooded cabins and crofts—slightly smaller versions of their cabins—donning different Scottish surnames. Rooms in the manor house are also available.

Barbe said that all of their lodgings feature a wide array of amenities and cater specifically to couples. "No matter who you are, or where you are in your relationship, we'll help you get that fire back." ■





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*The Glenlaurel Inn is located at 14940 Mount Olive Rd. in Rockbridge, OH. Visit [glenlaurel.com](http://glenlaurel.com) to learn more and book.*



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