Newspapers.com
https://www.newspapers.com/image/96642566

Downloaded on Jun 1, 2017

Road TRIP

FARRELL

By Marylynne Pitz
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

When is a swizzle stick edible?

When it's Swizzle Stick Day at the Daffin's Candies factory in Farrell, a Mercer County town of more than 6,000 people. Today is Daffin's annual open house and visitors will receive edible, chocolate-dipped swizzle sticks with filling on top.

The Daffin's factory will be open to the public from noon to 4 p.m. today for free tours. (Normally, tour reservations must be made two weeks in advance for groups with a minimum of 10 people.)

"When we're in full operation, you'll see the candy being made from scratch until the finished product is run in the same day," said Jean Daffin, president of the company that has existed for four generations and 110 years.

Clowns, the Easter Bunny and Winnie the Pooh will greet visitors and pose for pictures. Visitors can watch as employees decorate Easter eggs and baskets, pour melted chocolate into molds, and make candy bars.

The annual open house in this Shenango Valley community usually attracts visitors from Cleveland, Akron and Pittsburgh, Mrs. Daffin added. (From Downtown Pittsburgh, it's a 68-mile drive to Farrell that takes about an hour and 15 minutes.)

The factory turns out all manner of chocolate Easter bunnies — standing, sitting and floppy-eared. Some are milk, some are semisweet, which is the company's term for dark chocolate, and some are pink.

"We make milk and dark chocolate. Our dark chocolate business seems to be improving now. Dark chocolate isn't as harmful as milk [chocolate]. I've been eating milk chocolate all my life, and I'm fit, so it must be all right," Mrs. Daffin said.

Like many businesses, Daffin's Candies has moved and expanded since the day George Daffin, a Greek immigrant, opened the first store in the southern Ohio town of Woodsfield, in 1897.

When Daffin's opened its flagship store in nearby Sharon in Mercer County the company moved its production to Farrell in 1975, built a new factory in 1980 and enlarged its production facility in the 1990s.

About four years ago, Daffin's invested in a million dollar piece of equipment called a single-shot depositor that allows it to make European-style candy in molds, said Gary Sigler, superintendent of the 55,000-square-foot factory. Typically, American factories make candy by enrobing it in chocolate, such as chocolate-covered cherries.

"Shell-molded chocolates are a little fancier looking and have a lot of design. The chocolate is actually poured into a mold with different cremes. Some of our meltaway centers are shell molded. It is more efficient. It requires a one-shot depositor where the chocolate shell and the center are deposited into a mold in a one-shot process," Mr. Sigler said.

At the Farrell factory, he said, "We produce from September through May, and we do a little more than 2.2 million pounds of chocolate each year. That includes chocolate novelties, candy bars and gift boxes."

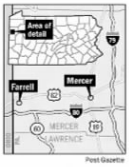
During the production season the factory employs between 40 to 50 people.

The most popular items are turtles, which the company calls pecanettes. These are pecans and caramel dipped in chocolate.

Other best-sellers are chocolate-covered cherries and meltaways.

Marylynne Pitz can be reached at mpitz@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1648.

Each week we map out a road trip in the region. Read past installments at post.gazette.com/travel/roadtrip. If you have a suggestion for a great one, e-mail roadtrip@post-gazette.com or write RoadTrip, The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 34 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.



Company offers biker adventures

TOURS, FROM PAGE F-1

Cleveland. Another partner, Rob Yackel of McKeesport, handles the administrative duties.

Most of the trips are not for beginners; riders should have several thousand miles of riding experience, as well as have participated in the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's basic or experienced rider courses.

Back Country also provides Touring 101 for newer riders not quite ready for a long, weekend trip.

And all the tours are BYOB —bring your own bike.

For more than 10 years, Pittsburgh was the home base for Stayin' Safe Motorcycle Training, a company founded by the late Larry Grodsky, a nationally recognized motorcycle safety expert who coached the lives of Ted Koppel and Mike Tyson.

But when Mr. Grodsky died last spring on his bike after being hit by a deer in Texas, his girlfriend, Maryann Puglisi, consolidated the operations in Washington, D.C. It still runs tours out of Pittsburgh (scheduled April 21-22), but the focus always has been on safety instruction rather than tourism.

"We help people become better, safer, smarter and smoother riders," Ms. Puglisi said.

So, for pure fun and adventure on the road, Back Country is the main game in town.

Sean Thomas, president of Back Country, said his operation evolved naturally after he and his father kept getting praise from other riders for how well they planned trips for their friends. Many encouraged them to start a business, which they founded last fall.

He hopes there could be a demand for these tours among the 155,000 licensed motorcyclists in the 80-mile radius of Pittsburgh.

"These people, they're out there," Mr. Thomas said. "I know they want to ride. I know a lot of people who will not sit down and take the time to plan a trip."

This region's topography also is a big draw for bikers, he said.

Many national motorcycle tour companies offer rides to the Smoky Mountain National Park's Route 28, known as the Tail of the Dragon; it has 318 turns over 11 miles.

"We've got roads here in Western Pennsylvania that rival any roads down there," Mr. Thomas said. "I know of roads where I've taken people who have lived here all their lives and didn't know they were there."

The tours generally stay off the interstates.

"You want nice scenery, a nice road. Down in West Virginia there are tons of roads and very little traffic. You figure within 1½ hours, you're in West Virginia's back hills, and you see nobody. That makes for good riding and makes it interesting."

Sharlene McCoy-Collinger of Scott, a member of the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program, had high praise for the company organizers.

She met Dave and Sean Thomas a few years ago in the Southern Cruisers Riding Club, whose members post informal rides on the Internet. Often the Thomases would take the lead in identifying routes and had good recommendations for out-of-the way but interesting B&Bs or mom-and-pop hotels, she said.

"We had some absolutely fantastic rides," said Ms. McCoy-Collinger. "They'd find the most fantastic twisties.

"They were just a lot of fun to ride with. They were real laid back and respectful," she added. "They could adapt to whomever was riding."

The rides, she said, gave her the confidence to become an instructor for the state's motorcycle safety program.

Sean Thomas said once the touring company gets off the ground, it may expand routes out of Cleveland, where Mr. Gaesh is based.

Tour operators will be at the Pittsburgh Bike Expo at the Expo Mart in Monroeville on Saturday and next Sunday.

Virginia Linn can be reached at vlinn@post-gazette.com or 412-263-1902.

Bob Donaldson/Post-Gazette

Dave Thomas, right, and his son Sean operate Back Country Motorcycle Tours.

if you go

Motorcycle tours

■ **Back Country Motorcycle Tours:** 1-866-217-2733 or www.backcountrymctours.com. Cost of the longer tours, which range from roughly $500 to $1,600, include meals, lodging and special activities, but not alcoholic beverages, gas, incidentals or spending money. Tour season runs from May 1 to Oct. 31. Custom trips for groups also are available.

Touring 101 costs $150 per rider, $40 per passenger, and will be held May 6, June 3, July 8, Aug. 5, Sept. 9 and Oct. 7.

The company believes that participants should wear helmets; motorcycle license and liability insurance are required.

■ **Stayin' Safe Motorcycle Training:** 1-202-857-8384. Each trip involves six riders (three per instructor). Riders are coached through an in-helmet communication system as they ride with instructors. Two- and three-day training tours. Costs range from $975 for two days to $1,375 for three days.

HOLIDAY TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL
Carlson Wagonlit Travel
Deluxe Italy Tour
Fully Escorted
Call Today -
We Even Speak Italian!
(800) 775-7111
Includes Air. Applies for other European Destinations.

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
A Virginia Beach Favorite For Endless Family Fun!
Bring the family to our fun-filled resort where they can sail down the Lazy River, splash in our tropical pool, and play in the warm sands and ocean waves. And so you can relax, there's our supervised Kid's Club.
Take a virtual tour and book online!
virginiabeachholidayinn.com
Holiday Inn
SunSpree® Resorts
1.800.HOLIDAY · OCEANFRONT AT 39TH STREET

Travel Getaways

DELAWARE

BETHANY BEACH - Sea Colony
1st NITE FREE! Oceanfront condos to secluded rth vacation rentals, plus private beach, pools, tennis, children's programs, WiFi ... Linens provided! Rentals on the golf course at Bear Trap too! 800-401-2127 for details.
www.ResortQuestDelaware.com/pgg

MARYLAND

A New Luxury Lakefront Hotel
DEEP CREEK LAKE, MD
Book NOW for Spring
Studios to one bedrooms with loft
Fitness Room, Sauna, Fireplace,
Restaurant & Bar
Suites at Silver Tree
800-711-1719
www.suitesatsilvertree.com

A perfect winter destination
DEEP CREEK LAKE, MD
Book NOW for Stay & Ski Package
1 Destination, 3 Resorts
Over 400 2-9 bedroom chalets, cottages and condos. Private pools, hot tubs, ski in & ski out, and pet-friendly.
1-800-846-RENT (7368)
RAILEY MTN. LAKE VACATIONS
www.deepcreek.com

Celebrate Easter in Deep Creek Lake
Deep Creek Lake, MD -
Long & Foster Resort Rentals
Rent 2 nights, get the 3rd night free!
Bring the family - our Concierge Service can help with all your holiday plans.
800.880.5782
www.DeepCreekResort.com

DELAWARE & MARYLAND BEACHES -
2007 Summer Vacations!
Over 1000 prime vacation offerings just a click away!
www.LPVACATIONS.com
Ocean City.....1-800-THE BEACH (1-800-843-2323)
Ocean Pines.....1-877-208-7368
Bethany/Fenwick.....1-800-562-3224
Rehoboth/Dewey/Lewes.....1-800-272-2828
Long & Foster Real Estate, Inc.

EXPERIENCE ALL FOUR SEASONS AT DEEP CREEK LAKE
Call Coldwell Banker Deep Creek Realty at 1-800-749-5300 and book your next getaway. Large variety of vacation properties from Luxury to Rustic to cheese from. Hot tubs, fireplace & much more.
Take a virtual tour online at
www.deepcreekrealty.com

MARYLAND

OCEAN CITY
Best selection of affordable vacation rentals, full/partial weeks. Call for free brochure. Open daily 9-5, evenings Monday-Thursday. Online reservations/brochure at www.holidayoc.com.
Holiday Real Estate 1-800-638-2102

OCEAN CITY
SEA GATE
Oceanfront, 1-BR Condos
1-800-678-5668
SUMMER BEACH
1,2 & 3-BR's Oceanfront & Oceanside
1-800-537-7876
www.seagateoc.com
Sea Gate S&R, Inc.

NEW YORK

Manhattan-NYC Hotel $109 for 2 Persons. Sgls $104. Suites $129-$139. Lincoln Ctr area, Hudson River views, 18 firs, kit ette, 5 min. to Midtown, safe, quiet area. Riverside Tower, Riverside & 80th. Free Brkfst. 800-724-3136
www.riversidetowerhotel.com

NORTH CAROLINA

AFFORDABLE BEACH COTTAGES ON THE OUTER BANKS OF NC.
SOME OFF-SEASON RATES APPLY
FROM 10 5/25 & AFTER 9/1.
www.wpmobx.com or call 800-276-7478, 7/wk., 9 -5.

COROLLA, NC VACATIONS
Call us today for your 2007 Destination Guide! Vacation on the Outer Banks of North Carolina! Oceanfront to Soundfront, 2 to 10 Bedroom Vacation Homes, Private Pools & Hot Tubs, Pets Welcome! Book online at www.brindleybeach.com1-877-642-3224

COROLLA, OUTER BANKS, NC
Beautiful homes oceanfront to soundfront; pristine beaches; relax, fish, golf, surf, bike, tennis; pet-friendly options. Deliberately & selectively smaller.
Free brochure - Call 1.866.453.9660
www.corollaclassicvacations.com/pgg

OUTER BANKS - Village Realty offers 100's of Vacation Rentals & Sales from Corolla to Ocracoke Island. Beaches, golf, fishing, hot tubs, private pools. Ask for our FREE Vacation Planner. 800-548-9688
www.villagerealtyobx.com/pgg

OHIO

GLENLAUREL, A Scottish Country Inn w/ Wooded Cottages. Romantic getaway & luxury hideaways nestled on 140 acres in beautiful Hocking Hills (SE OH). Fine dining, hot tubs & spa services. Voted the premier romantic getaway in the Midwest. Call & ask about our specials.
1-800-809-REST
www.glenlaurel.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

HILTON HEAD - BEACH PROPERTIES
Luxury Oceanfront and Beach Oriented Homes and Villas for Rent. Come experience the beautiful Island of Hilton Head. Call 1-800-671-5155 for FREE 100-Page Color Catalog. Visit www.beach-property.com for specials.

HILTON HEAD ISLAND
Luxury Vacation Homes 2-8 BRs.
Oceanfront-Beach Oriented-Golf Views
Call toll-free 877-874-7244
for catalog or visit online
www.DVHHI.com

HILTON HEAD ISLAND
www.hhisland.info will help you plan a great visit with Sandpiper Vacations. Discover our beach, golf, tennis, dining, shopping, activities & more.
Or call us toll-free at 800-845-0077.

KIAWAH ISLAND & CHARLESTON
Best Web, Golf, & Vacation Specials
Kiawah, Seabrook, & Wild Dunes
ResortQuest 866-249-0116
SCDiscounts.com

MYRTLE BEACH, OCEANFRONT
2 & 3 bedroom condos.
2 baths, washer/dryer, pool,
free waterless interiors.
Weekly rentals. 800-222-4241
www.condosmyrtlebeach.com

NORTH MYRTLE BEACH
1,2 & 3 Bedroom Oceanfront Condos w/ pools, jacuzzis, lazy rivers & tennis. Golf pkgs. New for '07: High-Speed Internet & kiddie water slide.
1-800-345-5617. www.coastalwest.net

SEABROOK ISLAND, SC
1-6 BRm villas and Private homes.
Ocean, golf, tennis equestrain.
Free Brochure. 888-718-7949
Seabrook Exclusives
www.seabrookexclusives.com

TO PLACE AN AD: 412-263-1236 or email: saschenbrenner@post-gazette.com

The sooner you escape the better.

DESTINATION	DAYS	FROM*
Alaska	7–10	$599
Alaska Cruisetour	11–17	$1,399
Asia	16	$1,999
Australia & New Zealand	12	$1,595
British Isles	12	$1,999
Canada & New England (from New York)	7–10	$1,095
Caribbean (roundtrip from New York)	9	$899
Caribbean	7–14	$599
Greek Isles & Mediterranean	12	$1,499
Hawaii (roundtrip from Los Angeles)	15	$1,399
Hawaii & Midway Island	20	$1,999
Mexican Riviera	7	$499
Pacific Coastals	1–7	$69
Panama Canal	10–19	$1,199
Scandinavia & Russia	10	$1,599
South America	12–21	$1,695
Tahiti & Hawaii	12	$1,799

Call your travel agent or
1.800.PRINCESS
Or visit princess.com

PRINCESS CRUISES
escape completely.

Fares are per person, based on double occupancy; cruises are oftentimes only subject to availability, capacity controlled. May be limited by inventory, and may expire. *Fares are for the shortest inside length of the voyage shown. Call the above number for more details. Government fees and taxes are up to $399.00 per person and are additional. All vacations are available. See applicable "Princess" brochures for terms, conditions and definitions that apply to all bookings. Other restrictions may apply. ©2007 Princess Cruises. Ships of Bermudian registry.

Copyright © 2017 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.

Powered by Newspapers.com