

# WORCESTER GOES GREEN

Worcester's proud Irish community celebrates St. Patrick's Day in March with parades, concerts and plenty of conviviality!

Monique Joseph, president of Discover Central Massachusetts, describes the region as "a vibrant destination where the arts, history and community events create a rich, inclusive tapestry for visitors and locals alike."

Worcester's Irish roots go back to the 18th century when Ulster Presbyterians arrived in 1718, followed in 1826 by Irish laborers who built Worcester's canals, roadways and railways. By the year 1850, Sullivan had become the most prevalent surname in Worcester, underscoring the deep Irish influence on the city's identity.

Today, those strong Irish roots remain, as 17.5% of Worcester County residents claim Irish ancestry, says the US Census.

"Irish culture is such a huge part of Worcester's identity," says Worcester Radio, where parade chair Erin Zamorro talked recently about the 42nd Annual Worcester County St. Patrick's Day Parade on Sunday, March 10. The two-mile parade from Mill Street and Park Avenue to Highland Street starts at Noon.



Erin oversees 50+ volunteers who put the annual event together. This year's Grand Marshal is Richard Smalley and Mayor of Parade is Tammy Bailey. Leo Quinn is operations manager.

Bud Sargent, popular radio host of the "Four Green Fields" show on WCUW 93.1, is parade commentator on Spectrum Local News.

## PERFORMING ARTS

Music Worcester presents Cape Breton fiddlers Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy on March 9 at The Hanover Theatre.

Fiddlers' Green Pub at Hibernian Cultural Centre has Derek Warfield and the Young Wolfe Tones on March 8, followed by the Druids on March 9, plus Irish music on Sundays.

Worcester Historical Museum presents "Nellie: The Musical," recounting the exciting life of Irish-American journalist Nellie Bly, on Feb 29, March 1, 7 & 8.

In Boylston, MA, Calliope Performance Center presents "Dancing at Lughnasa" by Irish playwright Brian Friel, on March 7-10 and 15-

17. Set in Donegal in the 1930s, *Dancing at Lughnasa* won the 1992 Tony Award for Best Play of the Year.

## HOSPITALITY & GIFTS

O'Connor's Restaurant and Bar was started by Brendan and Claire O'Connor in 1989 and remains an epicenter of Irish hospitality. O'Connor's prized corned beef and cabbage dinner is on the menu from March 7-14.

Other local Irish places include Quinn's Pub and Moynagh's Pub, Worcester's oldest tavern. And Erin Gift Store at Worcester Public Market in Kelley Square offers authentic gifts from Ireland.

Music, dancing, cuisine and culture, these are the cultural characteristics of Worcester County's Irish community, and those of so many ethnic communities in the region.

"Central Massachusetts is proud of the variety of activities and organizations that highlight the unique cultures of our dynamic region," says Monique Joseph, who invites visitors to take "a memorable journey through the Heart of Massachusetts's cultural landscape."

Central Massachusetts has an abundance of budget-friendly hotels, restaurants, breweries, cultural attractions and historical landmarks, ensuring a wealth of activities for those visiting for the parade or other events.

Find more information about visiting Worcester and Central Massachusetts any time of year at [discovercentralma.org](http://discovercentralma.org)